FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 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.


Parliamentarian Ferald Bryan was present.


I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Hansen made the motion; Novak was second. The agenda was adopted as written

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 28, 2009 FACULTY SENATE MEETING (sent electronically)

Thompson made the motion; Hansen was second. The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: Noted, on behalf of Deb Haliczer, the cooperation of most faculty in completing the ethics training in a timely manner.

Jan Rintala asked for a moment to make an announcement regarding the performance of our student athletes.
J. Rintala: The federal graduation rate looks at students who entered the institution as freshmen and again six years later to see if they successfully graduated from this institution. The 2002-03 entrance class of NIU students-at-large graduated at a 51% rate. NIU student athletes in that entering class graduated at a 70% rate, 19% above the graduation rate of the NIU students as a whole. When they calculate a 4 year average, again, NIU students graduated at a 51% rate and student athletes at 66% rate, still 15% above the average. When we break down the comparisons by gender, again student athletes are graduating at a higher rate than their comparative groups; all males at 49%, male student athletes at 64% and for females 53% to 76%, so female athletes are 23% above the students as a whole.

When compared with national data including all Division I institutions, student athletes graduate at 64% rate nationwide; NIU’s rate is 66%. The NCAA also calculates a graduation success rate, which takes account those that transfer either in or out of the university. When we look at all student athletes at Division I level, the graduation success rate is 79% and at NIU it is 82%.

A. Rosenbaum: added that our student athletes have achieved a 3.0 GPA for eight straight semesters, that we have the best student athlete GPA in the MAC Conference. Faculty should be very proud of student athletes and the fact that we do a good job of actually educating our student athletes.

A. Rosenbaum updated the Senate re: the Council of Illinois University Senate (CIUS) meeting in Bloomington-Normal. He noted that financially, things are worse at many other public universities in Illinois than they are at NIU. One concern that was raised by representatives from other universities was the possibility of furloughs and layoffs, and there was discussion regarding how other Senates are trying to prepare their response should the university engage in some type of a furlough or layoff program that affects faculty. It was suggested that universities could not utilize furloughs this year if they had taken federal stimulus money but this could be a problem in the next fiscal year. The representative from UIUC noted that the university has written their reappointment letters to permit furloughing of faculty members. This has not been done at NIU, where President Peters is trying to avoid furlough programs to the extent possible. It was also noted that faculty at NIU do not receive reappointment letters in years when salaries are unchanged.

The Faculty Senate Presidents and Chairs from the different universities were in accord that there is a crisis regarding the state’s funding of higher education and discussed the idea that if the senates from the public universities joined forces, they could be a strong lobbying force for higher education. There was general concern that the IBHE is not doing a good job of representing the interests of faculty at the state level. We have seen this in years past with respect to their emphasis on productivity and the need for our FAC to educate the IBHE regarding the amount of work faculty do that is outside of the classroom. Given these concerns it was thought that perhaps the Council of Illinois University Senates could unite and serve as a lobbying agent in the way that IBHE perhaps has not. As a first step in organizing this body, a chair was selected and ideas were generated regarding how we might be able to play a role in helping the state make decisions around funding of public institutions of higher education.
P. Henry: Inquired about the name of the chair and A. Rosenbaum: reported that it was Dan Holland at Illinois State University. Illinois State organizes the meetings, contacts the representatives, tries to keep abreast of the current Faculty Senate President or Chair at the various institutions, and hosts the meetings, therefore, he was a natural candidate for this position.

W. Baker: asked for clarification regarding which state universities have implemented furloughs to date.

A. Rosenbaum: was not aware of any universities that had done so.

W. Baker: asked about the furlough language that UIUC had incorporated in their re-appointment letters and D. Haliczer noted that it is posted on the U of I website.

B. Lusk: inquired about the 3 day university closure (12/21-12/23) and expressed concern for those of our colleagues who are in civil service and for some of those who have just started. She suggested that his is a considerable financial hardship because they are likely losing three days pay if don’t have 3 days of vacation accrued.

A. Rosenbaum: noted that the administration checked with the presidents of all three councils before enacting the closure and that includes the Operating Staff and SPS Councils, all of whom feel that their constituencies are very happy about the 3 day closure with a few exceptions. Secondly, anybody who does not have sufficient vacation will continue to get paid, and the vacation will be taken out as they accrue it so they will not be without pay for those days, but they will, in fact, be advanced vacation time which will then come out of their subsequent accumulation.

A. Rosenbaum asked senators to meet with their departments and discuss with them what they think the Senate should be doing and whether or not there are any issues that are of concern to them, and send along to me the concerns and issues with which the various departments would like to have the Senate deal. They were asked to get them to A. Rosenbaum by January 7, 2010.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

A. Rosenbaum: The next items of business are the reports from the advisory committees.

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

M. Morris: asked about the nature of the Illinois Policy Institute?

E. Hansen: didn’t know who they were and offered to send him the web address.
A. Rosenbaum: asked how the FAC advises the IBHE?

E. Hansen: answered that the chair who is always at their meetings communicates with the IBHE. The IBHE also gets a copy of the FAC minutes. The FAC sends correspondence to them on things that the subcommittees come up with in regards to where we think needs are.

P. Henry: noted that the IBHE website often had links to various things, including the FAC reports but didn’t know if that’s been maintained?

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

F. Bryan: Professor Buck Stevens also serves with me in this capacity and was unable to attend the meeting. The committee is chaired by John Butler, a former faculty member at this institution. His goal is to educate the trustees about programs and offices on campus.

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

The most interesting is Item F and which states that the university has begun to develop relationships with contractors who provide mostly energy related improvements to the university and who get paid only from the cost savings that are attributable to the improvements that they’ve made. These are guaranteed in the contracts, and NIU pays no up-front money. An estimate is made regarding how much money was saved using this new system over what would have paid using the old system, and that money is used to pay them for their work. If the system does not save any money, the contractor doesn’t get paid. This has turned out to be a very important resource for in a time when NIU is not getting a lot of capital improvement money from the state of Illinois. This is very creative and we have quite a number of projects that are being done using this method.

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

M. Kostic: Professor Kostic referred back to the issue of the contracts paid for by energy savings that was mentioned earlier and questioned whether it actually was a good deal for the university, stating that since the difference between the old rates and the new rates is used to pay the contractor, we are in reality, continuing to pay the higher rates.

A. Rosenbaum: reported that the university thinks it’s a good deal because we’re getting new equipment and at the point at which it’s paid off, we continue to realize those energy savings on an ongoing basis. Thus, if the new system is using 50% or 30% less energy, we will continue to realize savings; we haven’t laid out a large amount of money.

M. Kostic: Expressed the opinion that it should be reviewed further.

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

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

A. Rosenbaum: Noted that Donna Jarman is retiring and this is her last meeting of the Faculty Senate. She’ll be passing the torch to Robin Andersen who was introduced. Robin will be in the office beginning on December 1, and senators were encouraged to stop by and say hello to her. Donna has been an employee at Northern Illinois for 30 years. A.Rosenbaum asked the Senate to recognize her achievement and approve the following proclamation:

Whereas Donna Jarman has faithfully served Northern Illinois University for the past thirty years and whereas she has been Administration Assistant for the University Council and Faculty Senate for the past ten years during which time she has been an dispensable asset to four Senate presidents and whereas she has decided to take a well-earned retirement while still young enough to enjoy it, on this date, November 18, 2009 on the occasion of her last Faculty Senate meeting, the Faculty Senate of Northern Illinois University hereby recognizes her dedicated service, thanks her for her many contributions to the Senate and her tireless efforts on our behalf and wishes her a long and happy retirement.

The proclamation was approved by acclamation.

There will be a formal reception for Donna on Thursday, December 10 from 3 to 5 in the afternoon in Altgeld Hall, Room 315.

P. Henry: Asked about the status of the nepotism/salary discrepancy issue that was assigned to the Economic Status of the Profession Committee and the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committees.
A. Rosenbaum: reported that the salary issue is with the Faculty Senate. The nepotism issue went to University Affairs at University Council. Those committees have been meeting. We have been working very hard to try to get the data that they need. The university has promised us the data by early December. We will hopefully have reports on that early in the spring term as soon as they have gotten the information they need.

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Rosenbaum: Wished the senators a happy new year and asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved, seconded, and passed without objection.

The meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.