

Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee
May 19, 2016

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. by Chair Marshall in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Ms. Wright conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, John Butler, Wheeler Coleman, Cheryl Murer, Tim Struthers, James Zanayed, Board Chair Marc Strauss, and Committee Chair Robert Marshall. Also present: President Baker, Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman, Faculty Senate President Greg Long, Associate Dean Marc Van Overbeke, Chair Chad McEvoy, Professor William Pitney, and Associate Dean Melanie Parks.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel Blakemore indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Blakemore also advised that a quorum was present.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Strauss so moved and Trustee Coleman seconded. The motion passed.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to approve the minutes of February 18, 2016. Trustee Coleman so moved and Trustee Strauss seconded. The motion passed.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Marshall opened the meeting with a request for brevity throughout the meeting. He also reflected on this past weekend's graduation ceremonies and noted that, of the 3,619 graduating students, 2,700 of them had participated in the commencement ceremonies. Chair Marshall spoke briefly on the transformational power that NIU has on the lives of its students through their contact with the extended NIU family (faculty and staff etc.). Chair Marshall reminded the board that Diversity and Inclusion would be the focus of two of the presentations on today's agenda as well as recommendations for faculty promotions and tenure for 2016/2017, requests for new programs, and a report review.

PUBLIC COMMENT

General Counsel Blakemore indicated that there was a request for public comment and recognized Mr. Derek Van Buer and Professor Virginia Naples.

Mr. Derek Van Buer addressed the board with regard to a procurement issue on the consulting work of Mr. Ron Walters. Mr. Van Buer gave a summary of events that had transpired in the last two months sparked by a *Northern Star* article with regard to the State of Illinois' Chief Procurement Officers concern over Mr. Ron Walters. Mr. Van Buer also spoke on an article published on the Edgar County Watchdog's website with regard to Alvaraz (a subcontractor for Pugh Jones). He summarized an FBI raid on the NIU Police Department due to a suspected violation of the Clery Act during which NIU retained the services of Pugh Jones and Johnson PC as outside counsel to deal with this matter. Mr. Van Buer continued by describing an alleged illegal verbal contract between then interim CFO Ms. Suttentfield and Mr. Mark Sherman of Alvarez. Mr. Van Buer went on to state that Pugh Jones was instructed by Ms. Suttentfield to draft contracts

between NIU and Alvarez as though it were a sub-contractor of Pugh Jones under the existing contract between NIU and Pugh Jones subverting the state policy on public bids. Mr. Van Buer went on to remind the board that they had approved an increased purchase order related to this matter. Mr. Van Buer went on to describe the documentation regarding these transactions, to note current CFO Al Phillips' mention of a change in procurement and p-cards and requested that the board support a full investigation into these issues. Mr. Van Buer finished his comments by recommending President Doug Baker be put on administrative leave or fired pending due process.

Chair Marshall thanked Mr. Derek Van Buer for his comments and invited Professor Virginia Naples to speak.

Professor Naples began her comments by indicating that her ethics training had prompted her to report her observations to the board. Professor Naples stated her concern over an increasing budget and number of personnel in the highest level of administration. Professor Naples presented data on 2010-2014 which indicated that the salaries of and number of high level administration is increasing while the number of tenure track faculty are decreasing with salaries remaining the same; she indicated that in parallel to those numbers – the number of instructors and non-tenure track faculty are increasing. Professor Naples pointed out that the faculty are expected to do more with less, and that fact is being felt by the student body who, in increasing numbers, are choosing to get their education from other institutions. Professor Naples states that the data indicates that the present level of expansion in the administration in numbers and budget are unsustainable. She went on to state that these levels are a major contributing factor in low faculty morale and will result in the loss of faculty. She finished by stating that these trends are outside of the Illinois State budget crisis which is making the situation worse (and is not the fault of the administration or the Board).

Chair Marshall thanked Professor Naples and recognized Professor Dan Gebo, Faculty Senate President Greg Long, and Professor Leanne VandeCreek as representatives of the University Advisory Committee.

Dr. Long thanked Trustee Marshall and voiced support for the faculty promotions, tenure recommendations, and program recommendations stating that these recommendations have been well vetted. With regard to informational items, Dr. Long went on to praise the good work that the Chief Diversity Officer, Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden, has been (and plans on) doing around campus. He also offered support for the comments offered by Professor Naples with regard to faculty salaries and administration costs as well as the correlation between enrollment and faculty retention.

Chair Marshall asked for further comments and Dr. Long introduced Holly Nicholson, Operating Staff.

Ms. Nicholson addressed the increasing strength of communication, collaboration, transparency, and shared governance within the university today. She reminded the board of the Program Prioritization Task Force recommendation for enhanced resources for shared governance and stated that, with an eye to reform, the constitution and bylaws were currently being reviewed.

Chair Marshall asked Trustee Strauss how long the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance has been running.

Trustee Strauss informed the board that it had been running for two years.

Chair Marshall reminded the board that the governance committee is one of the many ways in which governance is continually being improved.

Chair Marshall then invited the Executive Vice President and Provost to present the university report.

UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORT

Agenda Item #7.a.

Recommendations for faculty promotions, tenure, and promotions with tenure for 2016-2017

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman introduced agenda item 7a. She began by stating that NIU's faculty are remarkable and one of the true pleasures of being provost is reviewing the tenure and promotion applications. Dr. Freeman pointed out that while there were a number of early promotion and tenure decisions that were made this year, this did not indicate a lowering of standards. Rather, she stated, that NIU is fortunate enough to have hired exemplar individuals who are exceeding expectations. She stated the university is recommending 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 meeting on June 16, 2016.

Chair Marshall called for a motion.

Trustee Strauss moved and Trustee Boy seconded the motion.

Trustee Zanayed requested a roll call vote to ensure compliance with state statute.

Chair Marshall called the roll call vote.

Recording Secretary Liz Wright called the roll and the votes were recorded as follows:

Trustee Robert Boey – Yes
Trustee Wheeler Coleman – Yes
Trustee Cherilyn Murer – Yes
Trustee Tim Struthers – Yes
Trustee James Zanayed – Abstain
Board Chair Marc Strauss – Yes
Committee Chair Robert Marshall – Yes

Provost Freeman called for a round of applause for the newly tenures and promoted individuals (in absentia).

Agenda Item 7.b.

Request for New Degree Program: B.F.A. Dance Performance

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman introduced item 7b and pointed out that both of the requests for new degree programs that were coming to the table at this meeting carry no additional cost while bringing value to the institution. Dr. Freeman informed the board that Associate Dean Melanie Parks from the College of Visual and Performing Arts was in attendance to summarize the request address any questions about the proposed B.F.A. in Dance Performance Program.

Associate Dean Parks informed the board that this degree already exists at NIU but is buried within 3 other programs causing a lack of visibility for the degree. Associate Dean Parks reiterated Dr. Freeman's comments that this would not change costs nor would it change any requirements for students looking to pursue this degree; this change would ultimately be one of name and location as a standalone degree.

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman stated that the university is recommending that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee endorse the request for a Bachelor of Fine

Arts degree program in Dance Performance to be offered at NIU and ask that the president forward it by means of his report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its next meeting on June 16th.

Chair Marshall called for a motion. Trustee Murer moved and Trustee Strauss seconded the motion.

Chair Marshall called for discussion.

Trustee Murer voiced his support for this request and asked if NIU has explored any opportunities for integration with Harris Theater in Chicago.

Associate Dean Parks answered that NIU has not but that this would be a great option for the future.

Chair Marshall called for a vote on the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Agenda Item 7.c.

Request for New Degree Program: M.S. in Athletic Training

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman moved to item 7c, a request for a new degree program: Master of Science in Athletic Training. She introduced Professor Bill Pitney from KNPE department and stated that this recommendation reflects an accreditor's recommendation and a change in what the market sees as an appropriate first professional degree.

Professor Pitney summarized the decision making process of the Strategic Athletic Training Alliance, which includes his program's accrediting agency, to move the entry level degree for Athletic Training to a graduate rather than an undergraduate degree. Professor Pitney stated that the department has worked since the fall to expand the old curriculum into a new graduate level curriculum, and the recommendation passed through the appropriate curricular channels.

Dr. Freeman stated that the university recommendation is that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee endorse the request for a Master of Science in Athletic Training degree to be offered by the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education within the College of Education and ask that the president forward this request by means of his report to the Board of Trustees for Approval at the June 16th meeting.

Chair Marshall called for a motion. Trustee Murer moved and Trustee Strauss seconded the motion. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 7.d.

Oral English Proficiency Annual Report 2014-2015

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman summarized the annual report contained with item 7d on Oral English proficiency of classroom instructors. Dr. Freeman reported that there were no complaints on English proficiency from any department required to report and requested the committee accept the report and forward it by way of the president's report to the full board.

Chair Marshall called for a motion. Trustee Murer moved and Trustee Strauss seconded the motion.

Trustee Coleman asked if what they have is the 2014/2015 year's report.

Provost Freeman confirmed this and stated that the university does not have all of the data on the 2015/2016 academic year yet and these reports are always provided on this time schedule.

The motion was unanimously approved.

Agenda Item 8.a.

Presentation: Chief Diversity Officer: Year in Review

Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman introduced the Chief Diversity Officer and Executive Vice President for Academic Diversity, Vernese Edghill-Walden.

Chief Diversity Officer (CDO) Edghill-Walden began by reminding the board that the CDO position was created in order to execute NIU's revised mission statement which is committed to a community of diverse people, ideas, services, scholarly endeavors, in a climate of respect for the intrinsic dignity of each individual. CDO Edghill-Walden stated that in August she began to develop an executable plan for NIU's commitment to diversity by engaging the faculty, staff, students of NIU as well as community members from DeKalb and Sycamore; she continued by pointing out that this ensured that people from a variety of areas were able to have their voices heard with regard to the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations. CDO Edghill-Walden stated that she would share with the board some of the initiatives and reoccurring themes from the action plan that will improve equity and diversity, promote inclusive excellence in research, artistry, and scholarship and prepare students to be more competitive in the global arena. CDO Edghill-Walden also drew a comparison between the Task Force recommendations and the reoccurring themes of Program Prioritization.

CDO Edghill-Walden noted that many of the Program Prioritization themes require community engagement and described the ambassadorship work she has done for the university in collaboration with the Office of Community Relations and Jennifer Gross. She indicated that she has been cultivating relationships with the DeKalb Human Relations Commission, the DeKalb School District, and, through the avenue of the Beloved Community Dinners, the DeKalb Police Department, the City of DeKalb, and the DeKalb County Library.

Dr. Edghill-Walden continued that these relationships have been an important part of executing the Diversity Task Force recommendations for dialogues on diversity on campus; she recapped the launching of the Diversity Dialogue Series aimed at engaging the campus and community in discussions on intersectional diversity topics. Dr. Edghill-Walden recapped the Spring Dialogues of Free Speech and Peaceful Assembly as well as Allies in Interfaith. She added that in collaboration with the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs, Katrina Caldwell, they have organized and led social justice training for DeKalb school district, faculty and staff, as well as facilitated student Peace Circles for DeKalb High School.

Dr. Edghill-Walden also described the creation of the new Presidential Commission on Interfaith as another milestone towards the implementation of the Task Force's recommendations; she also reported that a reflection space for interfaith communities will be opening in the fall. She added that, in partnership with the Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, Human Resources, and Student Affairs, they are in the process of establishing single stall, gender inclusive restrooms in Holmes Student Center to better serve NIU's transgender community, families, and individuals who may need assistance in the restroom.

CDO Edghill-Walden addressed the launching of a new more inclusive webpage and thanked Holly Nicholson and Taylor Hayden for their help in establishing this webpage. The Office of Academic Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has been working closely with Marketing and Communications to ensure that NIU's web presence is aligned with NIU's diversity initiatives. A Diversity Calendar Retreat will take place this summer in order to move towards better alignment of all campus wide diversity activities through a university wide diversity calendar.

CDO Edghill-Walden also reported on her work supporting the Office of Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance in the implementation of the recommendations made by the VAWA Committee in the summer of 2015. Dr. Edghill-Walden described one implementation of the recommendations: the newly launched

“College Experience Survey” designed to measure NIU’s climate, student attitudes, and behaviors related to sexual misconduct.

CDO Edghill-Walden described the creation of the Committee for Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence through a restructuring of two existing committees for better stewardship of university time and resources. She stated that this would allow for a unification of NIU’s efforts in updating its approach to multicultural curriculum transformation and cultural competency. The charge of this committee is developing a strategic plan and approach to re-envisioning the human diversity requirement, expanding faculty student research opportunities, and implementing the academic equity plan, and establishing a clear definition for diversity. Dr. Edghill-Walden emphasized the importance of working closely with the colleges with regard to these matters.

CDO Edghill-Walden described the ongoing efforts towards bringing the university into alignment with the mandate set out by Illinois Public Act 87-581 through the creation of criteria for a human diversity degree requirement. Also mentioned, was a proposed expansion of NIU’s student research model to increase engagement of faculty in diverse research opportunities with students of color. CDO Edghill-Walden continued by describing her collaboration with the college deans to address comprehensive academic equity and inclusion of diverse students through the creation and implement strategic plans to increase retention and graduate rates of underserved student populations. CDO Edghill-Walden closed by voicing her support for technology accessibility and gender inclusion here at NIU, and finally, she pointed out that the work she has done has been through collaborative effort.

Trustee Struthers asked if Dr. Edghill-Walden could expand on measure of success for the future with respect to retention and graduation rates.

Dr. Edghill-Walden confirmed that she has been working closely with the Director of Testing Services Greg Barker and Acting Associate Vice Provost Ed Klonoski to both develop strategies for retention as well as create measures for tracking success.

Trustee Butler asked Dr. Edghill-Walden to provide more information on Public Act 87-581 and how institutions can be compliant with the act.

She described the language of the Public Act as somewhat outdated and how it is interpreted differently across the state; she stated that this wide interpretation is good for NIU as it allows NIU to shape and develop its own criteria for a human diversity degree requirement. CDO Edghill-Walden went on to state that both course based and experientially based options were being discussed to meet the needs of NIU’s diverse student populations.

Chair Marshall asked if there is a possibility for internships in her office for students.

Dr. Edghill-Walden said yes, and that she is currently working with Jobs Plus to develop an internship in her office. She also shared that there are currently two graduate assistants working in the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Agenda Item 8.b.

Presentation: NIU and the Association for Black Culture Centers

Dr. Edghill-Walden introduced the next presenter, Dr. Frederick Hord, an accomplished poet and scholar and Executive Director of the Association for Black Culture Centers.

Executive Director Hord briefly described the inception of the ABCC and its mission: to celebrate, promote, critically exam the cultures of each ethnic group to understand their historical connections and what the meaning of those connections are. Director Hord described recent additions of Latino Culture

Centers, Asian American Culture Centers, and Native American Culture Centers to ABCC through authentic integration of the centers and their missions.

Dr. Hord stated that by hosting ABCC's headquarters here, NIU is strengthening its brand and reputation. As ABCC is the only accrediting body for Black, Latino, and Asian American Centers, Director Hord addressed possible future accreditation of NIU's cultural centers. Director Hord continued by addressing the positive effect his office's presence aims to have on student retention here at NIU by bringing additional diverse scholarship and support to the NIU community.

Dr. Hord pointed out that new cross-cultural research has already begun on NIU's campus since ABCC's arrival. He also reported that he's been working with CDO Edghill-Walden on the Diversity Dialogue Committee to strengthen community dialogue and partnerships. Dr. Hord described Kurumba, an independent speakers bureau of over 60 well-known scholars and performers, that NIU faculty, staff, and students will now have the opportunity to engage with. He noted the increased potential for publication that ABCC has brought to NIU, citing an in-publication book on black culture centers with four chapters written by NIU faculty. Dr. Hord described other scholarly opportunities (such as conferences and publications) that ABCC's presence at NIU makes more available to NIU's students, faculty, and staff. He added that the large network of institutions whose cultural centers are members of ABCC provides greater opportunities for collaboration between NIU and other institutions. Director Hord also stated that NIU is being brought into the newer research in the Afro-Latino initiative that is thriving across the country. Dr. Hord ended by inviting the board to this year's Annual ABCC conference and reminded them that NIU would be hosting the conference next year.

OTHER MATTERS

No other matters were discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee will be August 25, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to adjourn. Strauss moved and Trustee Butler seconded. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Wright
Recording Secretary

In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.