The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. Two handouts were distributed: an updated membership list and an updated follow-up report list. Alden presented the subcommittee chairs with certificates of appreciation.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of November 1, 2010, and the motion passed unanimously.

La Vonne Neal, dean of the College of Education, Connie Fox, associate dean of the College of Education; Paul Carpenter, chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education; and Jan Rintala, assistant chair of the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education were introduced.

The dean and the chair provided an overview of the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education. The college recognizes that the facilities need attending to, and the college and department look forward to working with the provost and his staff on these issues. The college is currently working on a strategic development plan that will address some of the issues raised by the subcommittee. The subcommittee report is very thorough, fair, and honest; it will help the department in the years to come.

Marc Falkoff presented the APC subcommittee report. It was interesting to learn about this department. Subcommittee B members were thanked for their assistance in reviewing this department.

There are several overlapping points that were made in the subcommittee report, which included resource issues and the number of faculty. Also, it was interesting to try and understand the employment options for graduates. This department has seen a huge increase in enrollment. The gender and minority enrollment figures are good at the faculty level but a little weak at the program levels.

The departmental strengths include the diverse, distinguished faculty; the practical experiences provided for students; the strong internship program; and the strong practical emphasis in all of the programs. The students have practical experiences through the program’s clinics. The programs are designed to produce highly qualified graduates who are prepared to enter the workforce in a growing sector of the economy.
The first three discussion points revolve around resource issues. There is an insufficient number of tenured/tenure-track faculty to keep up with enrollment along with an over reliance on adjuncts. Enrollments have increased 50 percent since the last review period; Anderson Hall is no longer “fit for purpose” and is in a deteriorating state of repair. When Anderson Hall was built, it was a state-of-the-art facility for physical education lecture-based classes. Now the department has athletic training and exercise science programs, and Anderson Hall does not have adequate space for the number of students in the programs and the research requirements that need to be met. Also, the condition of the facilities may have an impact on obtaining external funding. The department does not have a doctoral degree, so graduate students do not teach lower-level courses. If GAs could teach lower-level courses, then faculty would have some release time to pursue research initiatives. When grants are applied for, the grant agencies look at facilities. The department has the equipment but does not have the space to conduct research. Some of the equipment has to be dismantled when the space needs to be used for other purposes. If the gym is being used for classes, we can’t use the equipment in the gym during class time. If we use the equipment in the gym, we can’t use the gym for classes. There is one laboratory that fits six people, and there are 60 students who need to use this laboratory. This laboratory is also used for faculty and student research. The department needs more adequate space. The college and department are looking at using the space differently but funding it ourselves makes this prohibited. The large increase in enrollment exacerbates the resource issues.

The B.S. Ed. in Physical Education is nationally recognized as a high-quality program. The enrollment in this program has increased, and students don’t have difficulty finding employment. This year it was harder for graduates to find employment than in past years. Some of the graduates may be substitute teaching. If you look at the ten year alumni data (1998-2008), 83 percent of the graduates reported that they were teaching. Some of the graduates went into the private sector as athletic trainers, while other graduates pursued further education. Other institutions are seeking clinical sites in NIU’s region for their students, and that makes it more difficult to find sites for our students. The program is consistently one of the highest credit-hour producers in the university, and the resources have not increased. Is there a concern about over producing graduates? There is some concern within the context of our region. The program does not have a handle on the age distribution of the current teaching staffs in this region, so it is difficult to know what number of retirements may be pending. This program has discussed moving to a limited admissions program. The college will have information to address this issue in the spring. Another challenge is the budget issues that are being experienced in the state.

Discussion points include the relatively low number of women enrolled in and graduating from this program. How come this number has dropped over the years, and what should the department do about the decrease? There has been a shift in emphasis; more men are involved with coaching after-school sports, which is one explanation for the lack of females in this program. Until it becomes common place for women to coach boys’ teams, the representation of women in this program probably won’t change. Should the program target women? This could shift again because of the greater emphasis on health and wellness. Men tend to enroll in the exercise science/performance area and women tend to pursue the exercise science/health and wellness area. The majority of the men in this program come in to the program saying they are going to be coaches and then they learn how to be teachers. The only place that girls would see women in sports was as elementary school physical education teachers, and now they don’t see this in the elementary school setting. Approximately 78 percent of all collegiate coaching staffs are male. Right now it is all the
department and programs can do to keep up with the increase in enrollment. Most of the physical education educators in this region are graduates of NIU. This is also true of the exercise science program.

The B.S. in Kinesiology has two emphases: athletic training and preventative and rehabilitative exercise science. Students are evenly split 50/50 in these two emphases. There are more women in the preventative and rehabilitative/exercise science emphasis, and there are more men in the athletic training emphasis.

The first-time test takers pass rate on the Board of Certification examination for athletic trainers is low. Maybe the program should re-sequence some of the courses students are taking. Does the low pass rate reveal something more essential that students are not getting in their coursework? In order to take the certification examination, students must finish the degree. The examination has three parts, and the students must pass all three parts to practice in this field. Graduates are not required to take all three parts of the exam at the same time, and sometimes it is difficult for them to schedule all three parts on the same day. The exam rates are reported on only those who take all three parts on the same day. Some of the course sequencing has been changed. When the program surveyed the field, it found out that students were not well prepared for the examination. Now the program is thinking about adding a course to help students who are going to take the examination. Do the low examination scores impact the reputation of the program? They don’t seem to; the scores are not reported to the accrediting body, and employers don’t seem to look at this information. Given the way these data are reported, it makes it hard for informative feedback. In order to be a practicing athletic trainer, graduates need to pass the examination. Some graduates pursue other career options, such as, physical therapists, physician assistants, etc. and opt not to take the certification examination. How will employers’ desire for graduates who already have practical experience be fulfilled given the inadequacies of the laboratory facilities? It is impossible to provide all the training for individuals going into the preventative and rehabilitative exercise science field; the proprietary agencies that hire graduates also provide in-house training. The feedback that the program has received from employers is that our students “hit the ground running.”

One recommendation for the future is to enhance the opportunities for real-world experiences for students. What would this entail? The program would have to work with certification agencies to get the agencies to offer their programs here at NIU. This would increase students’ costs. The courses could be offered on the weekends, and the program would have to entice faculty to deliver these courses. Another issue is that there are several certification bodies, and the certifications change depending on where graduates work. The program gives the students the knowledge base, and then the students can get certification down the road. Do the certifications add on to each other? No, there is no reciprocal certification. Students would go through the same didactic requirements, but they would still have to take the courses the certifying agencies require. Are individuals who are certified more likely to be hired? In some circumstances they are more likely to be hired. Also, a number of our graduates are hired by the companies where they did their internships.

This program relies heavily on adjuncts. This is only true in practica courses like cardiac rehabilitation. Beyond this, most of the adjuncts teach at the 200-level. The program is not adjunct heavy in the exercise science courses. Some of our regular faculty teach on an overload basis. Exercise science is not limited admissions, but athletic training is limited admissions. Core classes for exercise science are also core classes for physical education and athletic training students.
Half of the students in the M.S.Ed. in Kinesiology and Physical Education program are seeking teacher certification. What do students who are not seeking teacher certification do after graduating? It depends on the specialization they are in. There are four specializations in this program: adapted physical education, exercise physiology/fitness leadership, pedagogy and curriculum development in physical education, and sport and exercise psychology. Many students pursue a career in the exercise physiology/fitness industry, and others continue on into doctoral programs. Students in the sport and exercise psychology specialization work in the industry, and also some of these students pursue doctoral degrees. Approximately half a dozen graduates pursue doctoral studies each year. How well do the students seeking initial teacher certification do on the examination? There has never been a graduate student who has taken the certification examination and failed. Students in the master’s program seeking certification are leaving other careers and going into a new career. These students are at the same place as the undergraduate students; this is all new to them. Typically these students get certified when they are one to two courses short of completing the master’s degree. Students who are certified can be employed at the bachelor’s level, bachelor’s plus 30 hours level, or finish the master’s. These students are typically seven years older than the undergraduate population and they get hired first. A number of these students would like to pursue doctoral work, but there are no schools nearby that have a doctorate in physical education. Once students are employed, it is hard to get them to come back and finish the degree.

Discussion points include employment options for graduates of this program. The employment market for these graduates is the same as the employment market for the undergraduate students. There has been a large increase in enrollment in this program too. Several years ago the elementary education area discussed using the M.A.T. degree to attract individuals who are changing careers. This is now an all university degree, and the plan was that there would possibly be a physical education track within the M.A.T. The downside is that the degree is held at the provost level, and the department wouldn’t receive the credit hour production. The department doesn’t have the capacity to offer two programs. If the department chose to offer the M.A.T. specialization, the enrollment would drop in the M.S.Ed. program. If the faculty size was different, would this still be the case? The program is looking at all options as it develops the program.

The M.S. in Sport Management is an interesting program, and it is business oriented. The program had three faculty members then one faculty member. Another faculty position was added last year; now there are two faculty members.

One discussion point is what are the employment opportunities for graduates of this program? The employment opportunities are very good; there is no shortage of positions. The number of programs nationwide has increased over 1000 percent in recent years. There are now three other programs in the Chicago area in addition to our program. There are about 60 to 65 students enrolled in this program. Another discussion point is the lack of women and minority students in the program. Why are the numbers so low? Should there be formal processes for recruitment of minorities and women? This is a male-dominated profession; our program is similar to other programs nationally. The low minority numbers are a concern; we would like to recruit more minorities. The program hopes to develop an enrollment plan to address these issues. The department has been given some money from the Graduate School to use for minority recruitment. The final discussion point is that the department is considering adding a B.S. and a Ph.D. in sport management. There is no shortage of interest in an undergraduate program. The issues are finding the space and faculty to teach the classes.
The recommendation for the future is to implement the assessment plan. The assessment activities haven't taken place. The program is working on this issue. The accrediting agency, the Commission on Sport Management Accreditation, may be looking to change some of the objectives and the way the industry is going to go, business oriented or sports oriented.

Overall, there are so many variables involved in this department that it requires nimble management. A lot of these areas have only become fields in the last one to two decades. We do need to be nimble and adapt and change as the industry changes.

This is the last meeting for the fall semester.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Cradduck