
G. Barrett attended for J. Novak.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

THOSE FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT:  Arriola, Bisplinghoff, Cordes, Crisler, Cummings, Finkelstein, Frank-Stromborg, Ghrayeb, Greene, Kang, Kim, Kolb, Larson, Loubere, Markowitz, Mehrer, Payvar, Pierce, Smith-Shank, S. Song, X. Song, Spear, Stephen, Wade, Wang, Windelborn

I. CALL TO ORDER

President Willis:  I’d like to call the meeting to order.

The meeting was called to order at 3:06 P.M.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Willis:  First, could I have a motion to adopt the, excuse me, to adopt the agenda? Second?  Sorry, I just inhaled some of my coffee.  Any changes or additions to the agenda?  If not, all those in favor of approving it say aye.  Opposed?  All right, we have an agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 29, 2003 FS MEETING

(Pages 3-5)

President Willis:  Could I have a motion to approve the minutes of our meeting of October 29? Okay, it’s been moved.  Excuse me.  Second?  Okay, yes.  Any changes, additions or corrections to the minutes of the last meeting?  If not, all those in favor of approval say aye.  Opposed?  All right, the minutes are approved.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Kathy Buettner, Associate Vice President and Executive Director for State and Federal Relations will attend meeting – handout
President Willis: Kathy Buettner is here and will come up in a minute, but first I have a couple of announcements I would like to make. The first one would be in the nature of shameless advertising except it’s for a non-profit group. I sing in a women’s chorus called “Bread and Roses” which has a lot of NIU people in it. Well, I shouldn’t put it that way because there are only eighteen of us, but the majority of our members are affiliated with NIU in one way or another. We are doing a concert this Saturday at 7:30 in the Federated Church in Sycamore. The proceeds are going to benefit CASA which is the court-appointed special advocates in DeKalb County. These are the people who are appointed to represent the interests of children in divorce and custody cases and that kind of thing so it’s a very good cause and we sing very nicely. So I would encourage you all to come. Tickets are $10.00 and it really is – I think you’ll like it. We’ll be doing half various music and then half holiday music, mostly Christmas, but also Kwanzaa and Hanukkah. So we’re very varied. All right, if anybody wants to ask me about that you can come up later.

The other thing I would like to do before Kathy comes up is I would like to read into the record a memorial resolution and ask for your endorsement of it.

“Whereas David A. Wirsing faithfully served the people of the 70th Legislative District including Northern Illinois University from January, 1993 to November 16, 2003, and
Whereas Representative Wirsing worked tirelessness and selflessly to promote higher education and Illinois’ nine public universities, and

Whereas he recognized the unique nature and mission of each public university in Illinois and sponsored legislation to create independent governing boards for each institution including Northern Illinois University, and

Whereas Representative Wirsing sponsored legislation permitting public universities to retain tuition revenues locally as a method of improving the management efficiency and maximizing course delivery opportunities at each public university, and

Whereas he supported the governing boards and trustees at each public university as well as the university presidents, faculties and staffs in their efforts to provide the best education possible at an affordable level for all Illinoisans, and

Whereas State Representative Wirsing was a staunch advocate for and supporter of public university students receiving a voice and a vote on university governing boards, and
Whereas Representative Wirsing worked tirelessly with the university administration and the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University to ensure capital funding for buildings at Northern Illinois University including the renovation and restoration of the university’s oldest building, Altgeld Hall, the basement build out of Founder’s Memorial Library, the storm water retention/detention program throughout the west and east campuses as well as funds to update and renovate the university’s chiller system and to equip Barsema Hall, and
Whereas the Faculty Senate wishes to officially express its appreciation and gratitude for the many contributions of State Representative David A. Wirsing not only to Northern Illinois University but to higher education state-wide,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Faculty Senate of Northern Illinois University in formal meeting here assembled confirms and extends its grateful appreciation to the late David A. Wirsing for his outstanding commitment and dedication to furthering public higher education in Illinois.”

Could I have a motion to endorse? All in favor? Thank you.

Now Kathy gets to come up. Kathy Buettner is the Associate Vice President and Executive Director for State and Federal Relations. What that means is that she spends an awful lot of her time in Springfield and Washington talking with legislators and trying to figure out what is going on and so since there is a lot going on and things seem to be considerably fuzzier than usual, even, I thought I would ask her to come visit us and tell us a little bit about what’s happening. I’ve asked her to give just a brief overview of what’s going on and then open it up for your questions.

K. Buettner: Is this okay for me to sit here?

President Willis: That’s fine.

K. Buettner: Okay. Can everybody hear me in the back of the room? Okay, I’ll try to speak louder then. As Sue mentioned, I’m Kathy Buettner and some of you I know and some of you I haven’t had the pleasure of meeting yet. I work in the President’s office and I’m in charge of the State and Federal Relations Program. We have one other support person/staff member in that office by the name of Ken Zehnder. Ken has been doing more substantive work in Springfield the last two years which has freed me up to spend a little bit more time in Washington on some of our research projects and some of you I may have worked directly with toward that end. I can also give you an overview of the budget status.

I thought I’d start there and then work through some of the issues that I know that you are interested in, because we are interested in them as well in our office. I’m handing out something which is basically some information which is going to be given to the Board tomorrow morning at our Legislative Audit and External Affairs Committee meeting. It’s an appropriation update for ’04 and a FY05 status. I just was reading, before I came over here, the new economic and revenue update for the state prepared by the Illinois Economic and Fiscal Commission. Obviously we’re all short of money. I’m going to give you the website at the end of this because I really think that we’re never going to talk about the budget that affects NIU. We have to look at what the state is up against, because that is the crux of every single thing that we have to deal with in Springfield on behalf of the institution. I think there’s some good news, as you all hear in the news on a national level, the economy is beginning to turn around. I’m not sure yet that’s been seen in Springfield and I don’t know that it will be seen in time for the preparation of the FY05 budget. We may be a year or even two delayed. The good news is that when the national economy went south several years ago, it took another year or so for it to really hit Springfield, a
year and a half, so we were in better shape. The opposite of that, obviously, is that when the 
national economy begins to turn around it takes us longer as a state to rebound as well given our 
manufacturing and service sector base. I have to tell you, the latest projections as of a couple of 
days ago from the experts in Springfield that study this and develop the reports for the legislators 
and upon which they pass the budget – tax receipts for the state which, of course, impacts all of 
us here at Northern, while up from lows that were seen last year, remain at levels well below 
FY95 through FY00. The conclusion is that it’s going to take sustained improvement in 
employment and especially in income tax revenues to give the state legislature the flexibility it’s 
going to need in ’05 to be able to either abate or reduce some of the cuts, particularly to higher 
education as well as other areas in the budget on a state level.

Federal monies have expanded dramatically. That’s good news in terms of the state’s overall 
revenue receipt. In fact, they’re up by almost $900,000,000 as of October 31st. However, if you 
analyze the federal gains in receipts – they’re tied to Medicaid – if you take all that and factor all 
that out, the bottom line is that our base revenues for the state continue to struggle and are 
actually down $91,000,000 compared to last year. So, that is an ongoing problem. How does 
that break down as far as the revenues for the state? The gross personal income tax is essentially 
flat. The current state of the Illinois recovery, if you will, is considered still jobless which means 
that no new jobs are being created or not enough to make an impact in the overall revenue 
picture yet at the state level on the personal income tax. Sales tax has picked upward. Sales tax 
revenues are up about $35,000,000 or 1.7%. Again, the revenue picture is actually up 
collectively over $900,000,000 or 12% from last year but if you just look at that number, it’s 
misleading because it has a lot of this federal aid and the federal revenue transfers in it for the 
Medicaid program. Basically, unless we get some of our base revenues in terms of personal 
income tax, corporate income tax and sale taxes up, we’re going to be in a very similar situation 
in ’05 in our state budget level as we have been in ’04. In fact, the updated revenue forecast that 
the leaders are working with changes monthly but this is the one that came out a couple of days 
ago, was 27.3 billion dollars in revenue. That’s up from 25 billion in ’03 but, in order to reach 
that forecast, base revenues must grow about 2 billion dollars or 11.9% over the remainder of the 
fiscal year. That rate of growth is dependent frankly on the future performance of the new – 
what should I call them – fees, I guess they would be, that were tied to the passing of the budget 
in June. Most of those fees did not impact us directly here at NIU but they impacted, for 
instance, the trucking industry and many other companies. Some of your waste hauling places 
had extra fees. The private section – the corporate section – had a great deal of money fees 
adding to those areas and as a consequence, if those fees hold firm at the base of which they were 
calculated during the budget negotiations in the spring, we will make that differential. If they 
don’t or they fall short or they’re held because of a court challenge on a substantial level, that 
can impact the debt ratio for the state as we go into the budget discussions.

We are already actively involved in the budget discussions and have been, frankly, for almost 
eighteen months straight now. They never seem to end. We are trying to work with the 
Governor’s Office, the Bureau of the Budget, the Legislature and the IBHE. Everything is 
delayed this year. I don’t think there’s anyone, including the Governor himself or even the 
Director of the Bureau of the Budget, that can tell you exactly what the status of the revenue 
picture is going to be as we begin to shape the ’05 budget request. Because of that, we have 
these uncertainties with these fees and if they’re going to be subject to court challenges. We
have the issues of how much of the collection is actually going to come through as predicted so
there are many issues facing them and they make up 2½ to 3 billion dollars of the general
revenue side of the budget in terms of revenue. That’s substantial, because most of the public
university funding as well as many of the state agency lines depend and relate to the general
revenue side of the funding. So, as a consequence, we’re all waiting for more data. I doubt very
much that substantial progress will be made in terms of budget decisions until after the first of
the year. They’ll have, at that point, the first six months of data to look at and they’ll have a
better challenge, then we’ll see. I’m telling you all this as far as the economic picture goes
because I’m sure, as all of you know, we can’t begin to talk about how we’re going to fill our
needs until we know what we have to work with and that’s where the state is right now. We
don’t know what the situation is going to be for concluding ’04 – in the second half of the year. I
myself personally believe that we will probably not see a great relief; we may see some relief but
we won’t see a great relief on the budget side at least in ’05 because of the way the economy
builds from the national level and then works its way down to the revenue picture for the state.
I’ve been in state government for twenty years and I’ve seen a lot of budget ebbs and flows and I
have a pretty good understanding of the operations on the revenue side that make up the
exemptions.

What happens is the IBHE has normally, at next week’s meeting, would be voting on the budget
recommendations that would go to the Governor for consideration for the ’05 budget. We
haven’t even gotten to the stage yet with the IBHE this year where we have been given a
discussion budget to even look at, much less vote. They have indicated that they are holding off
until January at the minimum to do that. The Governor is usually encouraged to give his budget
address by the third or so week of February. That’s been historical practice for many years. He
delayed it last year because of the unique situation with his brand-new election as well as the
budget situation in general which was so poor that they tried to get the best data they could get
when they actually put the assumptions together upon which to frame the budget so they waited
until about the first of April. I don’t think that they’ll wait that long this year but it may happen.
He may try to get an extension from the General Assembly to go into early March given the fact
that there are so many uncertainties on the revenue side and that has to be at least agreed upon by
the Governor, the leaders and the economic experts in Springfield before they can begin to then
erect the budget frame around that. So there’s a substantial amount of discussion that’s going on
right now, and has been going on, and study given to what the revenue picture is going to be for
the state and then as a consequence we, of course, have been working with the Governor’s Office
etc. and the IBHE over the last few months to make sure that they have heard our needs side of
the equation and I assure you, they have. Now, if there’s going to be any funding to deal with
that, I don’t know. I’m optimistic, cautiously, that it is going to be a slightly better year in ’05
than it was in ’04 but when I say slightly, I mean very slightly. I don’t see – I could be wrong
and I hope I am – but I don’t see a major budget change for the state until after at least the ’05
budget is over.

I could talk a lot about that, so I’m just going to try to give you the highlights on a couple of
things, then I’ll be glad to take your questions. The other issues as far as legislation goes, there
are a few bills introduced in veto session that you may be aware of. As of Monday, we will have
up on our State and Relations website through the university here, a list of the substantive
legislation. I think we have one now but it’s probably not updated. It will be as of Monday.
We’re presenting information to the Board tomorrow and then by the time we can turn around and actually get it on, on Friday, it should be ready to go by Monday for you. I would encourage you to look at that. As you know, we had a Truth in Tuition Bill passed last spring which was a radical departure for tuition policy in the state. We at Northern and other universities have collectively been meeting together as a group as well as separately in our own institutions to try to figure out how we’re going to implement this Truth in Tuition Policy. As you know, it will start next fall, I’m sorry, fall of ’05 and we have to have a policy and be ready to go. We are talking about that and we are trying to figure out how to actually develop that and make that work and I think any – other than Western perhaps who had a similar program going before the bill was passed – I don’t believe that any of the universities have actually unveiled their formal policies yet. We’re all in a talking stage and trying to figure out obviously what’s best for the students and what will help the institution run as efficiently as possible. So, I don’t really have any more information on that other than that, obviously, as you know I’d be glad to tell you a little bit more about that if you need to know.

We also had a line item disclosure bill that passed as a result of our appropriation discussions with the General Assembly. In my judgment the bill that passed was the product of a lot of work on behalf of a lot of people, and for Northern, it really didn’t change anything in the way we did things because we have submitted our bills for the last few years in a line item format to the General Assembly. We sensed several years ago that they had been concerned. There was never a policy change about six years ago; it was simply in terms of statutory language. Previous to that, all the universities had received their appropriations in a contractual obligations and our personnel services type of a line item format, not detailed at the departmental level or anything like that but just, you know, broad categories – personnel services, contractual, travel and that kind of thing. We never felt that that was a problem to work with. The Senate Republican Caucus when they were in the majority about five years ago decided that they felt it would be better for us to receive a lump sum so they just changed it. It was not changed on a statutory basis. That was fine with us but we continued to file the bills both ways and so it was not a problem for us. It did require a lot of discussion because they decided they were going to codify this, which always is something that requires discussion, and so we ended up with a format that was very similar to what we used to have. I would say it probably impacted the U of I and Southern most directly because they have multi-campus systems. We don’t have that here so there wasn’t an issue of disclosing by campus. It was simple. We have one budget and that is what it is. They had a situation wherein they were given one lump-sum appropriation, for instance, for the entire University of Illinois and then it was up to the U of I to decide how much Chicago, how much Springfield and how much Urbana got. Under the new system, the new bill that passed, they have to declare and they will get appropriations based on each individual within the U of I system. Same thing with Southern, so it affected them more, I think, than any of us that have single university campuses.

The SURS legislation, as you know and followed, the Board shift did not occur. I have not heard that it is imminent for spring session. I think we need to be very wary of that issue and I think we need to be vigilant. I’m not sure yet what the administration is going to do about that. As you know, there was a flurry of activity in the spring wherein many boards and commissions were going to be consolidated and shifted around, and actually, I think only one or two of those passed by the end of the day but that doesn’t mean that the idea has completely gone away so I
think we need to be vigilant and we are very aware of those and share those concerns obviously
and work very closely with Steve Cunningham and the Personnel Services Office here and HRS
as well as the other universities on those issues.

I also just wanted to briefly mention a few things on the federal side. Higher education
preauthorization is probably the most important issue facing the public universities at the federal
level. The President and I have been involved in a lot of meetings over the last year on this
issue. It started about eight to ten months ago and it will continue throughout all of next fall.
Possibly, depending on the controversial nature of the issues, it may even go over into the next
spring but I doubt it. I think the most important issue that you need to be aware of in there is that
there are about six bills and again, I will have a substantial report up on our website on the higher
ed reauthorization issue as well on Monday, but there are about six bills federally that make up
this issue. Most of them have originated in the House and three or four of them have already
passed and have been relatively non-controversial – discontinuation of funding, teacher
recruitment/retention, ready-to-teach act, Title II, graduate opportunities in higher ed,
international studies, etc. The issues that really seem to be driving the basis of the discussion is
this affordability plan in the higher education act. Some of you may have read national
publications about Buck McCann’s provisions that would create his college affordability index.
He’s the author of this legislation. It has been introduced but not passed in the House. It has a
long way to go in the House but it has caused a great deal of consternation. Basically, opponents
have said that it would establish price controls on any private or public college or university
across the country that did not adhere to the provisions, which limit tuition increase. If your
tuition increase is more than twice the CPI over a rolling period of three years, you get placed on
a watch list, and if it’s not fixed within the year, then you will lose federal funding status in
certain areas. Obviously, that’s a significant issue. There have been – House Democrats have
submitted their own version last week before they adjourned. On that the Senate Republicans
and the Senate Democrats have now issued their own plans. It seems that most of the issues
involving the higher ed reauthorization are plodding through but the one issue that I think will
probably occupy most of next year’s debate is this affordability issue and again, it goes to the
cost of a college education. We are very actively involved in this and I’m going out to
Washington again on this next week. It’s just a long and ongoing process but I encourage you to
pay attention to it because it could affect – if we don’t fix some of these issues as we debate them
over the next year on a national level – it could affect the revenue side of universities (plural)
public, private, community colleges, etc. for years to come.

The other issue that we spend a lot of time on in our office federally is the research issue in
general and particularly funding for either our own research projects for our faculty at NIU or
earmarks. The FY04 budget is just about finished in Washington. The Conference Report has
been compiled in an omnibus fashion. Most of the appropriations for operating the federal
government – most, not all – but most of them are in there in that Conference Report. The
House is expected to come in next week and pass it on Tuesday or Wednesday and then the
Senate may or may not take that up next week. They may hold over until the end of January if
they can’t reach agreement but it’s pretty much done and then we will obviously we’re already
beginning our FY05 process as well. So, we spend a lot of time on that. Some of you may have
worked individually with our office on some of those things.
As far as – I’m going to just say one thing more here about the landscape now that Dave has passed because I thought that was a beautiful resolution and I’m really glad that the Faculty Senate did that. It’s been – it was a shock a couple of weeks ago when I got the call on Sunday night that Dave had passed and Dave has been a terrific support. He’s been a great personal friend and he’s been a terrific support of NIU and all of the public universities. He’s been a wonderful friend to the students, to the faculty, to the staff, to the administration. He has provided a lot of leadership and in his own unique style has brought warring factions together on repeated occasions throughout the last nine years that I have worked with him to try to hammer out solutions and compromises to issues that remain sticking points. I’m very sorry to lose him because, as I say, he was such a personal friend as well. The new State Representative for this area is Bob Pritchard and you know Mary, perhaps, who is the Associate Dean in the College of Health and Human Sciences and we look forward to working with Bob. He is the incumbent. He’s going to fill the remainder of Dave’s term. He has to run again obviously in the March primary for the Republican nomination. There have been other individuals that have indicated that they’re going to run in the primary and in the general election as well so it seems like for the first time in my tenure at Northern, we have an “open seat” if you will for the State house. So it’s going to be interesting to see how that plays out. I obviously am very, very encouraged and want to work with whoever is elected to make sure that our needs are expressed and that they understand the realities that the University has dealt with over the last few years. As far as anything else goes, I just – I think it’s going to be a tough year as far as the budget goes. I’ve said that. I think that the issues involving the organizational aspects of education in general are still on the table with the administration. I’m not exactly sure how those are going to play out but I think it’s going to be a very interesting sessions. I’d be glad to take your questions.

President Willis: Okay, questions for Kathy? Yes, Pat.

P. Henry: Yes, this pertains to my upcoming report on the IBHE but I wondered in your discussions with them if you had had any insight into how they’re seeing this issue of faculty productivity?

K. Buettner: I thought that you might have a question like that. If you haven’t read the IBHE agenda for next Tuesday I believe the meeting is, it is on the website – the IBHE website – and I just downloaded it this afternoon looking for that very issue and there is a report that’s there. In fact, it’s twenty-five pages long and it is the response to the IBHE request for input regarding faculty productivity issues. They’ve got it up and it goes – it’s very detailed. Basically – I just scanned it before I came here – but I would encourage you all to read it. Basically, what they’ve done as far as I can tell is the authors of the report are, I think, part of the Faculty Advisory group and it looks to me like they’ve taken data from all of the universities because they mention individually almost each universities here and different tables affecting each but basically where the cuts have hit, what it has done to the individual universities, the economic implications of what that has to do – talked about what are measures of productivity for faculty, the fact that the time you spend in front of the classroom is certainly, obviously, a key element of the instructional activity but there’s so much other than that that goes into making a faculty member a good faculty member and productive and making the classroom a learning experience for the students. They talk about research. They talk about all those things. I think the end of it where it basically talks about suggestions on increasing faculty productivity – it talks about technology
and the ability to use technology to redesign the delivery of large core curriculum types of courses, early retirement, athletics, non-academic student services and fundraising – they should look there to take more money, examination of the programs and inventory of the state, core curriculum and general studies. Basically, these are ideas that will be short-term band-aid approaches but the long-term conclusion is that we have a big problem. We have to rework our tax structure. We have to make sure that tuition can fluctuate to meet the state demand.

Limiting enrollment is a possibility. Expediting academic progress while maintaining quality is difficult. We have to fund unfounded mandates. Let me close with something I thought was really interesting and, as I say, I just pulled this off the website before I came here – but they close with John Peters’ statement in his State of the University speech about how we have a tidal wave of students headed our way in the state and across the nation in the next ten years, and that basically demand has outstripped supply for seats within particularly the public university system and therefore, the public universities have got to rely on proper and sufficient and continued state funding. That is the crux and how we get there is the decision but I thought it was kind of interesting that they choose to end with John’s quote there. It’s a very interesting report and it’s just available on their website and again, because of costs, I did not copy it for all of you but it is there and I would encourage you to read it. It was written by I think most of your colleagues that sit and represent you on that Faculty Advisory Committee.

**P. Henry:** Just to follow up on that, do you think that this will be something that the IBHE and the administration will respond to in a positive way?

**K. Buettner:** You know, I really don’t know. I really don’t know. I would say that I would be very interested to hear their discussion next week when the report comes out. I do think that they will probably have the discussion at the Board meeting itself and then I would expect that there will be some private discussions obviously held after the meeting. I’m just not – I really don’t know. I am as puzzled as you are as to how they will react to that. We have been through a long, arduous budget process on the administrative side getting to this 25% reduction number that you’re all familiar with and it’s been very, very difficult. Most of you have seen the effects of that. Our office has seen the effects of that. Everybody has seen the effects of that I think and the issue of delineating administration and faculty as two different categories and how faculty should be strictly instructional, teaching in a classroom and nothing else, I think, is a very narrow viewpoint of what a university education is about and all of you, I think, now that you rely heavily on – I don’t want to say people like us – but people that aren’t necessarily faculty status but yet advise students and take care of computers and counsel people and do all those things so it’s very hard to say that those kinds of administrative cuts don’t impact the educational system as well. So, I’m not sure how they’re going to react I guess. I really don’t know.

**President Willis:** Bill?

**B. Baker:** Could I ask you to comment – to amplify – on how this university compared in the last round with other universities in the state in particular with the three University of Illinois campuses and further to comment on the perception that perhaps under the new Governor the University of Illinois at Urbana and Chicago has no longer perhaps the perceived influence financially that it had previously?
**K. Buettner:** I think that an element of that is correct. I do have the charts and again, these will be up as well on the website as of Monday in my Board materials for tomorrow. We all suffered basically 8.2% reductions on our general operating lines for ’04 versus ’03. Now, there’s an exception to that. The Southern Illinois reduction was 7.5% and the University of Illinois’s reduction was 7.7%. Now initially you can look at that and say “wait a minute, they didn’t get hit as bad”. Actually they did. What they did and why their numbers are slightly less is because they were able to take out their patient care section that impacts the hospitals that directly – not the faculty side, not the administrative side – but the actual side with the nurses, whatever part of that budget that is directly associated with the care of patients in the hospitals was removed from any direct cut as part of the Governor’s pledge toward, you know, maintaining health care and things like that. The actual operations of the universities themselves were hit directly across the line at 8.2%. I can give you a sense here of where they all are. Community colleges were hit 4.4% in ’04 versus ’03. I’m trying to think – the HECA grants of course were really, really hit hard. They were knocked out about 70% and the Civil Service System had a 10% reduction. The BHE had a 10% reduction in their operating line. The community colleges were not hit as hard as the public universities were. The public universities because of the fact you’d average in the U of I in and Southern and the fact that they’re such a significant part of the whole budget, the public university overall percentage came in at 7.7% and community colleges came in overall at 4.4% in terms of reductions. So this is an issue that we have obviously noticed and we are working aggressively on that.

I was just telling a visitor today that at Northern, and we are not unique – we’re in the same boat as any other public university in the state – we’re down about 18 million dollars in actual GR dollars. We’re back to about 101 million dollars, which is about what our FY99 appropriation was, and we’ve got several thousand more students here than we did in FY99. So when we talk about faculty productivity, we’re living faculty productivity here, you know, we’re living staff productivity. We’ve cut and cut and cut and there’s not much left that we can cut without dramatically impacting the educational mission and the quality of the institution. So, you know, I wish I had the answers. I think that the optimistic part of me says that I do think that that message is beginning to get through to the administration and to the General Assembly. I’ve had lots of conversations, our president has had, our Board members have had over the last year and a half about these issues and I think finally we’re beginning to turn a corner and that people are beginning to understand that there are no more millions and millions and millions of dollar pots that can be “easily” and I say that in quotes, cut without dramatically hurting either access or quality within the system. Now, does that mean we won’t have to suffer any more cuts. I wish I could be that optimistic. I think that – I hope that the big ones are over or that we are on the downswing from those but I’m not – I just don’t know how this faculty productivity issue is going to come out. I wish I did but I can’t tell you that and I couldn’t have predicted how the administrative one was going to come out either. It’s been so difficult but I really don’t like talking about them separately because to me they’re not separate. They’re all integrated because it takes everything to make a university work and so we try to talk about it together in the sense of what’s all happened here at Northern when we make our case. Did that help?

**B. Baker:** Um-huh.

**K. Buettner:** Okay.
President Willis: Yes, Jim?

J. Lockard: Hi Kathy. I’m wondering if you have any thoughts at all on the pending negotiations of the union contract at the state level and how that might affect this projected increase in health care costs for instance and the potential trickle down into our own private pockets.

K. Buettner: Yes, in fact one of the things on the sheets that I gave you was the fact that the AFSCME contract state-wide is up in ’04 now, it expires, and so after the first of the year, formal negotiations will begin so that it can kick in in FY05. That affects about 37,000 employees statewide and obviously a lot of those benefit issues and things are geared toward or set the bar if you will, for the rest of the state. I don’t know yet. I would suspect that given the health insurance issues we are, for instance, our own situation here with the state group and health insurance our ’04 costs is 200 million dollars more than it was in ’03. I mean, costs, for the state that is, costs are going up dramatically. I expect that state employees will be asked to shoulder more of those costs and I would expect that the prescription benefits and things will be slightly raised as they have been in the past. Several years ago, I think five years, whenever the contract was up last time; I know they jumped on the prescription co-pays. They almost doubled. I don’t know that they can double this time. I know they’re looking at all kinds of options. They’re looking at different pension options for new people. I mean, I don’t know that they can do much with current pension obligations. I’m not an expert on that but I don’t think they can tamper much with that but they’re looking at different – again, these are just ideas. They’re not written down so don’t think that there are formal proposals out there – I just, people are talking about “what if we did this, what if we did that” because the pension contributions and the health insurance contributions are rising so dramatically. I don’t know what will happen in the end but I think that it is expected that there will be at least some minimal increase in the deductibles and the prescription co-pays. Now, whether that’s across the board or whether that’s geared toward salary, you know, I don’t know how they’re going to do it but I would expect that there will be something because there was when the contract was adjusted four or five years ago. We all saw the bump in our prescription co-pays. That’s the one that stuck out in my mind because my family is on a lot of medicine so --.

J. Lockard: To follow up, unrelated but related in some ways I suppose, that is how do you sense the sentiment in Springfield might be if we bite the bullet and honestly say “given this amount of money, we’ve got to cap enrollment” and that cap might very well be lower than the number we’ve got right now, being realistic.

K. Buettner: Well, we’re not there yet. I don’t think – we’re not there yet in terms of that discussion and that debate. If we were to say that right now, I think it would be very ill received. I think that after a period of discussion over the next three to four months as we get heavily into and people come back to focus on the budget and the reality of the budget, we see what’s happening with the fee increases that were established and if they’re holding up in court and if the revenue projections estimated from them are coming in – a lot depends on those kinds of things. It’s just a speculative type of issue right now but I really think we’re just going to have to...
wait and see how it plays out Jim. I don’t know how else to tell you. I don’t have any wisdom there in terms of, you know, how that’s all going to work.

**J. Lockard:** It does seem to be a real serious issue for you and others who are lobbying down there on our behalf, because we’ve been there before in this institution and they’re giving us funds that are inadequate for what we’re trying to do right now. We simply can’t see the cap continue to increase and increase and increase. There’s no end to it in sight.

**K. Buettner:** I think that’s what John Peters was trying to lay out there. If you didn’t read his speech or listen to his speech when he gave it, it’s on the website I still believe, I don’t think they’ve taken it down yet, I would encourage you to do it because parts of the speech are really interesting. In fact, I took that speech and condensed it into a three page synopsis and I mailed that to every legislator with a cover letter kind of bulleting the main points about this tidal wave of students and what’s the state policy going to be long-term. When the President and I went to Springfield a few weeks ago during veto session, we met with the Governor’s new Deputy Chief of Staff for Education, Brenda Holmes, and we talked for almost forty-five minutes about where is the state going with the clarity of policy and how are we going to address these issues and she was very interested in this. She comes from an elementary and secondary background and she’s very new to the job. She’s not new to education at all, but she’s new to this particular job. We spent a lot of time talking about it and John and I came out of there and said “wow, she listened and she cared and she realizes that we have a problem”. So we need to continue that dialogue and start working with them and try to talk to them about solutions, which I wish we had a lot of solutions that were easy but they cost money, and that means investing in the public university system again. I think that, as I said, the good part, the encouraging part, is I think our message is getting through. It’s going to take time until the revenues catch up that maybe they can start reinvesting again but I do think that the issues of access are beginning to be heard and the appropriate caucuses and things in Springfield are listening to those and are very concerned about access. So I think that we’re beginning, we’re at the fringe perhaps, of turning the corner. It’s going to take another year or two and then I think – if you can get the will there, then we just need the money. The will has been hard. I’ve never had that problem up until I would say the last year. I’ve been in this business a long time and there has been generally a very favorable impression of the public universities and the quality and the productivity and just the general contributions that we as public institutions make to the state and to the economic development of each region that we’re located in and I haven’t necessarily felt that that has been entirely the case in this year. I do think that our message is getting across now. They’re starting to understand and listen. I think that the fiscal situation was so difficult, that there was – that was the overriding issue and anybody’s mind who had access to the budget policy was how are we going to solve this gapping hold of five billion dollars. That was the overriding thing and they couldn’t think of anything else. I’m hoping with at least the national economy then can at least see the light at the end of the tunnel, maybe in a year or two.

**President Willis:** Yes, David.

**D. Wagner:** Jim just stole my issue but I would like to point out instead of explicitly limiting enrollments an alternative is to raise entrance requirements.
K. Buettner: So noted.

President Willis: Okay, any other questions for Kathy? Well, if not thank you very much for coming and if people think up questions later, if you want to send them to me, I can forward them on to Kathy and I’m sure she’ll be pleased to get back to us with some answers.

V. ITEMS FOR SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Patricia Henry – report (Pages 6-8)

President Willis: Let us go on with the agenda. We have no Items for Senate Consideration and nothing on the Consent Agenda so we will move to Reports from Advisory Committees the first of which is the FAC, Pat Henry. More good news, right?

P. Henry: Yes. Actually, I have to thank Kathy because she just gave a good chunk of my report. Thank you! Much more efficiently than I could, probably. This is regarding the meeting that we had at Northeastern Illinois University. I don’t want to go over all the details but I think a couple of things to note – one was that we had a teleconference with Dan Layzell who is the Deputy Director of Planning and Budget with the IBHE, and in parts 2 and 3 of this report I’ve summarized the points that he made, which are quite familiar to us by now, and then in part 3 this was the ongoing discussion with the FAC concerning the issues of the budget. I think the underlying points especially are those things that we really tried to focus in on and get some dialogue going. One of the points that IBHE, or the FAC, was quite concerned with is on the top of page 7, where we keep trying to push the IBHE to be our champion of higher education and as has been pointed out, there seems to be a lot of lack of enthusiasm about higher education in Springfield and we would like the IBHE to push our case a little more. We haven’t had a lot of reaction on this, and we’ll continue to push the issue because we feel that really it’s very important to have a voice other than the faculty, who can be seen as somewhat self-serving in this. Obviously, students and others are also – parents – there’s lots of interest groups that can help make the point but the IBHE has a good role to play especially since they are supposedly committed to the Illinois Commitment and there are many things about the Illinois Commitment that are getting somewhat damaged in this difficult budget situation. The second bullet point on page 7 also highlights this, that one of the budget priorities that the IBHE is currently working on has a lot of catch-up stuff in general but doesn’t really address the ways in which academic programs work. Retiring faculty have not been replaced and there’s real need for buttressing the programs. That doesn’t seem to be part of their budget priorities at this point, so the FAC wanted to make clear that this was an important issue for us.

As the matter of a mid-year rescission was brought up, it still again not clear but currently agencies are being asked to reserve 2% and I think that’s as much as we know at this point. The rest of the meeting and then page 8 discuss this; indeed – this report – I had not realized was on the IBHE website so I summarized it here. This is the report that will be presented to the IBHE
from the FAC at the December 7 meeting and, I think, the way in which Kathy summarized it was excellent. By the way, the person who passed on John Peter’s State of the University document was me; I thought he made some excellent points and others agreed and it was quoted selectively to good effect. The effort was made to indeed, make the case that “yes, we are producing” and that there’s lots of ways in which the situation is being over-simplified if people think we aren’t.

The matter of PQP, which was something that we discussed the last time, is still around and there was nothing adopted in terms of talking about endorsing it or anything like that. On page 7 under number 4, the first bullet point, the FAC considered endorsing the concept that institutions should look at programs, their quality and their productivity and be given the autonomy to make decisions about what programs need to be improved or face elimination. That was the closest we came. We are not alone in expressing deep distrust of the process of PQP; Greg Paveza, who’s the ACE fellow visiting NIU, emphasized this point as well. The walk-in that I also asked Donna to make available is an excerpt of item 16 of the IBHE agenda, yes that’s right, it’s December 9 that they’re meeting – which I brought up because this is essentially the new PQP. I would like to reiterate, although when I first brought this up I talked about the FAC trying to deal with it – it really has come from the IBHE. The FAC is responding to it and is trying to put it in the case of local or the individual institutions need to be in control of the process and we’ll continue certainly to push in that direction but what the IBHE is going to be looking at December 9 is a framework for reviewing priorities, productivity and accountability in Illinois higher education and you can read the entire report on the website there. I think the point that needs to be emphasized here is the middle section, “Exploration and identification of efficiency/productivity enhancement opportunities across all activities”. This is clearly where they’re going to be looking at the FAC report and where I think a lot of the questions of what productivity is and how it should be taken into account will focus.

This is purely informational. Nothing is going to be acted on this in the December meeting but I thought you should know that it’s coming down the line. They are continuing to pay some attention to the fact that in this continuing effort at accountability there needs to be a look at that so that we don’t get bogged down in many, many ways of assessing things, which take up time, lead to administrative bloat and so forth, so they’re trying to keep that under control. We’ll see if that actually happens as it ends “additional discussion and consultation with members of the higher education community” this means you “and others will be necessary to refine the goals and scope of such a review”. So, as I say, this is just the shot across the bow. I think it behooves us to pay some attention to this and especially, as Kathy was saying, keep our cases going as far as how we are defined and keep educating the people in Springfield about this including the IBHE. That’s it.

**President Willis:** Okay, thank you, Pat. Are there any comments or questions for Pat? If not, we can move on.

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Paul Loubere and William Tolhurst – no report

**President Willis:** The Board of Trustees has a meeting tomorrow and so you will have a report
VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs Committee – William Baker, Chair – report (Page 9)

President Willis: Let’s move on to Reports from Standing Committees. Academic Affairs, Bill Baker.

B. Baker: Right, if members of the Senate would care to turn to the report on page 9 there are certain things I’d like to draw Senate’s attention to. We’d like to thank John Briscoe for excellent minutes; the last two paragraphs are the key ones. In the end it was decided that the Committee would recommend to the whole Faculty Senate that a change in the grading be considered and that the Senate itself should debate the details and merit of any such change. That’s the first thing to look for Senate to consider and secondly, it was agreed that all faculty and a representation of students should be invited directly or indirectly to contribute. It was recommended that the Senate informally poll their departments and Sue Willis will formally contact department chairs to get feedback. No details were brought forth on how to include students. One other point of information to Senate, David Wagner had kindly, subsequently to this meeting, supplied further details of the University of Wisconsin at Madison grading system which is very basically in essence letter grades A-F. The off letter grades and their values on the full percent – full point scale are A-B, B, B-C, C, C-D and F and that’s essentially what we discussed. Our next meeting will be at the end of January. Thank you. Any questions?

President Willis: Any comments or questions for Bill? Okay, I would just add – what, do you have something else?

B. Baker: Do we have to make a motion? What about ---

President Willis: I think at this point it would be premature.

B. Baker: Okay.

President Willis: What I would suggest is that Senate members look this over and do discuss it with your departments when you have a chance. Bring some feedback. I will contact chairs and see if they have strong opinions one way or the other. I will also contact Registration and Records and see if there are any technical issues that need to be considered. So I think in
January we can come back with some – probably in January, maybe in February – we can come back with some more substantial information and perhaps make a motion at that time. Yes?

**B. Miller:** I was just going to ask as a member of the committee, were people clear about what the A-B, B-C meant because it was new to me. Okay. I think A and B+ people are more clear about. A would be a 4.0, A-B is a 3.5, and a B would be a 3.0. That’s the final grade point that it would accrue at the end of the semester. So that’s the actual grade you would give a student at the end of the semester so it gives you a little more flexibility when you give grades so you actually give an A over B and the student would receive a 3.5 grade point average for that course.

**President Willis:** Okay, thank you Beth. Carole, did you have your hand up? You need a mike.

**C. Minor:** My question was when we go to our departments and ask them – I’m assuming the question is “do you want to retain the current grading system, do you want to change the grading system and if you want to change it do you want to go to this A, A-B or A, A-, B+, B”. So we have three options we’re considering.

**President Willis:** It seems to me that the first question is “do you want to move to a system that has more flexibility”, whatever it is, so there are gradations between A and B and C as opposed to just those grades. I mean that’s the first question and then the second question is “how many gradations” and then all those little details. To my mind the first question is the more important one. How much sentiment is there for wanting more – where’s the word I want, I have no idea what it is but – more flexibility in giving grades.

**B. Miller:** Could I ask another follow up question? With the points, the A, A-B be 4 point, 3.5, 3 – what are the numbers for the A, A-, B+, B?

**President Willis:** My understanding is that they would be equally split so that an A would be 4 points, A- would be 3 2/3 and B+ would be 3 1/3 and so forth. Okay, thank you. These are details. As I say, I think right now the important question is, do we want such a change of whatever sort that would give us more options.

**B. Miller:** Carole, when I explained it to my department I explained that a 4.0 was an A, a B+ was a 3.75 and then a 3.25 or something like that just to give them some idea of how it breaks down so, you know, you get quarter points or you get thirds.

**President Willis:** Okay, yes? My undergraduate college did use pluses and minuses and they organized it so they were all equally spaced. So, ---

**L. Finkelstein:** I actually have been affiliated with systems that have used both. I’ve seen 3.3 for a B. I’ve seen 3.4 for a B. I think it would be very useful for me going to my department to have two clear models on the table where all that’s hashed out. Otherwise, we will become completely bogged down in discussing the merits of a 3.3 versus a 3.4 versus a 3.25 for a B+ and I think we’ll spend a lot of time on these details which I don’t think needs to happen at the
departmental level right now. So I think it would be useful if the committee could maybe put two models on paper and send those to us and those could at least be our discussion models. We could get some feedback from departments on those.

**President Willis:** I would say, just for discussion purposes, that one system would be the A–this half-point system so it’s sort of like A, B and a half, B, you know, C and a half, you know–whatever you call it and then the other system would have A+ and A- and B+ distinguished. So you would have A, then you would have A-, B+ and exactly where those come, you wouldn’t even have to mention I wouldn’t think.

**L. Finkelstein:** It will come up. In my department it will be a great point of discussion.

**President Willis:** I would be in favor of having as equal of separations as possible because otherwise it gets too complicated to think about. At least for me but–okay, we’ve got 9 million hands up. Let’s see, Paul?

**P. Stoddard:** Did the committee give any consideration to dropping the D grade?

**President Willis:** I don’t think so.

**B. Miller:** We did discuss the possibility of the D over a D over F–D-F possibility. Half of the committee was opposed; half the committee was not and the chair of the committee was opposed too.

**President Willis:** Okay, Jim? You need a mike.

**J. Johnson:** In considering this, did the committee find out what’s done at other universities? I mean, you know, what percentage of universities do one or the other?

**B. Baker:** University of Wisconsin.

**J. Johnson:** But what about other–nationwide, do most universities have B+; did most of them use the system we have? Does anyone have a sense of that?

**B. Miller:** I don’t think we have a national sense. It think we have a sense there are many other universities that do this just in looking at transcripts of graduate reviews, that a lot of universities do this. I think our general feeling was that from our own experience here, that it is difficult as graders sometimes to justify the difference between a low B and a high B and it is oftentimes numerically more difficult often than a high B and a low A and that was sort of the originating difference in the conversation. I do know that from my own review of transcripts from students who apply to our graduate program, a large percentage of them come from universities. If you want us to do more searching I suppose we could.

**President Willis:** Okay, John?
J. Engstrom: How is this decision made? Who makes the decision, the University Council? Okay. That’s what I wanted to know.

President Willis: Yes, what the Senate would do would be to formulate a recommendation, which then would be forwarded to University Council for its consideration and possible action. Yes, Mylan?

M. Engel: I wonder if the committee looked at the possibility of what you would do with A+s. If students who currently would get a 4.0 can get a 3.63 or a 3.66, they are being penalized for being on the low end of the A. I’m wondering if the committee looked at the possibility of rewarding students who do exceptional work and this would be a way that an A+ in one course could offset an A- in another course and I’m also wondering if there are precedents for this in other departments.

B. Baker: Yes, could I quickly answer that? Yes we did consider this and it was opened to general discussion. The point was very much taken; please remember that was merely the first session we had and obviously we will take all these points under consideration at our next and subsequent meetings.

President Willis: David?

D. Wagner: Yes, this was originally my motion. I would like to make a couple of comments. I’m in favor of the A, A-B, B, B-C and that’s the limit at Wisconsin and how far down you go does make a difference. Wisconsin does not have a C-D and I think our committee was proposing that there should be and I think I would agree with that. I’m against a D-F but the same issue arises about pluses and minuses. This was the official grading policy at this university in the early 70’s and it was based upon a motion by Frances Stroup who wanted pluses and minuses and I amended it so there were C+s, B+s and my argument at that time was that a C- would have to be 1.67 – is that right? – and students would object mightily to that. If you only had C+, B-, B+, A-, maybe even A+, you get rid of that but I still think just the half step is much preferable.

President Willis: All right, I would suggest that these are issues which need to be thought about and perhaps, at your judgment, discussed with your faculty depending on how much time you want to spend on it with them and then comments should be sent to the committee for further consideration. Bill?

B. Tolhurst: Yes, I mean I don’t want to talk about the details of how to do it but rather the prior question of whether we should do it and it strikes me that students who go to universities that do do this may, on average, end up with slightly higher GPA’s because you’re not lumping together those who do the bare minimum with those who do considerably more and so not doing this might, in some small way, disadvantage our students who are applying to other institutions for graduate work because their GPA’s are slightly lower than those competing. That seems to me one argument one can think of for moving to this. Granted, people make adjustments for what the institution is anyway, but ---
President Willis: Okay, yes Bill?

B. Baker: People could send comments to me. E-mail them. As chair of the committee I will certainly pass them on so we can discuss them at our next meeting and it’s wbaker@niu.edu.

President Willis: Okay, everybody got that? wbaker@niu.edu. That’s Bill and you can e-mail your comments and suggestions and thoughts to him and whatever. Okay, yes?

M. Engel: I have one other – I have a follow up to Bill Tolhurst’s comment. I wonder if the committee could check whether shifting to this has any kind of impact on GPA’s. I would have thought it would have had the opposite effect that Bill suggested, especially if professors have the tendency to round up but not to round down. If you have somebody who’s at the B+, high B+ that you would normally round up to an A, if you give them a B+ then their GPA’s it seems to me would be lower than – so I’m curious whether it really would have the impact of pulling up student GPA’s.

President Willis: I rather suspect that it would not have a uniform effect over every faculty member. Some people are going to go one way; some people are going to go the other way and it’s just going to – anyway, we’ll see. All right, anything else for Bill?

B. Economic Status of the Profession Committee – Jim Lockard, Chair – report (Pages 10-11)

President Willis: Okay, going on to Economic Status of the Profession, Jim?

J. Lockard: Thank you. I won’t go every single item in the report which you have in the packet today on pages 10 and 11. Let me just call your attention to a couple of things of the most significance out of it all. Item #5 is simply a report back to you on one item that has been considered by the University Benefits Committee, namely why is there no support whatsoever for very high cost to individuals who require hearing aids. The answer is CMS says, no we can’t afford it but beyond that, one of the problems that we have in trying to address the issue is having absolutely not a clue as to the scope of the issue on this campus. We don’t know if there are five people or five hundred who would benefit from such a thing and so if anyone has information about the scope of the problem personally or otherwise, it probably would be useful because we really do not know what we’re dealing with on that one. Point #6 is a continued request for your cooperation in trying to share information as we provide it to you with your colleagues. The packet as it went out for today prompted two requests already for this report in electronic form which I was more than happy to provide. Donna could do the same; she got it from me that way. If anybody would like to share this in its entirety with your department colleagues, please just ask either one of us and we’ll gladly give you the whole thing electronically to share as best you can. I think the biggest problem we face here is that people simply do not understand what’s going on or they have bad information and we’re going to try to correct that as best we can.

Point #7 recalls something that you should be aware of already but I find a lot of people have forgotten or do not fully understand; that has to do with purchasing prior public service credit
from institutions. In a nutshell, until a very recent change in the law, anyone who had prior public service which can I believe, but please do not hold me to this, stretch all the way back to undergraduate student employment in a state university, potentially buy that credit into the SURS system. It is not cheap to do so but it is a whole lot better today when you can it either through payroll deduction over a period of time using pre-tax dollars or even potentially take money out of existing retirement accounts and simply use it, tax-deferred, no penalties to purchase that credit. Consider that option. Talk to the HR people if you have prior service that you might want to consider bringing into the SURS system. To know whether that’s beneficial or not we need to look a little beyond that but let me make the most important point of all and that is very simply this. If you have such credit, for some of you that might be 10, 15 or 20 years ago maybe even more at some other institution, it’s absolutely incumbent upon you whether you think you will ever buy it or not to get that verified with SURS now before everyone who ever knew you that long ago is long gone and the records, as has been the case at the U of I for instance, have been destroyed. You need to get it recorded because once it’s been recorded with SURS as valid public experience, you’re under no obligation whatsoever to pay for any of it but at least the potential is there should you chose to do so. But if you wait so long that nobody can verify it for you, it’s gone; you’ll never see it. So take that step now if you even remotely think you need or have the opportunity to do something like that. It only gets harder every year to get the verification done.

Finally, point #8 – would it be worthwhile for you or not – I can tell you right now the most expensive time to buy in is military credit. Almost nobody can afford to do that. It’s public service in institutions, schools, etc. that are the best ones. But at any rate, in order to find out what it might be worth to you if you’ve never logged in to become a registered member on the SURS website, it’s the best few minutes of your time you will take. The directions are there in point #8 as to how to do it. Once you do that, you no longer have to wait until November, December whenever it is that SURS gets around to mailing you a paper copy of your annual benefits statement. It will be there weeks before you will ever see it in the mail. Secondly, you can use the SURS benefits estimator to play with such things as “gee, if I bought in two years of prior service, what would it do for me five, ten, fifteen years down the road”. You can play with any parameters you want. It’s a fabulous system to work with and you can see exactly what the impact would be as they can best estimate it at this point in time. All you have to do is sign up. It takes a few moments to get the job done and from then on you can play with all these various things. It’s really enlightening to look at it and see what it might do for you, either scaring the hell out of you or encouraging you to realize it’s not as far off as it might seem depending on the circumstances.

One last thing that came up after I had sent this material to Donna already – just a preview - there will be in your mail we think, we’re not sure – it might be electronic – but somehow within the next couple of days Human Resources will put out its annual reminder of what needs to be done should you need medical care of whatever during the university shut-down. However that comes, don’t throw it away. You could end up paying a heck of a lot out of your pocket by not following the procedures and when there’s no one on campus you can call, you need that information. So regardless of how you get it, do keep it at hand just in case something unfortunate were to happen.
President Willis: Let me just point out that Jim’s report as well as the other ones you will find in here are also on the Faculty Senate web page attached to the agenda so – anything that’s in here, you can already get on the web. All right. Carole?

C. Minor: I have a question about #7 for Jim. Are these forms for buying in this time on the web?

J. Lockard: I don’t think so; not that I know of and it would be best to either make direct contact with SURS or talk to somebody at HR about doing it. I’ve done it myself and I don’t remember the exact procedure any more. I just know there was nothing cumbersome about it except getting the verification from the previous employer. That’s the problem.

President Willis: Yes, Nancy?

N. Castle: On #5 – I’m with the Department of Communicative Disorders and we have the Speech and Hearing Clinic and in fact when I got the agenda, I did go and talk to our Speech and Hearing Director and the department chair and we’d be happy to provide you with the numbers. We’re probably the key place on campus. Up until recently, we used to give – I think we used to give our hearing aids to faculty at cost. It’s become cost prohibitive to do that. Students, of course, get services by virtue of their fees but they don’t get hearing aids for free. This also has been an issue that the Illinois Speech, Language and Hearing Association has taken up with various boards and so they’d be glad to work with you on that. What I’ll do Jim is e-mail you and then we can cc each other so we can all be in touch. Sure.

President Willis: Okay, yes?

J. Jeffrey: Question on #7 on the graduate assistant possibility of purchasing credit as a GA. Several years ago I went through the bureaucracy to get certified by the institution I was at only to be told at the last minute all the certification was in, by SURS, no graduate assistant time could be purchased because it was half time because I was a student as well as a graduate assistant as is the common situation. Has there been a change in the law?

J. Lockard: Not that I’m aware of but it almost sounds to me that you may have had the misfortune of dealing with someone at SURS who didn’t quite understand the whole thing.

J. Jeffrey: How could that be?

J. Lockard: That is amazing, isn’t it? I’ll have to think about that one a bit. I’m not sure how it could have happened. I really don’t know. There are stipulations about percentage of time worked that are required before it’s purchasable but as far as I know and I think this was true in my own situation because I had that very same thing – a twenty hour appointment is eligible.

J. Jeffrey: Great, I’ll have them push it.

J. Lockard: They told me the same thing. Don’t take no for an answer.
President Willis: Okay, other comments or questions for Jim?

C. Resource, Space and Budget Committee – C.T. Lin, Chair

President Willis: Okay, Resource, Space and Budget, I believe, has no report; they’ve been stood up by Chief Grady after having been stood up by the Provost last month.

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Ngoyi Bukonda, Chair

President Willis: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities I believe also has no report.

E. Rules and Governance Committee – Gretchen Bisplinghoff, Chair

President Willis: Rules and Governance, Gretchen was not able to come today but she told me she doesn’t have a report either.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Stephen Nord, Chair

President Willis: Elections also has no report.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

President Willis: We have no Unfinished or New Business that I know of.

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

President Willis: Are there any comments or questions from the floor? Yes, David.

D. Wagner: I don’t know if this is a comment but for about five years I’ve been trying to get a discussion of the ACT scores and I’ve been told on two occasions that we would get to it. We never have and this ties in with what I said earlier, that this seems to be a very appropriate time to consider ACT scores with the increased enrollment so I would like that put on the agenda sometime if possible.

President Willis: All right, how about I see what information I can get from the appropriate offices and then we can go from there. All right, any other comments or questions? If not, I would entertain a motion to adjourn.

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Athletic Board minutes
C. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality
D. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
E. Minutes, Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum
F. Minutes, Graduate Council
G. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes
H. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
I. Minutes, University Benefits Committee minutes

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:30 p.m.