Present: J. Barakat (Student/LAS), T. Bough (VPA), C. Downing (BUS), A. Dreessen (Ex Officio, Student Involvement and Leadership Development), B. Henry (HHS/UCC Rep), K. Johnson (Student/CAB), W. Johnson (LIB), R. Kilaparti (Substitute Representative for D. Cesarotti), M. Koren (HHS), P. Munn (Student/SA), S. Schweitzer (Student/EDU), M. Stang (Ex Officio, Student Housing Services)

Absent: J. Brunson (Ex Officio, Student Affairs), D. Cesarotti (EET), M. Koss (EDU), M. Lenczewski (LAS), E. Seaver (Ex Officio, Vice Provost),

Guest: T. Griffin, Ombudsman
Gail Jacky, Director, University Writing Center – Guest Speaker
Greg Long, Co-chair Baccalaureate Review Task Force - Guest Speaker

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

T. Bough requested that the agenda be amended to reflect the deletion of Item C. Campus Facilities/Improvements Update, under Section IV. New Business, as the guest speaker was unable to attend this meeting. This item will be rescheduled for a meeting during the spring semester.

T. Bough also asked to add one item under New Business, Student Feedback or Concerns on Campus.

A motion was made by C. Downing, seconded by W. Johnson, to approve the amended agenda. The motion passed.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Approval of Minutes

Committee members reviewed minutes of the October 13, 2009, CUAE meeting.

A motion was made by W. Johnson, seconded by M. Koren, to approve the October 13, 2009, minutes of the Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment meeting. The motion carried.
III. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Baccalaureate Review, Part One

Greg Long, Co-chair of the Baccalaureate Review Steering Committee, provided the committee with an update on the baccalaureate review process. Noting that this process initially grew out of the strategic planning initiative, he provided an overview of how and why the Baccalaureate Review Task Force, which is comprised of faculty, staff and students, was formed. He said that the process began initially with the review of the general education goals but has become a much broader type of concept.

Long explained that over this past year the task force has been in the process of gathering input from the campus community on what it is thought NIU’s baccalaureate goals should be. Several methods for gathering input were devised, including a website for submitting input via email, an online survey, and focus group feedback sessions. He reported that 44 focus groups were held, including three employer groups and several student groups, and there were 900 respondents to the online survey. He feels the task force did a good job in obtaining feedback from all relative constituencies that had an impact on NIU’s undergraduate program. Data from all of these methods have been summarized and developed into three separate reports: 1) executive summary; 2) public report; and 3) university report. All three reports are available online.

Long went on to say that, from the feedback reported, three common goals (the “three C’s”) were repeatedly identified as being important to be demonstrated through all areas (academic, extracurricular, etc.): 1) critical thinking; 2) communication; and 3) context. Throughout this current semester the task force has been presenting this feedback to various committees and groups across campus. He said that sharing the feedback and data with the university community is enabling the task force to make sure the data has been interpreted correctly and providing the opportunity to obtain additional input. He pointed out that the three goals are very broad, and the additional input gathered will be used in the next steps of the review process to break down and develop each goal further. He said that during this second round of gathering feedback, it has been recommended that a potential fourth “C”, creativity/innovation, be added.

Long explained that during the spring 2010 semester the additional feedback submitted will be reviewed, compiled and used to determine and develop the future direction of the review process. Plans for the spring are to divide the task force into subcommittees, or faculty learning groups, and each subcommittee will concentrate
on one goal and how that goal will be measured. Several weeks are being allowed for this process.

Long said that the overall baccalaureate review process is a multi-year task, with the expectation that the entire review process will take from three to five years. The task force is currently in the middle of the second year of the process. He added that the process will be very methodical in approach and must be respective and inclusive of as many ideas and opinions as possible.

Long answered questions and received feedback from the group regarding the inclusion of a foreign language element. The suggestion was also made to incorporate the aspect of motivation, i.e., “motivation to utilize knowledge and skills,” as well as to instill in students motivation and ethics of care and value.

Long will provide a further update to the committee at the February, 2010 meeting.

B. University Writing Center

Gail Jacky, Director, University Writing Center, provided the committee with an overview of the University Writing Center (UWC). She said that the center is a place for all writers and serves NIU students, faculty, staff, and alumni. There are thirty consultants at the UWC, and they are a diversified group from all areas of campus with different levels of expertise. The center also employs both undergraduate and graduate students, which serves as practical experience for them. The UWC has two locations, with the main location in Stevenson South and a new satellite center located in Founders Memorial Library.

Jacky emphasized that the center’s job is to help writers become better writers. The center will assist writers with potentially any type of writing that occurs on campus, such as class assignments, professional documents (resume or cover letter), presentations, or creative writing. The center also works with Outreach, serving as a resource for questions from the outside community and assisting with community high school reading/writing projects.

Jacky said that the UWC also offers assistance to students to help them understand what is being asked for in class assignments and learn research strategies. She stressed that the center aims for clients to see progress, be self-sufficient, and become more confident in their writing abilities and supports the Writing Across the Curriculum efforts for both students and faculty. The center staff will also provide help with conversational English and assist with improving computer skills. Other services for faculty include aiding with conference presentations, grant proposals, and service reports as well reviewing syllabi, class assignments, rubrics, and course descriptions. Jacky said that the center works closely with professors and will provide onsite workshops if requested, and it is hoped that additional staffing can be added in the fall 2010 to provide assistance to students in foreign languages.

C. Student Campus Concerns/Feedback
Postponed until a future meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:37 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, February 9, 2010, at 2:00 p.m., in Altgeld Hall 225.

Respectfully submitted,
Mollie Montgomery
Recording Secretary