FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2010, 3:00P.M.  
HOLMES STUDENT CENTER SKY ROOM

Disclaimer: These minutes should not be taken as a verbatim transcript but rather as a shortened summary that is intended to reflect the essence of statements made at the meeting. Many comments have been omitted and, in some cases, factual and grammatical errors corrected. The full verbatim transcript is available online at the University Council website under Faculty Senate / Agenda Meeting Transcript.


Parliamentarian Feral Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:07 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Valentiner made the motion; Slotsve made the second. The agenda was accepted with the addition of three walk-in items.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 20, 2010 FS MEETING (sent electronically)

Henry made the motion; Valentiner was second. The minutes were accepted as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: updated the Senate on the progress of the raise equity committee. President Peters accepted the provisions and the Executive Committee met and appointed the committee to look in to raise equity issues. The members of that committee included three individuals from the Faculty Senate and two individuals from the faculty but outside the Faculty Senate. The
faculty members of this committee are Rosemary Feurer, Charles Cappell, and George Slotsve and from outside the faculty we have Bala Hosmane and Brent Wholeben. The Operating Staff Council nominated Alan Smith who is from the police department and SPS nominated Dan House. Ex-officio members include Joe Grush, Fred Schwantes, Celeste Latham who is the data manager for HR, and Steve Cunningham. The committee has met twice and we are planning to meet again this Friday. We are very pleased that the university has furnished the data to us so the committee, after signing confidentiality agreements, now has access to the data. This is not a complete data set but it is the data that they were using. We have let them know that this does not contain enough data points; it does not go back enough years and we need additional material. President Peters, met with the committee at the first meeting and empowered us to get whatever questions answered that we needed to have answered and was very convincing in telling us that he wants us to find out if there are any problems that need to be addressed. So he gave the committee authority to look at this question as they saw fit and I think the committee was very satisfied with the President’s charge. The committee is also satisfied with the speed at which the university is apparently providing the materials that the committee has asked for.

M. Kostic: asked about the confidentiality agreement given that the data are supposedly public record.

A. Rosenbaum: According Ken Davidson who’s the university’s counsel, although the salary data is public information, once you start manipulating it by putting additional information in or changing its form or analyzing it, it suddenly becomes a different set of data. The confidentiality agreement does not prevent us from talking about anything that’s in the data as long as we talk about it in aggregated form. So we can tell anyone we want what the data shows, we simply can’t disclose individual information and this seemed like a reasonable accommodation. The committee signed off and this and we made it very clear that this would not restrict us from presenting any of the results of the analyses that the committee does.

A. Rosenbaum: The committee feels that it is the aggregated data and the trends within that data which are of importance to us. The concern is finding out whether there is a fair and equitable distribution of raises across the different divisions of the university and to do that we don’t need individuals identified. The committee that we have put together is very statistically sophisticated and felt that the analyses that have already been done are mostly worthless so we are sort of asking for additional information to do analyses that are less worthless and so far they have been agreeable towards providing that data. We’re optimistic about this and we’ll get back to you if we hit a roadblock or if things bog down but as of right now, we feel we are on track at least to try to get an answer to our questions by the March 19 deadline that was set for us by the Senate.

President Peters said that if we have a problem, we should come to see him so I fully intend to go to the President if anything slows us down from trying to meet that deadline.

A. Rosenbaum noted that Ferald Bryan asked me to call to the attention of the faculty that the library is apparently removing many of the printed periodicals from its collection and I’ll read you exactly what it says. It says “To free up library space we took the paper-bound journals to which we have full content access in JSTOR and offered them to the Center for Research
Libraries in Chicago or sold or destroyed them under Illinois law. We have not lost content. We have changed the mode of delivery of content. Freed space is being repurposed for student group study.” Ferald felt we should call attention to this so the faculty was aware that these journals that have been saved for a long time are now being disposed of and what we will be left with are electronic versions in JSTOR.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Asked J. Hurych, library rep to the senate if she had any further information.

**J. Hurych:** I must say that I have protested the move in the library and I don’t know whether that helped or not but I felt that even though we may have electronic access to some of these journals, we have paid for the print and paid for binding them and they should have stayed.

**B. Jaffee:** inquired as to which journals were removed.

**A. Rosenbaum:** provided the website for the list of journals: www.ulib.niu.edu/information/jstorpulled.cfm.

**P. Henry:** expressed concern for the longevity of electronically stored journals.

**F. Bryan:** I just wanted to point out that a number of my colleagues are very upset that this is happening. Those who look at ads or graphic displays of the journal and want the original print form for many, many legitimate research reasons greatly deplore that this is happening. I think the place to start would be your department library representative.

**J. Brubaker:** I believe the deans were notified so I don’t think it was really done in secret. Unfortunately, a lot of times information doesn’t trickle down as it should and also JSTOR is considered one of the most stable of the electronic resources that are available right now plus we will keep copies in Portico which is an electronic archiving system.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Jan Rintala has asked for a few moments to make a couple of announcements related to Athletics.

**J. Rintala:** student athletes last fall concluded their 9th straight semester with accumulative GPA over 3.0. This time of semester you also are probably used to getting those yellow note cards if you have student athletes in class asking you to please assist the academic advising group over in Athletics. This year they are shifting to on-line reports. It’s called “Grades First.” Everyone who has student athletes enrolled in your classes, should be receiving an e-mail and I would encourage you to please complete that electronically.

**J. Rintala:** announced the recipients of this year’s academic All MAC awards. To be eligible, they must have at least a 3.2 GPA and have participated in 50% of their team’s competition. Everybody who’s eligible then gets on a list and the faculty athletic representatives select the best of the best for academic ALL-MAC. This year the recipients were women’s soccer: Annie Wyer and Lindsey Cumock. Men’s soccer: Brad Bahr and Luis De La Cerda. Volleyball: Kristin Hoffman, Allison McGlaughlin and Meagan Schoenrock and football: Brandon Bice, Tommy Davis and Chandler Harnish. In addition, the Columbus Quarterback Club selects one collegiate
male athlete of the year and this year the selection was Jake Coffman who is from the NIU football team. I just want to read a paragraph on the significance of his recognition. “Northern Illinois defensive end Jake Coffman took a road less traveled to arrive on the college football field. Before he walked on two years ago as a 23-year old freshman, the 6’5”, 250 pound lineman from German Valley, Illinois served in the U.S. Marine Corps and was deployed twice to Iraq, where he reached the rank of Corporal. The 2009 season showcased Jake’s football skills and he led the Huskies in sacks with 8 1/2, and tackles for loss. For his exceptional season on the field, and his devoted service to his country, Jake Coffman has been named the Touchdown Club of Columbus 2009 Male Athlete of the Year. The award is presented annually to the outstanding amateur athlete who exemplifies dedication and leadership both on and off the field of play.

A. Rosenbaum: Next item. The Presidential Commission on the Status of Women is accepting nominations for three awards. These three awards are the Wilma D. Stricklin Award, the Women Who Make a Difference Award and the Outstanding Mentor Award. The deadlines for these nominations are February 19.

D. Haliczer: the Wilma Stricklin Award is given to an outstanding administrator who has for a lasting period of time made a difference in the lives of women on campus. It’s given once a year or not and the other awards are given to women in any capacity working on campus who make a difference in the lives of women and who are good at mentoring women. The Outstanding Operating Staff deadline is coming up and so if you have an Operating Staff person in your area, think about making a difference in their lives. Awards make a lot of difference to people’s morale and this is the season to think about.

I might also make another announcement to tell you that you have present one of this year’s Presidential Supporting Professional Staff Award for Excellence winners, Bobbie Cesarek. Congratulations, Bobbie.

A. Rosenbaum: There was some conversation in the last Senate meeting about faculty participation in the university budget and this originated as one of the items that came from one of the departments. I’ve been trying to get more information on the budget process and the way faculty advise on the budget. There are at least three mechanisms by which faculty play a role in the budget. The first is the Committee on Resource, Space and Budget which is a joint committee of the Faculty Senate and the University Council. It includes four members from the Senate and four members from the Council. There are co-chairs from the Senate and the University Council. The role of this committee is supposedly to participate with the President and Executive Vice President in the development of long-range planning and allocation of resources. The committee is supposed to meet with the President and the Executive Vice President and Provost either together or separately at least twice a semester to offer advice on budget and space issues. Another way that the faculty participates in the budget process is on the Academic Planning Council. The Academic Planning Council is supposed to advise the Executive Vice President and Provost on academic priorities and strategies for the achievement of these priorities including the establishment of priorities in budgeting. The Academic Planning Council is largely a faculty committee. The third way is through the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees has sub-committees. The sub-committees meet once every three months. The sub-committees then present their findings or
their decisions to the full Board. The faculty is represented by the UAC. Right now the University Advisory Committee members for the Finance, Facilities and Operations sub-committee consists of myself and Greg Waas. A day or two before that meeting, Greg and I meet with Eddie Williams and he tells us what is going to be presented to the Board of Trustees’ Finance, Facilities and Operations sub-committee. We are allowed to ask him questions. He answers those questions for us and that is one of the ways that the faculty can have input. I’ve asked Barbara Jaffee to inform us about what that Resource, Space and Budget Committee does or doesn’t do.

B. Jaffee: Well, I can talk to you quite a bit about what it doesn’t do.

B. Jaffee: [referring to her report which was included in the agenda] The first paragraph lists the members for this year and I want to point out that in addition to the eight faculty members that Alan described, according to University Bylaw 2.8, there is also supposed to be a student appointed through the Student Association and there’s supposed to be an additional member appointed by the Council of Deans. The Executive Vice President for Business and Finance is a non-voting member, ex-officio. According to the Constitutional charge, the committee is supposed to meet regularly as a group in order to discuss issues of resource needs and priorities and in addition to that, to meet at least twice each semester “with the President and Provost together or separately”. These charges in the bylaws I think make it very clear that the purpose of this committee really is to be a conduit for faculty input, discussion with administration in both the academic and finance and facilities divisions. I’ve been on the committee three years. It has not functioned that way in three years. I have a summary in paragraph three from Dr. Williams in which he talked about the NIU budget process but I will tell you that all of this information is available on line and at the home page of the Office of Budget and Planning. That’s under the Division of Finance and Facilities. At our meeting in October we were joined by Dr. Grush who noted that in his opinion, historically this committee is a kind of artifact. That it is a sort of vestigial group because of the restrictions to the budget, there isn’t a lot of opportunity in his opinion for faculty to advise, that this was once-upon-a-time when the university was growing and maybe the faculty would have an opportunity to comment or help direct the growth of different academic programs. He did say that the growth or transformations to the budget over the last few years that have happened have happened through the strategic planning process and that, as far as he was concerned, this satisfied the requirement that faculty be involved in advising and consenting. Also, that working with a budget was such a big project that it couldn’t be done in the kind of format outlined in Bylaw 2.8 and since the administration conducted strategic planning and strategic planning had faculty input, that was really all that needed to happen. At the end of the meeting, both Drs. Grush and Williams offered the opinion that the real function of this committee should be provide faculty support for NIU’s external budget request so that when requests go to the legislature, we could be cheerleaders for that and that would be the most useful in terms of faculty input into this process. The other piece of information from Dr. Williams that this process is constrained by the fact that many of the university’s sources of revenue are by statute already allocated so that there wasn’t a whole lot that really could be done. It seemed as if the whole thing was so constrained and predetermined that, there wasn’t opportunity for faculty input other than the strategic planning process. I did offer the opinion at the meeting that I wasn’t sure that strategic planning was entirely faculty driven.
A. Rosenbaum: How about the meetings with the President and Provost? Have those not occurred?

B. Jaffee: No. I didn’t realize until I became chair this year that that was part of the charge. I had served on the committee for two years prior and I thought what we did was sit in a room while Dr. Williams told us about how all the money was already allocated and what a shame it is that the state is reneging on their commitment, all of which is true, and that we were then supposed to report back to the faculty about that. I came away from this with the feeling that I was not as empowered to ask the kind of questions that I was asking as this bylaw would suggest.

P. Henry: Well, as someone who was at that meeting I concur in the assessment of it. It seems to me, given our particular financial problems now, really important to have faculty input as budgets get scaled back and I would hope that there would be some way that we could make that point to the administration.

A. Rosenbaum: In fact there is. Article 2.9 called the Financial Exigency Advisory Committee which says that if the President believes a financial exigency is imminent, the President in consultation with Resources, Space and Budget Committee shall form a Financial Exigency Advisory Committee. Does the RSB committee want to meet with the President and the Provost?

B. Jaffee: I don’t know. Without some idea of what the budget is, the committee has no idea what there is to do.

A. Rosenbaum: The budget is published. We have a copy of the budget in the University Council/Faculty Senate office. The committee can have it.

B. Jaffee: All right. Well, that would be different. Yes and it would be useful because if we knew what we were talking about, there would be something to talk about.

A. Rosenbaum: I think that perhaps the faculty should have a stronger voice and we need to figure out how to go about doing that. So it sounds like our committee on Resource, Space and Budget is not exercising a very strong voice at the present. Would that be fair?

B. Jaffee: That’s exactly right but I think that if we had an opportunity to meet as a committee, as described here with the budget as a reference – we could have a conversation that we could then build on in the way, exactly as it says, regularly meetings discussing priorities and needs and then periodic interaction with the President and Provost.

A. Rosenbaum: We can certainly do that. I can provide a copy of the budget to the committee and we can ask the President and the Provost to meet as prescribed by the Constitution and I’m sure they would do that.
J. Stephen: I was going to suggest that the meeting with the President would be the most important since he knows about the external face of the budget. Eddie is the guy who knows about internally.

A. Rosenbaum: asked if the Senate would like to invite Dr. Williams to speak with us about these issues. There was no strong sentiment and the Senate was asked to think about that between now and the next meeting.

A. Rosenbaum: If people on the Senate have questions for the committee to ask Dr. Williams or President Peters, forward them to either Barbara Jaffee or to Mike Morris who is co-chair from the Faculty Senate.

R. Feurer: I would say that we ought to ask about that 2.9 provision and the Financial Exigency Advisory Committee.

A. Rosenbaum: offered to discuss this with President Peters.

A. Rosenbaum: Asked about the issue of +/- grading and noted that several departments have weighed in on the subject, but not many.

D. Valentiner: I raised this at a Psychology meeting, departmental meeting, and there was no strong opinion one way or the other about the issue.

A. Rosenbaum: Foreign Languages were in favor of it.

R. Schneider: Theatre and Dance is interested in the minuses but not the pluses.

P. Henry: You had mentioned this before that the system that’s used in some places where you have A, A/B, B, B/C really seems to make a lot of sense in terms of how it would interface with the 4.0 grade system that we’ve got now.

A. Rosenbaum: again asked Senate members to poll their respective departments.

T. Fisher: inquired about what happened the previous time this issue was raised at Senate.

A. Rosenbaum: The Senate choose not to act. The last announcement item is that at the March meeting we will accept nominations for the position of Executive Secretary and President of the Faculty Senate.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

A. Illinois Public University Presidents & Chancellors Letter and Faculty Senate draft letter of support
A. Rosenbaum: referred to the letter sent by the committee of university presidents and chancellors of the public universities of Illinois asking the Governor and legislators to fulfill the state’s financial obligations to the public universities and asked the Senate if they would like to consider a resolution of support.

E. Hansen: I know that the other institutions are coming out in support of this with their faculty so I would strongly recommend that we do that. From what I’ve seen sitting on this advisory committee, we really need to show a united front across the board.

A. Rosenbaum: introduced a draft of such a letter [walk-in item] and asked for a motion.

J. Stephen Made the motion D. Valentiner was second.

A. Rosenbaum: called for discussion of the draft and, hearing none, called the vote. The motion passed without opposition.

There was a discussion of recipients of the letter and it was decided to send the letter to the same people to whom the president’s letter had been sent.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – no report

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Joseph “Buck” Stephen and Ferald Bryan – report – walk-in

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – report – walk-in

D. BOT Legislation, Audit and External Affairs Committee – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – report – walk-in

P. Henry: asked about provisions for domestic partnerships?

D. Haliczer: Currently we offer same sex domestic partner benefits through the State of Illinois plan and the university has offered same in opposite sex domestic partner benefits to faculty and staff here on campus on anything that is discretionary and revenue neutral. The Board of Trustee member is asking for a clarification in the Board of Trustees’ regulations that explicitly acknowledges domestic partner as a status instead of the current wording which includes “member of the household” and so Human Resources provided an extensive comparison of benefits between the different universities which you can all look at on the Human Resources website.

J. Kowalski: I was wondering if there was any discussion about whether there’s – whether you think there’s a chance this effort to repeal the 50% tuition waiver is likely to pass or not?
E. Hansen: This is one of the pieces of legislature that the Faculty Advisory Committee has been actively fighting against through their representation in Springfield.

B. Cesarek: I just wanted to make a comment that during the conversation, Kathy Buettner did acknowledge that the university was well aware that the constituents at NIU were very much against HB4706 and they were fighting on our behalf indeed to ensure that that does not pass.

E. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs – Charles Cappell, Chair – no report

B. Economic Status of the Profession – Sonya Armstrong, Chair – no report

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

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

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

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – David Wade, Chair – no report

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. Academic Misconduct Issue

Undergraduate Catalog excerpt and Student Code of Conduct excerpt

A. Rosenbaum: There is one item of new business. This involves the academic misconduct issue and you have two documents in your packet. One of them comes from the Student Code of Conduct; the other comes from the Undergraduate Catalog. The problem is that the Undergraduate Catalog and the Student Code of Conduct are inconsistent regarding the academic misconduct policies. Specifically, the Undergraduate Catalog states that if an instructor finds a student guilty of plagiarism or any other academic misconduct, he or she may assign up to an F in the class. The student may appeal to the Judicial Board but can only appeal the verdict, not the penalty. So if a student pleads guilty to plagiarism no appeal of the penalty is possible, however, the Student Code of Conduct allows them to appeal both of the verdict but also of the penalty and we have a number of cases pending where a student has been found guilty of academic misconduct and where the Judicial Board has recommended a penalty that is different from that of the faculty member and where the faculty member has refused to change it and where this has created a legal liability for the university. And so the deans and the Provost are asking that we reconcile the policy as it’s stated in both the Undergraduate Catalog and also in the Student Code of Conduct. The Undergraduate Catalog language is controlled by the UCC,
and the Student Code of Conduct is controlled by Student Affairs and specifically the Judicial Advisory Board and neither of them answer to the Faculty Senate. The faculty has to play a very important role in this because it is an issue of academic freedom. However, it also seems reasonable that we want to protect against faculty members who are being completely unreasonable in their actions. This is a complicated issue and the deans and the Provost are not weighing in on which of the versions that they would prefer, whether it’s the Undergraduate Catalog version or the Student Code of Conduct, they’re just asking that it be reconciled, that we have one code of conduct and that it’s the same in both. We need a recommendation from the faculty regarding what the policy should be and we would ask that the faculty committee that looks into this include student input into the decision making process. We need a recommendation to the Senate. The Senate can then discuss it and vote on it and then we can give that to the UCC and also the Student Affairs and hopefully they will agree to the language that the faculty feels is the most appropriate. So that would be our starting point if the Faculty Senate agrees. I’m looking for a motion to send this to Academic Affairs. Moved by David Valentiner; seconded by Earl Hansen.

A.Rosenbaum: hearing no discussion called for a vote on the motion, which carried without opposition

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Hansen made the motion; Henry made the second.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m.