FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2009. 3:00 P.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 / Agendas, Minutes & Transcripts.


W. Zheng attended for T. Fisher; R. Winkler attended for C. Thompson.

Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

E. Hansen made the motion; W. Baker was second. The agenda was accepted as written.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2009 FACULTY SENATE MEETING (sent electronically)

W. Baker made the motion; D. Valentiner was second. The minutes were accepted as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: Announced that the MAP Grant money has been restored which is a very good thing for NIU. Asked for volunteers to represent the Senate on the review committee for the BOT Professorships. B. Jaffee volunteered. Any other interested Senators were encouraged to contact A. Rosenbaum. Senators were encouraged to remind their constituencies of the informal agreement made by faculty to not require doctor’s notes in cases of absence due to illness.
logic for this was to reduce the strain on health services. This is consistent with the advice from the CDC. Faculty are reminded that they are still free to require notes if they wish, as it is an issue of academic freedom.

P. Henry: reported that the policy in her class is to have students document it in writing, not necessarily getting a note from the doctor. She suggested that documentation from the student is a reasonable alternative to documentation from a physician.

A. Rosenbaum: updated the Senate on the status of the recently passed resolution regarding faculty with disabilities. S. Cunningham has been designated as the administrator looking into implementing the policy and he provided a letter updating the progress so far. This letter will be given to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities committee and will be discussed at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

A. Updates on Baccalaureate Review – Jeff Kowalski (Pages 3-13)

A. Rosenbaum: introduced J. Kowalski who updated the Senate on the activities of the Baccalaureate Review Committee.

J. Kowalski: Referred to the report which was included in the agenda packet. Encouraged members to access the reports on the NIU homepage. Briefly discussed the history and purpose of the review as well as the processes used to undertake it. The three educational objectives that emerged from the process were the three Cs, critical thinking, communication and context. Critical thinking which was the most cited goal by respondents involved in this process had subcomponents including literacy, reflectivity, being awareness of learning processes, and information skills. Communication had subcomponents of technology, language, particularly mastering and effectively using English language, and collaboration, working well in teams or in group situations. The final C as it emerged from this summer’s analysis was context including subcategories of historical context which might include for example looking at historical, cultural, social contacts in which knowledge is produced and in which it will be used and so forth. Global context, wanting our students to know more about their relationship with the world at large, social context and so forth. Faculty were encouraged to go to the NIU home page where there is a link that allows you provide responses to the report. He noted that this process is already underway and some have suggested the addition of a fourth C, creativity. The next stage will be to revise the objectives and then bring a revised version of the report with its recommendation about what these broad overarching goals will be to governance bodies such as the Undergraduate Coordinating Council and the University Council. The Faculty Senate will also probably be asked for their endorsement. Once these overarching goals are agreed upon the next step will be discussing ways to achieve these goals and incorporate them into the curriculum.

There were no questions from the floor.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA
VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – report – walk-in

E. Hansen: The most recent meeting of the FAC was hosted by NIU and President Peters addressed the group. This was the first time a sitting president addressed the FAC and Peters received many accolades for doing so. E. Hansen reported that the meeting was very successful. He described the make-up of the FAC noting that it includes all the two-year, private and parochial institutions within the state as well as technical institutions such as DeVry and others. He announced a meeting on November 17 in Springfield on the P-20 longitudinal policy research and that the Executive Committee and anybody interested in educational policy research are going to be invited. Interested parties were invited to contact Earl if they wanted to attend.

E. Hansen reported that the FAC was very happy about the restoration of MAP funding but concerned about where the funds would be coming from. He added that the FAC was concerned about the failure of the media to publicize other problems confronting higher education in Illinois.

A. Rosenbaum: Reiterated Dr. Freedman’s query at the previous meeting regarding the IBHE’s compliance with a statute that apparently requires a faculty representative on the IBHE.

E. Hansen: Responded that the IBHE/FAC has put forward two names from the committee to be voting members of the IBHE. Currently, John Bennett from Lakeland College is the president of our IBHE/FAC. He represents us there but he doesn’t have a vote. The two people we’re trying to put on there, wherever they are, wherever they come from, would be voting members.

A. Rosenbaum: noted that there are supposedly two members of the IBHE that are emeriti faculty from universities in the state and asked if those would be considered faculty or whether it would have to be an active faculty member to satisfy the statute? E. Hansen was uncertain.

There were no further questions for E. Hansen.

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

C. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

D. BOT Legislation, Audit and External Affairs Committee – Jay Monteiro and Bobbie Cesarek – no report

E. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic Affairs – Charles Cappell, Chair – report (Pages 14 – 19)
C. Cappell: Referred to the report of the Academic Affairs Committee which contained two parts. The first part of the brief summarizes the general discussion that took place and my research on the exact statute which is included as an appendix so you can read the verbatim text of a new federal law. In addition to summarizing the faculty concerns that emerged in the September 2 meeting, the committee also conducted an interview the Bookstore Manager about how NIU is going to implement these procedures. The administration is skeptical and is aware of unintended consequences that are going to result from this legislation. They do not think the legislation will be able to achieve the ultimate purpose of reducing textbook costs. If the book requirements get published early in the registration process and there is a change, students may actually incur greater costs by purchasing books that are not going to be eventually used in the course which is an example of an unintended consequence that might impact students negatively.

If you read the actually legislation, you’ll see there are conditions in there that in no way are these new rules meant to restrict the academic freedom that faculty have in conducting their course. There is no understanding from either Mr. Turk or myself that NIU is going to change any requirements for faculty. It basically is going to be implemented through the same procedure we’re using now. You turn in your book order forms and then the Bookstore and the ITS specialist will integrate that information with the registration material. It’s my understanding from Mr. Turk that that’s going to be updated on a weekly basis so if you do change your mind, at most there will be a week’s lag before that new information is posted. That information will be posted as soon as the registration is open for students, however, the University Bookstore will not actually open their on-line book ordering form until a few weeks before the beginning of the semester so if the students want to wait to get their books from NIU sources, there won’t be this confusion by hopefully three to four weeks before the course starts. It shouldn’t affect faculty accept for this pressure of getting our book orders in on time.

Regarding possible actions by the Senate, the committee included a resolution which is on page 16. The committee when polled and asked to vote to recommend this resolution, split fairly evenly, 3 in favor, 2 opposed, so there’s not a strong recommendation from the committee on the resolution. Those opposed felt that it was not a big enough issue and would not have much impact on faculty or students for it to be worth the effort. Those in favor felt it was a bad law and the Senate should make their feelings known.

A. Rosenbaum: Solicited comments from the floor regarding possible actions.

J. Jeffries: expressed the opinion that it was a triviality designed to make politicians look good and that we should just comply with the law. He stated that it’ll have no significant impact on us as faculty members. Anything action, in his opinion, makes us look narrow, self-serving and small minded.

B. Jaffee: Asked for clarification regarding whether the statute would affect studio courses that might, for example, require art supplies. C. Cappell opined that the course materials really refer to materials that publishers are putting together, special custom orders for faculty of reprints and chapters from books that are put in new packets.
**A. Rosenbaum:** Polled the Senate regarding interests in making a motion and seeing none concluded that the Senate did not want to take any action at this time. He thanked the committee for their fine work in vetting this issue. **P. Henry added her appreciation** to the committee for providing us with the actual statue.

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

**C. Resource, Space and Budget – Michael Morris, Chair – report** (Page 20)

**M. Morris:** Resource, Space and Budget met on the 1st of October and the function of the meeting was more informational than anything. Eddie Williams described the budgeting process as ongoing with continuous fine-tuning and refinement but didn’t provide a lot of specific information. He referred questions on specific priorities in spending on academic pursuits that concerns faculty most greatly, to the Provost. He did go out of his way though to let us know that large amounts of the budget are not freely allocatable. They are encumbered for specific purposes. Money that is derived from bonds, from student fees, from other sources are often dedicated to very specific needs and cannot be distributed to other endeavors. Joe Grush came into the meeting later and his primary point I think was that the university is looking at a 4.5 million dollar deficit once the stimulus money from the federal government runs out and he emphasized that the university is going to have to find a way to either plug this hole assuming that the 4.5 million dollars is not reinstated by the state of Illinois. Joe Grush said that the reason that some colleges are better positioned to survive lean times are because they have more of a tradition to save for a rainy day. M. Morris questioned how colleges with less resources could be expected to save for a “rainy day.”

**B. Jaffee:** I would add one thing as the University Council co-chair, that there was discussion from Joe Grush about how there will be opportunity over the coming years to have some faculty involvement in the capital planning process and that the committee discussed getting involved with and, in fact, we thought we would come back to the Senate and University Council and maybe solicit your ideas and suggestions. If we’re going to be involved in planning, what kinds of things would you like to see in the NIU of the future that may have more money than it has at the moment.

**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.Rosenbaum:** We have no new business

**XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**
XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

Baker made the motion to adjourn; Novak was second. The meeting adjourned at 3:57 p.m.