VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Allori, Arado, Armstrong (for Daniel), Azad, Bateni, Bisplinghoff, Blecksmith, Cappell, Chandler, Chen, Collins, Corwin, Cripe, Deng, Downing, Fang, Feurer, Finley, Gaillard, Goldblum, Houze, Kolb, Kostic, Lin, Long, Lopez, Mackie, Martin, Mirman, Nicolosi, Novak, Poole, Rheineck, Rintala (for Pitney), Rosenbaum, Sagarin, Slotsve, Staikidis, Tonks, VandeCreek, Von Ende, Wade, Willis, Woo (for Abdel-Motaleb), Zahay-Blatz


OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Griffin, Haliczer, Hansen, Hill (for Small), Latham, Rintala, Sunderlin

OTHERS ABSENT: Freedman, Prawitz, Quick, Small, Snow, Waas

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, let’s come to order. We have a relatively brief agenda today, so the prospect of a relatively short meeting is pretty high. We’ve had some long ones so it’s good to get a short one occasionally.

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

Before we start, I mentioned at the last meeting that we were ordering the clickers with which we were going to be doing our voting at both Senate and University Council. We used them at Council at the last meeting and the University Council was very excited. They enjoyed the clickers immensely. So, what we’re going to do is we’re going to hand out the clickers. We don’t have any votes today that I can think of. We have the agenda and the minutes, so we’re going to use those as practice so that everyone gets used to using these clickers and if something comes up that we do need to vote on, of course we’ll use it for that as well. But, there is nothing planned, there are no votes planned. So, what we need is, remember, clickers are only going to be given out to voting members of the Senate. So, if you are ex-officio, if you are nonvoting, we don’t want you to have a clicker. So, those of you that are voting members of the Senate, which means you represent a department, raise your hand and our elves will go around and make sure that you all have a clicker. Don’t drop the clickers. When you get them, don’t play with them. Don’t spill coffee into them. As I told the University Council, they don’t do anything except this, so they have no use outside of this room. You can’t get on the Internet or Facebook or anything. They won’t make phone calls. Also, they go on by themselves, you don’t have to turn
them on or off, and please don’t change the channel. Are we all set? Does everyone have one? Any voting members without clickers?

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Rosenbaum: Our first order of business is the adoption of the agenda. I need a motion. Remember to say your name into a microphone.

R. Lopez: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Rosita Lopez makes the motion.

C. Downing: Second.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, second and do we have any comments on the agenda? Anyone want to make any, we don’t have any walk-in items today? So, all in favor of approving the agenda, press #1. If you are opposed, press #2, and if you would like to abstain, press number, wait, what? What happened? Hold on a second, don’t vote. Don’t vote. I thought it was going to be a short meeting, but it’s not. How long does that take to warm up? Okay, are we ready. Now remember, you don’t have to press a button and you don’t have to change the channel. If you want to vote, “yes” to adopt the agenda, you press button #1, “no” is button #2, and “abstain” is button #3. The number you vote will appear on the display. If you want to change it, you can. So, you’ll be able to change it until we close the voting. So, everybody should now have put in one of those three numbers, 1, 2, or 3. If you put 5 or 7 or something like that, change it. Okay, anybody need more time? All right, this is the vote on adoption of the agenda, 1 Yes, 2 No, what? More time. What channel are you using? This may not be the best idea we’ve ever had. The channel should be 41. If you see a display that has the channel, 41, you see it’s in the upper left-hand corner. Has everybody voted? Now stop. Pat?

P. Erickson: There are 22 responses, so 22 votes have been registered.

A. Rosenbaum: 22 votes, that doesn’t…. 

P. Erickson: More than that have clicked.

A. Rosenbaum: How did it change? Did you press the channel button? You need 41. Okay, we’re getting closer, we now have 26 votes. What are the votes? Close it. We’re closing the vote so stop pressing the buttons.

P. Erickson: 26 Yes, 1 No, 1 Abstain.

A. Rosenbaum: Someone voted “no” on the agenda. Okay, the agenda is approved.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2011 FS MEETING

A. Rosenbaum: It’s amazing how efficient our voting has become. Next, we have the approval of the minutes. We need a motion to approve the minutes. I need a motion.
S. Willis: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Sue Willis has made the motion. I need a second.


A. Rosenbaum: John Novak is second. Any corrections, changes, omissions, anyone have any problem with the minutes? Okay, now carefully without touching any other buttons, if you wish to approve the minutes, press #1; if you wish to say, “no, you don’t want to approve the minutes,” press #2; and if you want to abstain, press #3. Press the button now. Okay, and we’re going to close the voting and what’s our vote.

P. Erickson: 28 Yes, 1 Abstain.

A. Rosenbaum: 28 voted yes, 1 abstained. Okay, so the minutes have been approved.

Inaudible – M. Kostic thought he had voted “no.”

A. Rosenbaum: What channel are you on?

M. Kostic: I’m actually teasing but how do we trust the software and the people who handle the software?

A. Rosenbaum: I don’t know, I didn’t think it was that complicated. So, you pressed #1 for yes, right? Millie? You pressed #1 for yes?

M. Kostic: Just hypothetically. Forget about what I said.

F. Feurer: Well, I can tell you Alan, I would ask for a hand vote for anything that is important to me.

A. Rosenbaum: Well, we can always get a hand vote if it seems way out of whack. I don’t know if anyone is really voting against the minutes. So, we’re just doing this to practice. When we get to actual voting, if it doesn’t seem to line up, we’ll be much more careful with it. All right, so that was a lot of fun.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: Moving along, the next item, President’s announcements. I want to call your attention to the brochures that are on the dessert table, the refreshment table. These are our new faculty members from this year. The university decided to print up these nice brochures and they had some extras and they thought the senators might like it. So, feel free to take one of those brochures if you want one. If you don’t want one… So, we have those brochures introducing our new faculty members.
The next item I want to talk about is the president’s email that went out yesterday, which I am essentially calling your attention to. I’m assuming that you have all seen that email and hopefully read the email. This email involves the upcoming, potential upcoming vote on Senate Bill 512, which is of some concern to us, whether or not we’re nearing retirement. So, the president clearly was concerned enough about this to send out a memo actually encouraging us to contact our legislators. He was, of course, careful to not say what we should say to our legislators and so it’s up to you what you tell your legislators and also whether you contact them. But, there is real concern on the part of the president and on the part of faculty as well regarding the impact of Senate Bill 512. Now, I’m not going to say much more about that because as you know, this year we’ve asked our Committee on Elections and Legislative Oversight to begin doing the legislative oversight part. So, Therese Arado is going to give us a little bit more information about Senate Bill 512 when we get to that particular report. So, hopefully we can learn a little bit more about that and why it’s important to us to perhaps contact our senator and of course, the university also has an interesting website that you might want to look at. The president refers to it in his memo. It’s [www.yourpension.niu.edu](http://www.yourpension.niu.edu) and if you go to that website, you can find a lot of information about recent articles on the pension and all of that. So, it’s actually worth taking a look at that particular website. It’s [www.yourpension.niu.edu](http://www.yourpension.niu.edu). So, when Therese talks to us about the SB512, we can have some discussion if people want to do that. It seems to me that you should at least be aware of this issues and the fact that this is going to be more than likely considered at the veto session, which has just begun again yesterday I believe, and could have some important impacts on both people who are currently hired and also our ability to hire people going forward. So, as our benefits package becomes less enticing, it may become more difficult for people to have faculty recruits choose to come to NIU. So, anyway, we can discuss that a little bit later.

The last thing I want to do is to update you on the misconduct policy. We talked about this at the last senate meeting. After a bit of discussion, the senate decided not to ask the council to send this misconduct policy back to the Undergraduate Coordinating Council. It was described in the minutes, so I’m not going to reiterate that whole scenario, but I do want to tell you what happened at the University Council because I think it is of importance. What happened is between the senate meeting and the council meeting, having had a number of discussions with people, it occurred to me that the UCC does have authority over catalog language; however, they don’t have authority over the grade appeal policy. So, they were attempting to change the grade appeal policy in order to make the catalogue language make some sense. So, the catalogue language suggests that students have appeal through the grade appeal policy. The grade appeal policy, as it stood, did not, remember, accommodate academic misconduct penalties, and so they rewrote the grade appeal policy which they, unfortunately, or fortunately, do not have the authority to do. So, what the University Council decided to do was to send that issue to its own Academic Policy Committee and so the Academic Policy Committee is going to reconsider whether or not it wants to rewrite the grade appeal process or, alternatively, perhaps create a new process that will apply only to academic misconduct penalties. So, that has been sent to a committee. Because that part of it was sent to committee, that catalog language no longer made any sense and so the council voted to send that back to the UCC with the advice of holding onto it until the council has revised or changed the grade appeal policy. Okay? So, that was sent back to UCC. It was only sent back, again, because without that grade appeal policy rewrite, it didn’t make a lot of sense. In the process also, a number of people in here were concerned about the wording of the grade appeal policy. Besides senators, the provost had some problems with the
wording of the grade appeal policy, not just the wording of the changes that were made by UCC but with the policy as it existed before UCC even made any changes to it. So, it was generally felt both in here, I think, and in the council and among a number of different people on the academic side, that this grade appeal policy needs to be redone. So because the wording is bad in several places, because it has some information in it that’s not accurate, we’re hoping that the Academic Policy Committee of the University Council will rewrite that. When that happens, then UCC can reword their catalog language and all of that can come back to the University Council and it will be more than likely approved at that point. So, this is still a work in progress and many of the concerns that were raised in here can still get into the conversation. So, that’s the current status. Does anyone have any questions about this? Yes?

**J. Novak:** Will we be voting on this again or not?

**A. Rosenbaum:** No, this is not really something that the senate needs to vote on. So, I guess it’s conceivable that if they write something in council that we really don’t like, we can then bring it up and reconsider it. But at this point, it does not need any approval by the senate. Charles?

**C. Cappell:** If we wanted to contact the committee that’s rewriting this policy, who would be the contact person?

**A. Rosenbaum:** Okay, the Academic Policy Committee is listed in the Committees Book, but I can tell you who the Academic Policy chair is, let’s see who is the academic, Karen Brandt. So, Karen Brandt is the chair of that committee but you can also look up the committee and you can find someone perhaps that is from your department or your college or whatever. If you have trouble finding the names of those people, all you have to do is call us and Pat will tell you the names of everyone that’s on that committee. Okay? Any other questions about this? This is kind of a mixed bag. I think on the one hand, I think people have a lot of frustration. I think I can speak for David that he, David Wade, has some frustration over the length of time that this has been bubbling around. We have been, according to our legal authorities, the general counsel, we are exposed as a university because we have policies that do not line up in different places. This has been going on for too long. We need to get this settled and we need to do it right. So, hopefully we will be able to push the academic policy group along, get a policy that makes some sense and then rewrite the catalog language and then talk to the student affairs people about rewriting the Student Code of Conduct. So, hopefully by the end of this semester or at least early in the spring semester, we will have this resolved. That’s the hope and when it’s finally resolved, hopefully we’ll have a policy that is well written, that makes sense, and that gives students due process and that is also acceptable to the faculty and doesn’t infringe on academic freedom or faculty authority in the classroom. That’s the objective and I’m hopeful that we’ll be able to get there. Anyone have any other comments about this or want to add to the discussion?

### V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

**A. Accessibility statement for syllabi – Greg Long – Pages 3-4**

**A. Rosenbaum:** The next item is the accessibility statement. Greg Long is here and I’m going to ask Greg to talk a little bit about this. Again, I want to make it clear to people that this is not something that faculty are required to do. So, this is just a suggestion, so this is not something
we have to vote on or adopt as a body; it’s just being called to your attention and we’re asking that you also call this to the attention of your departments. So, Greg, you want to tell us a little bit about this?

**G. Long:** Sure, thank you for the opportunity to share this with you. I’m coming wearing a couple of different hats, one certainly as a faculty member and the other as chair of NIU’s Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities. The other hat was last spring, I was acting coordinator for general education. In that role, I worked with a student group, Student Advisory Committee on Learning Outcomes, and they were interested in how the syllabi were constructed and so forth and we got a sample of about 50 gen. ed. syllabi and looked through them for a variety of different issues. One of the things that was really quite apparent to me, given my interest in disability and accessibility, was that many of the syllabi that we reviewed did not say anything about if you’re a student with a disability, where would you go, who would you contact? This is a significant issue in that when students are in public education K-12, schools are mandated to identify, to assess, to intervene, support and so forth. It’s an entitlement program. When you move into the postsecondary environment, it’s an eligibility program. So, students have to document on their own, students have to disclose, they have to seek supports. And so, from our standpoint, we as a university have a responsibility to let students know the availability of the CAAR office, the Center for Access-Ability Resources. So, when I was working with the student group last spring and we reviewed a sample syllabi, it was fairly surprising in that a good number of syllabi, I’d say roughly half of them did not even mention that students have the right to seek an accommodation for a class. When it was mentioned, and I will say that oftentimes, they would say you have a two-week maximum to inform your instructor. That comes from the old catalog. There was an old catalog copy that we had that did, in fact, used to say you have a two-week minimum. That’s obviously both incorrect and illegal because there’s any number of things that could happen mid-semester where you could break an arm, you could be in an accident. From that point on, you have the right to request an accommodation. You don’t have a right to go back and say, “Oh, by the way, I goofed up on exam 1, so now let me take it in an accommodated fashion.” So, that the point I would like to encourage you, and I agree with Alan that this is not something that you can mandate but certainly from the standpoint of good practice and protection from both the university standpoint as well as from student education, it would be really helpful if we could promote the proper statement and this is the statement that is included in this document is the one that has been endorsed by the Center on Access-Ability Resources, this is the statement they are encouraging all of us to put in our syllabi. So, I just wanted to bring that to your attention and say to the extent you can, please promote this because it’s beneficial to everyone.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Okay, go ahead Sue?

**S. Willis:** I just had one, I don’t know if it’s a question or a comment, but one thing that I’ve always been sure to include on my own syllabi is that, in order to get accommodations, they have to go through CAAR. I’m not sure that the statement that you have here makes that entirely clear.

**G. Long:** And I don’t, and that is something that they’ve not necessarily addressed but you are right. There is no accommodation that can be provided unless it comes through the CAAR office. In fact, we should not accommodate students unless they come to the CAAR office.
S. Willis: Exactly.

G. Long: Correct.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, any other questions for Greg? Just to sort of speak a little further on what Greg is saying, I think a number of the things that have come up recently, such as the misconduct policy, has driven home the importance of really paying attention to the syllabi and making sure that there are things on the syllabus so that if something comes up, you have it in writing and it’s really to faculty members’ best interest to have a carefully worded syllabus that includes all of these things such as what your penalty will be if someone is accused of academic misconduct such as the policy on accessibility, etc. So, I think this is worth taking a look at and again, because it’s not mandatory, you don’t have to use the statement exactly as it’s worded, so you can certainly take the statement, get the flavor of it and then add other things that you might want to add such as the comment that Sue just suggested. So, it would be helpful, the main way that we get things through the faculty is through the Faculty Senate. Since each of you represent a department, so we ask you to go back to your departments and distribute this and hopefully people will begin using it or some version of it.

B. Presidential Engagement Professorship Selection Committee – One Faculty Senate representative is needed to serve on this committee. Meetings will be held at 1 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7, Jan. 9, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, next item, we have the Presidential Engagement Professorship Selection Committee. The Faculty Senate is entitled to a representative on this committee. I know that one of the things we are concerned about here is that there aren’t enough committees in this university and you really don’t have anything to do with your free time. So, here’s an opportunity to get involved in a committee. So, is there anybody? Anybody that’s interested in engagement or would like to represent us on the Presidential Engagement Committee? You have a lot of information here so you know that there aren’t that many meetings, there are only like four meetings. It’s not a huge time sink. Does anybody have an interest in this? Nobody has an interest.

R. Lopez: Can you say anything more?

A. Rosenbaum: Well, this is the newest of the presidential professorships, so these are a very good thing for the faculty. Professorships come with stipends so in addition to honoring some of our own, the recipient also gets an amount of money, I don’t know exactly how much there is in this case but for some of them, it’s like $4,000-$5,000 a year for three or four years. Does it say what there is? Oh, yeah, a grant of, well I can read this to you, it says, “Each Presidential Engagement Professor will receive upon appointment, an increment of $2,000 to base salary, a grant of $5,000 will be provided during each year of a four-year award period following a nonrenewable appointment to be used in any legitimate activities directly related to the improvement of the professor’s engagement initiatives, equipment, graduate assistants, supplies, travel, secretarial help, except for personal salary.” So, you can’t use that for salary, but there is money there that can be used to work on the engagement issues. So, it’s an honor, it’s good to see the administration providing funds to honor professors who are doing a particularly good job
in research, teaching, and now engagement. So, we should really be supportive of this. It’s four meetings. Are you…?

**R. Lopez:** Yeah, I am interested.

**A. Rosenbaum:** So you are volunteering to be our representative?

**R. Lopez:** Yes, I guess I am. Let’s have a nice round of applause for Rosita. Excellent.

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS**

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – report – Pages 5-7

**A. Rosenbaum:** Next we have our reports. Our first report is from Earl Hansen who is our faculty representative to the FAC to the IBHE and Earl’s report is on pages 5-7. Earl?

**E. Hansen:** Okay, we met at North Park University in Chicago, and I’m not going to bore you by reading this to you. I will tell you that a basic issue is still performance-based funding and how you’re going to maintain an academic standing of credibility without having to weaken it I suppose would be the term that I would use. On the bottom of page 5, the third bullet from the bottom says that the high school quality improvement needs to be connected to this and that’s for sure. If we’re going to be judged on the product that we’re turning out, then we better be judging the product that’s coming in. That’s the basic feeling of the entire Faculty Advisory Council. On page 6, the second full paragraph in there where it says, “Don Sevener, the IBHE Deputy Director of External Relations,” addressed the group. He mentioned a lot of different things going on in the veto session and didn’t think the 512 bill was going to be called in or not. You can read that for yourself. There were some questions over there on the last bullet on MAP money not being allowed to go to proprietary institutions and that’s one of the Senate Bills, 1773. There are a lot of unresolved issues and if you read through this, you will see that the Faculty Advisory Council, whether they were from the private institutions or from the state institutions, all were on the same page with regards to they want to know what’s going on and they want to have some control over what we’re going to be evaluated on, whether it’s going to be certificates, diplomas, bodies going out the door or what. We’re talking about three percent of the budget and it’s going forward with or without money and I will tell you right now, there is no money. So, it will come out of your regular budget is what we’re being told.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Does anybody have any questions for Earl? I know everyone does have an interest in this performance-based funding, so this is an important issue and I’m glad that the FAC is paying attention.

**J. Novak:** I have a question about what the 60 percent is about.

**A. Rosentaum:** Okay.

**E. Hansen:** I didn’t hear the question.
A. Rosenbaum: You didn’t hear his question? Could you repeat the question?

J. Novak: The question is about this 60 percent goal and could you explain what that is?

E. Hansen: Well, that’s what they are calling for. You’re talking about the 60 percent issue that we have here by 2025 have met the criteria in the state institutions that we have a 60 percent graduation rate of our students by that year. The difficulty is that some students come here or other institutions that will never graduate.

J. Novak: Right, thank you.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, Sue, did you have a question for Earl?

S. Willis: That was also my question.

A. Rosenbaum: That was your question, okay. Any other questions about this or any other aspects of Earl’s report?

E. Hansen: That number comes out of Washington, D.C.. Now why, I don’t know, but that’s what I was told because I asked the same question. Where does this magic number come from? It’s coming from Washington, D.C. and no one knew why it was coming from Washington, D.C.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, no other questions? Thank you Earl.

B. Student Association – Austin Quick, Speaker – report – Pages 8-9

A. Rosenbaum: We have a report from the Student Association, but we do not have the reporter from the Student Association. He is in Springfield at the moment, Austin Quick, and he asked us to let you know that he is in Springfield fighting for our pensions. So, thank you, Austin, and his report is on pages 8 and 9. We have no BOT reports, there have been no meetings.

C. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – no report

D. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – no report

E. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Todd Latham and Rosita Lopez – no report

F. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Rosemary Feurer, Chair – no report
A. Rosenbaum: Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, Rosemary, do you have anything? Did she leave? Yeah, she left. Okay, so I guess she has nothing.

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

A. Rosenbaum: Charles, anything from Academic Affairs at the moment?

C. Cappell: No.

A. Rosenbaum: No? Okay.

C. Economic Status of the Profession – Michael Kolb, Chair – no report

A. Rosenbaum: Michael?

M. Kolb: No.

A. Rosenbaum: Nope?

D. Rules and Governance – Gretchen Bisplinghoff, Chair – no report

A. Rosenbaum: Rules and Governance, Gretchen?

G. Bisplinghoff: Nothing.

A. Rosenbaum: Nothing.

E. Resources, Space and Budgets – David Goldblum, Liaison/Spokesperson – no report

A. Rosenbaum: Resources, Space, and Budgets, David?

D. Goldblum: Nothing.

A. Rosenbaum: Nothing.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Therese Arado, Chair – no report

A. Rosenbaum: Our last is Elections and Legislative Oversight and Therese, you want to bring us up to speed on Senate Bill 512?

T. Arado: All right, hopefully everyone did have a chance to read President Peter’s email and I’m just repeating some things you’ve already seen. If you haven’t, in that message, he has a couple of links that send you to very useful, very informative places, one a summary on Senate Bill 512. As far as I could tell, as of today, nothing had happened with this, but don’t let that lull you into thinking they’re not going to do anything with it. The veto session goes yesterday, today, tomorrow and then it also is part of November. Once they choose to take action on it, they can move a bill very quickly through both chambers. So, if you have an opinion on this
subject one way or another, you want to contact the relevant people because they are talking about it down there, even if they’re not saying so in the news yet.

What this bill does, and I know we’ve heard this a number of times in different places, but what it does is it alters the pension system into a three-tier program, or well that’s what I’m going to call it and I think that’s what they call it too. The first tier is the traditional pension system that exists; however, it changes the contributions in that significantly. The second tier is the tier that started for people being hired after January 1, 2011 that has a different contribution system. The third tier is the self-managed plan. The idea with this bill is that, as of July 1, 2012, so next July 1st, every employee in most of the pensions, the City of Chicago and Cook County issues take place later, but at least for SURS, the university system, will have to elect one of these three tiers. If you do not make an election, you will default to tier 2. You will not default to what you are currently in, you will default to tier 2. If you do make an election, well, when you make an election, there’s actually a number of pieces of information that you can link to from this email that will tell you what the distinctions are in the tiers. But the main effect of staying in tier 1 is that your contributions can go up significantly. It can go up to where, I’m sorry, I have this highlighted here, I’m just not seeing it, I have the number 15.something percent in my head, I can’t see it on my sheet.

A. Rosenbaum: Yeah, it’s 15.31.

T. Arado: Thank you, and that is for a three-year period. What also happens in the tier 1 defined benefit is that they will recalculate what contribution amounts should be every three years. That does not mean your contribution requirement will go down every three years. It could go up and up after that. So, you are getting recalculated. You can, when it is doing that, switch tiers to one of the other tiers at some point, but you have to play that gamble every three years. There is a chart within this information that will tell you, there it is, my 15.31, that would be the total employee contribution if you stayed in tier 1. Tier 2, the employee contribution is 6 percent. Tier 3, or self managed, is 6 percent as well. What they said with the every-three-years recalculating, an employee can move to a different lower tier, but you couldn’t move up to, back up to tier 1 if you left it. Once you’re gone, you’re gone. So, if somehow, whatever calculation they did was a benefit to you, you can’t move back into it. There are a number of, that’s the main crux of what 512 is doing and even if they don’t act on it in the next two weeks, spring is right around the corner and having your opinion heard, whether you like these or not, having your opinion heard is what you have, it’s the opportunity we have to talk to them.

If you’ve heard of a number of other bills recently being introduced down there, they don’t have as much of an effect on us. There have been a slew, well maybe five or six, bills that were introduced in response to all the pension scandals we have been reading about, people who go to work for a day and then all of a sudden are vested. So, there is a bunch of bills that have been introduced to kind of address those issues, but they are not connected to this 512.

512 is the main one that is really across the board affecting all of us. Alan also mentioned the yourpension spot and that link, really, it has a lot of news information and sometimes because of the way Springfield functions, that’s our best way to find out what they’re doing out there. We’re not going to get necessarily press releases saying, “Oh, by the way, hey we passed 512 or we’re pushing it along,” but they’re posting there from the Springfield Register. They are doing things
from local papers where items are running, but you’re getting a lot of different perspectives and they’re doing a good job at that site of posting the information and also taking you to the legislation that is currently pending down there so you can track it. The Illinois General Assembly website is actually very easy to use, and if you pull up a bill, you can look and see who is involved, who is sponsoring things, who is doing things, it’s www.ilga.gov and then everything on there is arranged by bill number for the current stuff that is going on. So, I you want to know if your particular representative is sponsoring or going against something, you can take a look at that information there too, and it’s just driven by the bill number. So, you can get lots of information on what’s going on and who’s doing it from that website. I think that’s all.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, just a couple of things. First of all, if they change it, the benefits you’ve already accrued stay as they are. So, your current, whatever you’ve earned to date will be frozen at the level, at whatever your salary is now and the last four years or whatever. So you won’t lose that. It’s not going to happen retroactively, but all your money going forward will be in one of these three tiers and, as Therese mentioned, that tier 1, the main problem with that is of course, the state cuts back its share of the contribution to 6 percent and our share goes up to 15.31 percent, which is the equivalent of getting a probably 5 percent or so drop in salary because its pre-taxed money so we don’t get taxed on it, so it’s not going to cost us a full 7 percent, but it’s going to cost a substantial amount of money to stay in this plan and also as Therese mentioned, they can reconsider this every three years. So, that could go up.

T. Arado: Alan, sorry, on that point, this was the language, well, there’s a lot of things that could be considered troublesome, but with the every three years, it’s after three years, each employee will contribute the normal cost, and they define the normal cost as the true cost of the benefit earned in that year. That’s a pretty open-ended what they could up that amount by when they review it every three years.

A. Rosenbaum: So that could be a big problem, and we all have noticed that when the state doesn’t have the money for something, they just don’t pay it. So, we could get into this and still not get the money. The big problem with tier 2, and we might have paid a little bit more attention to this, maybe we didn’t because it didn’t affect people that were already in positions, but it affected our new hires and one of the big problems with tier 2 is you have to work a lot longer because I think it doesn’t kick in at full strength until age 67. The other problem with that is that it has a cap, and the cap on that is $106,000 a year. So, regardless of what your salary is, the most you could get per year would be $106,000. So, that may sound like a lot of money at this point. It may not sound like a lot of money 30 years from now. So, that’s something to keep in mind. You might be saying, “Well, $106,000. I can do well on that,” but 30 years from now, 20 years from now, maybe not so good. So, there is that cap. The third tier is the self-managed plan and, if you’ve been watching the stock market, you would know that the self-managed plan probably will not contribute to you sleeping well at night. But at least with that you have some control over, so people will have to make their own decisions about that.

So, if you are concerned about this bill, I think it’s worth noting that they tried to pass this in the spring and the outcry from the constituency was sufficient to prevent them from doing it or to stop them from doing it. So, people made a lot of calls in the spring and the legislators I think were affected by that. So, it’s probably pretty important if you feel one way or the other and again, clearly we’re at a State institution and I can’t say that you should vote any particular way,
but if you feel strongly about this, you should probably do it and you should probably do it quickly because as Therese pointed out, they tend to sort of run these things in the middle of the night and then get out of town before anyone knows what’s hit them. So, you want to sort of get on it quickly. Anyone want to make any comments about this or contribute to the discussion? Dave?

**D. Wade:** Let me just put out one more plea for joining the SUAA, State Universities Annuitants Association. Believe me, if the legislature acts, and there is some argument that they won’t with redistricting, correct me if I’m wrong political scientists, every seat is up for election this year, most jurisdictions have a lot of annuitants in their thing, so there’s a lot of headwind about bringing this up. But say it passes, invariably, it will be legally challenged. It’s running clearly in the face of the constitution and legislative history and everything else. So, I would encourage you to join the Annuitants Association and further, the Annuitants Association has now created a legal defense fund, which is going to finance a certain amount of this legal challenge and I would urge you to direct your additional funds to that legal defense fund. I’m in for $250 to the defense fund. I feel it’s in my self interest to do so, and I would encourage you all to do the same.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Okay, thank you, David. Any other comments? Yes?

**R. Blecksmith:** How do you join up?

**D. Wade:** [www.suaa.gov](http://www.suaa.gov), I think, and you can follow the links from there I would assume.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Yes, Deb Haliczer.

**D. Haliczer:** Go to the university website. Look for Annuitants Association. The application form is online. Call Lee Ann Henry at Advancement Services and, for a very modest rate, you can join the Annuitants Association, and they will tell you about the legal defense fund and SUAA Action, which is the lobbying group. We, on the benefits committee, Michael and I, certainly applaud David’s comment and please join. At the last Annuitants Association board meeting, which I attended, they handed out information about how many SURS members are in each representative’s district and how much money is represented by that, and they took a lot of the credit for stopping the legislation last term last year. So, they really do have a voice. We all need you to join. Please gently twist your colleagues’ arms.

**A. Rosenbaum:** And the other thing is, I mean, as you’re getting from a number of these comments, this is actually an organization that does something. I mean, they’re on the ball. You’re not throwing your money down the drain with some of these organizations that take membership money and then do nothing or some unions that tend to do that. This is an organization that is really at the forefront of this. They are keeping an eye on everything. They are really doing a good job for us. Deb?

**D. Haliczer:** Let me brag for a minute. [inaudible] we are the, NIU has the second highest number of members of all the universities, which means that after University of Illinois, we have more annuitants who are members. We also have far and away, the greatest number of active employee members. We’re at 426 and the next highest is almost 200 members less. So, we’re doing better than anybody else. Let’s keep it going.
A. Rosenbaum: Okay, yes?

C. Downing: As a representative, to take things back to our people, you said you can’t say something like, “Vote this way or don’t vote this way,” right correctly, but may we, are we allowed to say, “Dear members of the College of Business, we strongly urge you to join the SUAA.” That’s okay to say?

A. Rosenbaum: Yes, I think that is okay.

C. Downing: On university time and university equipment, all that?

A. Rosenbaum: Well, we’re about to get an opinion on that. Go ahead Deb.

D. Haliczer: Okay, it’s ethics training time, so the official version on that is, since we are talking as employees to our colleagues about terms and conditions of employment, that is not political activity. That is asking people to join our own employee and annuitant group, so it doesn’t offend the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay and remember, if you get arrested, the senate defense fund will kick in. we will support you.

All: *laughter*.

A. Rosenbaum: Anybody have any other comments on this? I think you’ve all gotten the idea of how important this is. Take it back to your constituents. We need to sort of stay on top of this. It’s really very economically important to us as a group.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

A. Rosenbaum: We, believe it or not, have no other business. If there are any comments or questions from the floor, anyone want to bring anything up that we have not spoken about? Anybody?

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee
C. Minutes, Athletic Board
D. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
E. Minutes, Committee on Advanced Professional Certification in Education
F. Minutes, Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
G. Minutes, Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, I will entertain a motion to adjourn. Now, before we do this, I know everyone gets up when I say this. Take your clicker, put it on top of your signed attendance sheet, put your hands up and then walk out without touching anything. Okay, I need a motion to adjourn.

S. Willis: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Sue Willis. I need a second.

T. Arado: Second.

A. Rosenbaum: Second. Therese. All in favor, we’re not going to vote, just raise your hand, aye.

Members: Aye.

A. Rosenbaum: Anyone opposed? Have a good month. We’ll see you in November.

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.