The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. Marc Falkoff and David Gorman were thanked for serving as subcommittee chairs, and Aimee Prawitz was thanked for serving as the APC assistant chair. David Gorman and Andrew Otieno were also thanked for serving on the UAP. The provost also appreciates everyone who has agreed to serve next year (2011-2012): David Gorman and Marc Simpson will serve as the UAP representatives, Marc Falkoff and Aimee Prawitz will serve as APC subcommittee chairs, and Lisa Baumgartner and Geoff Gordon will serve as subcommittee chairs-in-training. The subcommittee chairs-in-training will become subcommittee chairs in 2012-2013.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of March 28, 2011, and the motion passed unanimously.

The next item on the agenda is the follow-up report for the B.G.S. program. The B.G.S. program has had a series of follow-up reports since its last program review in 2007. For this follow-up report the program was asked to report on the implementation of an assessment plan and the development of an advisory committee. The University Assessment Panel (UAP) reviewed the assessment plan on April 15. The plan contains direct and indirect methods, and the program will be getting feedback from the UAP regarding this plan. Since the plan has just been developed, there are no findings. An advisory committee has been developed, and college leaders who will work with the vice provost will serve on the advisory committee. The assessment plan has not been implemented and a long-term plan for the program has not been formulated.

A question was asked about enrollment growth, specifically growth among certain groups. Another question is whether the program can sustain further growth. Previously the APC reviewed a follow-up report on enrollment and enrollment patterns, and there were no issues with that report. Students find this program after they arrive on campus.

The off-campus students who enroll in this program have different credentials and they are looking to complete a baccalaureate degree. The flexibility of this program gives the students an opportunity to use as much of their course work from other institutions as possible. Some blended courses have been developed to serve these students. This program is not about students who are not successful in a major; it is about students who have multiple interests.

The B.G.S. will be reviewed again in 2014-2015, and these same types of questions are asked in the program review process. Given the fact that we have an assessment plan that needs to be implemented and an advisory committee that needs to meet to discuss future plans, perhaps the upcoming program
review cycle would be the time that we would look specifically at our concerns related to these issues. A motion was made to receive the report, and the motion passed unanimously.

The budget priorities item is the next agenda item. The budget information distributed with the agenda lays out the top three program priorities requests for NIU (teacher preparation in STEM areas; web-based, off-campus baccalaureate completion programs for community college students; and nursing and clinical laboratory sciences education) and how these priorities fit with the IBHE Public Agenda and the imperatives of NIU’s Strategic Plan. All of these priorities have been brought forward for the last five years; it is unlikely that we will see money for these priorities this year. The request for nursing and clinical laboratory sciences education was paired down a little because the university did some internal reallocation to admit more nursing students; nursing has a waiting list of three times the number of students it accepts.

The budget situation is so unknown at this point that it is difficult to talk about. We will probably have budget cuts next year; probably around 10 percent. The deans have been told if they can stop spending now to do so, and these funds will be used to offset next year’s cuts. Pensions are an issue too. We can’t make up what the state has not paid into the pension systems.

The APC turned to the performance-based funding agenda item. Pay-for-performance has been voted on by both houses, and now the two bills need to be reconciled into one bill. Between now and 2013 the legislature will try to define pay-for-performance. There have been questions asked about F.T.E., degrees, and enrollment. Now they are looking more at student success. Retention and graduation rates will be big issues. There are some alternatives we have talked about. When you look at graduation rates, the IPEDS data only looks at first-time, full-time freshmen. When we include our transfer students in these data, we look good. An alternative to retention might be to look at the College Portrait success progress (how many students are still in school somewhere or graduated from somewhere). These data also look good; the four year graduation rate is 86 percent, and the six year graduation rate is 80 percent. All of these data would be broken down by demographics. Course completion and productivity are also starting to be discussed.

NIU submits a report on programs that have been eliminated to the IBHE; we do this as a matter of course. When we eliminate a program we talk about the resources being reallocated. We will be asked to look at all of our programs, and those serving a few students will be asked to look at the viability of the program. Faculty workload is being looked at too. We are currently working on developing a faculty workload policy.

Alums’ and employers’ satisfaction, earning potential, and how often programs are reviewed in relation to employability are also being looked at. The legislature is also talking about asking questions like “what is the university niche?” and list your five programs that you plan to cut. They also are looking at licensure and certification pass rates, which we do pretty well on. About two-thirds of our programs have 100 percent pass rates on licensure and certification examinations, and if you look at a three-year period, we have about an 86 percent pass rate. Our course completion rate is 91 percent, but what is the target? They are also looking at discipline specific information.

About half of the states have adopted the Complete College America to measure their performance. We are hearing the same things at the national level that we are hearing from the state legislature. There are some states that have been doing this for a long time. Who knows what pay-for-performance will look like in Illinois?
Right now 60 percent of our budget comes from tuition dollars, and we are competing for students with proprietary and other institutions. We need to demonstrate to the legislature and to our students the value of the baccalaureate goals. We have to do well what we say we are doing well. We need to capture how much of this involves critical thinking, communication, etc. This needs to be quantified more than just a grade.

On May 6 from 10 until noon Dr. David Shupe, who is with eLumen, will be doing a presentation on measuring learning outcomes. He will discuss measuring how students are doing and how we are keeping track of these data.

An update on the Strategic Plan was presented. We are currently finishing up phase three of the Strategic Plan, and we are looking to move forward. A planning group has been established, and its primary charge is to look at what we have accomplished to date and goals and imperatives where we have not gone far enough. Then we will talk about a plan for the future and what new initiatives we should look at.

Distributed learning is the next item on the agenda. The Distributed Learning Task Force has four work groups: academic issues, infrastructure and technology, markets and demand, and sustainability and resource planning. A Steering Committee is looking at all of the information gathered by the work groups. Hopefully in the next month we will have a report that will show some direction that will be implemented next year.

The Degree Qualifications Profile document was discussed at the Higher Learning Commission annual meeting earlier this month and it relates to being able to define what is a college education. It talks about the value added of associate, baccalaureate, and graduate degrees and looks at ways to have common language to communicate the learning outcomes and differentiate learning outcomes among degree levels. This document is being given to you as a model to show the kinds of things that are being discussed at a national level and criteria for regional accreditation. Page 18 shows the degree profile matrix. Several levels of learning outcomes have been identified and there are different learning outcomes for different degree levels.

David Changnon provided an update on the Baccalaureate Review, which came out of the Strategic Planning process. We realized the general education program needed to be reviewed, and we needed to clearly articulate the learning outcomes to our students. Three goals came out of this process: critical thinking, communication, and creativity, and eight baccalaureate learning outcomes were developed. Now we need to articulate these learning outcomes to the campus community and implement these outcomes. An organizational structure had to be developed to move forward. Measureable outcomes need to be developed for general education. The lessons learned from this process are that we have to be patient, persistent, and communicate these learning outcomes to our students. A “culture of change” needs to be developed on this campus, and our shared governance process is going to work on implementation. Also, this is not just a general education fix; 40-50 percent of our students are transfer students who have already fulfilled the general education requirements before they come to our institution. The learning outcomes will appear in the 2011-2012 Undergraduate Catalog. In the future this information will need to be requested in the program review process.

The APC members were thanked for all of their tireless efforts this past year.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,