

Minutes of the  
NIU Board of Trustees  
**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT AFFAIRS  
AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**  
February 2, 2012

**SWEARING-IN OF TRUSTEE**

This morning, I have the pleasure of introducing for the first time our newest Trustee, Mr. Wheeler Coleman, who will take his oath of office shortly, Board Chair Murer said. It is important that we all know a little more about Wheeler Coleman. He is an NIU alumnus, graduating in 1983 with a degree in Applied Data Processing, and went on to earn an M.B.A. from the University of Notre Dame. He currently holds the position of Vice President and Chief Technology Officer at Health Care Service Corporation, a part of Blue Cross-Blue Shield, the fourth largest health insurance company in the United States and the nation's largest customer-owned health insurer.

Wheeler lives in Chicago and is active in many civic organizations. He is a member of the board of the Black Ensemble Theater and the Daniel Murphy Scholarship Foundation. Wheeler was a fellow of Leadership Greater Chicago in 2006 and was named Chicago United Leader of Color in 2007 in recognition of his business accomplishments and civic contributions. Since 2010, he has also been a member of the NIU Alumni Association Board.

Today is not only a momentous occasion for Wheeler, but for his wife the Honorable Sharon Johnson Coleman, as well. I know personally the joy of sharing that experience with one's spouse. Sharon, we welcome you as well. Judge Coleman is also an NIU alumnae and went on to obtain her law degree at Washington University in St. Louis. She was confirmed by the United States Senate as a member of the federal bench, which bestows on her the honor of a lifetime and, indeed, comes with a lifetime appointment. Just as Wheeler stood by her side as she took her federal oath, which must have also been a momentous occasion, Judge Coleman is here with Wheeler today and will administer his oath of office. That is something very special for NIU as well. Please join me in a warm welcome for Trustee Wheeler Coleman and the Honorable Sharon Johnson Coleman.

As a lawyer and a judge, Judge Coleman remarked, I have participated in the taking and administering of oaths more times than I can count. Today's proceedings, however, have no equal. It is my distinct and, indeed, amazing honor to be able to administer the oath of office of the Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees to the man I was destined to meet more than 30 years ago on this campus. Not only was he this cute, tall, young man with a great voice and a great smile, he was the most determined and focused person that I had ever met and have ever met. I say that especially knowing that he was not coming from college educated parents. He was coming from parents who had raised their children in the west side projects and on the south side of Chicago, but still had an understanding that their children's future could be more and that education was the way. Wheeler was passionate about his education then, he was passionate for the education of his fellow students, being a leader on campus, and he took what NIU offered to him and expanded on it in so many ways. It is only fitting that he stands here before you ready to promise nothing less than his best efforts in serving the NIU community – past, present and future.

The significance of an oath is that we ask our God and the public to bear witness to a promise that we make, expecting to be held responsible for honoring that promise with our best effort. One of our family heroes, Muhammad Ali, once stated that "When a chivalrous man makes an oath, he is faithful to it." I add to that quote the wisdom of philosopher Aeschylus who said, "It is not the oath that makes us believe in the man, but the man the oath."

To the university officials and staff, to the Chair and the Trustees, there is lots of work to do, but I can personally vouch that your new Board member is ready, willing and able to give his all to assist NIU and its students to reach their full potential. You may have my word on that.

Judge Coleman asked Mr. Coleman to join her at the podium where she administered the following oath.

*I, Wheeler G. Coleman, 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 the laws thereof; and the Bylaws, Regulations and Policies of the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University.*

*Finally, I acknowledge the fiduciary responsibility that I have as a member of the Board of Trustees and do solemnly swear that I will discharge faithfully, and without regard to personal gain, my duties as a member of the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University.*

Trustee Coleman's remarks were as follows:

President Peters, Chair, fellow Trustees, administrators, faculty, friends and family, I cannot tell you how proud I am, and how humbled I am, to be part of this prestigious Board called the Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees. Today is a special day. It is like a homecoming for me, and I am glad to be back home. First of all, I want to thank Governor Quinn for appointing me to complete the remaining term of Manny Sanchez. Manny had huge shoes, and I tell you, I do not have the personality of a Manny Sanchez, so he is a tough act to follow.

I want to thank also my friends who have helped me during the entire process. Most importantly, I want to thank my best friend, my biggest cheerleader, my toughest critic, the woman that loves me in good times and in bad times, my wife of 29 years, Judge Sharon Coleman. Thank you.

The Chair told you a few things about me earlier, but for those of you who are not familiar with me, I would like to spend a few minutes talking about my background, provide you with a little perspective on what I believe and some of the challenges that I think we are facing as an institution. Less than 34 years ago, I was admitted to NIU from a small Catholic school in downtown Chicago. I came through these doors wide-eyed, naïve and ill-prepared for the academic and social challenges I was about to face. However, with the help of great people from the faculty, my fellow students and the administration, I was able to get through this university with a degree in computer science in 1983.

I left this school and went to work for a small organization that at the time was in near bankruptcy, a small health insurance company that most of us know as Blue Cross-Blue Shield of Illinois. I am still with that company today. However, that company is the largest noninvestor-owned insurance company in the nation, which means that that company had to go through a lot of transformation to get from near bankruptcy to where we are today, and I was a part of that ride. In order for us to do that, we had to be focused – laser focused. We had to lay out our strategy, we had to execute against that strategy, and it was not easy. Today we have over 16,000 employees and cover 13 million members. If you looked at the revenues of the largest publicly traded companies in the state of Illinois, our company would be in the top five. We would be next to companies that have household names such as Walgreens, Boeing, Kraft and Sears. So, I just want you to know that I come from a very large institution, I grew up in that institution, and I was successful in that institution. For the first four and a half years with Healthcare Service Corporation, I developed software code and then quickly moved into management, where for the last 24 and a half years, I have been leading others in various capacities throughout the company. I really have been living out the true creed, Dr. Peters, of NIU – “Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow.” Ten years ago, not only raising two kids, being married and working full time, I went back to school and got my M.B.A. At that time, I was

exposed to a university that prized itself on achieving greatness, not only in the sports world, but also in the classroom. I learned a great deal from those people and that institution.

Currently, I hold the title of Vice President and Chief Technology Officer in my organization. I have the responsibilities of setting the technology standards for the company, developing IT strategies, overseeing the IT budget and leading the transformation activities for the IT division. In the last two years, I led the efforts to reduce our IT budget by over \$140 million, \$70 million a year, and that was not easy. We had some tough decisions to make. We had to reduce people, we had to change our ways, we had to change our processes, we had to change our method of thinking, and we had to do it all without impacting the quality of work we were delivering, our system availability, our reliability, our innovation and our preparation for the future. I come from a large organization that is heavily regulated by the state and federal governments. We have a lot of constraints, and at times we feel our hands are tied. But we also have another philosophy at our company. That is, there are no excuses. There are no excuses for failure, there are no excuses for being average, there are no excuses for not winning, there are no excuses for being unethical, there are no excuses for not being team members and working as one team. I hope, as I come to you today, that some of that "no excuses" philosophy we have at Health Care Service Corporation is something that we can adopt as a university.

I am sharing my background with you not to brag and not to boast, because I know the credentials of a many of the people in this room, and they are pretty awesome credentials. You have a history of success. I am proud to say that I am a part of this family and to work with all of this great talent we have here. But I share my background and some of my history with you to let you know that I know I did not achieve my career accomplishments on my own. I had a lot of help. I did not get through Northern Illinois University on my own. I had a lot of help from great people in the administration. There was a Dr. Mitchell who retired a few years ago that helped me tremendously. There is another individual, the late, great Leon Miller, who was my mentor and helped craft my first resume when I was ready to enter the business field. So, I had a lot of help, and I want to let you know that I understand the value of people who came before me, who have opened up opportunities for me and for others, and it is important we remember that. Twenty years after Northern Illinois University opened its doors in 1915, there was a young female by the name of Fanny Ruth Patterson, who was the first African American to graduate from Northern Illinois University. She opened doors for people like me. Then there are numerous people that came in after her and opened doors of opportunities, doors that we did not even know were closed, and made it possible for me to stand here today. I understand the role of a trailblazer, people who are in positions to make a difference. Many of you in this room are trailblazers. You are in a position to make a difference. I understand that role clearly.

I come back to you 34 years later, a homecoming, to tell you that, yes, I have a little gray hair, my glasses are a little stronger, and I am a little less naïve. But one thing I know for certain is that I am not naïve to the magnitude of the responsibility of being a Board of Trustees member. I am not naïve to the challenges that we are facing and that we are going to be facing as an institution. I also want you to know that I am not naïve to the financial ills and the lack of funding that we have, to the social challenges that we have to address. I am not naïve to the fact that industry is changing, and it is going to require us to change our academic offerings in order for us to stay relevant. I am not naïve to the fact that we have to address our shifting, changing and shrinking enrollment. We have to address our housing shortages, our campus image. We have to shore up our infrastructure, our operation, our technology. And we have to compete for the very best talent out there, be it students, administrators or faculty. We have a lot of work ahead of us, and I want to let you know that I am here to work, not just a warm body in a seat.

Madam Chair, I know time is of the essence, and I know we have a lot of work to do today. In closing, I want to say the following. Over the last two-plus years, working with the Alumni Association and, specifically, over the last two months, meeting with and interacting with the NIU

family, I am impressed with the talent, the commitment and the love that the NIU family have for this institution. I think it is awesome! And I am excited about being here. I am inspired, and I am very hopeful because we, the people of NIU, have the core ingredients to be the best institution in this area. So, I am here to let you know, collectively, I want to work with all of you. And collectively, if we are going to achieve greatness, we have to work as a team and we have to take advantage of the opportunities that are in front of us to prepare and to lay out trails for the next generations to come. Thank you very much.

President Peters presented Trustee Coleman with the official Board of Trustees pin, which can only be worn by members of the Board of Trustees. May you wear it in good health, the President said, and thanks for those inspiring remarks.

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

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cheryl Murer at 9:30 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, John Butler, Wheeler Coleman, Robert Marshall, Student Trustee Jaemin Robertson and Chair Cheryl Murer. Also present were Trustee Anthony Iosco, Committee Liaison Ray Alden, President John Peters and Board General Counsel 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 Blakemore.

#### **MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Trustee Boey made a motion to approve the meeting agenda as amended. Trustee Coleman seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

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

It was moved by Trustee Butler and seconded by Trustee Boey to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2011 committee meeting. The motion was approved.

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

Chair Murer welcomed University Advisory Committee representatives Dr. Kerry Freedman and Mr. Andy Small. On behalf of the operating staff, Mr. Small welcomed our new Board of Trustees member, Trustee Coleman. When we introduce you at each of these committee meetings, it seems like it's a perfunctory act, the Chair said, but I want to reconfirm how important shared governance is to this university, and how critical your representation is at these meetings. Thank you.

On today's agenda, under University Report, the Chair noted, we have three action items and three information items. The February meeting of this committee is of particular importance to faculty. This is the time of year that the Board acts on Recommendations for Faculty and Supportive Professional Staff Sabbatical Leaves for 2012 and 2013. In conjunction with this item, two of our faculty members who recently completed their sabbaticals will provide the committee with a summary of their research. This is a presentation those of us who serve on this committee look forward to each year. Despite the extremely difficult economic times, this committee, the Board of Trustees and the university's senior administration continue to support and believe in the importance of providing professional development opportunities to faculty and staff to enhance the educational opportunities for NIU students. We will also review an information item this morning that represents an annual report on the outcomes of sabbatical

leaves for 2008 and 2009. I cannot emphasize more how important it is that we are accountable for sabbaticals, and we are accountable for the activities of these periods of time where our faculty are exploring a greater world than the DeKalb campus. I am especially pleased to note that our administrators are also constantly evaluating the curriculum for currency, enrollment, areas of specialization. This also echoes Trustee Coleman's comments that we really need to be very focused in the next 18 months to five years, in this very short- and long-term period of time, to assure that NIU will continue to be a very viable and vital organization. We have an item on the agenda today that requires a vote by this committee to delete certain emphases and a specialization due to the changing curricula and enrollment patterns. Again, this shows strong management and an eye toward our Vision 2020 Initiative. Finally, NIU has embarked on a very critical two-year accreditation preparation cycle, which we discussed at length at our last committee meeting. This will result in a 2014 site visit by the Higher Learning Commission, one of the six regional accreditation bodies of institutions of higher learning. I cannot emphasize the importance of this accreditation, but more so the importance of the opportunity to review ourselves, to self-examine and to determine what our future will be. An update regarding the university's preparation for Higher Learning Commission accreditation will be provided.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

The Chair asked General Counsel 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 he had received no requests to address this meeting.

#### **UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORTS**

##### **Agenda Item 7.a. – Faculty Report on Sabbatical Leave**

With Board approval, Provost Alden said, the university awards sabbatical leaves for the purpose of supporting and encouraging scholarship, research and artistry, with particular focus on strengthening their academic programs through this opportunity. Faculty or professional staff members awarded sabbatical leaves undergo a very rigorous proposal review process. The proposals go through reviews at the department, college and university levels, where they look at criteria including the quality of the proposed scholarship, the capacity of the applicant to conduct the work, and the likelihood of completion of the project during the timeframe allotted.

Every year we like to have some of our faculty come and talk about their scholarship and how it enriched their professional lives as well as their academic programs. The Provost introduced the first presenter, Robert Chappell, who holds a Master of Music degree from the University of North Texas. He is a Distinguished Teaching Professor at NIU and the head of the percussion studies in the NIU School of Music since 1983, with an emphasis on jazz keyboard, percussion, piano and East Indian tabla drumming. He PERFORMS with steel pan virtuoso and NIU professor, Liam Teague in the Liam Teague and Robert Chappell duo and their Afro-Cuban, Calypso Ensemble Panoramic. In his 28 years as a professor in the NIU School of Music, Robert Chappell has taken sabbaticals to India, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, which is the home of steel pan. On his sabbatical last spring, the Provost said, Professor Chappell spent four and a half months in Costa Rica where he studied, recorded and transcribed music of traditional marimba ensembles; coordinated a live internet master class between students in the national distance learning university of Costa Rica (Universidad Estatal a Distancia - La UNED) and professors at NIU; and started the first steel band in Latin America.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to tell you a little bit about my activities in the spring of 2011, Professor Chappell began. The importance of sabbaticals cannot be overemphasized. They are an easy target in these difficult times, but you will see just some of the benefits that are right now resulting from the four and a half months I spent in Costa Rica. Some of you may say, "Why Costa Rica?" It is a very small musical world that we live in. In 2002, I performed in Seoul, Korea with the NIU Steel Band as part of the Seoul Drum Festival. One of the other ensembles was the Costa Rican Percussion Ensemble. They were holding the World Cup that year and invited percussion ensembles from every country in the

16 World Cup finalists. We played concerts together and, in 2006, I was invited to teach at the National Institute of Music in San Jose. I brought Professor Bismark Fernandez to NIU, and a collaboration has ensued since that time.

Music is one of the most amazing collaborative forces that we have. We have to work together as a team constantly for performances, in shared teaching and in many other ways. The connections made from these sabbaticals are not only important for the faculty, but are really important for the students, because success in the world today is not based just on talent, it is based on how well you get along with people and the networking you have developed. More important is the ability for me to share these things I have learned with NIU students in developing new classes, new ensembles, new connections with these people and the chance for faculty to renew their joy of learning. Sabbatical gives us a chance to recharge our batteries and teach in the way that the students really deserve, as well as the chance for developing new materials FOR junior faculty in the university structure.

As Provost Alden mentioned, I have taken four very unique sabbaticals, and I feel very privileged and honored to have had the opportunity to study all over the world. My very first sabbatical was in India in 1989-90 when I received a Fulbright, which allowed me to study with Alla Rakha. Many here probably remember Ravi Shankar from the sixties and seventies. Alla Rakha was his drummer for over 25 years and was important in introducing classical Indian music to Europe and North America. I teach usually about 15 students every semester in groups of five, and I believe NIU may be one of three universities in the U.S. that offers Indian classical music instruction. That is important because our students have the opportunity to learn in a very different and unique kind of education system.

In 1996, I spent four months in Taiwan studying Chinese drumming and the manufacture of Chinese gongs, a very unique and interesting manufacturing system of bronzing. In 2004, I was back in the homeland of the steel pan, combining my love of Indian music with the tradition of Afro-Caribbean music on tassa drums. Tassa drums are originally from Persia, went to India and then came to Trinidad in the 1850s. I started the first North American Tassa Ensemble here after my sabbatical, and we premiered a piece that I wrote for the International Percussion Convention in 2009. For my last sabbatical, I was in Costa Rica where I worked with the Marimba Ensemble of Santa Cruz, Guanacaste State, in the northwest of Costa Rica. There is very little known about Costa Rican marimba ensembles, but groups in Central America, in Guatemala and in Chiapas in southern Mexico, are quite well researched, and I obtained some wonderful information about them. One of my favorite experiences was actually going to a concert in a bull ring in Guanacaste, and instead of having a guitar player or a piano player, they had four marimba players. Among some of my goals, I accomplished the live recording of about seven or eight pieces and about 50 traditional pieces. I started the first steel band with members of the Costa Rican percussion Ensemble and spent January composing a major piece that we premiered at the Second International Percussion Festival this past June. The players in Costa Rica do not read music, they learn everything by rote. I emphasize that as part of our educational experience at NIU. Most of our students come from a visual background, but I am a believer, having started as a classical musician and ended up as a jazz world musician, that a true musician now has to have both sides of that educational reality developed. Professor Chappell played a short movie clip of one of the top marimba players playing a piece called *Pasión*.

A traditional ensemble will have two players on a small marimba and three on the very large one. Alon Ramos has developed many interesting techniques, and is an amazing virtuoso on the instrument. In March of this past year, Dean Richard Holly, School of Music Director Paul Bauer, and Internet Specialist Dan Nichols came to Costa Rica to do a live internet workshop from Santa Cruz with Professor Rodrigo Villanueva, our drumset jazz faculty member, in the studio at NIU, and drumset students in the studio at La UNED of Costa Rica. NIU School of Music is in the forefront of developing internet technology, high-definition video and high-definition audio, which is different than just having a video conference, and gives musicians a chance to share with a higher kind of quality over long distance. For instance, last week we had the principal percussionist of the New York Philharmonic give a master class for our percussion students from Manhattan. Later in March, Liam Teague and I will be giving a steel pan

presentation for the Manhattan School of Music. It is an amazingly important development because musicians now can play live together up to 500 miles apart.

I will be in Costa Rica next week setting up a workshop with our harp faculty member and the harp students at the National Institute of Music. Professor Al O'Connor, who was my predecessor, started the NIU Steel Band in 1983, and it has become world renowned. We have students studying steel pan from the Caribbean, Asia and Europe, with the support of various benefactors. The professor showed a video from the festival where four pieces that he arranged for the ensemble were played with Liam Teague as the soloist. All of these people had never played a steel pan before January of this year, Professor Chappell said, and this performance was in June after about seven rehearsals.

Lastly, I was asked to write a piece for the International Percussion Festival that included the groups participating in the festival from Spain, Mexico, Costa Rica, and Liam's and my Panoramic Ensemble, which consists of Liam Teague, Rodrigo Villanueva, former faculty member Orlando Cotto, two alumni of the School of Music and me. We were part of that endeavor, and I wanted to write a piece that was based on the music I was researching from Costa Rica.

I want to close by talking a little bit about the results of this sabbatical. We are playing this piece, *Unidos en Ritmo*, in the NIU Percussion Ensemble this semester, so the students now are learning traditional Costa Rican marimba pieces. We are, again, expanding the internet capabilities we have begun this semester and, hopefully, more in the future. Most importantly, the exchange I have developed on all of these different sabbaticals has been really important, taking the name and the recognition of NIU around the world to different universities, bringing people to NIU to study and the faculty exchanges that make our institution as great as it is.

In regard to sabbatical, Trustee Boey stated, until I joined the Board of Trustees and then with the subsequent reports that we hear every year, sabbatical is probably one of the most misunderstood words outside the university world. The general public equates sabbatical with a vacation, not realizing the good that comes out of it. It is very important that we continue to receive reports like this every year because that gets out into the public and they can see the value for our students' education.

It struck me that we are in a global economy, Chair Murer commented. This certainly brings it to light in terms of looking at the behavior of other cultures, and music is such a wonderful vehicle for that. As we look to sabbaticals, we need to remember that it is the responsibility of professors to "incite" excitement and tolerance among our students. This was a very fine example of how you can achieve both of those goals.

Provost Alden introduced the next presenter, Dr. Teresa Wasonga, an Associate Professor in the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, where she has taught graduate courses in educational administration for the last nine years. She earned her doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2002 and was selected as a Fulbright Scholar in 2011. Her research interests include school leadership, particularly focusing on successful school principalships and individual and organizational resilience in international settings. She has published her work in major journals, including *The International Journal of Educational Administration* and has made presentations nationally and internationally in venues including Cyprus, Malta and South Africa. Her sabbatical project was part of the International Successful School Principal Project in Kenya, which is an ongoing international research venture focused on characteristics of successful school principalships. Her research included collecting and analyzing data on multiple perspectives about successful school principals and the personal qualities and professional competencies of these principals.

My sabbatical was spent in Kenya, of which I also am a native, Dr. Wasonga stated, but there is much more to learn from Kenya. I had an appointment at the University of Eastern Africa Baraton, which is a faith-based university, and that is where I was hosted. My research was International Successful School Principals Project. This started around 2001 in Europe and included researchers from all over the world,

including China, India, Europe, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand. While there, I also taught two doctoral classes, did observation of teaching and was appointed external examiner for a master's thesis. In Africa, there is very little in terms of training for school administrators. However, everything is becoming global, people are traveling across the world, so it is important that we know what is happening where and how we can impact those places, even if it is just in terms of developing humanity across the world, but also to learn from what is going on elsewhere. I was lucky to receive the Fulbright Scholarship, the purpose of which really is cultural interaction, and that really enabled me to do more than I could have otherwise.

How has my research enriched my teaching? The topics I researched are directly related to the classes I teach, so I borrow a lot of that research and bring it into the classroom. Lessons that I learned during sabbatical teaching at other universities have also been applied to what we do. One of the things I realized is that it is very difficult for people to understand how music theory is different from other things. So when you say theory is universal, what does that mean? This helps us to bring data from everywhere else so we can compare, and students are more able to understand that we need theory to work in different contexts. But, it also helps us to explain how context impacts those theories so that we are continuously collecting data, analyzing learning and forming those theories as those theories inform us. I have also been able to refine my teaching, particularly, of two areas, Doctoral Research and Dissertation and Research Seminar Education Administration Lecture, preparing students to write their dissertations. It is difficult to lead people in research when you are not doing research yourself. So, the more I did, the more I discovered, and the more able I am to help my students become skilled in that process.

Finally, we are in a global world, and this research provides an opportunity for us to learn, obtain knowledge from other parts of the world and be able to help our students. There are people who are comparing education in Japan, Korea and other places with the United States, and one of the things we are pursuing is trying to determine why they are doing better and what else we can do. But we cannot do that if we do not go there and find out what other people are doing. In this research, we have people from all over the world who meet at conferences and share, so we can look at the global perspective, negative and positive, what we can borrow and what we can learn from them.

Dr. Wasonga showed some slides of the schools in Kenya which highlighted the disparity between some schools that are very affluent and some primary schools that are not so affluent. Dr. Lee Shumow, from the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations, visited me in Kenya. We observed science classrooms in nine different schools, affluent and nonaffluent. Dr. Shumow is using that research in science teaching to compare methods in the United States with methods in Kenya. We discovered, for example, that a lot more time is spent in Kenya on content. In a girls' science class, we found that the 14- and 15-year-olds were very independent. They set up their own instruments, conduct their own experiments and then share with their teacher what they have learned. This is a difference in the levels of discipline and independence in activities from the U.S. Again, we learn from that and ask ourselves, how can we use this information to help in our circumstances? We were very interested in looking at how children participate in classroom learning there. Dr. Diana Swanson, an Associate Professor in Women's Studies and English, also visited while I was there. She was in the library in one of the schools having discussions with the students. What she told me is that when she arrived there, she was looking at these 14- and 15-year-olds, but she was thinking of the students here, and she found that the two are totally different, in two different worlds.

Overall, I would like to say that going elsewhere, doing different things, changing your routine, really gives you time to reflect. It gives you an opportunity to appreciate what you have, and maybe understand a lot of what you do not have. You can also appreciate how, with so little, people do so much, and sometimes wonder how, with so much, people do so little. Coming back and sharing all this research helps us to understand where we are and where we are going, knowing fully well that the world has become a very small place.

When Chair Murer inquired in what language Dr. Wasonga was teaching in Kenya, the Professor replied that she speaks three different languages, but Kenya is a British colony and the medium of instruction is



English. However, when they visited the schools, especially the elementary schools, I taught in Kiswahili, and they have the local dialects.

As the external reviewer on the master's thesis, Dr. Wasonga stated that she examined two topics, both of which were written on Rwanda. One thesis was looking at how children had emerged from all the issues and were coping with their education and how principals were trying to find a way to work with these children who had seen many things and had to come to school and sit together with other people that they felt had killed their parents. That research looked at how these kids were coping with some of their experiences. The other thesis was looking at how the education system was changing. Rwanda also has become a technology hub and has the most technology in east Africa right now. So technology is impacting much of what is happening there. People are coming from all over the world to visit. So the student was looking at how principals in schools are using this to impact education. Because so many of their professional people died, they are importing professionals from elsewhere and using technology to support some of what they are doing.

Chair Murer also inquired whether or not, compared to the U.S., there was more of an innate appreciation for education on the part of students in Kenya and if Dr. Wasonga could see any difference among primary, secondary and higher education in that respect for education.

Dr. Wasonga replied that there is a difference. When I first came to this country, she said, I was surprised to find that it was almost as if when you were poor, it did not look like education was your way out. So, in the U.S. students come to school and almost the first thing we say is they are poor so they have all these deficiencies. In Kenya, if you are poor, school is the only way out. So, poor people run to school as fast as they can, even on foot. In Kenya, when you go to the schools, you have the least problems with the poor kids, and you have the most problems, actually, with the more affluent who are exposed to MTV and those kinds of things. Whenever we went to the primary schools that served the poor, the kids were humble and wanted to learn. Classes are very large, and in some of those schools, three or more children may share a single book, but they are reading and struggling to get knowledge from that book. Higher education becomes very difficult because people have to pay for higher education. Primary education is not absolutely free, but there is some element of the word free in it. Secondary school is paid for, but it is subsidized by the government, so people are able to go to school. When it comes to higher education, there is absolutely nothing. There are loans, but they are very difficult to obtain because the rich usually end up with those loans because they know the system. The poor have a very difficult time. When you go to university, it is the inverse. You find more of the rich there and the poor really struggle; but if you look at academic achievement results, the poor tend to do better in standardized testing than the rich do. However, few of the poor who have the motivation to learn make it to university because they cannot afford it. That is one of the things Dr. Shumow was looking at when we were there, what makes these kids come to class and want to listen, to do experiments and want to learn, and it is because the culture is that school is the only way out.

My husband is also a professor here in Engineering, and as part of our giving back to Kenya, we are building a school there, basically for poor, orphaned girls. Kenya is one of the countries in which we have lost countless people to HIV and AIDS and we have so many orphans. The government does not have some of the safety nets that we see here for those kinds of children, so after my sabbatical in the spring, I stayed through the summer and worked on that.

I thank you for your presentation today, Trustee Coleman said, it was very enlightening, especially to hear about how they are trying to leverage technology, what technology is doing in Africa and how it is changing lives. He asked if Dr. Wasonga's images and observations were readily available for the institution to access. We have had a number of professors do research in Kenya and look at the different things we are doing, Dr. Wasonga said. There are people here who know about that and, where we can, we have been able to share some of those pictures. Dr. Teresa Fisher, Dr. Swanson and Dr. Shumow have all been there. Dr. Wasonga stated that her observations and research were not online here at NIU, but articles can be found online such as one from her former university, the University of Missouri-Columbia, on her research and their school. She stated that she would be happy to share more

pictures with those who were interested. Some of these photos and comments can be shared and, I would say, should be shared, the Chair said. You have touched a nerve among all of us to go back and remember what the true value of education is. We thank you very much, not only for your words, but for your work.

### **Agenda Item 7.b. – Third Annual Report on the Outcomes of Sabbatical Leaves**

The Third Annual Report on the Outcomes of Sabbatical Leaves is the result of Chair Murer asking, a few years ago, if we could do more of a summative type of analysis on the results of sabbaticals, Provost Alden said. While the Board appreciates the presentations, such as the two we just saw, summarizing the total amount of productivity of people who went on sabbatical generally takes two years after they come back to realize the full impact of some of these activities. I touched on this briefly at University Council yesterday, and reported that there were 389 significant outcomes. That included publications, presentations and so forth by 43 faculty members, which averages a little over nine significant activities per faculty member, which is an amazing amount of productivity. He called on Vice Provost Cassidy to briefly talk about the process and some of the results.

As the report indicates, Dr. Cassidy said, we survey faculty two years after the completion of their sabbatical in order to obtain information about their scholarly outcomes as well as the ways in which their sabbatical impacted teaching and enriched student learning. From the report, you can see that faculty were very productive in their publications and securing external grant funding. The comments at the bottom of the report reflect some of the things we heard from our speakers today about the opportunity for reflection, the opportunity to engage in scholarship work that would not otherwise be possible if they had to continue filling their teaching and service responsibilities.

### **Agenda Item 7.c. – Recommendations for Faculty and Supportive Professional Staff Sabbatical Leaves for the 2012-2013 Academic Year**

This year, Provost Alden reported, we have 44 faculty members from 27 departments who have gone through the proposal review process and have been recommended to the Board for sabbatical leaves for the 2012-2013 Academic Year. Chair Murer asked for a motion to approve the Recommendations for Faculty and Supportive Professional Staff Sabbatical Leaves for the 2012-2013 Academic Year. Trustee Butler so moved, seconded by Trustee Marshall. The motion was approved.

### **Agenda Item 7.d. – Request to Delete Emphases and a Specialization**

As mentioned earlier, the Provost stated, the administration of the various academic units and the faculty review of academic programs. Particularly under new guidance from the Illinois Board of Higher Education encouraging us to delete programs that are not very productive and reallocate to programs that have much more enrollment potential, today's request involves the deletion of three of these programs. The first two, the Emphasis in Athletic Training and the Emphasis in Preventive and Rehabilitative Exercise Science in the Department of Kinesiology, involve an issue with an accrediting agency. The accrediting agency for athletic training began to require nationally accredited programs to offer degrees specifically in athletic training rather than an emphasis. Over the last several years, the department has retooled its curriculum and received approval from both the Board of Trustees and from the IBHE to offer that degree program. Now that we have a full degree in athletic training, the first deletion is to remove the emphasis. Since there was only one emphasis left, it made no sense just to have an emphasis, so the degree in Kinesiology focuses on that previous emphasis. Because the curricular changes have already taken place, these involve no costs. The third request for deletion is the Specialization in Directing in the M.F.A. degree in Theatre. This is something that has occurred over time due to the intensive nature of directing requiring almost one-on-one relationships between the faculty and the students, and the fact that the demand of the students was more for specializations in acting and design and in technology. The School of Theatre has decided to remove a specialization which has had very little if any enrollment over the last decade or so. This also will not represent any cost but will represent the actual allocation of efforts of the department over the last decade.

When asked by Trustee Coleman whether the determination to delete a program is based on lack of student demand or what the market desires, Provost Alden stated that it is a combination of both. Decisions are made by the department based on enrollment and based on opportunities and changing demands in the external constituencies as well.

Knowing that athletic training is a very significant employment opportunity for individuals and also that healthcare is moving more into preventative medicine, Chair Murer said, as we look to deleting these two emphases and roll exercise science into a degree in kinesiology, I want to be sure that recognition of those two aspects in a very competitive market is taken with some level of sensitivity. Having a bachelor's or a master's degree in athletic training makes for a great job opportunity, especially if one does not want to go into physical therapy but stay in sports medicine. The same applies in rehabilitative medicine with an emphasis on prevention, it seems from the insurance world that it is falling right into where the future is for employment. The accrediting body decided to make sure that these degrees were actually reflected on transcripts as a full degree, the Provost explained, and that is what moved to the deletion of these particular emphases.

Chair Murer asked for a motion to endorse these requests for deletion of the Emphasis in Athletic Training and the Emphasis in Preventive and Rehabilitative Exercise Science within the Department of Kinesiology, and the Specialization in Directing within the M.F.A. degree in Theatre. Trustee Coleman so moved, seconded by Student Trustee Robertson. The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 7.e. – Oral English Proficiency Annual Report 2010-2011**

Public Act 84-1434 requires that the university report to the Board of Trustees on the efforts to insure that all of our instructors, graduate assistants and faculty have proper oral English language proficiency, Dr. Alden said. I am happy to report that every year fewer of these cases are coming forward. The English as a Second Language Center and the Speech, Language and Hearing Clinic are resources for any instructor who has problems with proficiency in oral language skills. This year, only two cases were reported, and it was found that the oral language skills were not necessarily the problem as much as teaching pedagogical techniques that were emphasized with these particular graduate students. Chair Murer asked for a motion to endorse the Oral English Proficiency Annual Report for 2010-2011. Trustee Butler so moved, seconded by Trustee Marshall. The motion was approved.

#### **Agenda Item 7.f. – Higher Learning Commission Accreditation**

Our final item is an update on where we are with the Higher Learning Commission accreditation, Dr. Alden said, and I will call on Vice Provost Cassidy for an update.

As with our last accreditation cycle, Dr. Cassidy said, we report to this committee at every meeting on the progress and activities related to the development of our self-study and our upcoming 2014 site visit. The steering committee continues to meet monthly. We have made progress in recruiting faculty and staff to serve on subcommittees that will begin to address the criteria for accreditation. Last week, Dr. Macdonald and I went into Chicago to visit with our Higher Learning Commission liaison and discuss with him our plan for activating the steering committee, our plans for development of the self-study and preparation for the site visit. One of the concerns we have had concerns the criteria which are still in the process of being finalized. Our liaison did inform us that the feedback they have received on this version of the criteria has primarily been editorial, and they do not anticipate any major changes in the criteria we have been looking at for the last several months. The Higher Learning Commission Board will take final action on the new criteria at its February meeting, and we should be able to move forward very confidently in developing our self-study based on the criteria we now have.

President Peters constituted a committee to update the University Mission Statement, and that committee has met twice. They are meeting weekly to review the existing Mission Statement, develop a Statement of Vision for the university and finalize the language related to the institutional values articulated in several documents such as the Strategic Plan and the Vision 2020 documents. We anticipate being able

to bring a progress report to the Board at its March meeting in relation to activity on the mission statement.

Trustee Butler inquired what role the Board might have in interacting with the criteria that is being finalized. Dr. Cassidy stated that the Higher Learning Commission had a period of public comment. As the criteria evolved from the Alpha version to the current Gamma version, people have been given an opportunity to comment on those criteria. The Higher Learning Commission has an annual meeting in Chicago and, for the last two years, has had multiple sessions related to the development, revision and refinement of the criteria. I have attended those meetings where there has been discussion among the constituencies. In addition, last summer, at the end of July or the beginning of August, forums were held in several locations, one of which was Chicago. We sent representatives to that forum to comment on the Beta version of the criteria, which has resulted in the changes we have seen in the current version. So, there have been multiple opportunities to comment on the development of the criteria at the annual meetings, in these public forums and on the Internet through the Higher Learning Commission website, and we have taken advantage of those opportunities.

Thank you for your report, Chair Murer remarked, and I want to emphasize again to the Provost and the Vice Provost how we are viewing this committee as the epicenter of what we do in academic affairs. We are looking forward to more content as it becomes more substantive. Almost certainly, one of the highest goals of this committee in the next two years is to stand shoulder to shoulder with our administration and our faculty as we are in a transformational period and looking to accreditation as a validation and an opportunity to step back and really focus on the detail of what we do. Please know how valuable this report is and how interested this committee is in knowing the substance of what is being done.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Chair announced that the next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee will be Thursday, April 19, in DeKalb.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Murer asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Boey so moved, seconded by Trustee Coleman. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins  
Recording Secretary