FACULTY SENATE TRANSCRIPT
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2008 3:00 P. M.
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM


S. Tonks attended for M. Smith.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

P. Stoddard: Welcome everybody to the October 29 meeting of the Senate. We assume we’re in order.

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

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

P. Stoddard: Can I have a motion to adopt the agenda? Thank you Bill. Thank you – Cason was in first. ??? there’s another opportunity coming up soon. Are there any additions to the agenda? Any corrections, concerns? All in favor of passing as written say aye. We have an agenda.

The agenda was approved as written

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 1, 2008 FS MEETING

P. Stoddard: I now need a motion to approve the minutes from the October 1 meeting. Bill was number one. Buck’s got his mouth full. Anybody else would like to second this? Cason got in there first. All right. You should’ve gotten the e-mail so does anybody have anything they noticed that they think needs to be amended? Seeing no one raised their hand, I’m going to move forward. All in favor of approving the minutes say aye. All opposed? Thank you.

The minutes were approved as written.
IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Deborah Haliczer, Human Resource Services, will be discussing the Ethics Test, the new benefit packages and the Constitutional Convention.

P. Stoddard: Under announcements we have a guest with us today who’s going to talk to us about benefits and other such matters. I think we all know her so I’m not going to take too much time to introduce her other than to say welcome Deb and tell us what you’ve got.

D. Haliczer: Can you hear me now? Okay. It’s nice to see everyone. I’m Deborah Haliczer from Human Resources and I will be several entities today, not just me but the other parts of me and you’ll know what I’m talking about later on. Okay, question number one, you asked me to update you on ethics training. Congratulations, I see that many of you already completed your ethics training. Yes, I do look at the list everyday of all 8,400 or however many of you there are and check to see who’s been good and who’s been bad. I feel like Santa’s elf during this time. The deadline for ethics training this year is November 14 and we have lots of questions about who needs to do ethics training and basically the answer is if you’re getting a paycheck you must do ethics training even if you’re on sabbatical in exotic places you must do ethics training. If you have problems doing ethics training from those exotic places, you have to talk to me because really only two people in the university can give you a temporary exemption. So if you get a paycheck do it. If you have students, graduate assistants, student workers who work in remote locations and don’t get to campus, don’t read their z-mail and don’t check their paper mail, make sure you nag them because you don’t want them to get the ultimate $5,000 if they willfully chose not to do ethics training. Those are the words of the state; not me. So this year there’s no quiz. It’s not a test but really be careful to answer those two final questions at the end because if you don’t answer the two what they call certification questions, you won’t get your certificate. Your name will not be on my list of people who have finished. I also ask you not to wait until the last minute. Last year some of the faculty and students who waited until the last day had all kinds of complications and couldn’t get finished so you don’t want to be on my nag list. I’m sorry. Okay, questions about ethics training. Wow. Okay, next year – this is your advanced warning – things are going to change with ethics training. The state, in its decision making process, has given universities much more control over ethics training in their minds and so starting in 2009, the universities will be forced to develop their own ethics training as long as it’s on line, approved by the State Office of Inspector General and meets their parameters for training, looks like the training we had before, includes all the same people that we had before and we do have the right to develop some of the questions on ethics training and we get to absorb the full cost of paying for an external training vendor so not only are you paying me big bucks to watch out for all of you and the army of secretaries around the university who have to also nag you, we’re going to take on more active costs so think of this as another unfunded mandate. Moments like this I really hate the fact that I’m being recorded. Okay. Questions on that, you’ll certainly hear from me more next year as we move into that. Ken Davison and I have met with the state about what it’s going to look like and not much looks different so more work and cost. Not much difference to you though.

Okay, second question you all asked was about benefits choice. We are now, as of October 27, in the midst of this year’s round two of benefits choice and if you’re like most of us, it’s kind of
perplexing to think what the differences are and what the changes are and if you carefully read the documents that Steve Cunningham (written by me) sent out back in April and May, we are contradicting what we said then with certain items and we apologize to you. It’s not our doing, it’s the state. They realized they couldn’t do some of the things that they promised in the area of flexible spending plans. So what’s new – you all got your benefits booklet in the mail, right, at your home addresses? If you didn’t, you can go on line and get it at www.benefitschoice.il.gov or I’ll e-mail it to you and look at the booklet and study it. Unless you really read benefits booklets all the time, there’s language in there that will keep you up wondering what they’re really saying here. I sure spend a lot of hours looking for information and trying to figure out what they’re talking about, some of the prescription medication and the pharmacy plan. Deadline for benefits choice is November 14. At the end of the work day, you have to have any benefit choices in for this year and if you have questions, there are several places you can go. You can call 753-6000 and be connected with one of our service center staff or you can go to our two service centers at Human Resources where the service office is and our new center at the Swen Parson site which is at the northwest corner of Swen Parson – what is it, 110? Thank you Jay. 110, Swen Parson, northwest corner kind of kitty-corner from the student center and the Martin Luther King Commons. We have staff available to answer your questions and help you with these decisions. So call, come on over, ask questions. Some of the changes are – surprise – increases in deductibles, increases in co-pays, increases in premiums and a new deductible for prescription medication, that one took us by surprise. I’ve heard a lot of concerns about increasing costs. If you had seen the original ??? or the new state proposed contract and what ??? did the state level to negotiate this back to reasonable costs, you would have been amazed at the addition costs the state was proposing for all of our benefits and so even though costs as usually increased, it’s so much better than what the state was originally saying, I was able to sleep at night again. I was really concerned at some of the wild additional expenses. So the pharmacy network, a new $50 co-pay and additions to co-pays even if you’ve met deductibles. Up until the end of December, there are additional deductibles that you will still have to meet starting in January. So read the details of the benefits choice book and, if you have questions, ask one of my staff. Do you have any quick questions now before I go to other things? Yeah, Buck?

J. Stephen: Did you mean a $50 deductible and not a $50 co-pay?

D. Haliczer: $50 deductible, yes.

J. Stephen: Is the average deductible going up the standard $1 per prescription per year?

D. Haliczer: About $2 per prescription.

J. Stephen: Okay, so we’re it doubled that way.

D. Haliczer: Yeah.

J. Stephen: I do read these things. Can I get a paper copy from you? I didn’t get one in the mail.
D. Haliczer: You didn’t get one in the mail? I have one paper copy with my name on it which I might be able to copy for you.

J. Stephen: I’ll give it back to you; I just want to read it.

D. Haliczer: I can pass it around if you promise to give it back.

J. Stephen: Okay.

D. Haliczer: We only get one and the insurance office doesn’t get extras except for the number of new hires we’ve told them we’re going to have and so the state has gotten very restrictive in their printing.

L. Yamagata-Lynch: Sorry Debbie, just to be clear ??? no matter how many times I read it – the $50 deductible for every prescription or $50 the very first time you’re filling your prescriptions for that year?

D. Haliczer: The first time you’re filling prescriptions and after that it’s the usual.

L. Yamagata-Lynch: It’s something like the $22 for the first one would additional to the $50 or something like that? Okay.

D. Haliczer: There’s this chart in the book where they explain and that’s where I got really confused because that’s where it stopped making sense to me.

???: Right.

D. Haliczer: It’s supposed to be helpful but --- Buck?

J. Stephen: Who’s our vision care this year?

D. Haliczer: The same – there are no changes in vendors so vision care is the same as last year, MedCo still for most prescriptions.

J. Stephen: Might be an appropriate time for me to mention that thing about the vision plan. If you’re thinking about taking advantage of the vision plan, one of my colleagues in my department went to the one of the vendors and went through all of the paperwork and picked out his glasses and everything and then he asked “how much would this be without insurance” thinking it would be something horrible. It was cheaper without insurance because he got two pair of glasses in this deal so he ended up getting it cheaper without insurance and then – cheaper than what he would have paid – and then getting paid by filing the claim as if it were a medical network. So if you’re looking at glasses, be really careful. Don’t assume that the insurance price is going to be the best price.

D. Haliczer: Let me speak now as the university’s benefits’ committee chair. It’s better than the HR rep. I will be switching hats here and there so I have now ceased being the official HR
person and I’m the university’s Benefits Committee chair. We had an interesting discussion at
our last meeting about just such a thing and the motto we determined was “???” so, be careful of
what you buy and shop carefully because one of the members described going to Sam’s Club,
I’m not advocating Sam’s Club, this was an antidote but this person says that at Sam’s Club he is
able to get a much better deal on prescription medication so shopping is really important if you
have a lot of prescriptions, glasses, vision care things. So generally speaking, using your
insurance benefit is advantageous. Once in a while, there’s a better deal and that’s unofficial.

**D. Zahay:** The flexible spending plan is going to start again on January 1st or ---?

**D. Haliczer:** Yes.

**D. Zahay:** Do we have to say how much money we want to put in again?

**D. Haliczer:** Well, if you signed up for the flexible spending plan during benefits choice period
1, you can’t change what you already have being deducted based on that earlier contract. It
contradicts what they told us you could do. They told us you had to sign up for your benefits
choice 1; could change in benefits choice 2. That’s not true; they will not allow you to change.
They got caught by some IRS regulation so that they couldn’t do it. So, you can sign up for the
flexible spending plan starting in January, however, you can’t make changes if you signed up
before. We think that’s a hardship and we protested that. It’s goofy.

**D. Zahay:** So when do I sign up ???.

**D. Haliczer:** It continues. So what you deducted from – if you signed up during benefits choice
1 or if you signed up for flexible spending during benefits choice 1, it just keeps taking out that
amount and there’s no change. But if you realized that costs are going up and decided you
wanted to take more out of your salary, you can’t make any changes to it.

**P. Stoddard:** I need to remind people please, especially if you’re new to the Senate, introduce
yourself when you start speaking.

**D. Zahay:** I’m sorry, Debra Zahay, Marking. I did get a book and I did read it and I couldn’t
understand it.

**D. Haliczer:** Yeah, that does not surprise me. The insurance office spent many an hour
studying and they understand this stuff better than I do so what I am always going to advise you
to do, if you have very specific questions about benefits, talk to the experts, not their boss.

**J. Stephen:** If they didn’t opt into that in the first, can they do it in the second?

**D. Haliczer:** If you did not think to sign up for flexible spending during benefits choice 1, you
now can sign up during benefits choice 2. Again, that contradicts ---

**J. Stephen:** That has to be done before November 14 and can only apply to expenses after
January 1.
D. Haliczer: Correct. Okay, so you sign up ---

J. Stephen: That’s different than what you said before too.

D. Haliczer: Yup. Jay?

J. Monteiro: Jay Monteiro from Operating Staff Council. Deb do you want to tell them there’s going to be a benefits choice seminar?

D. Haliczer: It’s on my list of things to say. We are, because there’s so much confusion about this, we are offering a seminar tomorrow at 11:00 to 12:00 and 1:00 to 2:00 in the Heritage Room. We called it Questions and Answers on Benefits”. So if it’s convenient for you to pop in, you didn’t need to sign up; it’s nice if you did but do come over and ask questions because people from the insurance office will be there answering questions. Thanks Jay.

M. Valle: Marie Valle, Nursing and Health Studies. This is more of a long-range question. I have the Quality Care package and I noticed that that is considerably more expensive than the other packages. At this point in my life, I really could go with one of the less expensive packages but I also really like that option of having Quality Care available but I’m concerned because of the extra cost that the university might not be keeping that as an option in the future. Has there been any discussion about eliminating Quality Care in the future and if I change out of it for now, what’s the likelihood – to your best guestimate – would I then be able to go back into it in the future?

D. Haliczer: As you all know, the university does not select benefits at all; it’s all done at the state level. Certainly there has been some talk at the state during the contract negotiations about eliminating the indemnity program and just going with HMO’s but there’s such a lot of opposition to that I don’t think that’s going to happen. That’s my best guess. What many people know is to evaluate their current medical status and if you are young, don’t have any health problems in particular, things are going well, the HMO’s are a wonderful idea but when you get to be my age and start to get chronic illnesses, you think Quality Care is what I need to do because I might have to go out-of-network, I might have to go out of state or go for a second opinion and then I’d have to get permission, so – as you know very well – individual health choices really depend on where you are in life and what your personal and family medical conditions are.

M. Valli: Just to follow up, I guess – if you were going to – I know my own personal medical condition and what it is. I guess what I’m interested in knowing is if, as you said, there is discussion about eliminating it. If it were to get eliminated, would we have a heads-up? Would we know ahead of time that that could be an option?

D. Haliczer: The troubling thing about all benefits is even the benefits office has no real clue what the plans are until decisions are made, usually in late April. I don’t think that they’ll ever eliminate that kind of medical plan and just go with HMO’s. There would be so much outcry from so many constituencies around the state because our insurance isn’t just for universities; it’s
for all state employees. So when it came to the proposals that the state made to really increase cost and decrease benefits, there were demonstrations down in Springfield and that’s a good thing for our purpose.

M. Valli: Thank you.

D. Haliczer: So I don’t think we’ll ever lose that. Bill?

W. Baker: Can I ask more specifically whether there are any changes for the better in the dental coverage?

D. Haliczer: Rarely are there changes for the better in health insurance. Actually, the health insurance is pretty decent for the most part. It’s endlessly more expensive, occasionally more restrictive, but no significant changes. Your clue for what is paid for in dental insurance is that benefits choice book. If the procedure is in this book, it’s reimbursed at some level. If it’s not in this book, you’re going to pay for it out of pocket. Okay? Buck has something to add. Buck’s my junior here.

J. Stephen: The deductible went up $50.

???:

D. Haliczer: Implants are included. That was a change. Yes, dentists will be there. Go to the insurance office and talk to people. The better place for specific questions are in the benefits office or the workshop. Okay.

Then you wanted me to talk about this other thing. The constitutional convention. Okay. Let me give you a disclaimer here. The university does not have a specific stance on the constitutional convention. That will always be an individual personal decision on how you feel about how to vote on this particular issue. So as I talk about this issue, I’m going to be speaking largely as the chair of the university Benefits Committee. We have discussed that and made a stand. This is a very controversial issue. I’m sure you’ve all been reading about it. How many of you are members of the Annuitants Association already? This is a pitch for the Annuitants Association. Really the best information about pensions goes out via the Annuitants Association because we have some wonderful retirees or spend a lot of time doing excellent research and keeping us informed about it so a lot of our information comes from them. I am going to make a pitch for all of you to join while you’re current employees. It’s the best source. So you’re going to be making a personal decision about this and based on the number of questions we’ve been getting in HR and the administration about the Constitutional Convention, Steven Cunningham will be sending out an e-mail message to the campus tomorrow with some basic information which largely focuses on where to go to get information to help inform your decision on the vote and I got to look at this just before. Many of the concerns are the things that could happen in the Constitutional Convention. Our current Constitution dates from 1970 and about every twenty years we get to vote again. The last vote on this was in 1988 when citizens voted no to the State Constitutional Convention. There is concern there’s more interest in having a Constitutional Convention this year because of various issues, popular anger at the Governor and the
Legislature; concerns about corruption and state ethics in spite of the Ethics Act; the cost of employees’ salaries, rising costs of benefits and pension and health care for employees; concern about education funding reform and property tax reform. That means that there has been a lot of writing in public, a lot of media reports and a lot of debates about supporting or voting against the Constitutional Convention. Some of the reason to vote for a Constitutional Convention is it’s been forty years since we’ve revised it. A new group of people should analyze the document and have an opportunity to make important changes. It would be a good opportunity to import some new ethics provisions that would be more sufficient to deal with ethics concerns in the state. It would be a way of putting in some mechanisms for recalling government officials and doing a different method of redistricting. It would be a good way of changing school funding packages – school funding reform and looking at tax policies considering, for instance, a flat tax. Moving from flat tax to a progressive tax and the political climate is different than the 60’s. That was a quote from Pat Quinn. If you vote against the Constitutional Convention, some of the reason for not voting for it would be that the Constitution is fine as it is and any changes that we want are possible within the scope of amendments to the Constitution so why get rid of the whole document if it seems to be working; the Constitution is used as a model in other states; this would give an opportunity for special interests groups to lobby on issues. There are questions about who would be the delegates? Why do we think this is an opportunity to make major reforms in the state when changes are the rules will be made by the people who are running the state now and who would be the representatives. The current administration would be making the rules, etc. So, I read a lot of the arguments for and against and let me summarize what the State University Annuitants Association has said. They’ve recommended a no vote on the Constitutional Convention and their major reasons are cost. Estimates from the Annuitants Association at the state level and from the League of Women Voters is the cost of the Constitutional Convention could run anywhere from 30 million to 100 million dollars and, at a time when the state budgets are in such a difficult place, do we want to incur that level of cost. The process of selecting delegates will be run by the same people in the General Assembly that we have concerns about. They’re also concerned that waiting for a Constitutional Convention in 2010 would be an excuse for inaction in the next two years and so on and so forth. I really suggest that you look at the e-mail that Steve Cunningham is going to be sending out because the links that he’s going to be providing are through the State University Annuitants Association web site which gives a good summary of their concerns. The Secretary of State’s Office is another one of the links and the Secretary of State has given an excellent summary of the pros and cons of the vote and there’s a Constitutional Convention Referendum site that we’re going to be referring you to. So again, we urge you to do your homework. Read and think about the issues. I can say that in our discussion last week the university Benefits Committee did consider – having done our homework and research and looked at the issues about the Constitutional Convention – and as your representatives, we have voted to support a “no” vote on the Constitutional Convention. Our major arguments were cost; we don’t think the state can afford the Constitutional Convention at this point given state budgets. We feel a strong concern that the Constitutional Convention will open up debate on the status of employee retiree pensions and benefits and since our main focus is on benefits for state university employees and retirees, we really are concerned that the pension protections showed there in the Constitution could be changed and that would jeopardize our future pensions and we also believe that the changes that are necessary can be accomplished through legislative process so we voted “no” unanimously.
C. T. Lin is one of our representatives. Did you want to say something about our discussions C. T.?

C. T. Lin: No.

D. Haliczer: Okay. So again, HR is not saying this; the Benefits Committee is saying that we do not support the Constitutional Convention. You probably know as much about it as I do. Questions, discussion?

P. Stoddard: I would suggest those – how many have already voted? We do have early voting so the quicker we can get that information.

D. Haliczer: Tomorrow. Do you want to talk about the confusion about the wording of the amendment or the vote on the referendum?

P. Stoddard: I wasn’t aware there was confusion

D. Haliczer: Okay, this is something that ??? would probably know better than I do but there is some concerns and possible talks of law suits about the wording. It’s too late now; it’s going to be out next week. But according to some of the people that I read that for the Constitutional Convention to win, either a 3/5’s majority of those voting on the issue need to vote in favor or a simple majority of those voting in the election must vote in favor of it so there are a lot of concerns that people will vote in the election but choose not to vote on this particular item on the ballot. ??? can you explain anymore about that?

???:

D. Haliczer: Oh, duh. Okay, sorry about that. Okay, go forth and read.

P. Stoddard: The confusion on the Constitutional Convention would be the Con-Con-Con?

D. Haliczer: The wording of the thing.

P. Stoddard: Some more other questions for Deb? We have one in the back? Two in the back; I don’t know, I see one.

T. Fisher: Deb, I want to go back real quick to the ethics real quick to a particular question that my department would ask. In 2009 when the university does its own, would there also be the $5,000 penalty for not completing it or do you know about the guidelines for that?

D. Haliczer: Well, the fine is still there because the fine comes from the Office of the Executive Inspector General, not from the universities and they’re the ones that are still going to require that everyone who gets a paycheck and is on the list to take Ethics Training needs to do it and we will still be sending reports to them instead of them sending reports to us and if they decide to investigate and find that someone has chosen not to obey and do their Ethics Training, they still could levy the fine. So far, no one at Northern has gotten that because we spend an exhausting
amount of time investigating why one person doesn’t do their Ethics Training. There was a person who is out on the ice in Antarctica last year – I had to write a little note explaining to the state that professor so-and-so was not just in Antarctica but was on the ice and couldn’t log in to any computer. They accepted my word but I had to write a little tale about everybody. So the fine is still there; the mechanism for delivering training is the only thing that’s different.

???:

P. Stoddard: Let’s not go there. Any other questions? All right. Well, thank you very much Deb. That was very informative.

B. Faculty Salary Study

P. Stoddard: Okay, moving on then under announcements, I was at the UCPC meeting last week I believe it was. I believe we had a couple of other people, C. T. was there and a couple of people were there. Anyway, the reason that I was invited was to see the report on the Faculty Salary Study that they just performed. This is the second in an ongoing process of these studies. I just want to make sure – the main purpose of the study wasn’t to confirm what we all know, that we’re underpaid relative to what we should be as a group, which they did acknowledge, but to make sure that they couldn’t find any evidence of discrimination based on race, gender or age. The short of it was that they showed a lot of fancy graphs and threw up a lot of numbers most of which I was able to follow and they were unable to detect any sort of systematic statistically significant variations in salary that could attributed to either race, gender or age. I felt that they were relatively convincing. This was a body – well, there were three different bodies that actually took a look at this. There was a steering panel that decided how it should be done; there was a panel that did it; and then there was a panel that said well, you did it but now what about this, that and the other thing. And so, I mean, and each of those bodies was reasonably well representative of all the constituencies on campus and so I think, it looked to me, like it was a good job that they had done in showing that. The result of this are to be posted on line at some point; I’m not sure exactly when and they may actually try to publish this as well. So very briefly, that’s what they said. If there are any questions, I’ll try to answer them otherwise I can let you look on line and if you’ve got questions at that point, we can pursue them as well. Okay. Moving on.

C. Campus Parking

The other thing I’ve got on here is campus parking. This came up last meeting and I suspect it’s not going away anytime soon I’m afraid. I did meet with the Parking Advisory Committee and I have to underline the middle line there, advisory. This committee used to report to Bob Albanese and ultimately it’s Eddie William’s committee. It’s to advise him or whoever he wants parking decisions to be made. Over the summer, for reasons I don’t know, that responsibility was shifted from Bob Albanese’s office to the Office of Public Safety and the best I can tell you is they seem to have a somewhat different philosophy on tackling problems. So over the summer, this committee did meet and decided that because of the loss of about fifty or so parking spaces by the Student Life Building due to East Plant, East Campus Chill Plant construction, that there be some rearrangement of the lots directly east of that, specifically removing some brown
parking which is for students who live in town and could take a bus but still would like to park on campus and then rearranging some of the yellow/blue with the net effect of replacing most of the blue spots, lost to construction and not terribly adversely affecting the yellow parking that’s out there and they all thought that was a great idea and everybody was happy. But apparently that didn’t happen and so we still have a major parking problem especially for faculty. Public Safety is aware of the problem. They are aware I think especially now after that last meeting that the faculty are not at all happy about the nature of the problem. That the faculty thought this problem had been addressed over the summer and there were some questions as to why nothing had happened yet. The response was that they are studying, monitoring the parking situation out there. There is no word on how long they will have to monitor the parking situation before they decide something needs to be done, assuming that they do decide something needs to be done. My fear is that it’s going to be 18 months of construction and it will take them 17½ months to study the problem. That’s just me; they didn’t say that but they didn’t say how long it would be. They did say they are getting a lot of complaints. They said they don’t want to solve one problem and create three others. That’s what they said and that’s really as much as I can tell them. I found dealing with them is a little bit frustrating because they weren’t able to give us any information. Now, I haven’t spoken with them specifically about it since then. I don’t know the next Parking Committee meeting probably isn’t for a little while yet but we’re all aware of it and what I would suggest is if you have problems, you continue to let them know you’re having problems parking. If we stop telling them there’s a problem, they might assume that there is no longer a problem, everybody’s figured out a different way to address the situation. So, just let them know.

**J. Novak:** John Novak, ???. Who specifically should we be addressing our complaints to?

**P. Stoddard:** There’s – I can’t remember her name. Kristen – do you remember the new person in Public Safety and who is head of parking services? They just hired her over the summer. Curtis Young was the police lieutenant who addressed the – who was there as representative for Public Safety. He might be someone you want to talk to. I’m sure if you just call the Office of Public Safety and let them know that parking remains a big problem, they’ll make sure that that gets forwarded to the appropriate people. Buck?

**J. Stephen:** Pretty clearly OPS isn’t one of the things we have control over. OPS is not one of the things that responsive to the University Council. Who is it responsible to?

**P. Stoddard:** Eddie Williams.

**J. Stephen:** So, if it was transferred, he transferred it.

**P. Stoddard:** Yeah, but of course that’s – Bob Albanese and Chief Grady report directly to Eddie Williams, Eddie Williams – yeah, I assume he’s the one who transferred it but again, I don’t know why the transfer was made.

**J. Stephen:** Well, it’s not causing me any trouble but if it’s causing you some trouble, let it roll downhill too.
P. Stoddard: I was going to suggest uphill. Nancy?

N. Castle: I would be sure that it’s clear to them that it’s not just faculty who have blue stickers, it’s staff too. It’s not just the faculty complaining about this it’s a lot of people who have blue stickers. And do we have some sense when they’re finished with construction how many spaces we’ll get back out of this 50? Will we get any?

P. Stoddard: I believe we’ll get some but offhand, I think I knew that over the summer but I don’t remember offhand what it is. It’s not 50; it’s between 0 and 50. It’s bigger than a bread box and smaller than --- yes, Pat?

P. Henry: Pat Henry, Foreign Languages. I just wondered, does Public Safety also, could they be involved in the question of making bicycles a little more easy to use on campus in terms of parking spaces to lock them up and bike paths and stuff like that, because that in a sense might help in some aspects in the car parking problem.

P. Stoddard: That’s a good question. I think there’s a committee on campus environment and safety. I mean if there’s the actual placing of places where you can lock up a bicycle, I don’t know if Public Safety does that or if that’s another body on campus that – that’s money so that’s all sorts of stuff that goes in. Bike paths – that’s another whole issue as well and then there’s bike paths throughout town so that you can get to campus safely on a bike. Even, you know, campus can be the most friendly bike campus friendly place in the world, if you can’t get here it doesn’t do you a world of good. So there are some issues, I know Parking Services does have a lend a bike program or something like that. I think students were – I don’t know if they have to put down a deposit or some them an ID or something but they can get bikes from parking services to bike around on campus with. I know there were some ideas of having a huge bike parking area right downstairs from here someplace but that hasn’t come to fruition that I’ve seen. So, it is a very good question. It is a question that has a lot of tentacles that would permeate the university and immediate ???. I don’t know how you show that in the record. But anyway, it is a good question. Jay, you’re on the Campus Environment – do you know anything about it at all?

J. Stravers: Jay Stravers, Geology and Environmental Geosciences. You wouldn’t know it by looking at me now but I used to do a lot of cycling and I’m very bicycle friendly and this is not a bicycle friendly campus. I was going to speak to pedestrians. It’s not a pedestrian friendly campus either. My son goes to U of I and there are very few automobiles who pay any attention to pedestrian crosswalks. They’re clearly labeled but very few cars, very few drivers, pay attention to them. My son goes to U of I and what they have, I’ve suggested this on that committee before, is what they have at U of I are these plastic knockdown signs that spring back up again right in the middle of the road that you must yield to pedestrians. And I think that’s one thing we should easily consider and it can’t cost that much for this campus to do that. Those things can’t be that expensive and I don’t know what the statistics are for pedestrian and automobile interaction but I’ve actually seen, actually witnessed an automobile run in to the back end of a bicycle on the street and thought nothing of it and so, yeah – I come from. Well, to make a long story short, I did a post-doc for two years at Nova Scotia which is the most
pedestrian friendly place you can possibly imagine and this is the complete opposite of where I came from.

**P. Henry:** Unfortunately, I haven’t been able to ride my bike recently in general, it’s so much easier except that indeed, there’s so much danger of interaction with pedestrians and even just drawing lines on the sidewalk which wouldn’t cost that much but would at least let people know that there might be a bicycle coming up on them if bicycles stay on that part, I think would help a lot on campus. Back to Jay’s point there, I think students would use those crosswalks more often if there were some signs that cars would yield to them. I try and do that when I’m there but then I see students just drifting across the street any old where because nobody is going to stop for them anyway so I think there’s a lot that could be done there.

**P. Stoddard:** Actually, I know down on Normal Road, you know, we’ve got those barriers now which was to address part of that problem. They also have speed bumps and the like to slow down cars so I mean, we’re not – the university is not immune to the calls for more safety. Mari?

**M. Vella:** I hate to harp on this but it really impacts my quality of life because I park right across the street from that parking lot and I have a question. My understanding is that the Office of Parking Services receives the funds from any fines that they collect from parking.

**P. Stoddard:** All parking, yeah, parking – I mean the maintenance of the lots, the building of a new parking garage or whatever is all funded by the parking fees for the permit we buy as well as for fines.

**M. Vella:** But do you see a conflict of interest in terms of having the same organization, the same unit controlling the parking allotments and then collecting the money from it?

**P. Stoddard:** Yes, actually.

**J. Stephen:** I got a ticket for using a blue permit in a blue lot.

**P. Stoddard:** Really?

**J. Stephen:** They cancelled it though.

**P. Stoddard:** Yeah, I mean, yeah they do, you know, if you forget to hang your permit, you can go over there and they’ll charge you a dollar and – and actually I’m told you can handle it through campus mail so you don’t have to go over there and visit with the friendly – actually, they’re pretty friendly.

**M. Vella:** I mean, talk about conflict of interest in our Ethics Training.

**P. Stoddard:** Outside agency, then --- Buck?
**J. Stephen:** I’ll touch on both things I’ve been touching on but one of those is those of us who’ve been on the Faculty Senate for a long time – I’ve heard Pat’s speech about how nice it would be to have a bike path for oh, going on twenty years. Jay, maybe we can actually do something about that soon. That would be nice. Then the other thing I’ve only been going on about for a year and a half is those three garbage cans on the south side of College Drive between the new bridge and Louden Hall have not been replaced yet and they’re still just lots of garbage floating over to the lagoon that could’ve gone into those three garbage cans that were never replaced.

**P. Stoddard:** All right. We do occasionally see bikes in the river so I guess that ties this all together. C. T.? Not that they would fit in a can.

**C. T. Lin:** My name is C. T. Lin and I’m from Chemistry. In the past, this type of ??? campus as well as, you know, bicycle issue is really in charge of our standing committee of Resource, Space and Budget. Why don’t change this to the committee for a thorough investigation and come back to us about, you know, the ---

**P. Stoddard:** Is this a motion?

**C. T. Lin:** It’s what I suggest.

**P. Stoddard:** We will take that as a motion. All in favor? Okay, great. Thank you very much. That’s a fine idea to refer it to Resource, Space and Budget.

**V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION**

**P. Stoddard:** Moving on then, we have no items to consider or to consent to.

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – report

**P. Stoddard:** We have a report on the table in front of you from Earl Hanson from the FAC to the IBHE. I don’t think Earl was able to be here today so I’ll invite you to peruse that at your leisure. It looks like I did have a chance to peruse this at my leisure and the main emphasis of that particular meeting looks like it was the role of community colleges, especially as some of them are looking to expand their charge to four-year degrees and so forth. So, you might find some of what’s in here actually particularly interesting so I would suggest you all take a look at this and I’m sure Earl will be happy to answer any questions you might have next time should any of those arise. Do we post these? We just got it today, so --- microphone

**J. Stephen:** ??? colleges to offer four-year degrees in some way or the other and that’s why there are certain things in here that are of great impact to us.
**P. Stoddard:** Other questions about that for anybody who’s not here to answer them. Okay. So far, so good. The BOT didn’t meet so we won’t have reports from anybody there.

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 – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Paul Stoddard – no report

**VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

**P. Stoddard:** We’ll just go to standing committees and if you’ve got a report, feel free to let me know. I think there might only be the one. Academic Affairs has no report. Economic Status has no report. Resource, Space and Budget has no chair here and also no report. Oh, well that was good – we passed that in his absence – excellent – no, no, no. Let’s hear from the Council side. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, no report. Rules and Governance.

**N. Castle:** That’s me!

**P. Stoddard:** Nancy.

A. Academic Affairs – Mari Valle, Chair – no report

B. Economic Status of the Profession – C.T. Lin, Chair – no report

C. Resource, Space and Budget – Michael Morris, Chair – no report

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Rosemary Fuerer, Chair – no report

E. Rules and Governance – Nancy Castle, Chair - report

1. Article 1 Membership of the Faculty Senate – [First Reading](#)

**N. Castle:** I have a report and it’s attached to your agenda for today. I want to start by saying I can spell. I’m not a good typist and apparently not a good proof reader because the sentence that says “in reviewing what should have been the bylaws”, apparently it’s the Scotch/Irish in me that says “we reviewed the bylass” and byladdies – by golly. You remember at the last meeting or two meetings ago this committee was asked to look at the possibility of including the Faculty Athletic Rep as a member of the Faculty Senate so the committee reviewed the bylaws of the Faculty Senate and determined that there’s a precedence set and so following the language, we’re proposing – and this is a first reading so you can review it and we’ll vote at the next meeting.
What we are proposing is that there should be language inserted at 1.24 under Article I saying “if not otherwise a member of the Faculty Senate, Faculty Athletic Representative shall be an ex officio, non-voting member” and that follows the example of a couple of the ones ahead. “If the person who is the Faculty Athletics Rep is already a voting member of the Faculty Senate, then that does not strip their vote away”. In doing that, just to be consistent with the items ahead, we then bumped what was 1.24 down to 1.25 because it just sort of flowed better in terms of the ex officio status thing. So that is our proposal is that we include the Faculty Athletics Representative as a member of the Faculty Senate if not already a member, then to be one as ex officio, non-voting. So e-mail me with questions or comments and we’ll vote at the next meeting.

**P. Stoddard:** All right, Buck? Hold the microphone closer to you.

**J. Stephen:** Is the Faculty Athletic Representative actually a post.

**P. Stoddard:** Yes.

**J. Stephen:** Okay.

**N. Castle:** It’s Jan Rintala, it’s the position Jan Rintala holds.

**J. Stephen:** Is this the kind of thing where you might want to have or ---

**N. Castle:** There’s always somebody who’s the Faculty Athletic Representative.

**P. Stoddard:** Any other questions for Nancy? All right, this is just the first reading.

**N. Castle:** Do I have to move for first reading.

**P. Stoddard:** No, we just read it and next month we’ll read it again and then we can vote on it. Okay.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Cason Snow, Chair – no report.

**P. Stoddard:** Okay, Elections and Legislative Oversight. Isn’t there an election coming up?

**C. Snow:** No report. I voted.

**P. Stoddard:** Yes, very good, very good but don’t ????. You can save that for later.

**IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**X. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Scheduling concerns.
P. Stoddard: Under new business I have a technically written comment called scheduling concerns and this comes from a couple of different things both from the front end and back end of the semester. On the front end, I think everybody is aware, maybe not, a recent law championed by Dick Durbin actually, now makes it – I don’t want to say mandatory – that’s slightly too strong, strongly encourages faculty and universities to post the required books when you decide what classes you’re going to teach so that when it goes out that you’re teaching class A, they also want to see the book list for class A. That means that not only do we have to come up with the classes we’re going to teach, two or three years in advance it seems, well, literally we come up with them at the beginning of the semester. We’re just starting for the semester following, we also have to come up with the book list for that. So this is now the way it is and one of the questions that has come up from time to time, especially now that the schedule of classes is available on line and we don’t have to wait however many weeks for the printing of this booklet, why is it that the deadline still seems earlier than it’s ever been? So that was one of the questions and then on the tail end, I’ve gotten people who feel that they don’t get enough time to grade exams following – during finals week and immediate following where we have to, in some cases you know, a minimal amount of time over a weekend, and if you’re trying to grade essays and other such papers, that gets to be really quite onerous. So, I thought I would lump both of those together and see how the Senate would like to handle this. It’s something I think that we as a faculty, my impression is, we want to speak up about it. If everybody is happy with the way things are, then we don’t but if you feel that there is a concern than maybe we should try to address that. Buck and then ---

J. Stephen: There are more concerns with NIU that will effect scheduling and that is whether we have to – I would love to be able to test drive a grade input thing because if I have 240 students and I have to input a grade and it refreshes between every grade like it does when you have to load up a new course or something, that’s going to be aggravating and I think we need to make it broader than this because, for instance, my assistant chair had to do 500 contacts with students about just giving them the type of thing that we used to have given them a 4 digit number for.

P. Stoddard: Okay, in the back?

M. Kostic: Kostic from Mechanical Engineering. Basically, about scheduling, there are even more issues but I’m glad you brought them up. About grading, I heard things in three days or four days and even impose some penalty if you don’t do it. You have to do change of grades and before ??? I was thinking if I’m right, I ??? usually do. ??? a lot of the time ??? and we faculty have big concerns about the quality so you compromise quality against the deadlines. The other issue is about deadlines for the master’s thesis for example. Master’s thesis are rather short thesis, you know, one semester or so and graduate school has a deadline that they have to be finished in the middle of the semester and then for processing and I understand they need the time, but then we are under pressure to basically do it in a hurry, compromise the quality or whatever. I think it should more the students should be allowed to work whole semester for master’s thesis and then processing could be done afterwards, you know, to the graduation ceremony ??? to be finished. So we lose basically a month of making a better thesis for students and that is concern of my whole department. Now grading is another one and whatever else, you know, and somehow at one time, you know, I didn’t want to ??? and that will actually even how
we make up the final exams. We make them up for speedy grading, not to basically accomplishments and then we complain about, you know, excellence. I’m not afraid to say it. So basically what I’m talking about, we engineering professors, we to students to solving problems only and then we are wondering why they don’t know concepts because they are smart. That’s actually related to the time available for basically examination and so on. So I think this is okay. So ---

N. Castle: I have a different issue for throwing up issues.

P. Stoddard: Not scheduling issues – is it a scheduling issue?

N. Castle: Related to that, but responding to Kostic. My regret is that we lost serendipity with this system and that is if there is somebody out in the community who might like to take a course to advance on a job or whatever, that they can’t just scroll through an offering of courses. You have to have a Z-ID to log in to get to them and so unless we are giving out free Z-ID numbers just for people who think they might be interested, we’ve lost our ability to get to a market.

P. Stoddard: Yeah, I’ve heard this – unless you’ve e-mailed me already – but I’ve heard this already. Somebody else – and for incoming students who are planning on coming here, they can’t check courses that are available if they haven’t gone through the registration process yet because they don’t a Z-ID.

N. Castle: Well, and they do have do, I mean, they have to know exactly the four letters that would go to whatever so they have to go through a really lengthy process of figuring out.

P. Stoddard: Yeah, we need to make this more outside user friendly.

J. Stephen: Well, we’ve mentioned the bad front end of MyNIU. If you’re an advisor and wondering how you can have a student with a 4.0 and be on academic probation, see me after the meeting.

P. Stoddard: Well let’s – if we turn this into a MyNIU gripe session, we’re going to be here for a long, long time. Are there any other scheduling issues that people think we ought to be considering. Yes, Pat?

P. Henry: I assume that your discussion of the books that we have to have ready would also be something that would be available on line?

P. Stoddard: Right, what classes are there.

P. Henry: Even a stronger argument that I totally concur with that is does seem the deadline keeps getting pushed earlier and earlier and we’re just barely able to think about plus, if a new book comes out or something like that, it’s hard to take advantage of if we’re so far ahead.

P. Stoddard: Okay. Yes?
L. Yamagata-Lynch: Didn’t you explain a couple of meetings ago that the book listed is supposed to give an approximate guess on how much it will cost so it doesn’t have to be the exact title or was I wrong?

P. Stoddard: You know, I don’t remember saying anything about that one way or the other, which isn’t to say I didn’t, but, you know, I’m getting up there. Part of it – I think we’re getting into trouble if we try to list prices just because that gets us into the book store versus Amazon.com versus used versus new. I think that – you know, bundling, not bundling – I think there’s a whole wealth of things that are going there and frankly I think if we provide the name of the book, it’s up to other powers to figure out what the price of the book is. In fact, we never have to actually list what the price is. It would be nice if we’re aware of it and whatever but that’s not something we need to list. So, no – I don’t know if that’s really an issue; I don’t think so. Were you going to – you’re getting a mike ready.

D. Zahay: This is Debra Zahay again and I was wondering is the idea that we would post the name of the book early so students could buy it elsewhere, not buy it at the bookstore? Is that the idea?

P. Stoddard: That’s one possibility. The other possibility is that the students get an idea of what their book bill is going to look and if your course is just too darn expensive, they’ll take something else.

D. Zahay: Okay, that’s kind of interesting. Because I had actually used Blackboard posting this is the text we will be using like several weeks, sometimes a month in advance. Invariably, none of the undergrads at least purchased the book until several days before the course and there’s always somebody who comes up and says that they’re waiting for it to be shipped when actually they could have ordered it two or three weeks prior. So I’m not sure we’re going to achieve that objective.

P. Stoddard: Yeah, that’s a whole other issue. All right, so I think I’m hearing enough concern that this is probably something we might want to go ahead with so I’m going to ask that people take a look at the list of standing committees that I just read through, Academic Affairs, Economic Status and so forth. If any of the chairs of those committees would like to volunteer the services of that committee to investigate what might be done about scheduling or at least report that nothing can be done if that’s unfortunately the way we go, I’d be happy to entertain volunteers. Otherwise, if you have a thought as to where it should go, we have people who need something to do. I don’t think it’s Elections and Legislative Oversight – although it was Dick Durbin. Academic Affairs would be a possibility? I’m seeing some nodding. No, I don’t think it’s Rules and Governance Nancy. You’re off the hook.

M. Vella: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

M. Kostic: Are we talking about scheduling here? I think Academic Affairs. ??? learning and teaching.
P. Stoddard: I’m going to take that then as a motion to refer this to Academic Affairs. Any comments from the chair perhaps of Academic Affairs.

M. Vella: No, it will give us something to do.

P. Stoddard: Thank you Mari. All in favor say aye. All right, terrific. Does anybody else have anything they would like to bring up? Nancy?

N. Castle: Just real quickly, with my temporary part time hat as the director of the Honors Program, it has come to my attention, and you’ll be hearing about this because we’re really going to capitalize on it, that the Honors Program is 40 years old. That it was legislated, however we did it, in 1968 and the first class came in in the fall of ’69 so we have a 40 year old Honors Program that you’ll be hearing more about and we’ll be celebrating the anniversary and so on but pretty cool.

P. Stoddard: Well, congratulations to Honors. Any other comments? If not, is there a motion to adjourn? All in favor get up and leave.

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

XIII. INFORMATION ITEMS

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:14 P.M.