

Minutes of the  
NIU Board of Trustees  
**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT AFFAIRS  
AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
May 12, 2011

**SWEARING-IN OF TRUSTEES**

Chair Strauss began the morning with the swearing-in of one of our newly appointed Trustees and two of our reappointed Trustees. Accomplishing that for us today will be Judge Robbin Stuckert, who is a double alumna of NIU. She was appointed as an associate judge in 2001, was appointed as a circuit court judge in 2003 and was later elected to that position. She accomplished all of that after having served in several area law firms and even trying some cases against me. We are grateful to have her here this morning.

As a graduate of this great university, Judge Stuckert began, I am both honored and pleased to have been asked to administer the oath of office to the returning Board members as well as the newest member of the Board of Trustees. The oath that each of you take this morning has great significance. It is not just a formality or a ritual that you undergo before you assume your duties. No, it is much more than that. So, what is this oath that you are taking today? Generally, if we give our word that we are going to do something, we stake our name and our reputation behind that promise that we have made, and generally, is that not enough? But under some circumstances, we require more. We require an oath because the consequences of the things being considered are substantial. For example, in court, when a witness is presenting testimony, we just do not ask, "Are you going to tell the truth?" No, we require a swearing-in and an affirmation, an oath, that they will, in fact, tell the truth. And we require an affirmation or oath for the President of the United States, members of Congress, civic duties, as well as those who are in civic organizations and religious bodies, all are required to take oaths.

Now I am sure that each of you as members of the Board of Trustees understand the enormous responsibilities, obligations and hard work that you are called upon and will be required to do and that you are anticipating the continuing or the new challenges that you will be facing as well. So the significance of the oath for you is just perhaps necessary so you can get started with the work that needs to be done. But I suggest to you that the Oath of Office is really for the people who are being served by the person promising the service. In other words, the oath is not so much for that witness I talked about or the President of the United States or judges or members of Congress or anyone else that takes an oath. Rather, it is for society, our constituents, the people we serve, the faculty, students, employees and all of the many individuals who will be impacted by your service and the decisions that you make. An oath gives assurance and public recognition that we will do our utmost to live up to our obligations.

The judge then asked Robert Marshall, Cheryl Murer and Marc Strauss to come forward to receive the Oath of Office, which was administered as follows:

Would you all please raise your right hand and repeat after me.

*I, Jaemin Robertson, do solemnly swear that I will faithfully serve, support, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States and the laws thereof, the Constitution of the State of Illinois and laws thereof, and the Constitution, Bylaws, and policies of Northern Illinois University. Finally, I acknowledge the fiduciary responsibility that each member of the Board of Trustees has and further solemnly swear that I will discharge faithfully my duties as a member of the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University.*

Congratulations.

Since I have done this once before, Chair Strauss said, I will be very brief. I want to let everybody know how excited I am to have another six years to have an opportunity to complete some of the things we have started. It has been a real pleasure to work with all of you who are here for this period of time, and I am looking forward to continuing that. Thank you, again.

Since I am the new kid on the block, Trustee Marshall said, I will give you a bit of background. I reconnected with the university about six years ago through an alumni event that was held in downtown Chicago to celebrate the holidays. At that event, there was a pulse of energy from staff members who were there and from the many alumni who came out. I decided to look a little deeper, and, on a subsequent visit to NIU, I found that the campus went beyond Annie Glidden Road, since I came from the dinosaur era when NIU happened to be Northern Illinois State College. It became a university during my sophomore year. I can only say that it is an honor, and I look forward to being able to serve. Thank you. President Peters then presented Trustee Marshall with the official Board of Trustees pin, which can only be worn by members of the Board of Trustees.

I am not usually at a loss for words, Trustee Murer commented, but this morning is very emotional for me because it is a return for six more years. I love this university, and it has been an honor and a privilege to serve on this Board of Trustees. Thank you.

It is wonderful to have a new face here as well as welcoming back the familiar faces, Trustee Boey said. To our new Trustee, Trustee Marshall, welcome. It is a delight to have you here, and to our Trustees who have been reappointed, as we all know, reappointment is a tricky business, just ask the President of the United States. You two have done a great job, and we are delighted to have you back.

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order by Chair John Butler at 8:22 a.m. in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Sharon Banks-Wilkins conducted a roll call of Trustees. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, Robert Marshall, Cherilyn Murer, Student Trustee Robert Sorsby, Committee Chair John Butler and BOT Chair Marc Strauss. Not present was Trustee Anthony Iosco. Also present were Committee Liaison Ray Alden and Board Parliamentarian Jerry Blakemore. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

#### **VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Confirmation of Open Meetings Act public notice compliance was provided by Board General Counsel Jerry Blackmore.

#### **MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Trustee Strauss made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Murer seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

#### **REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

It was moved by Trustee Strauss and seconded by Trustee Boey to approve the minutes of the March 3, 2011 committee meeting. The motion was approved.

#### **CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

On today's agenda under University Reports, Chair Butler said, we have four action items and two information items. Today's meeting is of particular importance for faculty because this is the time of year that the Board acts on recommendations for faculty tenure and promotion. Our action items include the recommendations for faculty promotions, tenure, and promotions with tenure for the 2011-2012

Academic Year; a reorganization in the College of Education; two programmatic issues – a request for a change in degree designation with the College of Education, and a request for a new minor in Theatre Studies. Our information items include a request to increase the regional delivery fee for the Off-Campus RN Degree Completion Program in the School of Nursing and Health Studies and an update on the Higher Learning Commission.

I would now like to welcome the representatives of University Advisory Committee to this committee, Kerry Freedman and Ferald Bryan. As always, Dr. Freedman said, I am delighted to be here, and I have one question for the Dean of the College of Education during her presentation on the restructuring. Restructuring of these types, particularly when the dissolution of a department is involved, is always very stressful for faculty, staff and students. My question is, "What actions are the dean taking to minimize stress among the faculty, staff and students, and to support them during the transition?" Chair Butler assured her that her question would be asked during the presentation of the item concerning the College of Education reorganization.

We have an ambitious schedule and a number of items on each committee's agenda, Chair Butler remarked, so I will say only a few things for information purposes for our new Trustee who is here today. This is a committee charged with a dynamic mission to cover the three very large areas of academic affairs, student affairs and personnel. Most of our action items concern academic programming and some personnel matters such as today's discussion of tenure and promotion. Our information items are crucial opportunities also for the Board to learn more about the function of a particular office, the goal behind an effort, and achievements of a programming effort. At any given time, there are hundreds of achievements we do not get to talk about. The Office of University Relations keeps us informed of many of these things through *NIU Today* and a variety of other releases and publications. I want to just quickly acknowledge and welcome the new Trustees, also Jerry Blakemore, our new General Counsel, who is with us today for his first Board Committee meeting. I want to also welcome Professor Mary Pritchard, who has been appointed Interim Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences, and congratulate her on her appointment.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chair asked Board Parliamentarian and General Counsel Jerry Blakemore if any members of the public had registered a written request to address the Board in accordance with state law and Board of Trustees *Bylaws*. Mr. Blakemore noted that no timely requests had been received.

#### **UNIVERSITY REPORT**

##### **Agenda Item 7.a. – Recommendations for Faculty Promotions, Tenure and Promotions with Tenure for 2011-2012 Academic Year**

For the new Board member, Provost Alden stated, at this time of year, we consider these kinds of issues. This is a lengthy process that involves both administrative and faculty based committee reviews of each case, and takes place at the department, college and university levels. By the time of the May and June meetings, these individuals' files have been well vetted by the university community. Today we bring forward one promotion from assistant to associate in the College of Law, 15 promotions from associate to full professor, 3 individuals already at the rank of associate for tenure only, and 21 coming forward for both tenure and promotion from assistant to associate professor, and one tenure and rank of associate upon hire. This is a fairly typical mix of the kinds of promotion and tenure issues that come before the Board at this time. The university recommends that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse this request and ask that the President forward it by means of the President's Report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its June 9 meeting.

Chair Butler asked for a motion to endorse the Recommendations for Faculty Promotions, Tenure and Promotions with Tenure for the 2011-2012 Academic Year. Trustee Murer so moved, seconded by Trustee Boey. The motion was approved.

### **Agenda Item 7.b. – Reorganization in the College of Education**

Dr. Alden invited Dean of the College of Education La Vonne Neal, to come forward and describe the reorganization process for the college.

### **Agenda Item 7.b. – Reorganization in the College of Education**

It is a pleasure to join the Board of Trustees meeting today, Dean Neal said. Today I will be discussing the request for department name change as well as the transfer of tenure locations. We begin with a charge for transformation. I particularly enjoyed President Peters' thought-filled charge of public university model "The Twentieth Century no longer fits." As I reflected on that and on my charge from Provost Alden, this was a key phrase, "The Twentieth Century model in public universities no longer fits." I also began thinking about the 25-page leadership profile that the search committee compiled when they were looking for a new dean for the College of Education, particularly the request that the new dean be a planner and builder and bring a model for moving the university forward. More importantly, I reflected on the messaging that "was complex and rapidly changing." But what really caught my eye was this is not a status quo position. This really illuminated for me the forward thinking that NIU was focusing on, because this is salient when you look at the other charges, recognizing that this is a complex as well as rapidly changing region, as well as the need to work with both energy and sense of urgency.

When we looked at the college landscape and higher education landscape, the charge was clear: a new model. But more importantly, when I looked at the higher education landscape, our learners were different. Our learners are more diverse than ever before in terms of ethnicity and learning styles. The increased competition, proprietaries, are now focusing on professional schools such as nursing and education, our diminishing funds as well as increased accountability, demands for productivity and curricular renovation, and also accrediting agency requirements. I am proud to report that effective this academic year, all 17 of our College of Education programs received national recognition.

The analysis that we conducted regarding the Department of Teaching and Learning was created in the Twentieth Century. Let us look forward to the Twenty-First Century. When it was created, it was necessary to have the focus, and the foci are delineated there, seven basic objectives with that redesign during the Twentieth Century, and we were looking at increasing program focus to have a clearer mission as well as to communicate more effectively, to improve services to our students, align graduate programs improve visibility and national education disciplines to better align our departments.

In a situational analysis, the current market and the demand, clearly, cohesive and synergistic program alignment, greater relevance for students are the things that we need to do differently based on the needs analysis conducted at a national as well as regional level, the teaching environment that encourages curricular innovation and greater faculty innovation and learning environment that reflects and even improves upon best practices.

In the transformation process, one of the many things I appreciate is the thoughtfulness of the COE faculty and staff when they were looking for new leadership. One of the things that I was so proud of was that this actual transformation process timeline was faculty initiated. The faculty initiated it in the fall of 2010 through conversations with me, and I then facilitated conversations with Senate. For those of you not familiar with the infrastructure, Senate is comprised of the department chairs as well as the program directors. Departmental and unit meetings were conducted in December and in an ongoing manner. But more importantly, for the transformation of the impacted departments, for example, Teaching and Learning, visited with every one of the faculty and staff in that department. In an all-college retreat, we discussed this again and faculty proposed what they wanted to see in terms of where the changes would occur.

Given the different landscape, our speed of change determines whether we will continue to be the viable entity that we want to be. The five goals delineated in the College of Education strategic plan are: Students, Diversity, Engagement, Innovation and Culture.

These new changes will connect our graduate program and align it with other school leadership programs. Remember, this is based on decades of research, the two indicators for students' outcomes to be successful in education — one is the quality of the teacher and the other is the quality of that school principal. With Curriculum and Instruction, as identified through the faculty by their proposals, we are now aligning all school leadership together. In elementary education and what is happening with national trends and the need for literacy development, the faculty recommended that the elementary education be transitioned into the Department of Literacy. Finally, one of my fields is Special Education. National trends show that more students now than ever have special needs, and where more to begin making certain that they have the appropriate skill sets than in Early Education? – therefore, the alignment with Special Education and Early Education.

We developed the transformation blueprint based on all the things we had discussed in the fall semester. The faculty and staff of the College of Education submit that we would like to do three things. We would like to be a data driven, decision making entity; we would like to diversify our sources of revenue; and we would like to have sustainable, systems driven operation. Those three foci are a major part of the College of Education transformation blueprint.

In conclusion, I am requesting that the Department of Teaching and Learning be renamed Department of Special and Early Education. The undergraduate program entities would be housed in Literacy Education as well as Special and Early Education, and the graduate programs will be housed in those three departments. In essence, three departments are impacted by this reorganization. The transfer of 21 faculty tenure and tenure locations is required.

It is important to note that this reorganization was achieved with minimal impact in that no faculty, staff program, degree program or courses have been eliminated. Current students will continue in their programs, future students will be admitted as previously admitted, and service courses for programs outside of the college will continue unchanged.

It struck me that the College of Education is one of the pillars of Northern Illinois University, Trustee Murer commented. And it is very reflective of the aggressive mode and culture that we are taking under the leadership of Dr. Peters and Provost Alden that it is the College of Education that has picked up the gauntlet in making such changes, so I commend you for that. But it is very important that we recognize that this college, which really is at the basic core of this university, too, must change.

I have no doubt that this has been thoughtfully and methodically approached, Chair Butler said, but my question is what sorts of implications or transitional kinds of things you anticipate with respect to transferring the tenure home of these faculty members. As mentioned earlier, Dean Neal said, the proposals were submitted to me by the faculty, and we went with their recommendations of where they would like to be. There will be 21 tenure-track professors impacted in the move – 14 of the existing faculty will stay and seven will transition.

Chair Butler first asked for a motion to endorse the renaming of the Department of Teaching and Learning to the Department of Special and Early Education. Trustee Boey so moved, seconded by Trustee Murer. The motion was approved.

The Chair then asked for a motion to endorse the requested transfer of tenure and tenure-track faculty to the indicated departments. Student Trustee Sorsby so moved, seconded by Trustee Strauss. The motion was approved.

### **Agenda Item 7.c. – Request for a Change in Degree Designation**

Provost Alden stated that this request for a change in degree designation from a Ed.D. in Educational Psychology to a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology has received all of the required curricular approvals at the department, college and university levels as well as endorsement by the Academic Planning Council. Upon approval by the Board of Trustees, it will be forwarded to the Illinois Board of Higher Education for

approval. This particular designation comes from the Department of Leadership and Educational Psychology and Foundations in the College of Education. Nationwide, doctoral degrees in educational psychology tend to be at the Ph.D. level because so much of the discovery is research based rather than practice based, which is the usual distinction between the Ed.D. and the Ph.D. In the United States, about 93 percent of all universities have a Ph.D. for educational psychology rather than the Ed.D. In the state of Illinois, NIU is the only institution that has a doctoral program offering the Ed.D. rather than the Ph.D., which is perceived to place our NIU graduates at somewhat of a competitive disadvantage. With a Ph.D., they can go into either a research based career or a practice based career, whereas the Ed.D. may not be viewed as competitive as a Ph.D. This particular degree has been in the planning for a number of years, and there has been quite a bit of transition in curriculum and in external funding. We had an external team of individuals from among the top Educational Psychology programs in the country review our program, and they confirmed that it was indeed ready to make the transition. After the appropriate approvals, this Ed.D. program will be phased out, but all students enrolled in the program at the time of final approval will be given the option to continue the Ed.D. or to switch over to a Ph.D. to complete the research internship process. No new resources are needed. The program is well-positioned to undertake this degree.

Provost Alden reported that, upon approval of the change in degree designation by IBHE, all students in the program at that time would be given the option of continuing the Ed.D., which would require a practice-based dissertation, or switching to the Ph.D., which would require a research-based dissertation. Anyone graduating with the Ed.D. prior to approval by the IBHE would not be grandfathered in to the Ph.D. due to the difference in dissertation requirements.

In reply to a query from Trustee Murer regarding the need for students now in the midst of dissertation to take other courses once this change is approved, Dean Neal stated that faculty had looked at the national trends and began preparing five years ago for this very move, so that when the evaluators looked at our programming, they deduced that it is definitely Ph.D. programming. We know with confidence that we would be able to transition because we have been preparing students so that even if they did not have the Ph.D., they would have the skill sets as an Ed.D. to compete with their Ph.D. peers.

Part of the external review was to look at whether the scholarship and the external funding, in particular, of the faculty was appropriate for a Ph.D. level program, Provost Alden said. It was not just a curricular issue or whether the appropriate research based dissertation was possible, but what the faculty's qualifications are. The five or six years that this program has been in the works, faculty realized that it required all of them to be graduate faculty with that sort of a scholarly background. Dr. Cassidy stated that all of the faculty assigned to this program have the Ph.D. except one, who has an Ed.D. from Harvard. Over the past five years, 24 students have been enrolled in the program, and so they have had consistent enrollments. Annually they graduate three to four degrees, which is fairly typical for a department of this size at the doctoral level.

The complicated issue is with respect to the IBHE, Chair Butler said, and I believe what Trustee Murer is asking is what options are practically available to students who are in the Ed.D. program right now, who may either prior to the completion of it or even after avail themselves of the opportunity to receive a Ph.D. instead of an Ed.D. Due to the fact that Trustee Murer and I are uncomfortable with the item as it stands, Chair Butler said, from a procedural standpoint we can endorse this item to send it to the full Board. Then perhaps we can facilitate the answers to our questions in a more systematic way within the three or so weeks between now and that meeting. If we are still not comfortable with it at that time, we can table it then.

I would suggest, President Peters said, that the questions that have been raised and more of the background material excerpts from the external report, the performance data on who the students are, these questions asked by Trustee Murer, be incorporated in the materials being forwarded to the full Board meeting. At that point, your questions may be answered, and if not, then we can table or postpone to a future date. I do not see any issues at the IBHE except timing because we meet the qualifications, and we have done the external review. They do not do that. The college has been

moving toward this for several years, so the curriculum is in place, qualified professors are in place, recruitment patterns have probably been changed, and my guess is that even the Ed.D. practicum dissertation type thesis that they are writing is a bit more research focused than practicum oriented because of the professors who are directing these activities.

Trustee Murer agreed with Chair Butler's and President Peters' suggestions for forwarding the item to the full Board's June 9 meeting and using the intervening three weeks for responses to their questions.

Chair Butler asked for a motion to endorse the request for a change in degree designation from a Ed.D. in Educational Psychology to a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology. Trustee Murer so moved, seconded by Trustee Strauss. The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 7.d. – Request for New Minor**

For the new Board member, Provost Alden explained, a minor is a subdivision of an existing program that is available to students in other majors, and it is identified on their transcripts. This is to be distinguished from an emphasis, which is a concentration within a degree at the undergraduate level, or a specialization that is a concentration within a graduate degree. This minor is available to individuals who are not in Theatre. This particular program has been vetted at all levels from the department to the college to the university, including the Undergraduate Coordinating Council. It will offer a Minor in Theatre Studies to individuals who are not majors in that area, and they will gain a comprehensive introduction to dramatic literature, performance and theatre technology. This allows individuals in a number of different fields, including education, law, marketing, communication studies, music, dance and health sciences to gain these kinds of skills, competencies and knowledge base. No new resources will be involved because the courses are already being offered.

Dean Holly stated that this minor had been eliminated eight to ten years ago due to major enrollment and a change in faculty. In the intervening years, he said, we have had a large number of students ask about having a minor. In particular, we have a number of education students in all of the colleges that offer education programs take the one course that is available, Acting for the Nonmajor. They have gained so much knowledge and skill through that experience, that they have asked if there is more they can do, and up until now, the answers has been no. Through discussions with the faculty, it became clear that yes, we can accommodate minors, and we should bring it back.

Chair Butler asked for a motion to approve the request for a new Minor in Theatre Studies. Trustee Strauss so moved, seconded by Student Trustee Sorsby. The motion as approved.

#### **Agenda Item 7.e. – School of Nursing Fee for Off-Campus Nursing Degree Completion Program**

As everyone is aware, the Provost said, nursing is a high-demand, high-impact discipline. It is probably one of the fastest growing fields in the country as well as in the region. As a result, our nursing school is quite stressed to accommodate the students on campus. We have accreditation issues that mean certain courses cannot have a student to faculty ratio of greater than eight. We want to continue and to expand our service to individuals who have an RN degree at the associate's level, who are often working professionals who want to acquire a baccalaureate level nursing degree. This program is aimed at that particular group of individuals who, because of their circumstances cannot come to campus, but can either meet at a regional site or conduct their degree largely on line. Usually it is a combination of those two options. Until now, we've had to go through cohorts essentially having this particular option offered at one region, then another and another, simply because of limitations. We simply did not have enough faculty to prevent it from impacting our on-campus students. This request is the result of about a year planning how to build capacity so that we do not jeopardize our on-campus programs but build capacity for both on-campus and degree completion programs. Part of that financial model involves increasing the credit hour fee. Nonetheless, this program will be still be very cost competitive with other programs offered to provide this particular degree completion option. This request will be presented as an action

item in the FFO Committee, but because it involves an academic program, we present it here for information.

In response to a query from Trustee Murer, Dr. Brigid Lusk, Chair of School of Nursing, stated that the school has a nurse practitioner program enrollment of almost 200 students. We are working towards getting the post-master's doctorate in DNP, she said, but right now we have a master's degree in Family and Adult Nurse Practitioners which is provided pretty much 50 percent on line and 50 percent on campus. We do have requests to provide it off campus, and it is a situation of resources. Our online courses are very popular. A concern with off-campus is where we site it to be helpful to everybody since we draw from such a large region.

### **Agenda Item 7.f. – The Higher Learning Commission Off-Campus Site Visit**

Our final report to day is from the Higher Learning Commission related to the Off-Campus Site Visit that occurred this past year, Provost Alden said. The Board has heard before and immediately after the site visit that this particular issue is a new requirement by the Higher Learning Commission. He asked Vice Provost Virginia Cassidy to report on the findings of the Commission as a result of this report.

As stated in your Board Reports, Dr. Cassidy said, the findings of the Commission were very good. The external evaluator had two options to respond to for each area, either that the requirements were adequately met or required additional attention. So there were no opportunities for superlatives in the actual report to the Higher Learning Commission. But his comment, which is the last sentence in the report, indicated very clearly what he had told us at the time of his visit, that NIU should be a model for how we deliver our off-campus programs. All of the criteria are met in terms of this aspect of our requirement to the Higher Learning Commission. We will not have another visit of this nature for 10 years, which would be mid-cycle for our overall accreditation.

I would also like to acknowledge not only Vice Provost Cassidy's effort and that of all of the academic individuals on this, Dr. Alden said, but also Vice President Kaplan's tremendous support of these programs, which is key to our mission in the area. We had a major group meet with this off-campus site visitor, and I believe he was extremely impressed that this was integrated into our academic community and how well run the educational sites were.

### **OTHER MATTERS**

Chair Butler thanked the Provost, the Chair of Nursing, the Deans of the College of Education and Visual and Performing Arts, and Vice Provost Cassidy for providing information to the committee. He also extended a thank you to the University Advisory Committee representatives and to General Counsel Blakemore and President Peters for their input.

### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee is scheduled for Thursday, August 25, 2011.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Butler asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Strauss so moved, seconded by Trustee Murer. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins  
Recording Secretary



