FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2006
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM


Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2006 FACULTY SENATE MEETING (Pages 3-5)

The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Provost Raymond Alden, III will be attending the meeting.

P. Stoddard introduced Provost Alden.

Provost Alden addressed several issues. First, he started by describing the rational and logistics of the Strategic Planning project, and how it intertwines with the capital campaign for academic excellence. Second, he discussed his impression of the “big picture” meeting between NIU and the IBHE, in which each presented their visions of what NIU’s objectives and funding needs. While the IBHE is indicating a modest increase in funding for next year, the provost said that any increase in funding could be tied to IBHE-specified priorities, perhaps in performance contracts. NIU expressed their concerns with such a plan. Third, the provost said that the Spellings commission report stresses affordability and accountability in higher education, and has been described by some as “No Child Left Behind for Higher Ed.” Fourth and finally, Provost Alden warned that broadcasters are eyeing digital technology as a way of preventing
retransmission of material they’ve aired, which could have negative effects on our teaching resources.

Provost Alden then answered questions from K. Thu regarding performance standards, B. Lusk regarding the capital campaign timeline, and D. Swanson about the capital campaign logistics.

K. Thu asked if any faculty bodies at the university deliberated or responded to these performance standard setting initiatives either at the state or federal level. Getting a negative response, K. Thu then moved to charge the Executive Committee to gather information for the Senate to illuminate the performance standard initiatives alluded to by the Provost. D. Kempton seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

B. Dean Search for University Libraries (Page 6)

P. Stoddard announced that the Senate’s Executive Committee had approved the search committee for the Dean of the University Libraries

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs – Daniel Kempton, Chair – report

D. Kempton reported that Academic Affairs was soliciting input from faculty and students currently using the various classroom personal response systems, to better evaluate which should be considered the preferred system for use at NIU. In addition, the committee is serving as liaison between the Senate and NIU Connect, the group implementing the new student information system software. NIU Connect has identified several gaps between NIU policy and software capabilities. Three currently under consideration are the on-line calendar, which has manual workarounds for irregularly scheduled classes; transfer credit for courses where the students have tested out at other institutions, possibly with lower standards than those at NIU; and the grade policy for repeat courses, specifically whether the best or latest grade should be used.

The grade policy generated much discussion, with participation by D. Swanson, D. Kempton, J. Holt, B. Tolhurst, P. Stoddard, L. Kamenitsa, M. Morrison, K. Thu, T. Sims, J. Stravers, N. Castle, M. Valle, D. Dowen, J. Pierce, and J. Kowalski. This discussion covered the rationales and ramifications associated with each of the options, the dissemination of information pertaining to NIU Connect, and the concern about software capabilities driving academic policy. On this last topic, it was pointed out that no policy would be changed specifically because of the software, but this exercise does offer the opportunity to clean up archaic and sometimes conflicting policies.
B. Economic Status of the Profession – Cason Snow, Chair – no report

C. Resource, Space, and Budget – C.T. Lin, Chair – report (Page 7)

C.T. Lin reported that the committee met with Dr. Eddie Williams, who talked about the Capital Campaign, the fiscal budget request for maintenance and repairs of existing buildings. Currently, NIU has deferred maintenance of up to $185-190 million. NIU is undertaking “Performance Contracting” which involves paying the contractor via energy savings. The other thing discussed was the change in retirement process involving faculty whose salaries increase more than 6% per annum during the last three years before retirement.

J. Kowalski asked if the 6% applied to summer teaching. P. Stoddard responded that as the legislation was originally written, there were no exceptions for extra teaching, promotions, grants, etc., but that Steve Cunningham, among others, was actively working to get reasonable exemptions included.

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Janet Holt, Chair – report

J. Holt reported on the possible reclassification of some faculty members to SPS last summer. After collecting information from numerous sources, the committee determined that some positions, but not the people who hold them, were given an SPS04 classification, but that this does not mean any faculty with that designation were actually Supportive Professional Staff. This, however, had not been made clear to the effected individuals. As a result of their findings, the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities committee formulated the following recommendations:

- Faculty Rights and Responsibilities agrees with the recommendation made already by Steven Cunningham.
- Change the title of academic administrators on all personnel forms to a title that reflects the employee’s faculty rank and tenure.
- Academic administrators who have rank in academic departments should be rewarded for their job responsibilities that are academic in nature in accordance with the personnel merit procedures of the department in which they have rank, in proportion to the time spent on those tasks which are academic in nature.
- There should be prior notification and agreement from the employee whenever changes are made regarding a business code, a job classification, the position they hold changes. Additionally, individuals who already hold any academic administrative position should be fully aware of how their position is classified within all of the databases at NIU.
- Any changes to academic administrative positions should be reviewed and approved by faculty bodies before the position is reclassified to one that could be held by a non-faculty employee.
• Deliberations need to occur, with faculty input, on three related issues:

1. Possibly creating a separate salary pool for academic administrators.
2. Deciding on clear guidelines for salary increments for academic administrators.
3. Determining what proportion of an individual’s job responsibilities needs to be administrative in nature for that individual to be classified as an academic administrator (including department chairs).

J. Holt moved that the recommendations in this report be adopted by the Faculty Senate and be forwarded to the Provost Office, specifically Provost Fredrick Schwantes and also to Steven Cunningham to be adopted in future use.

The motion passed.

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

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Earl Hansen, Chair – no report

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

X. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – P-20 Teaching Standards (Pages 8-10) and report

P. Stoddard, filling in for Jody Newman-Ryan reported on the FAC to the IBHE. The major order of business was the approval of a proposed FAC position paper regarding teacher preparation. While NIU has already implemented most, if not all, of the paper’s recommendations for middle and upper level teachers, the proposal that Elementary Education teachers be required to have a content major, thus increasing time to degree by a year, was problematic. Despite reservations about this particular proposal, the position paper was approved unanimously by the FAC. P. Stoddard explained that he voted for the paper to ensure that debate on this important topic get underway. He explained that this paper would still have to be presented to the IBHE, who could deal with it, or ignore it entirely, as they saw fit. In addition, the ISBE, responsible for teacher certification requirements, would no doubt have something to say about these proposals, should they get that far.

J. Holt pointed out that this is really disconcerting for colleges of education and wondered about the representation of colleges of education in the state for this. She felt that we should not support this without getting significant input from the College of Education. L. Elish-Piper added that the Elementary Ed proposal looked almost like the fifth year programs in states like California, where there’s been research that indicates those programs are extremely flawed. D. Kempton wondered if this subject matter could be approached in a less combative way. L. Elish-Piper thought that a lot of us would argue that if someone were going to be a primary teacher, their specialization should be within an area of teaching.
P. Stoddard said he would revisit this issue at the next FAC meeting and pass along the reservations that have been expressed.

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 – Rachel Turner and Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Academic Planning Council minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/APC.html

B. Athletic Board minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/Athletic.html

C. Campus Security and Environmental Quality minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/CSEQ.html

D. Committee on Initial Teacher Certification minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/CTTC.html

E. Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/CUC.html

F. Graduate Council minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/GC.html

G. University Assessment Panel minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/UAP.html

H. University Benefits Committee minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/Benefits.html

I. Undergraduate Coordinating Council minutes  
   http://www.niu.edu/u_council/OUC/UCCmin.html

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.