
D. Gough attended for N. Castle.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

President Peters was added to the agenda, which was then approved as amended.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2, 2005 FS MEETING

(Pages 3-8)

The minutes were approved with minor amendments.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. President Peters

P. Stoddard introduced the president of the university, Dr. John Peters.

President Peters updated the Senate on budgetary and legislative matters. The budget process is still in its earliest stages, so there is not much on which to report. Possible legislative efforts that would affect the university include bills dealing with textbooks, naming rights (such as for buildings and endowed chairs), and pouring rights, such as the contract NIU currently has with PepsiCo, the proceeds from which go in part to the USOAR program for undergraduate research.
The president has indicated that he is making a new aspect of his job increasing the university’s endowment. Endowments, such as for professorships, fellowships, and scholarships, provide the university with a stable, forecastable source of income.

At the national level, the president has been helping lobby for increasing Pell Grants, retaining the Perkins Loans, and helping save the Upper Bound Program. He is trying to shed some of his national obligations, however, so that he can devote more time to fundraising and addressing programmatic issues at NIU. He is also trying to shed his responsibilities as President of the Mid-American Conference, which has found educational and rewarding for NIU as well as for himself.

The president was appointed to the Abraham Lincoln Commission on Study Abroad. This commission was the inspiration of the late Senator Paul Simon. Former Governor Edgar, Senator Durbin and State Senator Kirk are also on the Commission. The plan is to encourage more of our undergraduates, those who do not traditionally experience a study abroad situation, to do so in huge numbers; half a million a year at about a $7,000 per stipend.

The president has a growing concern about free speech and academic freedom issues. There’s an ideological twist to this. There’s a report, about the ideology of professors, out of George Mason that shows that well over the majority of professors are liberal in their political philosophy. There are people who’ll make something out of that.

The president feels the textbook issue isn’t going to go away. It’s picking up steam nationally. There’s a federal tax credit proposal in the Congress to make expenditures on textbook materials a tax credit. There’s a shell bill in the Legislature, Illinois Legislature, to make textbook purchases tax exempt.

F. Bryant asked about the projections for fall admissions. President Peters replied that the Enrollment Management Committee is attempting to keep enrollments flat at where they were last year. 42% of our enrollment has been transfer students and that’s been going down. We’ve made a simple, smart adjustment which is that if you come in before 60 hours, you’ve got to have a higher GPA. We will probably not be more selective. What we need to do is make sure our admission requirements are modern and up to speed so students can be successful here given our programs.

B. Steve Cunningham will be attending to discuss pension proposals

P. Stoddard introduced Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Steven Cunningham.

S. Cunningham summarized the state’s budget concerns, pointing out that the current pension shortfall (almost $45 billion) is the result not of policies and practices of the current administration, but of years (decades?) of under-funding by the state. The 1995 Funding Plan partially addressed this problem. Under funding of SURS represents only about 4% of the problem, but the Governor’s proposals realize 38% of their savings from reductions in SURS benefits.
Cunningham went through the various pension proposals for SURT. These include, for new hires, 1) limiting the automatic annual annuity increase to the lesser of 3% or the CPI, and allowing the increase only on the first $24,000 of annuitant’s annual pension, 2) eliminating the money purchase option, 3) requiring universities to fund additional benefits resulting from pay increases exceeding 3% during the final four years of employment, and 4) increasing retirement age. Affecting all members would be a limit on the interest rate used to calculate the money purchase plan benefits.

C. Minor asked about the magnitude of the difference the interest rate limit would make to benefit level. S. Cunningham indicated that the difference grows with time. For example, 10 years from now, maybe only 20% of employees would see a money purchase retirement whereas now it’s 60% of employees. C. Minor then asked about priorities in dealing with these proposals. S. Cunningham answered that it is best to point out that SURT is being asked to shoulder more than its fair share, despite (or because of) the fact that it is the best performing plan.

B. Miller asked for clarification regarding capping the high number of years that someone could have. S. Cunningham responded that the high four year average relates to the general formula that applies to everyone and that what was proposed is not to really cap the amount of growth. There is already a 20% per year limit on that. The employer would become responsible for making supplementary contributions to the retirement systems for liabilities created by salary increase histories greater than 3% per year in any of those high four years so it shifts the burden of liability from the general state budget to the independent university/community college/school districts’ budgets. Therefore, it is a disincentive for employers to authorize salary increase beyond 3% per year. B. Miller pointed out that women oftentimes achieve things later in their careers and so the data would suggest that they sometimes would not achieve these senior level positions at all or sometimes later and so they would be shut out under these choices. W. Tolhurst asked if there would be any exemptions from the 3% limit. S. Cunningham replied that the current exceptions are not incorporated into the Governor’s budget proposal. There are no exceptions. W. Tolhurst reasoned that this means that the university could have an economic reason not to allow senior people to do extra teaching. P. Stoddard thought of another scenario, to wit, if someone towards the end of their career writes a nice grant and gets a lot of money, there would be a disincentive for the university to actually follow through on that and support this person and summer salary from the grant because the university would then become liable for that extra benefit.

P. Stoddard asked if Cunningham knew anything about the summer work schedule decision. S. Cunningham said that last year the decision was announced in mid-April/early-April. President Peters indicated that we need to be on a similar track this year.

P. Stoddard announced that the Provost indicates that the summer budget is set.

P. Stoddard further announced that the Presidential Teaching Professorships were selected. They go to Jeff Chown from the Department of Communication; William Koehler from the School of Music, and Parviz Payvar from the Department of Mechanical Engineering. Congratulations from the Senate for a job well done.
V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

A. Faculty Personnel Advisor

**B. Miller** moved to reappoint Curt Behrens as Faculty Personnel Advisor. The motion was seconded.

The motion passed.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Joseph “Buck” Stephen – report

**J. Stephen:** We met with the State Director of Educational Reform, Elliott Regenstein. The FAC was extremely hostile about the attack on the SURS pension plan. We aggressively attacked him on the PPA issue when there are no similar reforms at the high school level. Illinois has some of the strictest requirements for graduating from high school but we increasingly see extremely unprepared students coming from all over the state. Regenstein says that they have an understanding that the university wants to be left alone and they need to exercise some restraint; however, no promise of an even approach is made to higher education.

E. Rules and Governance – Augden Windelborn, Chair – report (Page 13)

1. Change in Order of Business. **ACTION ITEM**

**A. Windelborn** moved to amend the Bylaws so as to reorder the Agenda, allowing University Council members to leave early, and essentially miss only the committee reports that they normally hear at Council meetings as well.

**J. Stephen** seconded the motion.

**B. Miller** noted that the “Questions from the Floor” section followed the reports, and asked about University Council members who wanted to raise a question.

**P. Stoddard** responded that they could stay.

The motion passed.

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – report (Pages 9-10)

**J. Stephen** reported that all 48 recommendations for sabbatical leaves were approved. Trustee Boey made a very positive comment about the importance of sabbaticals to the university. New
programs in Industrial Management, Art Education and Computer Science were approved; the emphasis in Acoustics within Physics and the specialization in Elementary Education were deleted at the request of the departments in question.

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Xueshu Song – report (Page 11)

**P. Stoddard** reported that with the exception of the student health fee, the university was able to keep the total increase in student fees under 3%. The student health fee, however, did go up almost 24% which is essentially beyond the university’s control. There was a lot of input and feedback from the Student Association throughout the process.

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Donna Smith and Shey Lowman – report – walk-in

S. Lowman referred Senators to the written report, and added that she has available (via email at el0ssl1@wpo.cso.niu.edu) the 10 pages of substantial legislation that was given to the subcommittee.

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

**P. Stoddard:** Trustee Boey again made a strong, affirmative statement about the sabbatical program. The Board extended President Peter’s contract annually until 2010, and also approved retroactively a 3% raise for the president in August and a 1% raise in January which parallels the raises that the rest of the community got. Finally, the President announced the creation of an endowed scholarship in the general field of public service, in his and his wife’s names.

**VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

A. Academic Affairs – David Lonergan, Chair – no report

B. Economic Status of the Profession – Radha Balamuralikrishna, Chair – report


**P. Stoddard** indicated that included in the packet is a *Chronicle of Higher Ed* article about flexible tenure processes, from a study by the American Council on Education and the Sloan Foundation. **B. Miller**, regarding the academic career pipeline, especially for women, commented that although NIU does many things that some universities don’t do, there are many things that we could do better at NIU and it is the Faculty Senate that oftentimes must speak for new faculty. We don’t do nearly as good a job as we oftentimes think that we do. Data indicate that when people – men and women – are happy at their institutions, they perform better. **L. Kamenitsa** added that the one step that we’ve taken in this direction does not come anywhere near even mining the depths of what’s in the article much less what’s in the whole study. **J.**
Newman-Ryan noted that although the article concentrates on childcare issues and there are other issues such as care of elderly parents (which affect both genders) that somebody should be paying attention to on campus if they’re not already. W. Tolhurst suggested it would be best to use the new leave/tenure clock policy as a starting point for any further work in this area.

P. Stoddard indicated that this is an important issue, and that the committee will be assigned with following up on these issues in the fall term. B. Miller stressed the need for education of faculty and department chairs about issues related to tenure/promotion/leave issues and that this is not just a faculty issue but it is an issue for students and staff, as well.

C. Resource, Space, and Budget – C. T. Lin, Chair – no report

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Joseph “Buck” Stephen, Chair – no report

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Gretchen Bisplinghoff, Chair – no report

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Letters from Joseph “Buck” Stephen, Shey Lowman, Donna Smith to Michael Madigan, Tom Cross, and Robert W. Pritchard (Pages 14-18)

B. Letter from The Faculty Senate of Eastern Illinois University discussing state pension system (Page 19-20)

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

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
K. Letter of Acceptance of Nomination from Paul Stoddard (Page 21)

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:42 P.M.