

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.

THOSE FACULTY SENATE MEMBERS NOT PRESENT: Baker, Butler, Ceisla, Doederlein, Hamlet, Johnson, Kolb, Markle, Peters, Ridnour, Schoenbachler, D. Smith, M. Smith, S. Song, X. Song, Tollerud, Walton

I. CALL TO ORDER

P. Stoddard: Order, order. Let’s consider ourselves called to order please. This is the Faculty Senate Meeting for Wednesday, October 5, which is today hopefully.

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

P. Stoddard: The first order of business is the adoption of the agenda. We will have one new item under New Business regarding centralized advising so we’ll put that under “B” for New Business.

Obviously, we have a guest here, Representative Robert Pritchard to the Legislature for Illinois so I’d like to give him as much time as he can give to us so I’d like to zip through what we can quickly.

Can I have a motion to approve the agenda as amended? Second? Any further discussion? All in favor please say aye. Any opposed? Great.

The agenda was approved as amended.

III. APROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2005 FS MEETING

(Pages 3-7)
P. Stoddard: Next up is approval of the minutes. Any corrections or comments about the minutes? That was quick. Correction?

J. Stephen: I was present; I’m not listed.

P. Stoddard: Any other corrections? All in favor of the motion to approve the minutes with Professor Stephen present please say aye. Opposed? Okay, great.

The minutes were approved as corrected.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Robert Pritchard will attend meeting to answer questions

P. Stoddard: My first and only announcement at the moment is that we do have with us Representative Pritchard. We asked that you send in some questions that you may have for the Representative. We have forwarded those on to his office so that he’d have some time to prepare suitable answers to those. He will address those and he will also address any other questions as they come up so I will turn this part of the program over to him and thank him again very much for coming to speak to us today.

R. Pritchard: Mr. President, thank you and good afternoon. I feel like I’m a little bit at home coming to this body. My wife served on the Faculty Senate for a time and also on the University Council so I feel I’ve heard a little bit of the agendas and discussions that you’ve had in the past. As State Representative though, I’m really pleased to speak before the Senate because I don’t get the chance to do that in Springfield so I really appreciate the opportunity to be with you and to discuss really some important issues that both of us feel. As you know, I’m a product of the State University system. I was a faculty member previously in my career. My family is deeply involved in education and I have a wife, as you know, a son and a brother who are faculty members at other universities at this time. I certainly have felt concerned about NIU since I took over this position from Dave Wirsing who was a very strong advocate of Northern Illinois University and, as I’ve said, with my long record here in the community and having a family member involved in the university, the university has been a part of my life as well and I’ve recognized the significant economic contribution that the university makes to this community and its important role so I’ve tried to stay abreast of some of these issues and certainly as I have been in Springfield representing the university and the employees of the university, many of the issues that you’ve raised with me today have been on my radar screen of key issues and topics that I have spoken out about and I hope you recognize that I’ve tried to advocate the positions that many of you have in those areas.

You’ve asked several specific questions and what I would propose to do is to kind of work through in some kind of a narrative fashion, responses to those. I certainly welcome, if you want to interrupt or if you have questions at the end, to please raise those questions as well.
Pensions of course was one of the items that a number of you had responded to. It’s a topic that I have spoken of and I hope you have followed some of those public utterances as well as some of the comments that I have made at other forums. Clearly, when we started the legislative session the past year, starting all the way from the Governor’s budget message in February through all the representatives and senators that I spoke with, everyone had a commitment to living with the pension repayment that was negotiated in the mid-ninety’s. At that time as you may remember, we had a crisis in under-funding of the pension funds and we had five funds in the state as well as the State University retirement system and at that time, a negotiated agreement was worked out on how we would wrap up state payments to reach a 90% level of investment in our obligations to you and those that have proceeded you at the university to build a sound retirement system and we were ramping up to those payments this year when we really had the first significant payment of something like 2.6 billion dollars that was supposed to be made and everyone was making a commitment that we weren’t going to shortchange our commitment to you and to other employees in trying to deal with the state’s fiscal policy. But when all of the talks failed and I think the leadership of the House and the Senate looked at the fast-approaching May 31st adjournment date, they opted out for an idea that clearly a few months before would not have flown and that was underpay the pension system which would generate revenue to fund other priorities that some people had in this state. I didn’t join them in that effort. In fact, our vote in the House was 53 no, and 61 yes. It was a very partisan issue. In the Senate likewise, it was 32 to 26. Again, a very partisan issue and I think my colleagues on my side of the aisle raised the fiscally irresponsibility of the whole funding mechanism, that we would shortchange pensions in order to increase spending and that really was an unheard of concept. The fact that we underpaid our pension liability was not new. In fact, if you look back over our histories, you can go back more than thirty years and we never once met our obligations to paying pensions. So, the fact that we had an agreement in ’96 and were moving toward commitment to reach 90% equity funding by the year 2045 was really a commitment that everyone had made at that time and we had stayed on course until we got to this year and we felt it was irresponsible because not only did we under-fund by something like 1.2 billion dollars this year, we’re going to do a like amount of under-funding next year – the election year – and because of what we do in 2007, what we do in 2008 and 2009 will also be less than what we should have paid. So, our accountants on our side of the aisle have looked at this underpayment and we’re estimating that something like 3.5 billion dollars will not be paid into the fund as scheduled by the year 2010 and by that time we then move to an accelerated schedule of payments and if we can’t pay 2.6 billion dollars this year, I don’t know how we’re going to pay 4 billion dollars or 6 billion dollars in the next five to ten years. So, we’re setting ourselves up for some real failure and continued practice of under-funding and it’s that kind of fiscal policy that I spoke against and my colleagues spoke against to no avail but nevertheless, we stated what seemed to be a more sound policy and we can get into if you want to what were some of the alternatives but in the final analysis and the majority and the leadership of the House and Senate felt it was easier to underpay because there are safeguards against people who are in the system already; that there weren’t be any underpayments according to our Constitution and new employees would be hired under different rules and we would just have a two-tiered system. So really that’s a little background on where we have gotten to the current situation. When you look at Senate Bill 27 which was that enabling legislation, it under-funds as I said, for two years so we won’t have to debate this issue next year but it also under-funds over the next five years and again, as I said, when we look out over the next forty or so years, we’re estimating that it’s probably going to be
25 to 30 billion dollars in under-funding and the fact that if we every do catch up, it will cost every citizen in this state $3,900.00 to meet our obligations that we would have put in if we had kept to this schedule. And what really is sad about this policy choice, is that it doesn’t use the leveraging of compounding and I know many of you and certainly the accountants in the audience can explain it better than I, know that if you invest in and let your money compound, we’re going to reach that level of full funding and not have to worry about the liquidity of our assets when we reach the time that you will be retiring and others will be retiring in the system. Senate Bill 27 also requires employers, in this case the universities across the state, to purchase additional liabilities if, in the last few years of your working careers, salary increases exceed 6%. So any additional liabilities for increased responsibilities or new duties that you may have or some other contractual agreements are going to cost the university more dearly according to this bill. It further creates an advisory or task force to consult with the House and Senate in terms of further reforms that might be made to the pension system and I might digress for a moment to say that the university pension system is one of five pension systems in the state all of which have generally been under-funded all of their histories and I think what we have come up with is we’ve increased the benefits in these funds without ever worrying about what the revenue stream was into these funds and really that is an irresponsible long-term vision that is unsustainable and we’re looking now at pensions consuming fast-approaching 20% of our budget and growing almost experientially over the next twenty to forty years so that clearly the pension system as we have it, the Medicaid system as we have it, and some of our other expenditures in education is unsustainable at the rates of growth we’ve been looking at and at desires that the constituents have across the state along with all the other priorities that we have set in the state legislature. So, we have a situation that requires more adjustments and more reforms than what we dealt with in this bill. This fourteen-member commission or advisory task force has been appointed. It has met once already I believe and by statute is supposed to report to the General Assembly by November 1 so it doesn’t have much time to do its work and, in fact, as an aside, many of us are skeptical that it will really do its work because if you look at the history of the General Assembly, a lot of the reforms that are forced SURS or the TRS system or others that have occurred have all been done in the last minute, backroom deals that reach some type of compromise that we on the House floor and Senate floor hardly have a chance to read, let alone understand the consequences before having to vote on them. So, there’s really some skepticism that the taskforce will have any meaningful forms and that, in fact, there probably will be other forms that will creep into legislation during the last year or two, at least certainly according to Speaker Madigan’s comments in several different committees and occasions. The Senate Bill 27 also changes the money option purchase formula and I know Steve Cunningham has shared with faculty a number of epistles explaining some of the consequences of that. Again, this was a concept that was put in place to give some recognition of the fact that the SURS members and annuitants do not have access to the Social Security retirement system and it is one way to keep compensation for university faculty and staff at a more competitive level with other universities in other state but again, with the Governor’s leadership and with the majority in the House and the Senate, they changed that process not only changing it for new hires, but also saying that the comptroller rather than the trustees of the fund would set the interest rate that’s paid to members of the annuity. So, you see, those were some of the major changes that occurred in this bill. It does pose a great, in my view, fiscal risk to the solvency of the retirement fund and many people aren’t able to gauge the risk exposure level until we get down the road a few years and we see what the spending practice is of future legislators. I’m just pessimistic that given our thirty year
or so history and given the actions that were taken this year, that when push comes to shove, there isn’t a lot of commitment to the obligations and the promises that have been made to you.

So when we get down to another question here, what can we do about it, I think there are some actions that we ought to start strategizing and some plans that we ought to put in place to try to protect what we have today let alone erosion in what we have today. I also would like to mention as an aside, if many of you have read the Midweek this week, there is an article in there dealing with the appointment of the Executive Director to the SURS Board and I think you will note that the Governor has interjected politics into the functions of the Board and the Trustees unlike any prior governor. That the governor has always left it up to the Trustees to pick the staff and the Governor has made a recommendation that’s purely a political recommendation. In talking with Irene Rubin, it became very clear that the Governor’s nomination has no experience in managing an organization with assets the size of SURS and certainly doesn’t bring any investment skills or experience to the table so all we can conclude is that it’s a political appointment that will act at the behest of the Governor and I think we need to argue that and we need to fight that appointment. The appointment is up to the Trustees and they are in a process of looking at a nation-wide search for the new Executive Director. The note of caution is that of the nine-member Board of Trustees, four of their terms expired this June and they haven’t been reappointment yet by the Governor so now we have a further evidence of political influence into the functioning of your Board of Trustees and the soundness of the policies with which they might come forward. So, that’s why I have been working with her and working with many of you in trying to raise our concerns with the Board; trying to raise our concerns to the Legislature and with the oversight committees that we have in trying to say let’s keep professionalism here; let’s keep someone with the experience and credentials that’s going to do the best job of multiplying and managing the assets that you have been invested and to whatever degree the state has invested in your retirement system.

Moving on to one of the other questions, “how can the state more fairly divide up higher education budgets”. NIU doesn’t seem to be getting its fair share and certainly faculty and staff have been asked to assume additional responsibilities and have had larger class sizes in the last few years as Northern and other state universities continue to grow. This is certainly an area that I’m concerned with as serving on the Committee for Higher Education in the House as well as higher education appropriation and I have verbalized repeatedly in our hearings and with the Board of Higher Education, the concern of adequate funding. We fought very hard for level funding last year in the budget when the Governor wanted to continue to have rescissions and other holdbacks and under-funding of our state universities. We were successful in getting a flat budget last year. This year I was advocating and joining some colleagues in working towards an increase. The Board of Higher Education had recommended a 1% increase which was extremely modest when you look at the under-funding that’s occurred over the last few years and I thought very appropriate, but in the final analysis, that was not successful as well and we came out with a second year of flat budgets. I applaud the president and the administration here at Northern for doing the accounting magic that they somehow were able to do to give the kinds of increases that they were able to make to staff and faculty. Certainly they’re long overdue and more is needed but given where we are in the state’s commitment to funding higher education, that’s the best we can do at this point. So the question is, how do we come about a different policy and a different priority. Those clearly are on my high priority list of changing the importance of funding higher
education. In fact, there is a summit that the Board of Higher Education is holding on November 9 in Chicago that is going to try to deal with this whole area of what is our commitment, what is our priority and what is the role of higher education in the state of Illinois’ priorities as well as in our nation’s priorities. A number of other university presidents have spoken out on this issue. Perhaps you’ve read some of that dialogue and I think I’m anticipating that President Peters may speak to this as he gives the State of the University Address tomorrow. So we might look together at what is the role; how do we define that role, and how do we build public support for that role. Clearly, if you look at K-12 funding and the discussions that have been ongoing in this community and you look at the referendums that have a checkerboard success rate across the state of Illinois, there seems to be a changing priority for education in this state. I think as educators and advocators for education, we need to fight that. We need to be out with stronger messages of the importance again of reminding people of the importance of education rather it is, you know, for early childhood all the way through higher education or lifelong learning, education is our key to world competitiveness. It is our key to having an educated workforce that is able to attract businesses to our community and it is a key to keeping property tax rates at a more reasonable level for our homes so that we can have business and industry to share in that property tax burden. So I think we need to strategize again on what our messages are and sharing with our friends and neighbors and voters so that there is again an appreciation for education and an understanding of how an educated electorate is really the foundation of a strong democracy and if we are to preserve our democracy as we try to spread that democracy around the world, I think we need to attend to our own home situation and shore-up public support for education at all levels of the learning process.

Another one of the questions dealt with was getting the Governor to pay attention to the quality of higher education in Illinois and how would I suggest to work on that agenda as a state representative. I guess a simple answer is I’m going to continue to try and be more effective as advocating as I have been advocating and to try to do a more serious role of strategizing with learned individuals who understand education better than I perhaps on how we can get these messages across not only to the Governor but as I said to the electorate of this state because if we aren’t successful in that effort, I think we’re all going to be in an continuing downward spiral of less state commitment to all levels of education, more privatelization of education and more reliance on corporate and research support for the operations of education at all levels. So I think it is a serious topic that we need to engage in in the university community as well as more broadly and what are those messages and what are those strategies to help share the importance. I think you don’t have to look very far to see the importance of, as I said earlier, a very informed, education workforce. That is our key; that is our competitive advantage and we need to continue to work to take advantage of that.

There was also a question that deal with a bill that I passed this year dealing with vocational academies and some of you may have a particular more interest than others in the fact of am I trying to in some ways distract from the preparation of students for higher education and a two-year education beyond high school. Really, nothing could be more further from the truth. What I’m trying to do is look at all of our students who are attending school. I have heard in many of the committee meetings we’ve had of the dropout rates in many of our schools across the state and how many students don’t see the relevancy of education to their career interests and what they would like to do and where they feel their skills and their opportunities are for productive
careers. So I think we’ve got to look at those students who aren’t necessarily college bound, whether that’s two or four years, and are we preparing them and are we giving them the tools they need to be successfully employed after high school. This is certainly not a new concept. I think many of us that have gone through the study of history and democracy in this state know that rural schools and high schools many years ago, thirty years perhaps, had the multi-career and discipline track and that there was concern and there were courses and there was preparation for students who didn’t necessarily plan to go on to college and I think that’s they model that we were trying to return to and certainly in this community, we have a great role model in the Kishwaukee Education Consortium that works well with Kishwaukee College; that works well with the school districts in giving students an opportunity and it’s really that kind of success model that I was looking and saying we need to more broadly apply that across the state where school districts don’t see that opportunity and aren’t providing students with a choice in how they prepare themselves for productive lives. So the Career Academies Bill that I passed was modeled after legislation in other states. It sets up a program within a school. It’s a two-year program for juniors and seniors that relies on current faculty, that certainly does not diminish the qualifications of that faculty and encourages a partnership between that school district, between the community college and between businesses and other organizations in the community to work collaborative on instruction, to work collaborative on funding and internship opportunities so that when those students do graduate, they feel better prepared with the skills and tools to be successful in careers that may not require a college education and I think all of us know that there are a number of those skills, there’s a number of those trades that exist and are very important to our society and to our way of life. So the bill that I passed was a start down that road of moving towards vocational academies. It did not contain any funding. That’s something that I’m going to try to come back to, in this next year and in the following year to try to get some additional state board funding that could be applied to what school districts and communities can raise and apply on their own accord. Again, it would be very much like the model that we have seen at work and many of you may have had a part in in this particular community.

So these were the questions, I think, that were posed to me. I certainly would open the floor to any follow-up or any additional questions that you may have.

J. Stephen: First of all I’d like to thank you for inviting us to the bi-partisan budget meetings last spring. That was very informative and I believe you came away and informed other legislators of our concerns. Several other things I’ve noticed, I certainly support your career academy and the vocational institution. Iowa has an excellent program involved with that. Depending on where I eat and the fact that I am slowly learning Spanish, I congratulate you on your outreach to the Hispanic community by publishing in La Nuestra and I think that’s great. I see members of that community reading that. I have one random trivial question and then an observation. Is the General Assembly retirement fund still the most unfunded of the five?

R. Pritchard: I don’t think so.

J. Stephen: Okay, in 1995 it was. Also, are you aware that at the national level, there’s a house bill that is aimed at strongly reducing the amount of national funds available to public institutions? I think it’s House Bill 609 but I’m not positive.
R. Pritchard: I’m not aware of that but I’m not surprised at that. As I’ve said, what we see in Illinois is not unique. Across the country states are backing away from their commitment and their funding to higher education and I think really what’s happening on the federal level is your seeing more of the support from federal dollars channeled through some of the targeted research programs and I know the Institutes of Health and many of the other agencies have been relying more on universities to do research for them and that has taken some of the form of support. Clearly, when you look at the financial help that the states and the feds have given to students who attend has not kept pace with the increased costs that have been transferred to students and I think you’re all aware as the state, and all the other states, have decreased their funding, universities have little choice but to increase tuition in an off-setting amount. So really it’s been a shifting of the responsibility for funding public education and higher education onto the families across the states and we exacerbated that this spring in another bill where we totally eliminated the merit-based scholarships, supposedly increase to some degree the need-based scholarships, the merit-based MAP grants, but clearly there is a need in all families for some support and some help in funding the increasing costs of higher education.

J. Stephen: Thank you.

R. Pritchard: And going back to your comment on reflection, yes, I think the legislative retirement fund is probably still one of the most under-funded but when you look at the reforms that were put forward this spring – we didn’t touch the judges, we didn’t touch the state employees, we certainly didn’t touch the legislative pension system. Clearly, I think that’s wrong; it’s irresponsible. I didn’t come into this role with the hope of ever retiring with the state pension system. I had worked in private industry and have a pension system through that system but clearly many people do rely on it and we need to be responsibility and pay what is committed and what is owed.

P. Henry: Yes, I really – I appreciate your articulating these problems and I share your concern with the fact, especially with the pensions, that we’re getting to an unsustainable situation and as you mentioned later, the increased privatization of public education is something that is really a concern. Is there any way to approach this without increasing the tax support and by that I mean increasing taxes to bring more public money into the situation?

R. Pritchard: Well, this gets back to the whole debate of how do we fund governmental services and we’ve gone round and round with that the last couple of years, certainly the last two that I’ve been in the General Assembly to be more attentive to some of those discussions and what seems so fundamental to me is that if we could only increase our jobs and our business activities in this state at the rate of our neighboring states or at the average that this country has experienced during the last three years, we would have 500,000 more jobs than we do today and we would have more economic activity that would result in more taxes that would give us more revenue to deal with some of the human needs and other needs and priorities of this state. That is an agenda that I’ve been supporting for two years now. We put forward sound ideas that have never been allowed to even be debated in committee let alone debated on the House floor. Instead we keep talking about gambling expansion, we keep talking about cigarette taxes and fees that have, on experience level, driven business out of this state and certainly driven any
business that wanted to expand to expand in some other state than Illinois and I think we only have to look at what’s happened with the outcome of our fees and the policy that we’ve had to know that we’ve got to try something different if we want a different outcome and that’s why we’ve been proposing ideas, we’ll continue to try to frame them slightly different, to look at strategies and how we can work with the other side of the aisle to move these ideas forward because clearly when you look at what happened last year versus what happened this year, they’re day and night sessions in collaboration and cooperation. Last year there was agreement on both sides of the aisle working together on some common difficult problems to reach some solutions. This year almost from day one it was a very partisan issue. Only medical malpractice brought out parties together so we need to go back and look at some fundamental, I guess, rules of conduct of how we get legislation passed just as how you work together here on the Senate to work for some cooperative efforts towards common goals and I think that’s where we’re going to have to come back and try different strategies and fundamentally try to look at different ways of generating revenue in ways that are acceptable. Many people, including the Governor, feel that citizens are taxed enough so what we’ve got to do is look at how we’re spending those tax dollars and make sure they’re working as good as they can and try to stimulate our economy so that we get more tax revenue through natural growth.

**P. Henry:** Higher education as part of stimulating the economy is where we sort of get a vicious circle.

**R. Pritchard:** I agree but the Governor doesn’t necessarily see it that way and I don’t know, he’s never elaborated and in conversations he’s never been willing to really say what his problem is with higher education but almost since day one, it’s like he had a problem and maybe it was because he was a product of private education, I don’t know.

**P. Stoddard:** Anyone else have any questions for Representative Pritchard? In the back?

**B. Lusk:** This is basically just a pitch for my department since nobody else has questions. I’m from the School of Nursing. With your role in the education committee I just wanted you to be aware of the role of nurses with baccalaureate degrees and advanced degrees. I know that Governor Blagojevich has set aside some monies in terms of critical skills for nurse education in community colleges and I just want to emphasize the fact that they are producing good but different nurses and for the future of health care, we need more nurses with baccalaureate degrees so just for your information.

**R. Pritchard:** Well, I’m well aware of that. I attended a session over at Waubonsee Community College that representatives from Northern was at as well where they were trying to strategize on a new system for increasing the supply of nurses at all levels and skill levels across the state. I would much rather do that than open the doors if you will to people who have been trained in other countries who may be very competent individuals but I think there’s employment opportunities and certainly opportunities for people that are this country if we can somehow stimulate the training and the capacity that we have not only at Northern or at Kishwaukee College of Waubonsee Community College but in all of our educational systems where there are training programs today. Yes, I am aware of that and we’re continuing to try to advocate that and it’s my understanding that there has been good progress made between the articulation
programs and looking at new models that have accelerated the capacity of programs working in partnerships with hospitals to turn out more educated people.

Well, let me just say in closing I would welcome the opportunity to work with you, to work with President Peters and to work with the staff of this university on issues that are important to higher education. Clearly, you do drive the economy in this state. You certainly drive the economy in this region, in my district in particular, and you are a great engines for successful futures for the students of Northern Illinois University and I would just like to work with you in helping to build the research and work force training aspects of this university in any way that I can and with this game tonight, let me just say “Go Huskies!”.

P. Stoddard: Thank you very much Representative Pritchard. I hope we get to see you several times while you’re acting as our representative.

R. Pritchard: Feel free to call my office anytime. I’d be happy to meet here or wherever. So thank you.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

P. Stoddard: All right then, moving on. We’ve got no items for faculty senate consideration.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

P. Stoddard: We’ve got nothing we need to consent to today.

VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs – Kendall Thu, Chair – no report

P. Stoddard: Academic Affairs, I don’t believe has anything yet.

B. Economic Status of the Profession – Radha Balamuralikrishna, Chair – report (Pages 8-9) and handout on election of Medicare coverage – walk-in

P. Stoddard: Economic Status of the Profession, Chaired by Radha Balamuralikrishna, does have something.

R. Balamuralikrishna: Yes, Paul we do. As this is my first report this year, let me start off by saying what the committee does. We are a little bit nosey about things that affect the economic status. We look at positive things and negative – mostly negative things and we discuss among the committee of course and then report back here.

On a personal note, I should also say I prepare, or rather I report here, the findings and there are a lot of folks outside of academia and some within who believe that everything in education should end up in a report. I take a slightly opposite view. I feel that every report should end up in some kind of education and for a body like this, what does this mean – education to a group of
educators. That means something that stimulates healthy discussion and maybe raises our passion to do things to advance the status of our profession. I have something along those lines in this report for sure, but appear in the later stages of the report but for the most part, I will readily admit that this report reads much like the weather guy on the evening news, guy or girl, you know who talks a lot about how great the day was or not, you know, before moving on to something useful like the forecast. In fact, this past summer I was literally shouting at my TV; at the weather guy. You know, I know how the day was; I lived through it. Tell me about how it’s going to be like tomorrow. I would like to take the kids to the Brookfield Zoo I got a 3% raise. Speaking of a 3% raise, I’m sure I speak for many if not all of us and as Representative Pritchard pointed out, you know, it was some kind of magic that it happened considering the year 2005-2006 was proclaimed as the year of flat budget but I would be even more happier if I didn’t have to pay all but 3% of it to Sebby’s Shell Station on Lincoln Highway. By the way, gas prices have increased 47% this year compared to last year and many of you know this already.

Well anyway, coming to the text of the report here, I know that this was giving to you so I assume you all read through it so I’ll just focus on the highlight of the highlights here. Regarding health benefits, by the way, there are some small errors in the report. I’ll point them out as we move along. In the health benefits update, on the positive side we have a new hearing aid benefit which reimburses us up to $500 for the device itself. In addition some fees for consultation that is also covered. I’ve not mentioned that but that runs to maybe a hundred dollars or so. You all know that buying a hearing aid costs an arm and a leg so at the minimum, it costs about $3,000 but $500 is a good beginning I guess. By the way, the providers for prescription coverage and vision care, you know, they have changed and the vision care plan is administered through IMED – okay, it should be EYEMED, not IMED. Okay, other than that, I think there is really nothing I’d like to talk about here today unless you have any questions on that section right now – the health benefits update. Okay.

Regarding pension reform proposals, I think Representative Pritchard focused quite a bit on that and in prior meetings our president, Paul Stoddard, has said almost everything that’s here. One item that appears on page 2 of this report, you know the 1.55% contribution to Medicare, I believe Deborah Haliczer from Human Resources has a walk-in handout that will give you more information on whether or not you should consider participating in this. That requires some thought okay, so I think Debbie is going to talk about it following this.

In paragraph 2 of the second page, there is an interesting statistic that appears in quote. Okay, I wanted to call your attention to that for a minute. “In national IBHE peer group comparisons --- so all those numbers virtually say that we are below the median, okay, which really should be a matter of concern and we all know, you know, “lies, damned lies and status stake”. Okay, but then Paul Stoddard is on that committee too, isn’t he, he’s on the advisory committee so I would on any day trust Paul rather than Benjamin I guess. Who said that?

Lastly in the report, I bring to attention this FMLA Act. Also during this past summer, you know, I was surfing – not the worldwide web – but the TV channels trying to go from CBS to CSpan and I happened to catch the Judge Judy show. At that point, Judge Judy said “in my courtroom, it’s not the law that matters, it’s the spirit of the law”. Doesn’t the legal profession love Judge Judy? But I think this body is as good as any other body to talk about the spirit of the
family and the medical leave act. In one particular case in this *Northern Star* article, you know, it kind of highlighted student grievances about how they had to endure an instructor change when they were 80% through with the course. This is an ongoing thing, okay, this is fall semester 2005 so the faculty member in question was given twelve weeks leave, you know, through the FMLA and of course a temporary ad hoc instructor would cover during those twelve weeks but then this faculty member had to come back for the last three weeks of the semester and students in particular found that inconvenient, you know, disruptive and also in that article what appears in quotes there “Northern Illinois University is behind many comparable institutions when it comes to family and medical leave benefits for faculty”. So on that note, I conclude the report. Thank you.

**P. Stoddard:** You have actually a recommendation that goes at the tail end of that report, the last sentence?

**R. Balamuralikrishna:** Right, yeah. I think this issue transverses both the academic affairs and economic status. You know, particular the grievances of disruption of class to the students. That should be an academic affairs issue and the other thing about benefits for faculty. This leave is usually an unpaid leave, okay, and this article alludes to the fact there are some universities that are doing a better job, so we need to explore.

**P. Stoddard:** So in other words, you’d like to make a motion that Academic Affairs look into the impact of how FMLA is implemented, how that impacts students?

**R. Balamuralikrishna:** So moved.

**P. Stoddard:** See what happens when you miss an Executive Committee meeting? Is there any discussion? Would anybody like to discuss that motion or ask Rahda any questions about his report? All right, seeing none – oh, yes?

**K. Thu:** Are you asking us if we have any questions dealing with the report or in dealing with the Family Medical Leave Act?

**P. Stoddard:** Let’s just deal with the Family Medical Leave Act now, get the motion taken care of and then we can go on to other questions that you might have for Rahda. Okay, we have a motion on the table, a motion that’s been seconed to refer impact of implementation of FMLA on students to Academic Affairs. All in favor say aye. All opposed? Very good. Now, anybody who has any questions for Rahda regarding any part of his report.

**K. Thu:** I was just curious about the second paragraph on page 2 there, the second to the last sentence where

**R. Balamuralikrishna:** I agree, yeah. Does anybody know more about this?

**P. Stoddard:** Not offhand. Jody?
**J. Newman-Ryan:** I don’t know anything about that. I have another question. Fortunately, I haven’t filed any claims lately but on the first page, the second paragraph, it says there were no unusual delays. I recall months and months the last time I filed. Do we know what a usual versus an unusual delay is?

**R. Balamuralikrishna:** Four to six weeks is usual.

**J. Newman-Ryan:** Okay, so we’re below the year that it was a while back. Okay. Thank you.

**J. Stephen:** I have several claims that have been processed in a shorter time frame than four weeks.

**P. Stoddard:** Excellent, excellent. Why don’t we, since it’s been promised, give Deb a chance to quickly talk about the Medicare buy-in?

**D. Haliczer:** Hi everybody. I’m Deborah Haliczer from Human Resources. You know me as the bearer of bad news usually. This is actually an opportunity; it’s not bad news. As you will have received a memo from Steve Cunningham about a week ago talking about the opportunity to participate in Medicare, we’ve had a lot of questions about whether this effects you and what this is really about. I attended a briefing at the State Universities’ Retirement System just yesterday and hot-off-the-press prepared a brief summary of some information that might be helpful for you to know what this is all about so I’m passing that around. Can I ask you guys not to take one because you’re going to get one tomorrow? Thank you. My colleagues on SPS Council will get one tomorrow and Operating Staff Council. I only have 50 of them so if you don’t get one, please ask me and I’ll get you another one.

Okay, this is in reference to Public Act 940415 which gives university employees an opportunity to participate in Medicare. Let’s look at history and let me take a quick poll. How many of you were employed on or before March 31, 1986? Okay, you are the people we are talking about and as I looked around the room I counted about 15 people whose names I knew who are on my list of people affected and there are about 350 names at the university who are subject to this group. Those of us hired after April 1, 1986 are paying into Medicare and we will be able to get Medicare once we have our 40 quarters of credits on that so that’s 10 years. What this really affects is that group of faculty and staff who came to work before this magic date and according to recent legislation, we now the opportunity to begin to participate in Medicare if eligible and so the time table of what’s going to happen is – Steve sent out his memo the other day and it’s so brief as to be confusing – on the other hand, that’s what the law says. The implementation details have not been given to anybody by Social Security and so it’s going to take awhile for the details but what’s going to happen is we’ve prepared a list of people who are eligible for this pool of people. In January Social Security anticipates it’s going to send us all a memo saying you’re eligible to make contributions if you chose to participate. It’s called – it’s got a peculiar name – it’s called the “Medicare Referendum”. This is no referendum; it’s a one-time opportunity to make a decision to participate. In February SURS is going to be sending you what they call an “election ballot”. Again, it doesn’t sound like one that I’ve known but it gives you an opportunity to elect Medicare coverage. In the spring, we’ve requested that SURS come to campus and have informational meetings for people so that they can come and hear the details
and ask individual questions and we’ll provide you our usual detailed updates, but you right now have all the information that we know. The deadline for responding is May 15, 2006. If you don’t respond, this means you don’t participate and it’s an irrevocable decision so please read this memo and get your colleagues to read it. Later on we’ll get confirmation and the deductions will begin July 1, 2006. I’m not telling you all to make the decision immediately to participate in this because it’s an individual decision based on your personal situation. For example, my spouse would not have to participate in this even though he’s never paid into Medicare or Social Security in his whole career because I qualify and so if you qualify through having a spouse who qualifies for Social Security and Medicare, you might not chose to participate in this because there is no benefit to you since you’re going to get that Medicare anyway. If you’re eligible for Medicare through other employment prior to coming to Northern or if you almost enough quarters and are going to retire and work for a few more months or years and make those quarters, you might not chose to participate in this. So you’re all going to have to be making some individual decisions based on your personal situation and, again, this is all the information that we know. It will make you eligible for both Part A and Part B of Medicare and under my little bold point, another consideration – this is something that a lot of people don’t know – and that is this horrible situation where if you are eligible for Medicare and chose not to sign up for it or don’t know that you should sign up for it, when you turn 65 and are retired, you may then not be eligible to collect on your State of Illinois Health Insurance because it then becomes your secondary insurance. When Medicare should be your primary insurance, the state is going to shift responsibility for your bills to Social Security to Medicare and it is your responsibility to know this. This is something that the insurance office has been haranguing at SURS for for the last several years because even though there is a cryptic line in correspondence sent to all employees, I think a lot of people would not read that or would understand what it’s speaking in code so the Benefits Committee, Rahda and other colleagues, are really working at trying to figure out how to communicate this to people in ways that is comprehensible to a lay person, not a Medicare specialist. So it is explained to you at the point when you go through retirement counseling either through the SURS or through Northern. It’s mentioned in the all day retirement seminar that we do but it’s this crucial tidbit of information that really scares me because people wouldn’t know. My husband is one of these people. He retired; he never had Social Security credits and we learned to our chagrin and astonishment that if when he turns 65, he doesn’t apply for Medicare, which of course he doesn’t qualify for never having had credits, he will then lose the State of Illinois Health Insurance as his primary care insurance and only be able to collect the secondary insurance which is much less. So, you know, I hate insurance. It’s complicated. You don’t know the rules unless you really know the rules; they’re confusing and so I promise that we’ll be getting you information in the course of this year. Hopefully, in ways that are understandable but if you’re confused, call and ask. Right now at Human Resources there’s really no one that has very much information so probably you want to call me and ask. I have the list of names of people whose names have been submitted if you’re curious but you sort of know who you are based on the dates. Questions?

P. Stoddard: Buck?

D. Haliczer: Hi Buck.

J. Stephen: Is this sheet on the web anywhere?
D. Haliczer: No of course not because it has private, confidential information. It’s a document that we had to send to SURS saying who is eligible for this. Oh, my document? No, I just printed this off before coming here and it will be placed on the Human Resources website tomorrow.

J. Stephen: Okay.

D. Haliczer: You got it hot-off-the-press.

J. Stephen: Then I’ll wait a couple of days and find the web link before I notify my faculty in my department of this.

D. Haliczer: Yeah, but I did commit us to getting this on the web even thought it’s only as complete as it can be right now.

P. Stoddard: You can also post it on our website if you’d e-mail Donna a copy of it.

D. Haliczer: Oh sure, I can do that – I’d be happy to do that. Yes?

B. Tolhurst: A lot of this went by really quick. I want to ask to make sure that I understand. Say, like me, you don’t have enough quarters; you’re not eligible, you don’t have to pay. It’s not going to have a negative impact on your insurance after you retire. As it turns out, my wife will be eligible so I’m already taken care of. I don’t have to worry about it?

D. Haliczer: You don’t have to do this. Right.

B. Tolhurst: So a lot of the people on this list are going to be like me. Right? They don’t have to worry about this. I don’t have to think about it anymore. I don’t have to do anything.

D. Haliczer: You should think through your situation and be sure that you won’t be caught. We had a retired faculty member who felt that he didn’t qualify for Medicare because he had some quarters but not a lot. He knew that he wasn’t eligible but he’s been working somewhere else part time since retiring and to his astonishment, Medicare then became his primary. He felt no one told him that and therefore, he was told by his insurance company that they would only pay the co-pay portion, not the primary, big expense. I don’t know how to get the information out to everybody.

B. Tolhurst: But if your spouse is already covered ---

D. Haliczer: If your spouse is covered, you don’t have to do it.

B. Tolhurst: Okay.

J. Stephen: In Bill’s case, it’s very important that he sign up within 3 months of turning 65.
D. Haliczer: Yes, and what you’re often told about signing up for Medicare is you sign up 3 months before or after, trust me, you want to sign up 3 months before and certainly by the time you turn 65 because you only can begin collecting on the benefit once you have enrolled and if you wait until afterwards, and theoretically you can, but you’re out of pocket money so it’s foolish.

B. Tolhurst: So even though you’re eligible through your spouse, it doesn’t happen automatically, you have to sign up.

D. Haliczer: You have to sign up and it’s going to mean going off to visit the Social Security representative either in the regional office or in a local satellite place where they visit. They come to DeKalb every two weeks. You all have to have some conversations about this. There’s another one back there?

A. Senator: We have a faculty member who started in 1986 but retired or is in the process of retiring before May so what would happen to somebody would that? Would they be able to make a payment or would they just be out of luck?

D. Haliczer: My off the top of my head answer is probably would be out of luck but probably should come and talk to us at HR first and discuss this personally. Because I don’t know. I think it’s – because it doesn’t start until July 1 of 2006 so, not helpful.

P. Stoddard: Okay, Jody?

J. Newman-Ryan: What if the non-NIU but Medicare eligible spouse dies before the NIU person reaches 65?

D. Haliczer: Okay, that doesn’t matter. If you have been married 10 years or more, if your spouse was eligible, you are eligible. Even if you are divorced from someone and were married for 10 years, you are still eligible if they were eligible for Medicare.

P. Stoddard: Any other questions for Deb on this? At the risk of generating a lot of groans, I’ll point out that we also will get another opportunity to participate. This will be the ethics training again. Even though we did it last year, this is an annual event. Something you can put on your calendars and look forward to every year.

D. Haliczer: October 27 through November 29 you’re stuck again. I’ll send you the memo. Put up with it; deal with it. Get all your colleagues to do it. Get your students to do it or there’s the fine that they didn’t tell us before I talked to you last year. Last year we got, through a whole lot of effort, 100% compliance and so no one got fined. My goal was that no one at Northern got fined for not participating in ethics training. So have as many private conversations with me as you want about the concept of ethics training but it’s the law. You all have to do it and if you get a paycheck from Northern, you must do it.

J. Stephen: Is this an institutional fine or an individual fine?
D. Haliczer: It’s an individual fine so ----

J. Stephen: How much is it?

D. Haliczer: $5,000 is what we were told. So, when I talked to you last year they hadn’t told me about the fine. We finally kind of wiggled it out of the state people who said “well yeah, we can fine any individual up to $5,000 for failure to comply with this law and we could pursue them and there could be other legal consequences and so I got department chairs and secretaries and deans chasing people down to make them do this last year when I heard about the fine. So, remember fines and think about your graduate students or student workers or your extra help people or your retired colleagues who are teaching a class and don’t think of themselves as NIU employees anymore. They can all be fined if they don’t do this and they tell me that they did pursue people outside the university system for not complying so I’m on a mission to get no one fined.

P. Henry: It’s on the website again.

D. Haliczer: It’s going to go up. I’m busily writing Steve Cunningham’s memos on this one so you’ll get the ---

P. Henry: But you can take it on-line.

D. Haliczer: Yes, it’s on-line training.

J. Stephen: This came in under the gambling bill.

S. Webber: This is just a clarification that may apply to some other people as well. I coordinate an outreach program where I hire some professionals to teach sessions for me. I should have them do this as well?

D. Haliczer: If they get a paycheck, they’ve got to do it. Certain people who are considered “affiliates” don’t and certain people who are paid under very limited contracts don’t and if people are – oh, I found faculty who teach one class, don’t own a computer, have no access, have no computers in their office and I found ways to work around that so that they could do it in an alternative way. So people with disabilities, any kind of situation, I will work with them so that nobody gets fined.

P. Stoddard: Okay, great, thanks Deb.

D. Haliczer: Thank you very much.

J. Stephen: Deb, do you know if the Governor is required to take this ethics training.

D. Haliczer: Yes, actually technically everyone who is paid by the state, every official. It’s the state’s officials and employees as exact and so many people who are in official positions will have to take this as well or have already taken it as well. I remember a comment made by some
of your colleagues; it doesn’t necessarily make us ethical; it just makes us compliant with this law.

**J. Stephen:** Do you know how many times it took him to pass it? Have we seen a certificate?

**D. Haliczer:** Yes, I’m sure his certificate is on his wall.

**B. Lusk:** I have a question for you Deb. What about people who are on grants?

**D. Haliczer:** People who are on grants.

**B. Lusk:** Like external funding, you’re paying students to do things?

**D. Haliczer:** You might want to talk about their specific employment status because there are certain kinds of affiliate positions that are not subject to this and I will soon have a list of everyone who is expected to do it so ask me the individual question. I walk around with a list of 8,000 names.

**B. Lusk:** Thank you.

**D. Haliczer:** You’re welcome.

C. **Resource, Space and Budget – C. T. Lin, Chair** – *report* (Page 10)

**P. Stoddard:** Okay, moving on then, next up is Resource, Space, and Budget. C.T.?

**C.T. Lin:** Yeah, okay. The committee we have the meeting on September 21 and the meeting was chaired by Amy Rose of the University Council and the meeting was mainly to discuss the future direction and the future direction and future topic of this committee and the discussion. You know, the discussion was centered on buildings such as, you know, renovation and rebuilding of, you know, the current buildings etc., as well as the fundraising and the budget. Those are the things that the committee to hold future meetings on. So therefore, we are planning to invite different people to come to give us a presentation on those things there.

There are two important points that I think probably would be interested for your information. One is that the Associate V.P., Bob Albanese also attended the meeting and he indicated that the first thing is that is university policy is to paint a vacant office a no cost so therefore, you know, in your unit if there’s somebody who vacated an office, the university will paint the office without any cost so for the unit so I think it’s important. The second thing was a very quick communication between one of our member, Anne Hanley, and Bob Albanese related to the luck of the wheelchair assessability in Zulauf building and through the e-mail conversation in the past week or so we have received an e-mail and indicated that the particular project was started this fall to provide handicapped access to Zulauf Hall and the cost will be $29,730 and will be funded by the institutional accounting so that is very important I think so that’s my report.

**P. Stoddard:** Thank you C.T. Any questions? Okay, thank you again.
D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Joseph “Buck” Stephen, Chair – no report

P. Stoddard: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities has nothing at this point.

E. Rules and Governance – Nancy Castle, Chair – no report

P. Stoddard: Rules and Governance has nothing at this point.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Stephen Nord, Chair – no report

P. Stoddard: Elections and Legislative Oversight – we don’t have any elections today so they don’t have anything.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Questions concerning the changes to the Student Evaluation of Instruction

P. Stoddard: Moving on to New Business since we have no Unfinished Business, I was asked to open the floor essentially to any people or anybody who might have questions concerning changes to the Student Evaluation of Instruction. Fortunately, we have John Wolfskill here who helped formulate those changes or at least sat at the head of the committee that looked at that and basically this is something that grew out the University Council’s University Affairs Committee last year when it was charged with – they’re charged with periodically looking at the Student Evaluation form and how it’s used and it came out that the form was not being used consistently across campus. What was fair game – so these are the things we have the students fill out at the end of the year and generally they fill out – there’s three components. There’s the multiple choice questions, there are the student comments and then occasionally faculty might ask their own questions to get specific bits of information and the question was how much of that is to be used in the evaluation process and there were different levels that people or departments were using and so Academic Affairs tried to come up with a consistent policy to be used across campus. Basically, what they decided was that the multiple choice and the student comments were to be used in the evaluation process by departments. Any further use of those, any further dissemination of those results beyond the personnel committee of the department would only be done with the approval of the faculty member in question and any questions the faculty member himself or herself put together were the sole property of the faculty member and to only be used with that faculty member’s permission. I think I’ve summarized that correctly.

J. Wolfskill: Yes, except for the name of my committee, the Academic Policy Committee.

P. Stoddard: Okay, so make that correction, the Academic Policy Committee. Sorry about that. So basically, that’s the new policy as it stands. For some departments this represents no change whatsoever. For others, it might incorporate a bit more information in the evaluation process. Were there any questions about that? Yeah, Lynn?
**L. Kamenitsa:** I think I know the answer to this but, the policy does not stipulate how departments need to use that information does it?

**J. Wolfskill:** That’s correct. As with all policies set at this level, we don’t tell departments how to conduct their business. We’re simply informing them what equipment they have to bring to bare.

**J. Stephen:** Being a member of your department who gets 400 to 500 per year of those half slip comments, is our department going to be reading those for each faculty member or am I just going to continue getting them in an envelop?

**J. Wolfskill:** Well Buck, in our own department we’re going to have to work on this. Obviously, this is a significant issue for a large lecture class where you might get several hundred of these or at least several dozen. There are some logistical issues which have to be thought through and our department has to visit that. I don’t know what the answer is going to be but I have it on good authority from our chairman that I’m going to be part of the group working on how to do that.

**P. Stoddard:** We had a question in the very far back there.

**J. Hillery:** That was basically my question too, was just how are we supposed to use this information? There was a lot of concern actually and I’m the person who has to have this put on the agenda from the FCNS department on how exactly we were supposed to use this information. It wasn’t clear to us.

**J. Wolfskill:** It’s entirely up to each department chair and personnel committee and in our committee discussions last year, we thought it just wasn’t our business to tell the personnel committees how to do their jobs.

**P. Stoddard:** Okay, somebody on the left had a question? Yeah, Pat?

**P. Henry:** Again, this is sort of the same thing but it is therefore up to the discretion of the department personnel committee if they don’t want to deal with the questions or the comments at all? They can just ignore them.

**J. Wolfskill:** My answer to that is that the information is to be made available during the personnel process just as the quantitative portion is made available. We don’t tell department chairs and personnel committees what weight to put on the quantitative portion nor do we tell them what weight to put on the qualitative portion.

**P. Henry:** Thank you.

**J. Hillery:** One more question, I guess the other question they had was what the rationale was for the change?
J. Wolfskill: Different people may give different answers to that so what follows is simply my personal opinion. I speak only for myself; not for the University Council, not even for last year’s Academic Policy Committee but just for me. As I see it, the changes accomplish two things. One is that it gives students the assurance that their qualitative written comments are used or at least have the potential to be used formally during the personnel procedures which assurance was not there before, at least not in every unit. The second is the changes serve to clarify precisely what portions of the evaluation are part of the personnel process and hence kept free from outside prying.

P. Stoddard: Okay, anybody else? Lynn?

L. Kamenitsa: Just one other question and I would assume this means if a department does not look at those and someone wishes to appeal their evaluation that they could require the department to look at those because they’re part of the record or not?

J. Wolfskill: Well, when a faculty member makes an appeal, the faculty member has the right to bring whatever evidence there is to bare on the merits of the case and certainly it would be legitimate to bring this information to bare and then it would be up to the body hearing the appeal what weight to put on it.

P. Stoddard: You could have answer that like John Robert and said you don’t deal with hypothetical. Any other questions regarding student evaluation forms? No, okay, just preparing.

B. Questions concerning centralized advising – see memo from Doederlein to CLAS Senate – walk-in

Okay, part B of new business concerns an issue which has come up in force this week. I’ve gotten several requests to address this and this basically has to do with the centralized advising center. I guess that’s redundant. I think as most of us are aware, there is a population of students who are undecided as to what they would like to major in to the point of not even knowing which college they would like to be affiliated with. This represents a group of somewhat over 600 students at the moment so it’s a sizeable number. Traditionally, these students have been advised by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, basically, well – I don’t think we need to go into the rationale for that. I think most of us know or can surmise, but there has been a long-standing move to try to move that into a more centralized location academically if not geographically. This was accomplished apparently by May 23 of this year with little or no input from any faculty bodies. This has been part of the concern. Another part of the concern is that faculty are not involved in the SPS until you get up to the vice provost level so there will be an SPS person who is serving as director of the Academic Advising Center. This person will not be involved in curriculum committee meetings and will not otherwise be engaged in the curricular process and so there is a feeling, at least in some quarters of the university, that this will lead to less than adequate advising for the students and will lead to an end run, if you will, around rules decided by faculty where thereby exceptions could be made by non-faculty people. So, we have rules about who can – about being able to take courses for a third time after you’ve flunked it twice and late withdrawals and all of these other types of things and the decision on whether or not to apply the rules would be made by a non-faculty person and that has raised some concerns.
So far I’ve listened and talked to people who are not happy about this. My intention – and I’ve also talked to the provost a little bit about it – my intention is to talk with Vice Provost Seaver tomorrow. We’ve got a meeting scheduled and get his side of things but this is something I think that we need to be aware of obviously and I would like to get a sense of what the university faculty feel about this particular issue and Buck and his hand up first and then Bill.

**J. Stephen:** First of all, I’d like to point out that the Academic Advising Center has been constituted in violation of the Bylaws of the university and with disregard to the principles of shared governance. As the chair of the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, I think it’s important to note that this is an end run around our rights and our responsibilities. In particular, the formation of the Center Violates the rights and responsibilities of the faculty as set forth in the Bylaws of the Constitution in Articles 14.1 and 14.2 and more specifically, 14.11 through 14.13. I’m not saying it’s a bad idea, on the other hand I think many of us remember ten years ago when shared governance was ignored. I think it’s a bad idea to let this precedent start again. There is a discussion about whether advising actually falls under the purview of the particular committees in question such as CUC, UCC, and the APC and I would like to make the point that under the CUC guidelines which are Article 14, again the CUC is the body that is to make recommendations regarding university policies and I would like to make the argument that advisement falls under the realm of a university policy if you want to avoid the argument that it’s not a curricular issue which I don’t want to avoid that either, so I think the CUC and the UCC needs to look at this. If we want ---

**P. Stoddard:** If I may just for one second, the alphabet soup here – the CUC is the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and UCC is Undergraduate Coordinator Council.

**J. Stephen:** If we want to consider this as an experiment in university policy, that falls under the guidance of the CIUE, Committee for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education. If we want to fall back on what are the duties and responsibilities of the vice provost, the responsibilities are listed as “assisting the executive vice president and provost in achieving the academic mission of the university. The vice provost has administrative responsibility for coordination of activities pertaining to the undergraduate curriculum as to the undergraduate standards and admissions policy.” It doesn’t say he has the power to initiate change like this. My problem is the fact that we’re going to be hit with a defense department sort of argument – we’ve funded it, we’ve staffed it, we’ve got an office, we’ve built it – now approve it. Unfortunately, I would also like to point out that without the approval of the relevant committees and the faculty and 14.1 of the Bylaws empowers the faculty for decisions of this type – without the approval of the relevant committee and the faculty, the decisions and actions made by the Center are not legally binding as their powers are not specified in the catalog and the undergraduate catalog is our contract with the students. There’s my polemic – okay?

**P. Stoddard:** Bill?

**B. Tolhurst:** Well, Buck said several things I had to say. I want to echo his concern because the catalog is a legal document and so a student who’s been dismissed or refused a third attempt at a course could sue, right, on the grounds that this body did not have the authority, right? I’m more concerned about the process thought. The idea that a whole center could be established, an
enormous amount of money spent, right, in a way that clearly is incompatible with commitments made in the catalog, right, seems to me to be crazy and I’m more worried about the policy than the substance – although I’m worried about the substance – furthermore, let me collect this so I can keep it short. I’ll leave it at that; I’ll leave it at that.

**J. Stephen:** Let me build on that. The Center for Advising would basically service students which are 709s, undeclared college, undeclared major. There are I believe 693 of those enrolled this semester. The Center for Advising has a coordinator, an associate coordinator, 2 SPS advisors, 4 graduate advisors and peer advising. That’s not faculty advisement. Oh, and by the way, they’re making more money than the advisors in the college with less than 20 years experience. I think that two professional coordinators of the SPS level is not enough for 600+ students and I don’t believe that we should be relying on graduate students to advise undeclared majors nor should we be relying on peer advisors for undeclared majors.

**P. Stoddard:** Pat?

**P. Henry:** Just to sort of follow up on that. I mean in terms of the content, it is really important I think to have faculty oversight on doing the advising and to be able to have that perspective plus, I mean, the LA&S having taken it up to now, I think there is a rationale for that in terms of everybody having to undergo the gen ed requirements which means that everybody ultimately does have to sort of touch base with LA&S and, I mean, I guess, it’s not that, you know, if you can make it there, you can make it anywhere but, if you can make it there, we’re sort of saying right now you can’t make it anywhere and I think there is some rationale to that in terms of the gen ed requirements and that’s what I want to say.

**P. Stoddard:** Okay, thank you. Bill?

**B. Tolhurst:** Yes, this will be short. I’m not sure where things stand now but it seems to me that at least at one point, there was some lack of clarity about what was required for this process, whether it had to go through the University Council. One of the things that it seems to me to be very clear is that when there is any confusion, the ultimate authority on what the Constitution and Bylaws say is the University Council Rules and Governance Committee and so if there is any continuing confusion about what’s required here, who gets to decide what, I suggest that we move that this matter be referred to the University Council Rules and Governance Committee so that it can look into the matter and render an opinion on what’s required by the Constitution and Bylaws.

**P. Stoddard:** Okay. Nancy?

**N. Castle:** And as the chair of the Senate Rules and Governance Committee, I would like to reinforce the idea that the University Council Rules and Governance Committee ought to be the group to look at it.

**B. Tolhurst:** With the assistance of ---

**N. Castle:** I think they have a good handle on it.
**P. Stoddard:** Don’t you wish I’d get your committee name wrong now don’t you? Okay, we actually have a motion and a second. Would you like to speak to the --- okay. The motion is to refer the procedural questions as to how this was done and whether or not UC has legitimate say in whether this should be done and how it should be done.

**B. Tolhurst:** My remarks were prefaced by an “if”. If there is continuing confusion. There may be no confusion. It may well be that it’s recognized that this needs to go through certain channels and through the University Council and if that’s the case. I would just as soon not generate more work for a committee that I’m a member of.

**P. Stoddard:** John?

**J. Wolfskill:** Well, Bill’s last point does bring up part of what I wanted to say which is Paul, do you happen to know the status of this right now? I mean, let me say that my understanding is that after the fact, there is a push to get approval of the center and its various duties and authority through some chain of command. I understand it’s headed toward APASC next although exactly what its trajectory is I don’t know or what’s intended so is this on a path where it’s going to come to the UC?

**P. Stoddard:** It goes to APASC, the Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee. Okay. APASC is one of the committees that reports ultimately to the Undergraduate Coordinating Council, that’s UCC, so after APASC has their say, UCC has their say. UCC does not report directly to the University Council but they do file a report with the University Council to let us know what’s going on there. Buck has got something to say about that.

**J. Stephen:** No, they report to us but we can actually pull out their recommendation and reject them and send them back.

**J. Wolfskill:** Excuse me Buck. We meaning the UC, not the Faculty Senate.

**J. Stephen:** Right, the University Council.

**P Stoddard:** So, we need to clarify exactly how this going and this is one of the things I want to do also with the vice provost tomorrow and ultimately I think with the provost again and the president perhaps Friday when I meet with him.

**J. Wolfskill:** Well, it appears to me that these matters are going through some committee work at the intermediate levels. If we have the assurance that the final approval will be on the UC agenda at the appropriate time, I wouldn’t see any need at this time to send it to UC Rules and Governance. My opinion.

**B. Tolhurst:** Yes, I agree as the maker of the motion.

**K. Thu:** Where has it gone and where has it not gone. Who has seen it and who hasn’t.
**P. Stoddard:** It is going to APASC, that I know for a fact. It is going to APASC. It will then have to go to UCC and then yeah, I’m going to clarify exactly the relationship there to University Council. It has been through the advising deans. They are not a policy setting body however and their vote really is, I think, irrelevant but that’s where it’s been since you asked.

**D. Wade:** If this matter is going to APASC, because as a member of APASC, I would like some insight as to what – my understanding is that the issue that was going to come before APASC was not whether this advising center can do the undeclared/no college people but rather what kind of a faculty body needs to be constituted in order to handle withdrawals, reinstatements, probation, and issues like that. If this is not what’s coming before us, I am lost if we are going to be making a decision on can we have an advising center and can that advising center advise undeclared/no college because I thought that was off the table. I thought that was a settled issue. It appears there is some confusion over whether that is settled. If that is unsettled, I’d like that settled before it comes to our committee.

**P. Stoddard:** I think that is settled in the minds of the people who will be bringing it to your committee.

**D. Wade:** Okay. I’m not sure that’s helpful.

**P. Stoddard:** Buck?

**J. Stephen:** Do you have a copy of this?

**D. Wade:** No.

**J. Stephen:** I’ll give you one. I think the things that APASC should look at are not the Academic Advising Center mission but what are listed as “administrative services provided by the AAC which include withdrawal from a course, withdrawal from the university, academic probation advisement, third time course attempts, concurrent registration approval, and overloads”. Additionally, that --- I think additionally you should look at whether or not the ACC shall be allowed to waive or change any curricular requirement and whether it shall be allowed to independently articulate any course that’s not in the articulation handbook.

**P. Stoddard:** My understanding, based on what David said, is they’re actually looking at the faculty representation necessary to make those types of decisions and one of the problems that I’ve been told about is that there aren’t faculty so it sounds like there might at least be a move to rectify that situation, that there will be faculty assuming APASC says so, that need to be making those decisions. Bill?

**B. Tolhurst:** Did I hear this correctly? They want to give this center the right to articulate any course that’s not in the articulation handbook? Because normally that’s done at the department level. Does this mean that these folks are going to decide what counts as a Philosophy class?

**P. Stoddard:** Buck says that’s unclear. I have no additional information.
B. Tolhurst: I want that very clear before I’m going to vote on anything and it does seem to me something more than – it looks as though you’re going to have your hands full.

D. Wade: Well, that’s okay. We did changing grades last year.

P. Stoddard: Colin?

C. Booth: I hate to do this to Joan, but Bill prefaced his motion with the proviso “if there is confusion” and what seems to me is there is a very clear state of confusion here. I’m totally confused as to what’s going on and where this is going. I would like to kind of push to have Bill’s motion approved because I think that APASC doesn’t seem to know quite what’s coming to it or where it’s going. I don’t think – it doesn’t seem like anybody here is very clear about what’s going on.

P. Stoddard: Bill?

B. Tolhurst: I agree with Colin. There is considerable confusion and it seems to me that we need to think about what the best way to deal with the confusion might be and whether or not there might be some sort of joint meeting with faculty and something that will have to involve faculty unless you want things to stay unclear.

P. Stoddard: Buck?

J. Stephen: I thank that standards for advisement fall under the purview of policy and the standing committees and reporting committees of the UC are responsible for policy so I think that question is answered. I think it does belong in APASC to start with.

P. Stoddard: John?

J. Wolfskill: Well, with the discussion we’ve just had, I certainly don’t oppose the specific motion about referring some of the issues to Rules and Governance of the UC. I am concerned about some things in the immediate future, however. It’s my understanding that beginning next week, the Academic Advisement Center will begin, or at least could begin, to take administrative action in certain cases. For example, late withdrawal request which really they shouldn’t be doing and now the question is we have people acting in good faith and then what’s going to happen to the people receiving these in department offices or administration and records who suddenly are being put in an extremely awkward position in whether to accept such things or not. It seems to me that some resolution of these things needs to be done pretty quickly simply so that everyone can act in good faith and nobody gets left hanging.

P. Stoddard: David, APASC meets tomorrow you said?

D. Wade: No, we met last Wednesday. We won’t meet again until the 2nd of November I believe.
P. Stoddard: Okay, so there’s no way your body could approve any sort of faculty who might make decisions on late withdrawal by a week from Friday.

D. Wade: Correct.

P. Stoddard: Bill?

B. Tolhurst: There is one thing that’s not unclear and that is that the university catalog says things are going to go one way and the Advising Center says “no, they’re not, we’re going to do it, it’s not going to go the way it is in the catalog”. That’s a problem; that’s clear. That speaks to John’s concerns. It’s precisely that that raises a problem. I’m not sure whether this is an APASC’s problem or not but it’s a problem and it needs to be dealt with if only to ensure that we don’t run the risk of a law suite.

P. Stoddard: Pat?

P. Henry: Just to further be confused, my understanding from this walk-in and I’d seen it earlier, is that these are proposed catalog changes but that they aren’t in effect now so I don’t see how they could be doing this now.

B. Tolhurst: I have here a document dated May 23 about what the Academic Advisement Center – has it been doing this already?

P. Stoddard: I’m unaware that they’ve actually started doing anything yet but I’ve heard ---

B. Tolhurst: But they’re going to start doing it very soon.

P. Stoddard: I’ve heard the same thing John has, that a week from Friday they could start. I think that must be the late withdrawal ----

B. Tolhurst: They’re as it were, to use the words that some might use, usurping the responsibilities of the advising deans in another college and so when the catalog says it’s the college that does it and the Advising Center and the provost say “nope, we’re going to do it” right, things are going to happen that do not comply with the expectations created by the catalog. That seems to me to be a clear problem unless they’re going to postpone getting the center up and running in the way advertised on this sheet handed out to all freshmen.

P. Henry: It seems like they can’t, I mean, whatever the changes that they make to the catalog, surely the old catalog pertains and this is a new catalog.

B. Tolhurst: No, this is the 2005-2006 catalog that they’re – we’re not talking about the old catalog; we’re talking about the current catalog.

P. Henry: These are the changes that are going to go in that?

B. Tolhurst: This one right here. No, no, we’re not talking about that.
P. Henry: Okay.

P. Stoddard: Buck?

J. Stephen: Many of you were here at the UC meeting last month when I specifically asked Gip Seaver about this and the only response that I got was we’ll have to change the catalog then. Maybe he misunderstood what it means that he’s got oversight for catalog changes. There was certainly a tacit understanding on his part that this required a catalog change but there was also the assumption that we’d automatically do it.

P. Stoddard: Pat?

P. Henry: Is there any way, I mean I’m sort of with Bill on this, that we could somehow come to have some sort of meeting of a representative of each of the colleges and administrators to try and hash this out before it gets to the point of, you know, tearing things up and stuff.

P. Stoddard: I can certainly work toward that end, especially if we had a resolution from this body to do so. Any volunteers to sit on that committee? I mean, it would be nice – I mean, I certainly agree with Bill – it would be nice to take this in as non-confrontational way as possible. I think we recently have had a good relationship with the administration. I’d hate to blow it but I don’t want them to be taking advantage of that either so I’m open to suggestions. I think that’s a reasonable suggestion depending on which way this body wants to go. Given the – yeah?

F. Bryant: We have motion on the floor. I think we need to vote on or withdraw.

P. Stoddard: Okay, do we ---

B. Tolhurst: I’d like to withdraw the motion.

P. Stoddard: Okay, and would the seconder also agree to withdraw that motion? Is the seconder still here? Okay, thank you. So we now no longer have a motion on the floor. Do we have a suggestion, a motion on how we should – okay.

B. Tolhurst: I move that we empower Paul to meet with the upper level administration with the goal of establishing talks that would enable us to discuss this in an appropriate way and you can take it from there.

P. Henry: I second that.

P. Stoddard: Any discussion, clarification, details?

K. Thu: With the proviso Paul that you will certainly convey the sense of concern that has been expressed here during your discussions.

P. Stoddard: That will happen, yes. Jody?
J. Newman-Ryan: I just need to say I’m a person who philosophically things we ought to only have one undergraduate college even though I’m not in it but that simply is not the reality and if you listen, every single person has been from LA&S who has commended on this so far and I’m not saying I support this creative of this body or how it was done, but there needs to be – if you’re going to have this discussion – there needs to be some kind of discussion about the problems of advising as it was done before because you cannot separate those issues and there were many problems for those of us not in LA&S with the fact that all of these undeclared students were in LA&S and there were substantial problems with that. So I’m not saying I agree with this as the solution but somehow if you’re going to discuss this further, those problems need to be brought up because this letter is remarkably naive in not recognizing those problems. So I just need to say that as a non-LA&S person.

P. Stoddard: Larry you haven’t had a chance yet.

L. Gregory: Larry Gregory, the School of Art. I’m somewhat involved with advising and let’s not forget the fact that an undeclared major will become your student. This is not LA&S’s problem and we did not welcome central advising nor has our relationship with them been particularly good. They’re marching all over us and I think you need to watch this very carefully or you’ll be powerless. You’ll just have faces in your classes that are just there at their whim.

J. Newman-Ryan: Well, I’m not saying it is.

L. Gregory: And this isn’t the only example that most of us can remember when a person is brought in, whatever level in the university, who does not take time to figure out how things are going now who gets the opportunity to make total changes and totally change the structure of how things are done and they often then leave and certainly we’ve had that in departments and my guess is other levels based on our total experience. This could turn into that really quickly.

P. Stoddard: Yes, Buck?

J. Stephen: Two misunderstandings. I do the 709s. There’s no coercion to keep them in LA&S and, in fact, they don’t for the majority part go into LA&S. I actually believe that the motivation from this came more from our problem with retaining undecided students than with problems with the advising system as it’s in place now and I think a more complete examination of the process would examine best practices for retention, not just advising.

P. Stoddard: Okay, John?

J. Wolfskill: Did we have a second for Bill’s motion and if so, maybe we ought to move on.

P. Stoddard: We did and given the hour and the dwindling attendance, I think it would be a good idea, unless anybody else has anything they really want to say to the motion, to vote on it. So, call the question – all in favor of the motion that I will meet with upper levels and try to arrange some sort of pow-wow to hash things out a bit, signify by saying aye. All opposed? All right pow-wow it is.
X. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES


B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – no report

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Paul Stoddard and Xueshu Song – no report

D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Donna Smith and Shey Lowman – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – report – walk-in

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
J. 2005-2006 Alternate List (Page 12)

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

P. Stoddard: Can I have a motion to adjourn? Any discussion? All in favor. Thank you very much for your patience tonight. It was a long agenda; I appreciate you sticking around.

The meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.