

Minutes of the  
**NIU Board of Trustees**  
**Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee**  
November 16, 2017

**CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 a.m. by Chair Wasowicz in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Wright conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Dennis Barsema, Robert Boey, John Butler, Giuseppe LaGioia, Tim Struthers, Board Chair Wheeler Coleman, and Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz. Trustee Veronica Herrero was absent. Also present were Lisa Freeman, Matt Streb, Gregory Brady, Chris McCord, Linda Saborio, Alexander Gelman, Kendall Thu, Sol Jensen, Carolinda Douglass, and Sarah McGill.

**VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

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

**MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Committee Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Barsema moved approval of the meeting agenda and Trustee LaGioia seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 17, 2017. Trustee Butler moved and Trustee LaGioia seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the Enrollment Ad Committee minutes of February 24, 2017. Trustee Barsema moved and Trustee Struthers seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Committee Chair Wasowicz welcomed attendees to the meeting. He stated that there were five approval items, including the appointment of the Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer; the United Facility Alliance (UAC) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU); the deletion of the Center of Biochemical and Biophysical Studies; the deletion of the Institute for Nanoscience Engineering and Technology; and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Health Services Workers MOU. In addition to the five approval items, there were three information items, including recognizing the Professional Excellence Awards for faculty and staff; a presentation on recruitment and retention; and the report on the oversight of academic programs.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked General Counsel Brady if an amendment needed to be made to the agenda to adjust the orders of the items. General Counsel Brady replied that no amendment was needed to reorder the items listed on the agenda.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

General Counsel Brady indicated that there was one request for public comment. Ms. Sharon May addressed the Board.

Ms. May spoke on the topic of FOIA requests. She stated examples of request findings and her lack of understanding as to why the comment “chasing ghosts” was made in describing FOIA requestors.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked General Counsel Brady whether there were any additional requests for public comment. General Counsel Brady replied no, no additional requests.

Committee Chair Wasowicz recognized the members representing the University Advisory Committee that were in attendance including Professor Alex Gelman and Professor Kendall Thu. He also recognized the Faculty Senate President Professor Linda Saborio. He asked whether they would like to address the Board.

Professor Saborio congratulated the recipients of the Professional Excellence Awards for faculty and staff. She stated that their accomplishments are instrumental to NIU’s success and their recognition deserved. She continued by welcoming Sarah McGill, Vice President for Administration and Finance and CFO, Sarah McGill, to the Huskie family. Professor Saborio also thanked the UAC and the NIU administrative team for successfully negotiating this increment for all unionized faculty members.

Committee Chair Wasowicz noted that the Daily Herald featured NIU professor Dan Gebo and was excited to see NIU faculty on the front page of his local newspaper. He asked Executive Vice President and Provost Chris McCord to present the university report.

## UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORT

### **Agenda Item 8.a.**

#### **Professional Excellence Awards for Faculty and Staff**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord thanked Chair Wasowicz and adjusted the agenda to move agenda item 8.a. to first.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord stated that the university sponsors a number of programs designed to recognize excellence in faculty and staff performance. Three faculty members received the Board of Trustees Award, selected by a committee chaired by the Executive Vice President and Provost. Two faculty members are recognized as Presidential Teaching Professors, selected by a faculty and alumni committee chaired by the Vice Provost. Two faculty members are recognized as Presidential Research, Scholarship and Artistry Professors, selected by a faculty committee chaired by the Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships. Two additional faculty members are recognized as Presidential Engagement Professors, selected by a committee composed of members of the Outreach Advisory Committee, a dean, a student, and faculty chaired by the Vice President of Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development. Another three faculty members received the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award, and one instructor received the Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction Award, through a selection process initiated by students and reviewed by student advisory committees in each college, with the final decision made by the university-level Committee on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience. The Operating Staff and Supportive Professional Staff Councils each selected four employees for recognition following a university-wide nomination process coordinated by a subcommittee of each council.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord called the names of each award recipient and asked them to stand to be recognized by the Board. After all of the names were read, the entire room recognized them with a round of applause.

## **Agenda Item 7.a.**

### **Appointment of the Vice President for Administration and Finance and CFO**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord continued to the first action item, agenda item 7.a., the appointment of the Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer. Following a national search, Sarah McGill has accepted an offer to be the Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer (CFO). Ms. McGill currently serves as the Associate Vice President for Strategic Initiatives at Northwestern University, with a dual appointment in the Office of the President and Office of General Counsel. Prior to this role, Ms. McGill held the position of Senior Associate Dean for the Graduate School where she was the principal deputy to the Dean on all administrative, financial and strategic planning activities and served as the chief operating and financial officer for graduate education.

Prior to her joining Northwestern in 2012, Ms. McGill worked at the University of Chicago from 2006-2012, where she served as Executive Director of Enrollment and Student Advancement. In this leadership role, Ms. McGill managed the day-to-day operations of the Office for Enrollment and Student Advancement, including directing the offices of human resources, budget, talent management, operations and information technology. She also served as Chief of Staff to the Vice President for Administration and CFO at the University of Chicago.

Ms. McGill earned her bachelor's degree at Marquette University and later earned her Masters of Business Administration at Cardinal Stritch University in Milwaukee. She holds a Certificate of Completion from the Harvard University Institute for Management and Leadership in Education.

The university recommended that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse the request that Ms. Sarah McGill be appointed to the position of Vice President of Administration and Finance and CFO effective January 1, 2018 and asked that the president forward it by means of the President's Report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its special meeting on November 16, 2017.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion. Trustee Struthers moved approval and Trustee Butler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord asked Ms. McGill to address the board.

Ms. McGill thanked the Board, Acting President Freeman, and Acting Executive Vice President and Provost McCord for the opportunity to be the next Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer for Northern Illinois University. She described her excitement for the opportunity as well as an understanding of the challenges facing higher education, and confirmed her readiness to begin to address these challenges at NIU.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord thanked Ms. McGill.

## **Agenda Item 7.b.**

### **United Faculty Alliance Memorandum of Understanding**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord continued to agenda item 7.b. and presented the item.

Northern Illinois University and the United Faculty Alliance of NIU, UPI, IFT-AFT, AAUP, as the exclusive bargaining representative for all persons in the Bargaining Unit and subject to any required approval/ratification by the NIU Board of Trustees, have agreed effective November 16, 2017, a 3% salary increase shall be applied to the base salaries of all Bargaining Unit members employed by NIU as of December 31, 2016. The salary increase provided by this MOU shall be the sole increment plan for FY18 for Bargaining Unit members. There shall not be any other increment program for Bargaining Unit members for FY17 nor FY18. This shall not preclude negotiations between the Parties on compensation for future

fiscal years. The full text of this MOU can be found within the board materials. The recommendation, terms and conditions of this agreement are consistent with university policies and guidelines.

The university recommended that Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse this memorandum of understanding and asked that the president forward it by means of the president's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its special meeting on November 16, 2017.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion. Trustee Boey moved approval and Trustee Butler seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Agenda Item 7.c. Request for Deletion of Center**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord presented agenda item 7.c., the request for deletion of the Center for Biochemical and Biophysical Studies and presented the item.

Public university governing boards have the final authority to delete Centers. Most often, these requests are initiated by faculty within the Centers and are brought to the Academic Affairs, Students Affairs and Personnel Committee of the Board of Trustees after receiving approvals from the college(s) in which they are housed and the vice president for research and innovation partnerships, and with the concurrence of the executive vice president and provost. The deletion of a Center is reported to the Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) in the Annual Listing of Changes after receiving approval by the governing board of a public university.

The Center for Biochemical and Biophysical Studies is an IBHE approved center within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Program Prioritization placed the Center for Biochemical and Biophysical Studies in category 3 as a candidate for reduction in resources. Following a comprehensive review of the center during the 2016/17 program review cycle, the faculty within the center initiated the proposed deletion of CBBS. The faculty will move forward with the Dean and the Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships in the development of a newly formed independent research groups as deemed appropriate.

The university recommended that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse this request and asked that the president forward it by means of the President's Report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its next full Board of Trustees Meeting on December 7, 2017.

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion. Trustee Boey moved approval and Trustee Coleman seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Trustee Barsema asked for clarification about how the Vice President for Research and Dean of the College plan to work with faculty to develop independent research projects.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord stated that an IBHE center is not the only mechanism in developing research programs/agendas. Trustee Barsema clarified that these faculty can move forward without the center. Vice President Blazey replied first that the process of deleting the center has been completely transparent and in complete consultation with the faculty involved. Second, regarding the deletion of the center, the intent is to redirect the resources in an effort to redirect research on problems that are more recent and are more important on these disciplines. This will be a component of the research strategy presented at the research committee later today.

Committee Chair Wasowicz, hearing no further discussion, asked for a vote. The motion passed.

### **Agenda Item 7.d. Request for Deletion of Center**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord presented agenda item 7.d., a request of a deletion of the Institute for Nanoscience Engineering and Technology. This is also a deletion of a center. The Institute for Nanoscience Engineering and Technology is an IBHE approved center within the College of Liberal Arts and Science.

The university proposes to delete the center as it was also placed in category 3, a candidate for reduction in resources by program prioritization. The Institute for Nanoscience Engineering and Technology went through program review in 2016/2017. At the completion of the process, the faculty recommended that the center be disestablished as an IBHE approved center to pursue other opportunities for research engagement.

The university recommended that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse this request and asked that the president forward it by means of the President's Report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its next full Board of Trustees Meeting on December 7, 2017.

Committee Chair Wasowicz called the question. Trustee Struthers moved approval and Trustee Butler seconded the motion. Discussion followed.

Trustee Barsema asked for a clarification of why these centers are no longer needed and whether they failed. Executive Vice President and Provost McCord noted that sometime the purpose of centers is time bound. Research evolves and the need for a center may no longer exist. It may not be a question of fail, but a question of reaching success.

Acting President Freeman described the process of evolving disciplines and gave an example of how the life sciences used to be separated, and how they have now come together to tackle important questions for humanity. Having centers to unify cross-disciplinary studies has become less important due to organic unification around problems that need interdisciplinary lenses.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord further answered that there are times when a good idea does fail, and Vice President Blazey has been working very hard to build protocols that help us evaluate centers and make the decision.

Chair Coleman asked whether there were costs savings associated with the elimination of the centers. Executive Vice President and Provost McCord says that there have been cost savings and those have been redeployed by Vice President Blazey to be utilized toward impactful research areas. Vice President Blazey stated that these resources have been redirected towards building our equipment and infrastructure. There is an action item on just that in a subsequent committee meeting.

Committee Chair Wasowicz, hearing no further discussion, asked for a vote. The motion passed.

### **Agenda Item 7.e. Collective Bargaining Agreement**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord presented the final action item 7.e., collective bargaining agreement.

Northern Illinois University negotiates with 17 collective bargaining organizations representing different employee groups. Salary increases and other terms and conditions of employment for bargaining unit members are subject to negotiation and final agreements are submitted for approval for the Board of Trustees. The following collective bargaining agreement is the outcome of arbitration that is submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval. Bargaining unit is the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Locals 963 representing approximately 23 employees in Health Services Department.

The negotiations are an extension of the existing contract through June 30, 2019. This extension calls for the addition of a parking provision that stipulates that the university will be empowered to set parking rates and allows the participation in the FY18 campus wide increment program.

The recommendation, terms and conditions of this agreement are consistent with university policies and guidelines.

The university recommended that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse this memorandum of understanding and asked that the president forward by means of the president's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its special meeting November 16, 2017.

Committee Chair Wasowicz called the question. Trustee Butler moved approval of the motion and Trustee Boey seconded. The motion passed.

### **Agenda Item 8.b. Recruitment and Retention Presentation**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord stated that he and Vice President Jensen would provide a brief report on Recruitment and Retention.

Vice President Jensen updated the Board on the progress of the proposed recruitment and retention plan discussed at the last meeting. He briefed the board on the reporting of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and defined them as broad, overarching metrics comparable to benchmarks. KPIs described as goals for the institution were, increasing new undergraduate student enrollment by 5% in fall 2018; keeping graduate student enrollment flat in fall 2018; academic quality; retention rates; maintaining diversity of enrollment including on campus, off campus, online, full-time, and part-time students. The KPIs that are the most immediate for this fall are the enrollment, admissions, applicant, and inquiry numbers by yield based on the different segments of students. GPA and test scores will track the academic quality. Additionally, engagement in marketing and advertising will be tracked and whether or not those campaigns are being effective in bringing students to campus. Finally, we are asking perspective students that choose not to attend the reasons why in order to have a better understanding, as well as asking enrolled students why they chose NIU.

Trustee Barsema gave an example of a potential student at an open house that was greeted by a faculty member during an open house. The faculty member spent an hour with them talking to her about the School of Art program and this solidified the student's commitment to attending NIU. He stated the importance faculty and staff could make in recruiting students.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord continued the presentation. He stated that there is a presidential goal of increasing overall undergraduate retention by half a percent. At this time, NIU has the highest retention rate at the institution over the last decade. He noted that some of the students that are lost to graduation, which is the goal of the university. Similar to recruitment, retention also uses broad KPIs including year-to-year retention, graduation rates, student diversity, and equity gaps. These indicators serve dual-purposes, they allow progress to be tracked, but importantly, they allow identification of students at risk. The software being developed is assisting with interventions to support at risk students. Additionally, the university will be tracking student satisfaction and student engagement. These are also presidential goals, and they align with the recruitment and retention goals developed. He stated the goal is to bring a variety of indicators together as a baseline for measuring improvement for student satisfaction. He described the many surveys given by the university that will be used in measuring attitudes about the university. Executive Vice President and Provost McCord asked for questions.

Trustee Barsema asked which indicator has the greatest amount of potential to increase retention.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord stated that the financial need of students is critical. The Foundation is working to raise unrestricted scholarships to aid in the effort to retain students. Engagement is also a critical piece. A student must feel connected to the campus, it is critically important.

Committee Chair Wasowicz noted that NIU received praise from Kyle Westbrook, the executive partner in the Partnership for College Completion. He singled out NIU as being a school that has been very forthcoming with their data.

Trustee Struthers asked if they could comment on the early data for fall of 2018 applications. He also noted that he was glad to see the 5% increase and hopes that NIU continues to put more resources, more energy, and more focus to increasing enrollment.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord responded regarding the fact that the university understands the urgency and value of bringing students to the university and helping them succeed toward graduation.

Vice President Jensen said that it is early in the year and that much of the work regarding enrollment happens on the yield side of the funnel. It is too early to comment on the numbers for fall 2018.

Trustee Struthers thanked everyone for their hard work to attract and retain students.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord said that the faculty member to assist the student was Doug Boughton of the School of Art.

### **Agenda Item 8.c. Oversight of Academic Programs**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord presented the final agenda item, 8.c., on the oversight of academic programs.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord briefly summarized the item. He stated that NIU has a number of externally mandated oversight tools, elected oversight bodies, such as accreditation, and internal mechanisms that academic programs use to stay aligned with current discipline markets and trends. This item speaks to program review, which is done, as mandated by the Illinois Board of Higher Education, on a cycle of no longer than eight years. The university has been moving to align program review with accreditation review in order to avoid duplication of efforts from academic departments. Additionally, program prioritization took the institution a step further and we are planning to integrate all of the review tools to the extent possible.

Vice Provost Douglass stated that NIU has been involved in assessment of learning outcomes for about 25 years. In the 2014, Higher Learning Commission Report NIU was asked to increase efforts in general education assessment and in graduate level assessment. We have done that. The university looks at assessment learning at all the programs across the university.

Acting President Freeman complimented Vice Provost Douglass and the Academic Affairs team including the deans. Since her arrival in 2010, she has seen the academic affairs team work diligently to create a culture of assessment. She asked Vice Provost Douglass to provide information on the assessment showcase as it is a nice example of that.

Vice Provost Douglass said that every year, this is the 11<sup>th</sup> year there is an assessment expo where we identify curricular and co-curricular programs that are exemplary in terms of assessment. These programs create posters and engage in discussion groups. It is an annual event that is well received by the university. Many times the posters created are also used for disciplinary conferences. It has been an exemplary event that helps bring the assessment efforts full circle.

## **OTHER MATTERS**

No other matters were discussed.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee will be determined at the December 7, 2017 Board of Trustees meeting.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Butler moved approval and Trustee Boey seconded the motion. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:18 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Parrish and Liz Wright  
Recording Secretaries

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