Northern Illinois University

COMMITTEE ON THE UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

111th Meeting
Tuesday, March 20, 2007
Altgeld Hall 225

MINUTES
Approved

Present: D. Cesarotti (EET), J. Fischer (Student/BUS), B. Hemphill (Ex Officio, Vice President for Student Affairs), M. Lenczewski (LAS), C. T. Lin (UCC/LAS), S. Webber (BUS), K. Wesener (Ex-Officio, Student Housing Services)

Absent: A. Dreessen (Ex Officio, Student Involvement and Leadership Development), N. Pappanduros (Student/Student Association), D. Pender (EDUC), L. Prince (HHS), E. Seaver (Ex Officio, Vice Provost), L. VandeCreek (LIB)

Guests: Bob Albanese, Associate Vice President for Finance and Facilities
T. Griffin, Ombudsman

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A motion was made by D. Cesarotti, seconded by C. T. Lin, to approve the agenda. The motion passed.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the October 10, 2006, meeting were electronically approved.

B. Student Information System Update

There was no report.

III. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on Status of Faculty Representation on AADR

Diane Tyrrell, Assistant Director, Human Resource Administration, has notified the Vice Provost’s office that the Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources Committee (AADR) does not at this time need a representative from CUAE to serve on this committee. The AADR is in the process of restructuring its membership and will notify CUAE if and when a representative may be needed in the future.
IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Bike Program Update

Bob Albanese, Associate Vice President for Finance and Facilities, introduced himself and explained that he oversees several of the university service units, including the Physical Plant, janitorial, the controller’s office on the accounting side, and most of the other service units on campus.

He gave a report on the status of the bike program on campus, noting that he would like to see the bike program expanded. He said that several years ago, a program called the “Red Bike” program was formed based on the UW-Madison program. Used bikes were purchased and made available for use by students. Students were using the bikes; however, the weekends presented a problem, and bikes were being abused.

The bikes were being left carelessly around campus with many ending up in the lagoon. He reported that the program has now been restructured and coordinated into the Parking Office. He described the restructured program which will now be known as the “Borrow a Bike” program. It will be starting as a trial program this spring and will then be examined and modified in preparation for fall 2007. He reported that 20-30 bikes are available, as well as helmets and locks. Students, as well as faculty and staff, will be allowed to check out bikes through the Parking Office by the week (Monday-Friday), using proper identification. There will be no cost to the student. Bikes must be returned on Fridays, as currently no weekend checkouts will be allowed, although he indicated that could change in the future. He said that the goal is to try to reduce the number of students driving on campus. M. Lenczewski asked if more than one site, possibly closer to student dorms, is being considered for checking out bikes. He said that the student recreation center might be considered as a second checkout site.

He went on to say that anytime a campus improvement project, especially a parking lot project, is being done, he encourages improving the connectivity of the campus bike paths with the city paths. He said that once the handling of bikes is considered as part of a parking lot project, then improving the ways in which individuals move around campus also becomes a key issue, especially as a safety concern.

S. Webber asked if there was any plan to increase the number of bikes over the 20-30 figure. B. Albanese replied that if the demand exceeds that number then more bikes would be acquired.

T. Griffin said that he had already seen advertising in the current issue of the Northern Star for the bike program. He also asked what the consequences would be for a stolen or
B. Albanese said that there most likely would be a fine charged with the amount being at the discretion of the Parking Office, depending on the situation. He indicated that the charges would probably be fairly lenient in order to avoid gaining the reputation of not being a user friendly organization. T. Griffin then asked what would happen if a bike was not returned on Friday. B. Albanese answered that for a first offense, probably a call would be made on the following Monday to the student. The second offense might result in a more severe action; he said that the specifics of those situations have not yet been completely worked out.

C. T. Lin commented that the original objective of the bike program was to provide a convenient and efficient mode of transportation for a student to move from one classroom location to another quickly as was the case with the red bike program. He said that checking a bike out for one week at a time doesn’t seem to accomplish that same goal, especially with 20 bikes being checked out for an entire week. B. Albanese pointed out that the problem encountered in the old bike program was that a student could use a bike to travel to one location and then leave the bike at that location, but eventually there would be several bikes accumulating in the same location, with no one bringing them back to the original sites. He stated that the new program places the responsibility on the student to take care of the bike. B. Hemphill added that a this is an accountability issue, and students need to have that level of accountability as they will learn from having to take responsibility for even the little things as they move through the institution and beyond. S. Webber pointed out that there is already evidence that the previous program wasn’t working, as bikes were not taken care of. B. Albanese said that the program will be monitored to see how it works. He emphasized that a commitment is being made through this program to try to expand the bike use on campus, thus resulting in less students driving. S. Webber noted that this gives students the option, or opportunity, of being able to be on time for class, and to be responsible.

B. Hemphill asked whether a waiver of liability had been created in case there was an accident or issue so that the university would not be held liable. B. Albanese said that University Legal Services was been contacted and has taken care of this issue.

B. **Summer Projects**

B. Albanese also gave an overview of upcoming summer projects. He reported that the Governor has included in the capital budget for fiscal year 2008 the painting and renovation of the Stevens Building. He noted that this still needs to be approved by the legislature, but if it passes, this will be the first time the university has received capital funding from the State of Illinois in the last 7-10
years. He said that the Stevens Building has been the number one project on the list for a number of years, and it is good to see that this has been included in the capital plan for fiscal year 2008.

He stated that since the university has not received capital dollars from the State of Illinois over the past several years, many projects on campus are being completed without capital outlay from the university. One concept being used to achieve this is by performance contract which allows the university to finance projects over twenty years based on energy savings. He said that this past year the old windows in Zulauf were replaced with new ones to meet the needs for better energy savings. Handicapped accessibility improvements were also made in several other areas.

He reported that this upcoming summer’s project list includes replacing windows and doors in the DuSable, Cole, and Dorland buildings, air supply duct work in Gabel Hall, updates to the east and west heating plants, and installation of a solar heating plant for pool water in Gabel and Anderson Halls, which will generate huge utility savings. Sensor lighting will also be installed in certain locations. The total cost for all of these projects will amount to $3.9 million, with projects beginning in May and ending in October.

B. Albanese reported that parking lots W and X on Annie Glidden Road are scheduled for paving, as well as the addition of improved lighting, and improvement of the roadway. This project will begin in May and is scheduled for completion in August.

He reported that two emergency projects have been underway this spring. The Neptune West roof is being repaired as an off-season project resulting in a huge savings as contractors are less busy at this time. The second project is the repairing of the street which nearly caved in near the west heating plant.

Major road improvement projects planned for the summer are the resurfacing of the College Avenue bridge, College Drive and Castle Drive. He said that the State of Illinois’ project of overhauling the Lincoln Highway bridge is scheduled to be underway during the same time, a project that will take approximately one year. Also, the City of DeKalb will be working on Annie Glidden Road during this same time span. Traffic flow issues for accessing campus will result as a result of these projects all being underway at the same time.

B. Albanese added that other major projects planned for the summer include the Student Recreation Center roof replacement, and renovation of the Student Financial Aid Office. The Gabel Hall Child Care Lab playground will also be updated to make it safer. Work on the Monsanto Building is two months ahead of schedule, and ITS and other units will
begin moving to that building in July and August. T. Griffin pointed out that the Huskie Bus Line should be contacted to make sure that extra runs to the Monsanto building are being scheduled. Also, T. Griffin suggested extending the bike path to accommodate students riding bikes to the Monsanto Building.

B. Albanese reported that the new Northern View complex should be completed by the middle of August, and the Holmes Student Center will receive some upgrades to correct safety issues. The Pheasant Room has partnered with an academic department and will receive upgraded kitchen facilities. The Yorden Center end zone facility is scheduled for completion in August, the Convocation Center will receive a new marquee, and Lorado Taft will receive a new waste water treatment plant. All of these projects will be started in May and completed in August.

B. Albanese said that every year the Grounds Department looks for one aesthetic project to concentrate on – a project that can be done outside to upgrade the campus. He said that so far no project has been identified for this summer, and any suggestions for projects would be welcomed.

He also noted that maintenance requests from academic departments are now being tracked. He said that requests are not always completed in as timely a manner as they should be, but efforts are being made to improve on this. Work order requests are moving to an online format, so departments will be able to better track the status of their own work order requests. Also, in conjunction with the Provost’s Office, a rotation painting plan is being investigated, especially for office environments.

T. Griffin asked about the status of the Wesley Foundation Building, noting that the outside of that building is beginning to look uncared for, and the parking lot is being used without restrictions. B. Albanese responded that the university has not yet closed on taking ownership of that building, but, when that is complete, those issues will be looked at more closely.

T. Griffin asked about replacing incandescent lighting on campus with more efficient lights. B. Albanese replied that ballasts across campus have been replaced over the last four or five years, and old bulbs are being recycled. He commented that efforts are being made to make campus more energy efficient and attractive.

J. Fischer asked about the possibility of placing a bus shelter near Barsema Hall. B. Albanese was surprised that this suggestion had not been made before. He indicated that this should not be problematic, and he will look into it further.
M. Lenczewski asked whether repairs are scheduled to be made to the elevator in Davis Hall. She said that it is often not working and presents problems for students who need to get to classes on upper floors. B. Albanese answered that this elevator was currently on the project list. M. Lenczewski also mentioned that there is no automatic handicapped accessible door in Davis Hall. B. Albanese said he will look into both of these concerns.

J. Fischer asked if it was feasible to close Normal Road to vehicle traffic during class hours; he pointed out that crossing this street has become a safety issue for pedestrians with the increasing traffic flow during the day. B. Albanese replied that the City of DeKalb for several years has not been in favor of closing this road, but he would be willing to check into the issue.

S. Webber pointed out that it is also quite hazardous for pedestrians crossing Lucinda Avenue near Garden Road. B. Hemphill suggested having Public Safety Officers on duty more often in those locations where it is hazardous for pedestrians.

M. Lenczewski invited Dr. Albanese to speak to the committee again in the fall to give a report after completion of the summer projects.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:20 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 10, 2007, beginning at 2:00 p.m. It was suggested that the April meeting be held on location in a residence hall and include a tour of the residence hall. M. Lenczewski and K. Wesener will work out the details for this.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Montgomery
Recording Secretary