UNIVERSITY COUNCIL TRANSCRIPT  
Wednesday, December 4, 2013, 3 p.m.  
Holmes Student Center Sky Room


VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Arriola, Bateni, Bond, Garcia, Giese, Holly, Kolb (on leave from UC), Lenczewski, E. Lopez, Middleton, Mohabbat, Perkins, K. Smith, Walker

OTHERS PRESENT: Armstrong, Bryan, Cunningham, Gebo, Kaplan, Klapaer, Nicklas, Suttenfield, Waas, Weldy

OTHERS ABSENT: Blakemore, Falkoff, McHone-Chase, Slotsve, Thompson

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 3:10 p.m.

D. Baker: Hi, wow. Is anybody going to Detroit this week? The students are; great. Well congratulations to the football team. It’s going to be a great night for us and really looking forward to it. That’s the good news.

We had a pension bill passed in the legislature yesterday. Ying and Yang, huh? The sky is not falling yet. I would say the outside is probably a good metaphor for where we are with the pension bill; it’s pretty foggy. I think the legislators wanted to get something passed and sent it on to the courts so they could really get clarity about what’s constitutional and what isn’t and they’ve been wringing their hands, as you know, for a long period of time. Steve Cunningham and his partner at the University of Illinois worked diligently to come up with a proposal that was more balanced and they did. And it got the ball rolling and it got people talking. The ball stopped rolling at a place that we had not wanted it to stop rolling but I guess the good news is it’s off to the courts. Well, I predict it will be off to the courts and so then we will find out what the parameters really are. So I would say: Don’t be depressed yet about pension issues. I would say, in fact: Be buoyed that we’re off now to get a real understanding. I’m going to ask Steve to say a few words about that right now and answer any questions that you may have. There’s been a lot written. You’ve probably seen all the analysis. I don’t think we have to go through the actuarial tables today but, Steve, could you give us a few insights on where you think we are?

S. Cunningham: Sure. We could do the actuarial tables; that’s kind of fun. Yes, as you probably know, and there’s information on the pension section of the website. We have a lot of information up there actually in terms of a summary of the bill and things like that so I won’t go
over all the provisions.

But there are two fundamental provisions that do greatly affect our university and our sector, that being the public universities. And that is the amendment to the cost of living formula and also pensionable income. Both of these have a substantial effect with respect to higher education because we have a number of mid-career personnel who we have difficulty retaining. With this change to the pension code, it’s the higher education sector that has more personnel at income levels and pension levels that would be affected by this. It was a great concern also of the school TRS sector. We’re going to work on this as the president indicated. The cost of living would basically be $1,000 multiplied by the years of service. So a 30-year employee would be eligible for a cost of living allowance of $900. Under the retirement system, many 30-year employees have pensions that greatly exceed that. The average pension under the retirement system is somewhere around $32,000-$34,000, but that’s because the SURS has a number of deferred annuitants, people that were in the systems for a brief period of time; 10 years, eight years, 15 years. They have left, they’re at another retirement system and have banked their benefits and then later they draw an annuity on that. But for personnel that have 30 years, 25 years, things like that, the average pension is much higher. So this has a very substantial effect and that’s where the 50 percent number comes into play in terms of the net reduction and the cull; it’s that class of employees.

The other feature, pensionable income, would freeze the income base for purposes of the high, four-year average pension calculation to the salary being earned as of the effective date which would be July 1, 2014 or the social security limit under Tier 2 which is 109.9, whichever is greater. Again, the problem there is that, under most retirement systems, the retirement pension benefit floats with the income. So it corresponds with the income level because the employee makes contributions at all income levels. So this would greatly change that as well.

So those are two key issues. There is positive language in the bill for the funding plan. The funding plan is actually made far more secure under this legislation. It’s not bullet-proof, but it’s far more secure than it is now and it would dedicate significant new revenues to fund the pension systems that formerly were not in place. So that’s one positive development. As President Baker indicated, the next step will be – is already gearing up, it will be the – we’ve moved from the legislative sector to the judicial sector and we’ll continue to work on that. The presidents and chancellors and President Baker signed off on a letter before this was acted upon, opposing it. But nonetheless, we’ll continue to be very active as we go through all of the next stages as we have been and we’ll keep you informed.

D. Baker: Great. Thanks. Any questions? Before you ask your question, I didn’t do two things that make us legal. Let’s do those two legal things and then your questions will be on the docket. Okay?

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

D. Baker: The first thing was can we adopt the agenda?

Unidentified: So moved.

R. Lopez: Second.
D. Baker: All in favor?

Members: Aye.

D. Baker: Opposed? Thank you.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 6, 2013 MEETING

D. Baker: Approval of the minutes?

D. Smith: So moved.

P. Vohra: Second.

D. Baker: Corrections, deletions? All in favor?

Members: Aye.

D. Baker: Opposed?

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

D. Baker: You’re on.

J. Kowalski: I went to the annuitants luncheon and actually saw Steve briefly there and I did ask him this question, but I’ll ask it to him again, and he may or may not know the exact answer to this given the short turnaround time for the particulars of a massive bill. But my question had to do with the COLA calculation formula and, in particular, since my understanding is that the purpose of this reorganization of the COLA, aside from saving massive amounts of money to the state, clearly was to sort of put a floor under the lower paid staff and employees in public service, is to find out more particularly whether or not these COLAs are compounded over time based on this $30,000 amount and what formula they’re using to compute the COLA increment if indeed they’re compounded. It’s very important for employees to know whether or not that COLA is compounded and put into a base that’s increasing on an annual basis after they retire because if it’s not it’s a serious, going to be a serious deficit and impairment to the buying power of the employee at that baseline level. I’m very concerned about that particularly for our lower paid employees but of course also for everybody who is going to lose considerable buying power because of the lower threshold for this COLA sort of salary floor. So anything you can do to find out about that and help us to understand it, I will greatly appreciate and I believe others would too.

S. Cunningham: I think, Jeff, we’ll prepare some examples on a spreadsheet which may be the quickest way to go about that. This is a very significant and extensive reduction of COLA benefits. There is still a compounding up to whatever the limit is. Thirty-year employees would be $30,000, a 25-year employee $25,000, but once that cap was reached it would just be a payment. So, for example, for $30,000 at three percent CPI would be a $900 COLA; $25,750 and it would not compound in once the pension reached that level.
Now, one thing that makes this complicated is that the legislation does call for that base to be adjusted by CPI every year. So $30,000 would go to $30,900 and that would add $27.00 to the next year’s cost of living payment, but that rate of growth is much smaller, much slower than applying a cost of living benefit compounded to more of the pension or to the entire pension. We’ll put some examples together and get those out.

**D. Baker:** Any other questions? All right well stayed tuned. It’s a big issue and I appreciate Steve’s hard work and everybody’s hard work on this over the last years. I want to introduce you to somebody I’ve talked about in her absence, Nancy Suttenfeld. Nancy is our interim CFO and I’ve mentioned to you her recent jobs. And she’s hit the ground running, what two weeks ago Nancy? Could you wave at everybody? Hello! Can we welcome Nancy? (Applause) So Nancy is really drilling into the budget and trying to see where we are and what the implications are for the various scenarios we’ve got in front of us. One scenario we do know is that we’re down enrollment this year and so I’ve asked her to calculate how much does that cost us being down in enrollment. It looks like it’s a little over $2 million per 100 students in gross terms; about $2.3 million per 100 students in gross revenues. That’s a lot. And we’re down how many, 700 students?

**E. Weldy:** For this fall in comparison to last year it was between 300 and 400.

**D. Baker:** 300 and 400 students.

**E. Weldy:** (off mic) So we’re talking between $6 million or $7 million.

**D. Baker:** Yeah between $6 million and $7 million down. That’s a hit to the budget. We don’t know what’s going to happen with the pension situation because, if it goes into the courts, we don’t know how long it’s gonna take in the courts and we don’t know what impact that’s going to have on the state budget. And then I’ve already mentioned that the income tax is gonna be rolled back to three percent from five percent and we’ll lose billions of dollars there and that could lead to, if nothing else happens, maybe an eight percent budget reduction if that was spread like peanut butter across all the state agencies. So we’re in a bit of an uncertain fiscal future if we just look at those external factors and I’m asking her to model some of those issues.

On the flip side, there are a bunch of programs that we need to invest in that are bursting at the seams. There are capital issues that need to be addressed across the university. There are your salaries and wages that we need to address sooner rather than later. And so I’m asking her to model all those. I’ll have a lot more confidence in moving forward on those kinds of issues if we can see our retention and our recruitment activities turn. Eric’s given a description here on the many things that are underway in that regard and I think we’re starting to see some positive momentum but I would call on all of us to continue to work hard on recruitment and retention. We can affect next year’s retention today and the rest of the school year, you know, by how we reach out and how we help our students and how we help them succeed. And that’s the morally right thing to do and it helps the university be more fiscally viable. So I would just say: Let’s keep all thinking about that and in our daily activities and programming that we need to do and how we treat people and help the students succeed.

So I’m going to ask her to continue to model that and see what we can do so we can allocate
some money going forward. I’ve asked her to put together a budget planning and budget process and you’re meeting with the committee shortly? Friday with the budget planning and space, resource, space and budget, yeah okay, that one. Is Paul here? Are you ready for her?

**P. Carpenter:** I think so. Is she ready for us?

**D. Baker:** Yes, she is. So I look forward to that collaboration. We really want to have an open and transparent budget. We want to see how much money we’ve got. We want to see how we can allocate it and how we can actually enhance our revenues over time to do the stuff we want to do to fulfill our mission. So I’m excited about having Nancy here and excited for the committee to work with her. Stay tuned on all that.

I’m going to say a few of those words to the trustees tomorrow. We have a Board of Trustees meeting tomorrow and I have an agenda item on there to kind of lay out where we are fiscally and some of these needs that we’ve got right in front us including your salaries. But we need to make sure our balance sheet is strong so that we can make allocations and not then have to then, a few months later, pull back on those. I don’t want to do that and have to lay people off because we made a decision a couple of months before.

Let’s really work hard on all those issues and we’ll come back with a budget model, a budget plan this spring. In that regard, have any of you participated with the delegation that’s here on campus this week from China? Yeah, pretty exciting group. Thank you for doing that. We’ve got 22 executives from two universities in China. They’re private universities owned by the same person actually and the presidents of those schools and their senior leadership teams are here. And they’re very impressed with all of you; impressed with the faculty, staff and students. At lunch today we had students and industry partners speak about all the internship opportunities that are occurring and I think it blew them away. I think they are very impressed by what all of you are doing. So thank you and I think this could be an interesting partnership to have their students here and our faculty and students go there. It might be an enriching opportunity for teaching and research and cool opportunity. That’s one example of many things we’re going to try to be working on to affect our enrollments and the balance sheet at the university.

And since Nancy’s here, I can openly, in front of her, say that we’re searching for a chief financial officer. She’s doing a great job, but our deal with her is that this is an interim term-based position. And she’s on loan to us, and she’ll be done in the fall. And we’re starting a chief financial officer search. I’ve asked Bill Nicklas to chair that. Bill is here in the back corner. Hello, Bill. And we’ve got the committee put together. We also have a provost and executive vice president search underway and I’m chairing that with Alan, so thank you, Alan. And that committee is appointed. Do you want to say anything about how we’re doing on that?

**A. Rosenbaum:** Only that we finally have the committee finalized and that we’re meeting with the search firm. We’ve contracted with a search firm, and we’ll be meeting with them on December 11. And that will be our first meeting to develop the position description, talk about the advertising plan, and the time line. The search firm is confident that we’ll be able to get a good provost in place by July 1. Despite what feels like the lateness of the start of the search, they are very confident that we are on schedule. They’ve also suggested that there will be an on-campus forum where all the different constituent groups will get a chance to interview the final candidates so you’ll be able to have an opportunity to do that. We’re on schedule.
D. Baker: Right and same search firm’s helping us with the CFO search. We actually got a great package deal with them and I think it’s going to be a great search.

Anne Kaplan is also chairing the CIO search. We’ve got a bunch of candidates in the hopper and then we’ll be reviewing those on what day? On the 20th. Okay, so we’re making good progress there. Any questions on any of those searches or any of those issues? Okay, that’s the report.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

D. Baker: Let’s move on to the Consent Agenda I guess is the consent agenda. Yep, it’s ex’ed out here.

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Sonya Armstrong – report – Page 3

D. Baker: Reports from councils, boards and standing committees. Sonya you’re on first, the FAC to the IBHE.

S. Armstrong: Hi. So I just have three updates from the last meeting on November 15. One of them is now completely irrelevant and that is the first one that the public universities caucus was attempting to draft something in advance of the December 3 session. That’s now a moot point.

The other two updates, one is on PARCC assessment which will be a major topic going forward this year for the FAC. I do have a PowerPoint if anyone is interested in looking at the PowerPoint that was presented to us during the session. I can certainly share that perhaps through e-mail or Blackboard. [Website provided below.]

http://www.isbe.state.il.us/assessment/parcc.htm?col3=open#CollapsiblePanel3

Also we did get a brief update on the IBHE executive director search and that is going on right now as a matter of fact. So I should be able to report something at the January meeting. I can entertain any questions.


B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Dan Gebo and Andy Small – report – Page 4

D. Baker: The BOT Academic Affairs report, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee is a written only report today.


D. Baker: The Board of Trustees Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee, Alan.

A. Rosenbaum: Essentially you have the report. There were no terrifically exciting action items. The bulk of the meeting was devoted to presentations which were fairly interesting. One was
from the WTC Consulting report on our IT services and they made a number of suggestions and also highlighted some of the things that were going well for our IT services.

There was a presentation by Steve Cunningham talking about how the budget is built and most present, including the Board of Trustees, found that to be very interesting in that that’s not something that we heard about before. And so people viewed that as a sign of the transparency of the new administration. And so we were pleased to see that and to also learn about how the budget is created. Of course, it’s getting harder and harder to build a budget I assume, isn’t it? But anyway, so that was good and then there were, as you can see, a number of other presentations as well. It was a fairly long meeting. Any questions on anything related to the FFO committee?

**D. Baker:** All right. Thank you.

**D. BOT Legislation and External Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Rosita Lopez – report – Pages 6-7**

**D. Baker:** Next the Board of Trustees Legislation and External Affairs Committee. Rosita, are you presenting that?

**R. Lopez:** Yes, thank you. Am I on? Okay good. Just to start out on a little more positive note, Chair Murer, she commended our president and his administrative team for their involvement with the community and the impact, the positive impact, it has had and has been well received by the community including a lot of involvement by Mayor Rey and that’s been very good.

**D. Baker:** I’ve appreciated his support as well. He’s been very positive reaching out to us.

**R. Lopez:** I think I’ve never seen the mayor, any mayor, around here as much as I have so that’s been really good that he’s been that involved. I’m not going to go into the pension reform information. I think Steve has done an excellent job of that and has brought us a little more, you know, up to date as to where we are right now. Chair Murer did ask for a summary of what the climate in Washington is right now in terms of the fiscal cliff, if you will. And so, you know, the word is that we are not yet there but we are dealing with dwindling funds. Nothing new, we know that it’s a challenging time.

Kathy Buettner talked a little bit about Medicaid extension uncertainties, Illinois borrowing more, increasing taxes, God this is depressing. So everybody knows this already. We know what’s going on, but here’s something else. President Baker, you stated that this is true for most states and we know that there are states with crumbling infrastructures and health reform issues and we know that we are not the only state dealing with these kinds of challenges. We are in a difficult corner, but I think I like this best of all. We must control our own fiscal destiny. So we’ve got to come up with, you know.

And again, the China visit, that being a good opportunity for us to increase enrollment. Then as far as the federal congressional report, Kathy shared that our federal congressional relations are in transition. But relationship building continues and this is something that our president, Kathy, and Lisa Freeman have been working on closely.
I think that there was something that I do want to share with everyone and it was Lisa’s presentation. Lisa Freeman’s presentation on the closure of government and the effect that had on our researchers and on the Antarctic project and the negative effect that will never be able to be recovered and the effect that has on their life, their career, their everything was just – there’s no way to even talk about that. It’s a tragedy and it’s something that we hope something better comes along but it was an opportunity lost forever because of our fiscal issues. Meeting adjourned at 12:15 and are there any questions? Thank you.

D. Baker: Thanks, Rosita. In that regard, I’ve sent a letter to our federal legislators encouraging them to work on a compromised budget plan so we don’t face this again and disrupt all of your good work and we’ll see what happens. The glimmers seem to be there, people don’t want to go over the cliff again, but we’ll have to see what prevails in DC. In fact, I was there this week and just got back this morning and there seemed to be some optimism in the air this time around there will be some kind of compromise. Okay, thank you.

E. BOT Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs Committee – Deborah Haliczer and Alan Rosenbaum – report – Page 8

D. Baker: Alan’s next with the Board of Trustees Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs Committee.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, this committee, as you know, is a relatively new committee and, if you read my report, you know that this was really a meeting in which not much happened. The agenda consisted of an internal audit update presented by Danielle Schultz from our audit office, but she couldn’t really talk about any of the contents of the audit so all we learned was that there were 18 of them, whatever that means. Steve, can you tell us a little bit about what an audit means? I mean, what does that mean that we’ve had 18 audits? I never really understood that.

S. Cunningham: Well, Danielle is referring to the internal audit process and she has an audit schedule every year that she prepares. It’s authorized by the president actually and it goes through a wide range of our different administrative systems ranging from Accounting to IT, Human Resources across the university. I think she reported that she completed 18 or was on schedule for 18.

D. Baker: And if I might just mention that every university or every corporation has internal audits and they don’t have enough horsepower to do every budget in every office every year. You’d just spend all your time doing audits and not doing your work. So you sample. You have an audit schedule and you rotate around the university and you check different places, so she’s in the middle of 18 of those rotating around.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, so we’ve had 18. Does anyone have any questions about that?

D. Baker: Great.

F. BOT Ad Hoc Committee on Sponsored Research Activity and Technology Transfer – Greg Waas – report – Pages 9-10

D. Baker: All right Board of Trustees Ad Hoc Committee on Sponsored Research Activity
Technology Transfer, Greg.

**G. Waas:** Yes, the Sponsored Research Activity and Technology Transfer Ad Hoc Committee was established by Board of Trustees, John Butler, Chair, to basically enhance the board’s understanding of our research activities and technology transfer activities that take place on campus.

This first meeting was devoted primarily to a presentation by Provost Lisa Freeman during which she gave a broad overview of some of the issues that we face in these areas. As you can see from my report, Dr. Freeman provided a snapshot of our current status regarding sponsored research activity on campus. She reviewed some of the emerging issues regarding external funding and our efforts to increase our share of that funding. She touched on a variety of administrative factors that [static on mic] efficient sponsored research and technology transfer. And she also discussed some of the national trends regarding technology transfer and technology transfer offices at public universities.

The idea I think is that, although this first meeting was a broad kind of overview of these areas, future meetings will be much more focused and allow for greater depth of analysis.

**D. Baker:** Questions of Greg or Lisa? Anybody? Lisa, you want to say anything? No. Okay, we’re good. Thank you, Greg.

**G. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – report – Page 11**

**D. Baker:** Board of Trustees, Alan.

**A. Rosenbaum:** I’ve really got a lot of uninteresting reports today, so I apologize for that. This was a special meeting of the Board of Trustees and the main purpose of the meeting was to authorize the hiring of the search firms for the provost and the CFO. So it was important to get those searches started and so they called a special meeting so we didn’t have to wait until the December 5, tomorrow’s meeting, to have those approved.

They also approved the appointment of Nancy Suttenfeld who you were just introduced to a few moments ago.

The other item has to do with the Illinois High School Association football championships which were held here at NIU over Thanksgiving, I believe, Thanksgiving break. Apparently, we are going to alternate between the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign and every other year we’ll have it here. And this was to assign the ticket revenue from that event to the Illinois High School Association. Apparently, the funds that support this come from a fundraising effort by the DeKalb County Community Foundation. So that’s not anything that, I believe, is costing the university any money and that’s why we assigned the ticket revenues back to the Illinois High School Association for the state football championships. Any questions about any of that? All right good. Tomorrow’s meeting, hopefully, will be more interesting.

**D. Baker:** Or not.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Right.
D. Baker: I’d actually like to recognize Bill Nicklas and, Bill, would you stand up? Bill worked diligently on the high school football championship.

B. Nicklas: I didn’t get in the games, though.

D. Baker: You didn’t play? Your eligibility is up. Bill, I know a number of other people in the community and in the university worked on it. Could you just say a little bit about what went into it because it was a big effort.

B. Nicklas: This will be a short report. I can only kneel for about a half a minute. It was a big volunteer event. We had several hundred volunteers and it was four game days on Friday, four game days on Saturday. So we had a lot of the full-time employees, the people who work for athletics, who work at the Convo Center, ticket takers, police officers, building service workers and many others who normally would participate on a home football game were doing it all day long. So it started at 7:00 in the morning, went until 10:00 or 11:00 at night. Some of you got to see it on TV. Some of you came out.

I think it showed NIU at its best. We were very welcoming and the early returns from the IHSA people are very positive. And, maybe just as important, the many players and coaches and family members and fans who came up by the busload and pick-up load have been blogging and sending us notes saying: Thank you so much for welcoming us and we look forward to seeing you again in two years because we have it every other year for ten years.

D. Baker: Yeah, thank you. And what a great opportunity for us to show off to potential students that might want to come here and show them all the great stuff here. I think they were blown away by the facilities and the people that they met and the welcoming community. So, thanks to everybody. Great example of the partnering between the university and the community and thanks for Bill’s leadership on that.

H. Academic Policy Committee – Sean Farrell, Chair – no report

I. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Paul Carpenter, Chair – report – Pages 12-13


P. Carpenter: Thank you. I’m just going to make a couple of observations about the report. There’s the detail up there. If you have any questions about that, I’d be happy to entertain them afterwards.

As an observation, I think the committee is very pleased this year with the amount of information that we’re being given relative to past years. We also got to hear the presentation, or at least the PowerPoint of it, from the Board of Trustees that Steve Cunningham shared with us. So we’re very encouraged by that and we’re looking forward to Friday’s meeting with Nancy Suttenfeld to talk about budget criteria. Some of the principles that are going to depend on how the budget’s put together in the future. With respect to that, I’d like to encourage everyone here to send on to me, or any other members of the committee, any ideas they have for criteria they’d
like to see. No promises that they’ll end up there, but at least, if we have those things on the table, we can form part of the conversation so please send those on. That will start this Friday and then will continue over, I hope, to our meeting on the following Wednesday with the president and the provost also in attendance as well. Tight timeline but please get that to us as soon as you can.

One last observation I’ll make: Steve Cunningham also presented some information about some conversations taking place about a development corridor between the campus and downtown on the east side. And the idea here is to try and build a greater sense of community. I know it’s in the early stages, but I don’t know if Steve has more to share about that right now or if that’s for a later date. But, other than that, that’s the report from Resource, Space and Budget.

D. Baker: Paul, I’ll just say it is in the early stages but it does look like there’s interest in the community and maybe local investors to see what might happen there to make kind of a cool college neighborhood.

P. Carpenter: Very good.

D. Baker: So it will be another way for the city and the university to participate and make a more welcoming environment for everybody.

J. Rules and Governance Committee – Jeff Kowalski, Chair – no report

K. University Affairs Committee – Bill Pitney, Chair

1. Student Grievance Policy – Status Report


B. Pitney: Thank you. Am I on?

D. Baker: You’re on, you’re hot.

B. Pitney: As many of you are aware, last year the University Affairs Committee worked to draft a student grievance policy. This draft was presented as a status update last April in order to get some feedback and hear concerns from faculty and staff. That item was carried over to this year’s committee. And so, on behalf of the University Affairs Committee, I’m presenting a status update on that issue.

What we’ve constructed thus far is a draft article that is consistent with other articles in the bylaws in that the grievance policy is intended to be consistent with the preamble of the NIU Constitution. That preamble identifies that a respect for intrinsic dignity of each member of the university community, of which obviously our students are a part, both by the university in itself and by each member of that community as a basic cornerstone governing all community activities. And so with that as our lens, we have created a policy that should promote the values inherent also in the American Association of the University Professors’ statement of principles on academic freedom and tenure. That is to say that faculty and staff have an obligation to promote the common good, pursue a free search of truth and to protect the student freedom and
learning. The pursuit of these values shall not be cause for a grievance especially if conducted in the individual’s discipline or is a member of a learned profession.

Students, however, and this is our view as a committee, have a right to expect that these values be demonstrated throughout the university in their interactions. That is our base. We’ve modeled the grievance procedure off of Article 11 which is our faculty grievance process, yet with some modifications. The procedures provide the opportunity for a student to seek resolution in the event that informal procedures fail to address the issues. Our thought about what constitutes a grievance is that it should include a good faith claim of incivility, misuse of authority, intimidation, retaliation or professionally inappropriate acts or decisions by a faculty member or staff of the university that adversely affects that student in a substantive way.

We have viewed thus far several exceptions of the grievance policy. Exceptions would include, for example, things that are currently covered under other policies; for example, discrimination or harassment, appeals of disciplinary decisions and grades. We’ve got current policies in place to address those. So those, obviously, wouldn’t be part of any student grievance process. Also, we’re drafting in the policy language to note that the procedures would not pertain to the level of academic rigor that’s expected of all of our students in the classroom. So we wanted to articulate that in this status update report.

We also wanted to make clear that, consistent with last year’s draft, we’re still viewing it as a requirement that students undergo initiating an informal grievance process by addressing a faculty or staff member directly and/or his or her immediate supervisor. If the informal process fails then to have a mechanism in place that students could take in order to file a formal grievance.

Thus far, what we’ve constructed is a process whereby a student’s complaint would be channeled to a student grievance committee. The student grievance committee would consist of four members from four groups including a faculty, operating staff, supportive professional staff, and students. We also believe it’s necessary to have a designee from the vice president of administration on this committee as well.

Once that committee would receive a complaint, our thought is the chair would assemble a grievance panel consisting of at least one faculty member and student; two individuals also from the respondent’s employment classification as well as a designee from the vice president of administration. We view that panel reviewing the complaint, obtaining further information as necessary, and also – in collaboration with administration and compliance – collect more information to make an informed decision about the complaint.

At this point we’re also viewing this process that we may need to illicit more information, verify facts. And, therefore, imbedded in our process is this idea that we could have a preliminary hearing and that process would be consistent with how it’s articulated in Article 11. Ultimately, the panel would have to make a decision and we see this panel having an outcome, one of four outcomes essentially:

1. A denial of the grievance meaning the grievance would not be sustained.
2. Referring the matter to Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources. This would be in instances where we discover that it’s a matter of sexual harassment, it’s a matter of another issue
that we’ve already got a process in place to deal with that.

3. A third outcome could potentially be referring the matter to mediation.

4. A fourth outcome would be referring the matter to the faculty or staff member supervisor and the appropriate administrative authority with some actions suggested by the grievance panel. In those instances, the unit or division director would work with Human Resources to act as necessary.

This is the concise, Reader’s Digest version of the draft of the article we’ve gotten so far. There are certainly training and instruction needs for the grievance committee and or a grievance panel that would need to be addressed and so there are certainly going to be some spin-off tasks necessary to address in the near future. We also recognize that some additional dialog is still necessary within the committee. I’m working on some additional language. We’re meeting again in late January and we hope to have a draft of an article for first reading at the February meeting. So that’s our status update. I’m happy to entertain any questions.

D. Baker: Questions or comments from anyone? Sounds like you’re working hard.

B. Pitney: We’re getting it done.

D. Baker: Okay, thanks so much.

L. Student Association – Jack Barry, President – report

D. Baker: Well, Jack, you’re up but first let me say thanks for working so closely with me this year. It’s been fun to work you and the senate and we really appreciate your leadership and congratulations on getting through the semester. And, James, congratulations on your presidency of the senate and I guess there was an election, huh? Are you going to talk about that? Go for it, you’re on.

J. Barry: Right before the meeting started I got word from our director of athletics, Paul Julion, that the MAC Championship just sold out for Friday, so that’s exciting. We also have five student busses going down so thanks to SILD and Media Relations for helping us make that happen. This past Monday night, Rebecca Clark our director of academics and government affairs, hosted a Meet-the-Chief night down in the Huskie Den where students had the opportunity to come meet the NIU Police Chief Tom Phillips and bowl with him. So that was kind of a fun experience. We got to get to know him on a personal level which was nice.

The Sunday before Thanksgiving, Dillon Domke was elected to be the new Speaker of the Senate so he will take over for James in a week when James walks at graduation. And then Kaliah Smith, this past Monday and Tuesday, hosted the faculty advisors down in CLB, which is a good way to have our student leaders connect with their faculty advisors as well as others. That was good to see. And then our working groups are up and running and then, believe it or not, we have our winter break coming up right around the corner and then our retreat. I can’t believe how fast this semester went and we’re looking forward to getting back at it next semester and I yield.

D. Baker: Fantastic, thanks. James, do you want say anything, reflect on the year?

J. Zanayed: Just touch on everything I’ve done here as a senate. This university has given me
such a great opportunity and I thank you all for it. Not necessarily just this year but for the past year that I’ve been speaker and all the other opportunities that I’ve had. I’m really grateful for it and hope one day that I can give back to the university after I am done. So thank you all and I hope to see you down the road.

**D. Baker:** All right. Thank you. (applause) Congratulations on your graduation. I look forward to shaking your hand.

**M. Operating Staff Council – Andy Small, President – report – walk-in**

**D. Baker:** Operating Staff Council, Andy.

**A. Small:** Good afternoon, everyone. I’ve asked Pat to put a picture up here. This was our forum that we had here this past month. Unfortunately, the result of this forum was not what we hoped for, but we certainly had the opportunity to address some of our legislators. Just quickly identifying some of these people here, the people on the stage there, you might see the good looking gentleman standing up, I think that’s Alan over there at the far left. He mediated the conversation. He sometimes had to calm the crowd a little bit because it was an exciting day there at the forum. Then Mr. Cunningham, we appreciate your help with that. Then, Jim Lockard, of course, one of our advocates for the pension reform.

Then we get into our elected officials. Mr. Demmer who I believe voted for the legislation. Then there’s Senator Syverson who I believe voted for the legislation. Then there is Representative Pritchard who voted against the legislation and Representative Fortner who voted against the legislation. Not to identify how they voted or anything in case you want to vote this fall and express your opinion on that.

But it was a great day. I want to thank Alan. I want to thank my co-partner, Deb here. When we put this forum on and everyone who attended, we appreciate that support and hopefully we’ll have these types of forums in the future.

Moving on, I also would like to take the opportunity to encourage everyone, we have our Outstanding Service Award for our Civil Service employees coming up. It will be in February is the deadline, I believe February 28. I’d like to acknowledge someone. Amy, would you acknowledge yourself back there? Amy Polson has chaired our Outstanding Service Awards Selection Committee for over a decade. That is commitment! (Applause) She’s done a great job – an Outstanding Service Award winner herself. She’s done a great job for us and we truly appreciate all of the help that Amy has given us in that process. Thank you, Amy.

Last, but not least, I received a report from the State University Civil Service System. Back in January we had an audit. It’s a once every other year audit. It comes from our Civil Service System out of the Champaign Urbana area. And they come up and they take a look and identify positions of Civil Service employees versus Supportive Professional Staff employees. What we try and do is make sure that everybody gets classified appropriately. That’s very important for all of us to do that. Unfortunately, for this particular audit due to some things that Dr. Cunningham and myself have discussed, this was “our worst audit ever” as far as Civil Service employees not being put in the proper classification. So we’ve got some work to do on this particular audit and we will make sure that we will try and do that. What that does is, and I’m expressing my own
opinion here, but what that does is it limits the promotional opportunities for Civil Service employees because some of these positions are being filled by Supportive Professional Staff employees. So it limits the opportunity for promotion. It also limits the salary ranges of some of the opportunities for our Civil Service employees. We truly want to make sure that we’re doing the right thing with our Civil Service employees and filling the jobs appropriately and I will look forward to working with the administration and HR to that end. I will entertain any questions if there are any or if there aren’t any, I’ll entertain those too, and I appreciate the help that Dr. Cunningham has given us on this audit.

D. Baker: Anybody?

N. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Deborah Haliczer, President – report – Pages 14-15

D. Baker: All right, Deborah you’re up with SPS Council.

D. Haliczer: Okay, the book end to this issue of SPS and Civil Service employment has been an awkward, delicate issue of concern by many both Civil Service employees and SPS employees and our two councils and our membership are very collaborative with one another over what is a complicated issue. We are working, both councils with Human Resources, about the issue. In the last SPS newsletter, I sent off an article that was informative to our members about some of the differences between SPS and Civil Service employment because people were calling both of us and HR and others saying, “Oh my goodness, I’m going to be reclassified from my SPS position to a Civil Service position,” and that means all kinds of things which were not accurate depictions of the reality. So we wrote an article from SPS Council that tried to clarify those things. That being said, I’ve gotten calls from faculty, as well, asking about this controversial issue. “Are you really going to be re-classifying my people?” And most people don’t understand we’re really dealing in the realm of rumors, misinformation in many instances, and so please ask first before you let anyone panic and we will try and clarify those issues and we’ll be working with the Civil Service system and with Human Resources on that. You will be hearing more from both of us on the whole issue.

You see my SPS Council report. There are just a couple of things that I wanted to highlight. One of the things that our council has been working on, as well as other councils, is morale enhancement and community development. We know that our – when we develop community we are in a safer community and, when we develop community, it enhances morale. Even if we can’t give us more money, how we treat each other makes a difference and so we’ve arranged all kinds of things.

One of the positive things I get to report is – thanks to my nudging and reminding – we have the highest number of nominations for the SPS Presidential Award in at least eight years. And so I’m so happy that many people stepped up to look at their colleagues and say, “Yes, I’m going to nominate,” because though there are only four awards for our award and for the Operating Staff Award, what we know, especially those of us who’ve won that award, the most important thing is being nominated, being recognized by people. So I encourage everyone to think about every way that we can of expressing appreciation, whether its nominating, currently we’re soliciting nominations from the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women for the Outstanding Women Students Award. And so, for students who are going to graduate this year, please
consider nominating students. Recognize students, recognize colleagues, recognize staff, nominate professors for the awards that are available because that makes a difference in people’s sense of connection and morale and recognition for all the work that you all do. So thank you for all you do.

D. Baker: Thank you, Deborah. Great sentiment, I appreciate you saying that. Any questions for her on that issue?

O. University Benefits Committee – Deborah Haliczer, Chair; Therese Arado, FS-Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession Liaison – report – Pages 16-17

D. Baker: Well you’re up one more time with the Benefits Committee.

D. Haliczer: Okay the other Haliczer hat. Okay the University Benefits Committee, Therese Arado and I make this report. You have the written report and Andy has already reported on the pension forum and what was disturbing to all of us was the intensity of emotion. It was surprising to some people, not to most of us, that people are terribly distressed at threats to pensions and the intensity was reflected. We did, of course the three of us, make sure that our legislators knew that people felt intensely about it so no one was surprised at some of the comments that were made. The result was not what we wanted. But pensions remain one of the biggest issues for the Benefits Committee and we want to thank, as usual, Steve Cunningham and President Baker for all of their efforts, the statements that you make. Public statements make a difference. Even if they don’t make a difference in the vote, they certainly reinforce the fact that our leadership is fighting for us so thank you all for all you do.

Second of all, what can we do about this? Let me get to that next. One more piece of information that you need to know is that, if you are insured and if you are insuring dependents on state health insurance, in January we are going to begin a dependent audit. HR is going to be sending out clarification and information about what you need to get, what sort of documentation you need. So the Benefits Committee is pushing HR, oh dear my office, to make sure that we give a lot of information about the dependent audit.

Finally, what can we do about this pension problem? We had the Annuitant’s Association holiday luncheon today and we were reminded by Jim Lockard and our colleagues that our contributions and memberships make a great deal of difference in the defense of pensions. If you are not already a member of the NIU Annuitants Association, I brought a stack of application forms. $34 a year is less than the coffee you drink in a month. So do sign up through payroll deduction or a check as a current member. We still at NIU have the highest number of actively employed members of the Annuitants Association and I’m really proud of that because it’s everyone’s effort. But not everyone has joined and we have 3,500 employees, thereabouts, and only about 450 actively employed members. Please sign up and ask me about it and I can give you more information.

The next thing that Jim Lockard asked me to do and the University Benefits Committee, is suggesting that you consider, we can’t tell you to do it, but as a result of the pension vote, the Annuitant’s Association has started a fund for raising funds for fighting the legislative action. So, if you are at all inclined to contribute to the Annuitants Association Action Fund, ask me about
that and I can give you information. Okay? End of political statement.

D. Baker: Questions for Deb?

A. Rosenbaum: Not a question, but I’d also like to add that those of you who missed the pensions forum, and it was quite an exciting event, you can see a video of it. It is posted on the Faculty Senate homepage. And, if you go to the right hand column, there’s a link to the forum and you will have to sign in with your Groupwise ID and password. Once you sign in, though, you will be able to watch it in its entirety. And it is filmed in beautiful high definition, so it’s a high quality video and you’ll be able to enjoy the whole forum all over again if you’ve seen it and for the first time if you haven’t.

D. Haliczer: Thanks, Alan. The other place it’s posted is on the Supportive Professional Staff Council’s website so there are two routes. Again, you do have to sign in with your Novel ID and password. And, if you can’t get to it, come talk to me and I’ll make sure you get access to viewing it.

A. Rosenbaum: And we are gonna have the DVDs available in January.

D. Baker: Are you sending them out as Christmas presents or holiday presents?

A. Small: Was the audio censored on the DVD?

A. Rosenbaum: Not that I know of.

A. Small: Excellent, excellent. You should watch it.

D. Haliczer: We have freedom of speech.

A. Small: You’ll get to hear it in all its glory.

D. Baker: That’s quite a teaser.

P. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abhijit Gupta, Chair – no report

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
   NIU Bylaws Article 16.3 proposed revision – Page 18

D. Baker: All right, Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee, no report today. I don’t believe we have any unfinished business so that moves on to new business and I’ll ask Alan to talk about Campus Security and Environmental Quality issues. I think some of you have to leave too. Okay Alan.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, basically this is a bylaw revision and the Campus Security and
Environmental Quality Committee – you can see what the definition of that committee is and what’s involved with it. You can also see the changes. So anything that is bolded is an addition. Anything that is struck through is being removed. Some of this, a little bit of it is just cleaning up the language but there are also some substantive changes. One is the addition of the vice president for public safety and community relations who is now Bill Nicklas, as you know. It made a lot of sense that he should be involved in this committee both in terms of providing the committee with its agenda and also in having the committee advise him. So we added Bill to the committee.

We cleaned up some of the titles of people whose titles have changed. And then the other substantive change is that this committee, according to the bylaw, advises the president. We added “or his or her designee” to give the president the option of having that committee report, let’s say, to the vice president for public safety instead of having to report to the president. So it will be the president’s option either way, so we’ve given that option in there.

So you can see the language. This is a first reading. We can discuss it and then we can vote on it at our next meeting. So does anyone have any questions about any of this that we might be able to answer or comments? Nobody? Nobody has any problems with this? Okay we can have a motion to waive the second reading if that’s the case, otherwise. Correct, Ferald?

F. Bryan: For a three-fourths vote.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay well that should be easy enough. Let’s give it a try. I’ll make a motion that we waive the second reading on this and go straight to a vote. Is there a second?

S. Farrell: Second.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, any discussion? Okay so, Pat, clickers. If you press 1 you’re voting to – you’re saying no second reading; we’ll go right to a vote. If you vote 2, it means we’ll hold off for a second reading until our next meeting. So if you want to vote on it today you press 1. You want to vote on it at our next meeting, press 2; and if you want to abstain from the vote press 3. We’re all set? Vote. Anyone need more time? Okay close the voting.

YES – 43
NO – 4
ABSTAIN – 1

A. Rosenbaum: Overwhelming so we can go straight to a vote. Is that correct, Ferald?

F. Bryan: It’s a two-thirds vote required to pass.

A. Rosenbaum: Right, two-thirds of all voting members, so we need 41 votes, right? We have the three-fourths to waive, we need two-thirds to pass, so we need 41. Do we have enough people? Yes we do. Okay so I want to make the motion that we adopt the changes that are in the agenda to the Article 16.3 Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee. We need a second.

D. Domke: Second.
A. Rosenbaum: Okay, any discussion? All right, 1 yes, 2 no, 3 abstention. If you vote 1, you’re voting to approve the new wording and the various changes in Article 16.3. If you vote 2, you’re saying no; 3 is an abstention. Are we ready, Pat? Vote. Anyone need more time? Close the voting. Okay that’s the new vote. That carries correct? We needed 41 we have 42. Okay that’s it thank you.

D Baker: Wow that was efficient. Congratulations.

YES – 42
NO – 2
ABSTAIN – 3

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

D. Baker: I jumped over or I didn’t get to, I’m sorry, any comments or questions from the floor. Anybody have comments or questions this evening?

X. INFORMATION ITEMS

D. Baker: Okay, hearing none I note Item X information items.

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee
C. Minutes, Athletic Board
D. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
E. Minutes, Committee on Advanced Professional Certification in Education
F. Minutes, Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
G. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
H. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience
I. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum
J. Minutes, General Education Committee
K. Minutes, Honors Committee
L. Minutes, Operating Staff Council
M. Minutes, Supportive Professional Staff Council
N. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council
O. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
P. Minutes, University Benefits Committee

XI. ADJOURNMENT

D. Baker: And then I am open for a motion to adjourn.

M. Theodore: So moved.

D. Baker: Second. All in favor?

All: Aye.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.