FACULTY SENATE TRANSCRIPT  
Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 3 p.m.  
Holmes Student Center Sky Room

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Allori, Arado, Azad, Bateni, Bisplinghoff, Brandt, Cappell, Chen, Coles, Collins, Corwin, Daniel, Deng, Downing, Elish-Piper, Finley, Frank, Gaillard, Goldblum, Kolb, Lash, Lin, Lopez, Mackie, Martin, Mirman, Pitney, Poole, Rheineck, A. Rosenbaum, M. Rosenbaum (for Zahay-Blatz), Ryan (for May), Sagarin, Slotsve, Staikidis, Tonks, Valentiner, VandeCreek, Willis


OTHERS PRESENT: Austin, Bryan, Griffin, Haliczer, Latham, Monteiro (for Small), Rintala, Sunderlin

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

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Rosenbaum: We have a relatively brief agenda, so we can get started and sort of be out of here pretty quickly. Okay, let’s come to order.

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

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Rosenbaum: First item is the adoption of the agenda. We have four walk-in items, so we have the walk-in, we have a report from the Student Association, we have the BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee report, we have BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee report, and the BOT Legislation Audit and External Affairs Committee report. I need a motion to adopt the agenda with the four additions.

J. Corwin: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Jim Corwin made the motion. I need a second.

C. Downing: Second.

A. Rosenbaum: Chuck Downing. Okay, all in favor say, “aye.”
A. Rosenbaum: Opposed? Okay, the agenda is adopted.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2011 FS MEETING

A. Rosenbaum: We have the minutes of the October 26th Faculty Senate meeting. I need a motion to adopt the minutes.

J. Corwin: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Jim Corwin. Second?

C. Downing: Second.


Senators: Aye.

A. Rosenbaum: Opposed? Any abstentions? The minutes are approved.

IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: I only have very few announcements. I think most of you are aware that SB512 was not acted upon by the Legislature. This is in no small part, I think, due to the outpouring of opposition by the Annuitants Association and people at the university, and so they felt that they did not have the votes to pass it. It probably is not going to go away completely. They are going to resume; the General Assembly, I think, meets again starting on November 29 and, as you all know, there are going to be changes to the pension system one way or another. So, if not 512, then something else, and we’ll have to be maintaining vigilance. I don’t know how many of you took the advice that was given last time and joined the Annuitants Association. We hope that many of you did and spread the word to your departments as well.

Second item, I’ve been asked by Jay Monteiro to mention the Human Resources Services blood drive. So, the blood drive will take place on Tuesday, December 6. There is a pamphlet out by the refreshments and so if you’re interested, there is some information there about how to sign up. This is why we printed it up for you, because if you want to know how to get in touch with Heartland, who apparently is running this, you can do that. So, anyone interested in the blood drive and you want to take one of these, they’re out by the table. Jay, did you want to say anything else about that? So, that covers it? Just regular blood? You have some to spare? Here you go.

Okay, next, apparently David Wade had talked to us a little bit about the Workload Committee, you remember the Workload Committee, the Blue Ribbon Panel on Workload that was put together by the provost? I have continued to ask the provost about the status of that. Where it
stands now is they are working in the final stages of preparing a report and the provost has assured me that the draft of the report will come to the Senate. So, we will not be the only group that gets it and we will not, of course, have the right to veto it, but we will have the opportunity to review it and to give input into it and to let the provost know how we feel about it. So, that will be coming to us probably early. We don’t meet again until January, so that will probably come to us early in the spring semester. So, I have no idea, I did not get a preview of that, but we will get our hands on that before it becomes policy.

The last item, I just mentioned, this is the last meeting of the year, we have extra cookies there because we figured you would need cookies to get through the break between now and the next Faculty Senate meeting. So, help yourself to cookies. Do we have bags there Pat? We have cookie bags so if anyone wants to load up and eat cookies, be our guest. That’s it.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, we have no items for Faculty Senate consideration, nothing on the Consent Agenda.

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – no report

B. Student Association – Austin Quick, Speaker – report – walk-in

A. Rosenbaum: Our first report is from the Student Association, Austin Quick. Can we get him a microphone even though he usually doesn’t need one?

A. Quick: Good afternoon. I’m just going to keep this very brief because I’m going to bring it up to University Council next week, but I wanted to let you, as the faculty, know one of things that we’re working on, and I’ve actually met with members of this body already, is in regards to the lack of a student grievance policy here at Northern. We’re currently looking at other schools and benchmarking where they’re at, the ones that have them, and the ones that don’t, looking why they don’t have one. Dr. Rosenbaum had already mentioned through University Council Steering Committee that they had tried, I don’t know if you want to elaborate on that at all, but they had attempted to look at whether or not the Faculty Senate wanted to do that, I think it was 2000 and, I don’t remember.

A. Rosenbaum: Well, in 2000, I think it went back to 2003 in fact October of 2003. I did this history for the group last January when I wondered whether we were interested in picking this up again. Anyway, the short story is that this was sent by the UC to the senate in October of 2003. The senate was sort of charged with forming a committee to look into the development of a grievance policy. Ultimately, two years later, the senate did put together an ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee contained, among other people, the ombudsman, Tim Griffin, who can possibly, well I know he hates it when I ask him to comment without warning him, but possibly
in a moment, he’ll have something to say. We also had representatives from Brian Hemphill’s office. I think Brian Hemphill, himself, was on it for a time, Larry Bolles, so we had a number of Faculty Senate. We had two Student Association representatives. The committee was about 16 people. They met only a few times. Apparently, it was an unwieldy committee. They had a lot of trouble getting together. Nothing came out of it. The committee just died because the chairs of the committee were dealing with some health issues. Bill Tolhurst was one of the co-chairs of that committee and you know he has since passed away. The other co-chair was Buck Stephen in math. So, problems all around getting the committee together, getting participation; they just let the whole thing sort of come apart. So, that committee has not met. This goes back, as I say, quite a few years, and so the students are again raising this issue. I suggested that Austin might want to mention it to us in case we had any feelings about whether we want this handled within the senate, which is a suggestion that we could make to the University Council, or whether we think it should be handled by an ad hoc committee set up by either the council or the senate. So, I think after Austin’s report, we can sort of entertain some discussion on this if anyone wants to.

A. Quick: And one of the things that I wanted to mention also is that this is not, when we looked at this, it wasn’t looking at a specific grievance policy towards faculty, it was a grievance policy for faculty, staff, and all the professional staff that work here at the university, if there was some type of mechanism and some type of procedure of what to do. One of things that I’ve had in our office we’ve dealt with a lot lately is students have come to us saying, “I’ve tried different avenues and I’m having X, Y, Z problem with such and such a professor or this department and I don’t know what to do.” That’s when we found out when I had my, the staff researched a little further, that there was nothing, there were no guidelines that we could find, and that’s when I brought it to University Council steering and we’re looking at doing this. I am going to bring it formally with, you know, with consent to the University Council next week, for them to decide where it should go from there. I’m going to go on to a couple more things and we’ll go back to that.

The other thing that we’re working on that’s kind of a hot-button issue for us is a lot of students complain here about the price, or the amount of money they spend on fees and where that goes. And I’m not talking about academic fees, I’m talking about these other fees. And one of the things I’ve wondered myself, and this year I was asked, I’m not sure who asked me to be on this bond fee committee, and one of the things that we’re working on right now is currently students pay for the next year is going to be $35 per credit hour for these bond fee buildings. Those buildings consist of this building right now, Campus Life, the Rec Center, the field house, the Convocation Center, and the stadium. For example, out of that $35, this building alone gets $12.88 of every credit. Here’s the problem that we see and this is what we’re going to be working with the director of this facility and Dr. William’s staff. $12.88 of every fee, I think the total budget for the Holmes Student Center was about $5.9 million. We’re paying about $5.8 million of that. On top of that, we’re also paying when we need a room. Like for senate, I paid to use this room up here; I pay for every time I need a microphone – $5 for every one at 12 microphones and the equipment. These things, and I actually met with Dr. William’s staff, we’ve paid for that, it’s already included in the budget to replace these things, all these things are included. They have an equipment fee that’s all included in this budget that we’re paying. So, in my mind, as you know, a very simple person, I look at it and I’m, “We already own the building.
We own the equipment. Why am I paying twice?” I don’t understand that. I understand if we were only like a half owner, but the way I see it is, we’re a shareholder and we own it, and why am I paying for every little thing when we’ve already done that. So, we’re going to look at, and this is, and I’m going to speak very frankly to you, I think you all are very educated so you like frank conversations, the way this was presented to us and what I was asking on this committee, we meet with the different departments, whether it be recreation services, Convocation Center, and the Holmes Student Center for an hour within a week. So, it was one morning at 9 a.m., the next morning at 10 a.m., the next morning at 9 a.m. and then it’s done. And then a week later, we’re supposed to come together again for another hour and decide what we’re going to do and then we go on break and we come back and present it to the president. I think what’s happened with it, it’s been steamrolled every year, just push it quickly and get it out of the way. Well, not this year. $35 at a time, as you know as faculty, we have a problem getting students here. Students are looking at what they’re getting for the amount of money they’re spending and $35 a credit hour is a lot of money. The students are not about trying to take that back but making sure we get value for our dollars. One of the things that I have said many times, this building in particular, we need to get away from the student center and make it a student union. This needs to be a place that is truly student centered and is friendly, is inviting. We have to find a way to make the school more appealing to students looking at it and when I saw that we spent all this money on these things, why aren’t we getting more value? So, that’s one thing as a student population, we are definitely going to be fighting and hopefully, you have seen it in your various departments and when you try to use these facilities, these bond revenue facilities, that we’re getting more value for that money and again, students are paying a large amount of money as it is. Again, we’re not looking to decrease the amount of money and the fees, but making sure that once we pay those fees, we’re not then paying again to use the facilities we already own. That’s one area that we’re definitely going to be fighting for. And actually finding out recently again, looking at this further, we’re cutting about 19 phone lines off in our office in the Student Association. I’m not paying to rent phones every month in an office we don’t use. I don’t understand how many times over, I looked at the bill this month, at the Student Association alone, we spend about $4000 a month in phone bills and it’s not because we’re using the phones, it’s because just we have to pay to rent these every month. Well, again, I understand there are certain things we can’t get away from, then we’re just going to cut it off, we’re not going to pay for it, we’re not going to have the phones, we’ll get rid of them. ‘We’ve to find, in these leaner times, I’m trying to get to the point of understanding how, I think you pay for the phone, but after you’ve paid for it 30 times over, there’s got to come a point where you’re not paying for it anymore. Maybe you pay for a little bit of upkeep if something happens, but I have an office in my building right now, a Student Association office, where the group, every minute and a half, we have sensors in our building, and every minute and a half, they’ve got to jump up and make motion to get it to come back on again, the light, and to get someone over there and the building again, we pay the fee over there. This doesn’t make sense. I mean, I know that this probably doesn’t concern a lot of you, but I’m sure you’ve dealt with these things around this campus with certain buildings that are under this bond fee. We’re definitely going to be trying to find out where we can cut costs and not have people being double charged. That even goes for you as well. Any organization, why the student, why faculty would need to rent rooms or pay for things, because I’m assuming that Faculty Senate has to pay for these microphones like we do, why are we paying for these if they’re already paid for? Do you see what I’m saying? Like this is, it doesn’t make a lot of sense to us, so this is something that is very, very much a hot-button
item for us, and we will definitely keep you abreast of how that works. But, that was all I had really. Again, I think I mentioned last time I was here.

A. Rosenbaum: You sure?

A. Quick: Well, I wasn’t here, I’m sorry, I wasn’t here at your last meeting because we were down in Springfield. We took about 65 students with us. It was a very successful day. We were able to get students in front of a lot of very, not just your run-of-the-mill representative, but some of the more powerful ones on the various committees that are important to us, and made it known that we are very much in support of our faculty and our staff and making sure that we don’t have this huge exodus of staff because of the retirement scare with pensions and things like that, that we are very dedicated to our school and that it was very important. Actually, it was cool. We were told that there were going to be other schools there that day as well and it ended up they were there, and they sent about two or three students from each school. We came in on two of the brand-new NIU buses, 65 students, we had signs for everybody and we definitely let them know that NIU was there. They actually gave a standing ovation to NIU that day on the floor of the house. So we definitely hopefully will work together more to collaborate more because at the end of the day, we’re all here for NIU and finding a way to keep this place running and operating and keeping the money coming this way.

A. Rosenbaum: All right, I’d like a motion to hire Austin to faculty negotiations, salary negotiations with the governor. Are we paying for this microphone? I’m not using it, I’m not paying for that microphone. Thanks Austin. Now you’ve got me going. Thank you, Austin, for that brief report. Any questions for Austin please or comments? Again, back to this issue, this issue of not having a student grievance policy, I know that it was not an item that was high on our list when we talked about it a little bit, but in part, partially it is because it is a very difficult issue, so it’s hard to, you know, sort of come up with a policy where faculty won’t feel that it can be abused by students. It’s also the fact that there are students who are abusive toward faculty and we don’t actually have a grievance procedure for that, as well, other than we can fail them. We actually can’t do that, it would probably be reversed as capricious grading. So, any comments on this issue? Sue?

S. Willis: I can give a little bit of history on it since I was executive secretary when it first came up.

A. Rosenbaum: Didn’t I just give a little history on it?

S. Willis: I was going to give a little more history.

A. Rosenbaum: More history, okay.

S. Willis: We, in 2003, we were just finishing up the new grievance procedure for faculty and staff, both SPS and operating staff. That was the end result of what was basically a three-year process involving a committee roughly the size of the one that was then constituted to look at the student grievance policy. I said a lot of this in a note to the steering committee, but I figure I’ll mention it again now, as I said, just to put it kind of in context. It was recognized at the time that
not having a similar policy for students outside grade appeals and that kind of thing, was something that ought to be address and that’s why this committee got organized. On the other hand, it’s a heck of a job. I mean, the one, the committee that wrote that original grievance policy that you now see in the bylaws was roughly 12-15 people. It met over a period of three years, and I don’t think it wouldn’t have gotten anywhere except for that Jerry Zar started out being the dean of the graduate school and then retired, kept the whole thing together and just kept pestering us and pestering and pestering until we finally got the thing done. So, I would not disagree, in fact I would agree, that the same thing needs to be done for a policy affecting students. But somebody really has to take it on and be willing to be Jerry Zar for about two or three years and really make it happen or I suspect that what’s going to happen the first time is going to happen again because it’s a really, really, really hard job, and you need somebody who is going to be willing to take it on. I’m not volunteering by the way.

A. Rosenbaum: I didn’t think you were. Any other comments about this? I guess one of the issues is that, if it goes to Council, we can’t predict what the Council will do with it. I’m going to assume, since we don’t seem to have anyone jumping up and down about this, is that we don’t want to take it back into the senate and send it to committee. So, if I’m wrong about that, someone please raise their hand. Okay, so, Austin?

A. Quick: And, again, just to go back to that, the one thing, and we’ve had this discussion, you were not the last one. But the one thing that I wanted to be sure is the idea that it’s a tough job, the idea that it’s going to be difficult does not mean anything to the students. We want to see it started. We want to see it finished. And if it takes putting the right students and the right people in those positions, we will do that. A tough challenge is not something we are going to back away from. This is something that should be there. Students should also have it, and we’re not looking for a failsafe if I don’t like this professor for whatever reason, that we’re not looking for some magic parachute that you can use then because, “I don’t like the way you graded me.” It’s not that at all. But when you have students coming on a constant basis with what I think on an unprofessional point of view, that they obviously have some issue here that needs to be taken care of. With all due respect, the ombudsman is only going to send them another direction and it’s just a circular motion that people feel, “I’m not getting treated well.” And, like I said, it’s not just for faculty; it’s for staff as well. When you find staff and departments who are rude and unwilling to work with students, there needs to be some type of mechanism that students feel empowered to be able to say something. Because at the end of the day the empowerment is, “I’m taking my money away from here and I’m going to go somewhere else.” I mean, it’s the same thing as voting for a candidate, you decide not to vote for that person. We have students, we have a retention where students who decide, “You know what, my hands are up in the air, I’m going to go somewhere else that will treat me better,” and that’s where you want to make sure students feel that they have a roll and a say in what happens here at the institution. So, the idea that it’s going to take time and it’s going to be that, I look forward to it. I look forward to the challenge because I think we can find something that is equitable for all and everyone would be happy with.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, thank you. Tim, do you want to add anything to this discussion?

T. Griffin: Not unless there are questions.
A. Rosenbaum: Okay, Tim, as I said, was on that committee, so if anyone has a question for Tim.

C. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – report – walk-in

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, moving along, the Board of Trustees Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee, I don’t think we have either Kerry or Andy here, so you have the report as a walk-in, but I don’t think we have anyone available to answer questions on that. Is that right?

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

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, next is the BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee report. Greg Waas wrote the report that you have in your folder. There really isn’t anything in here that’s worth commenting on. These are just sort of housekeeping things. So, you can read them. I have nothing to add. It was not a very exciting meeting. So, we’re in luck there as well.

E. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Todd Latham and Rosita Lopez – report – walk-in

A. Rosenbaum: Next, BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee, Todd and Rosita. Who is, Todd, you’re giving the report? Go ahead.

T. Latham: Dr. Lopez and I attended Legislative, Audit, and External Affairs Committee. It was the first committee meeting that we’ve had since the new Board of Trustee members were placed. In this meeting, Anthony Iosco was seated as the new chair of the committee, so it was our first opportunity to have discussions with him and go through the committee process. We did have some nice presentations in that part of the committee. Vice President Buettner actually provided us with an update of the 97th General Assembly that was essentially what’s taken place in veto session. It was kind of quiet, but she did highlight some bills that we want to keep an eye on that might have some implications for NIU. Danielle Schultz then presented as the NIU internal audit director about her office and, if you recall, my presentation from last year indicated that they were short staffed. This year, they’ve met their full staffing requirement. They had 18 projects that were planned. Of those, four were moved to fiscal year 12 and I kind of outlined the reason why. One was a delayed project so, therefore, they couldn’t work on the auditing process. The three other ones were deferred due to previous staffing issues. I did want to make sure that you were aware that there were 14 audits that were complete and the last sentence of the second paragraph are really the types of audits that take place at the university. They are basically operational, compliance, financial, fraud or detection, or information systems types of audits that are conducted by her office. We were then given a presentation, again by Kathy Buettner about NIU brand recruiting. I must say, as a parent of a teenage student looking at NIU, that our marketing plan and our recruiting has greatly increased. I am very impressed with the documents and the process that we go through. One of the neat things was the social media,
where they went over how many hits we have on Facebook and discussions take place, how many tags. Then we also looked at YouTube about how many times that they utilize those and it’s – you should look at these on the website and see what kind of products we have. I’ve seen one of my own students that I had taught four years ago in the video. She was a great student and it’s nice to see her face representing NIU. So, I would recommend that you at least look at these and see what we’re using to recruit students and how we’re recruiting them because it’s very important and it’s basically an indicator of what the future will be like, how we will attract students and how we will retain them at this university. Then, we were concluded with our committee with Mr. Jerry Blakemore, of course, who is our general counsel. It basically gave a PowerPoint presentation about changes to the Illinois Open Meetings Act and it basically includes exemptions that could be granted, mandatory training that will now be required of individuals that are in the office of public nature, and procedures that have to be followed when one opens and closes a meeting. So, if you’re interested in some information that our own Board of Trustees will have to come up to speed on and be prepared to act in that official manner. Thank you.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, questions for Todd?

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 are you here? I didn’t see her. Rosemary is not here.

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

A. Rosenbaum: Charles, do we have anything from Academic Affairs to report? Any progress on anything?

C. Cappell: Progress is being made on all fronts.

A. Rosenbaum: All right, so we should have an exciting spring semester to look forward to.

C. Cappell: We hope to have some recommendations early spring semester on the online grade evaluation. I have had an hour-long interview with Murali who is instrumental in documenting and establishing best practices and reviewing the online procedure. We’ve got contacts in the ed school we’re going to be following up. We’re collecting articles. The grading system evaluation committee is probably not quite, moving at a more deliberate glacial speed than other parts of the committee. We’re just trying to compile the information and get together to deal with some of the issues that were raised.

A. Rosenbaum: The plus/minus grading?
C. Cappell: Yes, the plus/minus grading system.

A. Rosenbaum: I should also tell you that, I should have mentioned this in my announcements, but the Graduate Council approved plus/minus grading for graduate students. So, irrespective of what happens with the plus/minus grading system at the undergraduate level, we will have a plus/minus system for graduate students. I would assume, I hadn’t heard when they plan to have that in effect, but possibly in the fall. I will give you an update on that. So, that was a positive step, so we will have plus/minus for grad students at least. I’m still confident that our joint committee will iron out the bugs and we will have the system that the senate approved.

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

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, good. Michael Kolb?

M. Kolb: Nothing yet.

A. Rosenbaum: Nothing? There you are. I talked to Michael about the fact that we ought to start reevaluating the economic status of the faculty. Did the committee decide to embrace that and look into it?

M. Kolb: We are going to try to organize.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, so you’re trying to take a look at that and so we’re going to examine that. I should also tell you that, I don’t know if you are aware, but there is a link on the Provost’s home page. There is a link to a report that compares salaries at NIU to salaries at other places. So, it’s available and anyone can look at it, and you can see how NIU is doing compared to other universities in the area.

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

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, Rules and Governance, Gretchen?

G. Bisplinghoff: Nothing today.

A. Rosenbaum: Nothing?

G. Bisplinghoff: Nope.

E. Resources, Space and Budgets – David Goldblum, Liaison/Spokesperson – report November 1, 2011 meeting and November 8, 2011 meeting – Pages 3-6

A. Rosenbaum: Finally, Resources, Space and Budgets, David? Yes? Get him a $5 microphone please.

D. Goldblum: I can talk into two of them if it would be better. I think we have been too busy. We have had two meetings since the last Faculty Senate meeting. The first meeting we had was
a committee meeting on the 1st of November. We usually get a budget update from Dr. Williams, but we also reported a meeting that Laurie and I had with Mallory Simpson, the president of the NIU Foundation. There were some questions about the True North Campaign and how much money was raised and where that money was going. So, the details are there. They raised about $162 million, and we were under the assumption that they had more latitude where that money went. Almost all of that money that was donated, 99 percent of it was donor designated funds; 22 percent went to facilities, mostly Barsema, Yordon, and alumni center; 11 percent went to student scholarships; 5 percent went to faculty support, that’s donor-designated faculty support, going to specific departments for research for conference travel, etc.; and about 50 percent went into things like visiting lectureships, symposium, equipping laboratories, departmental funds. She told us that when there is a significant contribution that is not donor designated, she does meet with the president and the provost on priorities they might have for providing small amounts, or large amounts of money for other programs. We were also told that there were, in that 10-year period, about 2,800 donations that came from faculty and staff, either current or retired, for an average donation of about $2,500 during that period. So, a significant portion of that came from us.

We also met with Dr. Williams over the money on campus that we’ve received from the state. We’re still waiting for a lot of money from the state, some of it’s from last year, and they’re also in arrears for this year. It’s nothing new. We’re also out the MAP money we paid to students in the fall and again, that’s nothing new. With respect to facilities, as you may all know, Cole Hall is opening for spring semester teaching. They are working on the, they’re hoping that first-year housing project will be ready for fall 2012 enrollment of students. They’ve renovated Grant North Tower C and it’s occupied and they are working on other efforts to make the campus more appealing to students.

The more substantive meeting we had was on the 8th of November. We met with President Peters, Provost Alden, and Dr. Hemphill to talk about a number of issues and I’ll just run through those kind of quickly. Most of the comments from the president dealt with the pension reform. The main message I took away from that is that SURS is a small part of a very large problem and that we may just have to kind of sit back and watch this all happen without potentially too much input given that we are only a very small piece of the big puzzle.

Provost Alden discussed the strategic planning process. They had 24 proposals for continuing projects that are going on now, 28 new proposals came into his office, and they’re going to be working on recommendations for those in the coming months. A lot of discussion revolved around performance-based funding. The president and the provost felt this was coming to a university near you by FY2013, and it has become a very serious conversation at the state level. They think that it might start with a small portion of the university’s budget, 1 to 3 percent initially might be performance based. But the impression they get is that this will eventually ramp up to maybe 15 percent of the university’s budget will be based on some performance metrics. The question was opened as to whether or not, what those metrics would be. There was discussion about number of graduates, etc. The other issue was whether this would be a separate pool of money that might be allocated to universities on a competitive basis or would this be a portion of your base budget determined by how the performance goes. The other issue that the president mentioned is that the senator who has proposed this, Senator Maloney, is retiring this
year, so it seems like, in the president’s mind, this is the best chance to actually get something positive for the university this year.

Also, we had a discussion about how the pension reform might affect faculty and staff and Provost Alden presented some data that Joe Grush collected and the bottom line is about 35 percent of faculty are eligible, in one way or another, for retirement this year, and there is a concern that we will lose more people than we normally do. They have no way of knowing what will happen in June. It seems like this might be a very short period of time when there is an issue with people leaving perhaps a year earlier than they would otherwise. They don’t expect people to leave two or three or four years earlier given the equations for retirement, but it might be a one-year problem. So, we talked about how this might affect people who stay here, students and faculty and departments as vacancies arise as people leave earlier. We also talked about how the general condition of benefits for faculty in Illinois might affect our ability to recruit new faculty. President Peters thinks that we’re probably not that different from many other states, so we don’t stand out as being a troubled state, not that that makes us feel any better.

The last part of the presentation came from Dr. Hemphill who gave a very detailed discussion of how the university is trying to actively recruit more students to campus. He gave us a little bit of a history that until fairly recently, we had at least about a 1,000-person waiting list in most years for admission to NIU. Current enrollment is around 23,000. The goal is to get it up to about 27,500. Given that a lot of our money now, our budgetary money is coming from tuition, he pointed out that for every 500 students we are below our cap, we are losing about $10 million in revenue, which is significant. The other thing he mentioned was that the demographics in the state of Illinois for high school graduates has changed dramatically and will continue to change with a significant drop in the number of Caucasian high school graduates and a large increase, a tripling, of Latino graduates from high schools. So, they are working on recruiting efforts that will take advantage, or work toward these changes that are taking place in the demographics. They have also seen a significant drop in students applying to come here from DuPage and Kane counties. They feel like a major issue is the perception of the campus with respect to security and safety, so, they are putting a lot of energy into improving that and also improving campus technology in the residence halls. As item number 4, there is a long list of efforts that they’re making, they’re implementing, to try to reach out to high school counselors to make it easier for students to navigate the website, asking for the ACT company to provide us with names of students who are putting NIU as either their first or second choice. I think there were, I think last year there were 7,000 students who indicated NIU as their first or second choice and we weren’t getting those names until last year. So, he mentioned that a lot of this has to do with the fact that we haven’t had to recruit in the past and now we are in a very different, more competitive environment. So, item 5 there also includes some of those issues that deal with attracting students to campus.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, thank you. Any questions for David? Sue.

S. Willis: I just had one comment. I was at a reception a month or two ago for prospective students and their parents and one of the parents spoke to me – this is relevant to the perceived safety issue – and he said they visited and there were all these, there was a fairly visible campus
police presence and his interpretation was that, if he saw these police around, it must be a dangerous place. So, I just present that as a bit of feedback.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, I am sorry? You need that $5 mic turned on.

F. Bryan: David, I can’t help but notice that they’re going to have the open house for Cole Hall on February 14? Can you elaborate on why that date was chosen please?

D. Goldblum: I can’t. It struck me as a little odd too.

F. Bryan: Is it, you know, President’s Day? I mean, that’s when we tend to have open houses, but that seemed badly chosen.

D. Goldblum: I think they are going to have a ceremony, I think there’s going to be a ceremony with families potentially from the incident. So, that’s why they made that the day.

[Following the Faculty Senate meeting, it was learned that the Cole Hall open house is scheduled from noon to 3 p.m. Sunday, February 12, 2012, not Tuesday, February 14.]

A. Rosenbaum: Any other questions? Comments?

D. Goldblum: I would make one more comment. I think Todd mentioned the fact that most of us who live in this area have noticed that our high school students have not been getting any information from NIU for recruitment purposes and I guess that’s changing now. For a long time, they figured that if students, if there were high school students in DeKalb County, they would know about NIU, they wouldn’t have to be contacted, and they are not going to be giving, they’re not going to be following that procedure anymore. In the future, they are going to be now sending out information to high achieving students in DeKalb as well. So, I think, across the state, they are reaching out. They’re also trying to attract more out-of-state students by offering scholarships that might waive out-of-state tuition, try to get high-quality students from Iowa and Wisconsin, and Indiana.

A. Rosenbaum: Okay.

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

A. Rosenbaum: We have one more committee, Therese Arado I think is not here, so she did send a letter saying that she couldn’t make it but that there were no bills at the moment since 512 has been shelved at least, so she had no other business. So, that pretty much completes the agenda.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR
A. Rosenbaum: Do we have any comments or questions from the floor? Any items anyone wants to bring up?

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  
H. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience  
I. Minutes, Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum  
J. Minutes, General Education Committee  
K. Minutes, Honors Committee  
L. Minutes, Operating Staff Council  
M. Minutes, Supportive Professional Staff Council  
N. Minutes, Undergraduate Coordinating Council  
O. Minutes, University Assessment Panel  
P. Minutes, University Benefits Committee

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, before we adjourn, remember it is our last meeting of the year, so I hope you all have good holidays and we’ll see you all again in January. I need a motion to adjourn?

J. Corwin: So moved.

A. Rosenbaum: Jim Corwin.

S. Willis: Second.

A. Rosenbaum: Sue Willis seconds. All in favor?

All: Aye.

A. Rosenbaum: We’re adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.