



Special Meeting
of the
Board of Trustees

November 12, 2020

**Special Meeting of the
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY**

1:00 p.m. – Thursday – November 12, 2020

This Special BOT meeting is being conducted through video conferencing communications and is being conducted pursuant to Section 6 of Executive Order 2020-7 (Suspending OMA requirements of in person attendance by members of a public body).

AGENDA

1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Verification of Quorum and Appropriate Notification of Public Meeting
3. Meeting Agenda Approval.....*Action*..... i
4. *Review and Approval of Minutes of September 17, 2020.....Action.....1*
5. Chair's Comments/Announcements
6. Public Comment*
7. President's Report No. 146
 - a. *FY21 Goals for Northern Illinois University and President Lisa FreemanAction.....10*
 - b. *Recommendation for Faculty Tenure and/or PromotionAction.....22*
 - c. *DeKalb Campus - Central Campus Roadway Improvements.....Action.....23*
8. Other Matters
9. Next Meeting Date
10. Closed Session
11. Adjournment

*Individuals wishing to make an appearance before the Board should consult the [Bylaws of the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University, Article II, Section 4 – Appearances before the Board](#). Appearance request forms can be completed [online](#) in advance of the meeting. For more information contact Crystal Doyle ccoppel@niu.edu.

Anyone needing special accommodations to participate in the NIU Board of Trustees meetings should contact Crystal Doyle, ccoppel@niu.edu or (815) 753-1273, as soon as possible.

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Regular Meeting
September 17, 2020

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Board Chair Dennis Barsema virtually. Recording Secretary Crystal Doyle conducted a roll call.

Trustee Rita Athas: Present

Trustee John Butler: Present

Trustee Montel Gayles: Present

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present

Trustee Aidan Shields: Present

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Present

All members of the Board of Trustees were present.

Also present: President Lisa Freeman; General Counsel Bryan Perry; Board Liaison Matt Streb; Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram; Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah Chinniah; Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications Sol Jensen; Dean of University Libraries Fred Barnhart; Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey; Vice President for Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Interim Chief Human Resources Officer Vernese Edghill-Walden; Associate Vice President for Information Technology Matt Parks; and University Advisory Council (UAC) Representatives Greg Beyer, Cathy Doederlein, Katy Jaekel, Natasha Johnson, Sarah Marsh, and Kendall Thu.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

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

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Athas seconded. The motion was approved.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF AUGUST 20, 2020

Chair Barsema pointed out that it was brought to his attention by Vice President Chinniah and General Counsel Perry, that a correction needed to be made in regards to the action item Classroom Technology Upgrades that was approved on August 20, 2020 at the BOT Special Meeting. The action item incorrectly listed the vendor BHP Photo as a BEP vendor. BHP Photo is not a BEP vendor, but rather their subcontractor Electrical Resource Management (ERM) is the BEP vendor.

Chair Barsema asked to please correct the minutes to reflect BHP as the vendor and ERM as the BEP subcontractor.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 20, 2020 as corrected. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Pritchard seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Board discussion followed.

Chair Barsema stated that General Counsel Perry also brought it to his attention that Trustee Gayles has a relationship with the vendor ERM and that it may be a conflict.

Trustee Gayles explained that he is currently the Vice President of Construction Management and New Business Development with ERM.

Chair Barsema asked Trustee Gayles if he had any knowledge whatsoever that ERM was involved with this contract award. Trustee Gayles responded that he had no idea that ERM was involved in this contract.

Chair Barsema asked Trustee Gayles if he personally gained or profited from this transaction. Trustee Gayles responded that he did not whatsoever.

Chair Barsema asked Vice President Chinniah, if she could please explain the process on how this contract was awarded. Vice President Chinniah explained that the award was not one item that went solely to BHP Photo, rather BHP Photo was one of eight vendors used to procure the needed classroom technology. She explained that to date, NIU has used approximately \$503,000.00 across the eight vendors of the \$600,000.00 funding granted by the Board. Of the \$503,000.00 spent in support of classroom technology only \$3,982.00, that is less than 1%, was expended on BHP Photo. Further, the two purchases from BHP Photo made in late July and early August were made by a NIU staff member utilizing a University Commercial Card in accordance with University guidelines, and because the purchases were made using a commercial card there were no contracts or transactions to review.

Chair Barsema asked Vice President Chinniah if the money had been spent on this contract, and Vice President Chinniah confirmed that the money has been spent.

Chair Barsema asked Trustee Gayles if he was aware of any other contracts that may come before the Board where he or his company would be involved. Trustee Gayles responded with saying he is not aware at this time of any other contracts but will be very vigilant to identify potential conflicts in the future.

Chair Barsema reminded all the Board members to please go back and double-check and see if there are any transactions, regardless of how remote, that may come before the Board that involve the Board member themselves, or their company, that would need to be disclosed by our bylaws. If a Board member has any future transactions where they or their company are involved, the Board member would need to recuse themselves from voting on the item. The Board member would immediately need to inform the General Counsel so he can work with the Board on a conflict management plan.

Chair Barsema asked the trustees, that after hearing Trustee Gayle's disclosure and the University's explanation of the process, is there any trustee that has heard anything that makes them want to now change their vote on the Classroom Technology Upgrades Item. Based on the information presented, the trustees did not feel it necessary to revisit the item approval.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Barsema welcomed the members of the University Advisory Council who were present and asked for their comments.

UAC Representative Thu commented that he appreciates and supports the goals that President Freeman has formed and that they seem to be taking the University in the right direction. He stated the University Council and Faculty Senate have had their first meetings of the year and they are going well. Last year they revamped the shared governance system and processes and are in the process of implementing those changes. In the meetings faculty have discussed returning to campus and are very pleased and supportive with the way leadership has handled COVID-19. It reflects very well on leadership and the faculty with how well they have dealt with all the changes. Shared governance is working on looking at assessment practices at the university and how any of the processes or practices can be simplified.

UAC Representative Thu also mentioned they will also be reviewing and revamping the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM) this year. Further, he stated they are committed to dealing with social justice issues at NIU. A survey was completed to look at recommendations that came to us from students for dealing with social justice issues. The results of that survey will be circulated as the next Faculty Senate meeting approaches.

UAC Representative Doederlein stated that when asked about increment raises by other Supportive Professional Staff (SPS) colleagues, she responds by saying two things: first, that the President, senior leadership and the Board feel strongly about providing fair and equitable benefits for non-represented employees, and second, that the President, senior leadership and Board have been open to engaging active dialogue when there have been concerns, and there are no barriers to doing so directly. UAC Representative Doederlein thanked the President and Board for bringing the action item regarding the FY21 Non-Represented Staff Salary Increment Allocation Guidelines forward. She stated the SPS non-representative staff appreciate the strong signal that is being sent about salary increases in a budget strained environment. The transparency the university has had with different budget saving measures has been very much appreciated across the campus, given the effects on many peoples professional and personal lives. She concluded that the discussions on contingency plans, should they be needed, have also been well received, and the openness is appreciated.

Chair Barsema stated that the Board appreciates the hard work and sacrifice that has gone into the budgeting process, not only by senior leadership but everyone on the NIU campus. As COVID-19 is affecting everything around us, it is important to be flexible this year from a budgeting standpoint. The Board and the administration have agreed to a quarterly review of the budget at Board meetings. Senior leadership is encouraged to have at the ready contingency plans and actions to respond to any further decreases in revenue or increases in expense when COVID-19 related issues on our campus, in our community, lack of COVID-19 relief funds or state appropriations any of which, or all, could happen.

Chair Barsema commented that the Board supports the senior leadership team and President Freeman's actions that were taken last Friday, September 11, that were related to COVID-19 on the NIU campus and in the DeKalb County community. The safety and health of our students, faculty, staff, and our DeKalb County community members must always be prioritized. The Board sincerely appreciates the cooperation and sacrifice that everyone is being asked to make to support Protect the Pack.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Barsema introduced the public comment portion of the meeting.

General Counsel Perry indicated that there was no request for public comment.

REPORTS OF THE BOARD COMMITTEES AND BOARD LIAISONS

Chair Barsema reminded everyone that the reports of the Board Committees and the Board Liaisons are information only.

Trustee Herrero gave an update on agenda item number 7.d. Trustee Herrero gave an overview of the strategic planning process that the IBHE is undergoing. Additionally, Trustee Herrero mentioned the consulting firm UPD was selected to help the IBHE with their engagement and planning work. She noted the work has started and is targeted to conclude in spring 2021.

Trustee Herrero stated that recent IBHE meetings have been packed with very rich data and information about our current state, including perspectives from college and university leaders, national higher education experts, and most importantly students. There have been conversations and presentations informing the board of the opportunity gaps for low income black and brown students that exist across the state, and the work that lay ahead for all of us. At a recent meeting, Dr. Kim Hunter Reed, the Louisiana Commissioner of Higher Education, spoke on their approach on closing equity gaps and master planning. The IBHE also heard from Eric Zarnikow, Executive Director at the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, and he shared the state of MAP Grants in Illinois.

Trustee Herrero stated that the Governors Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER Grant) will provide dollars to help overcome barriers created by the pandemic related to the recruitment and retention of students that are most impacted, including underrepresented, first generation, rural and Pell. The state of Illinois received \$108 million, but higher education will see \$49 million, which will be distributed across the colleges and universities in Illinois. Three million dollars was earmarked for grant awards of up to \$500,000 to eligible 4-year Illinois universities, including Northern Illinois University.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT NO. 145

Chair Barsema asked President Freeman to present the President's Report No. 145.

UNIVERSITY REPORTS FORWARDED BY THE BOARD COMMITTEES

President Freeman asked whether any Trustees wanted to revisit information items forwarded from the committees. Hearing none, she continued to the items directly from the President.

ITEMS DIRECTLY FROM THE PRESIDENT

Agenda Item 8.b.1. FY21 Non-Represented Staff Salary Increment Allocation Guidelines

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.1. for approval.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve item 8.b.1. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Gayles seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.b.2. Collective Bargaining Agreement for International Union of Operating Engineers Local Union #399

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.2. for approval.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve item 8.b.2. Trustee Herrero so moved, and Trustee Athas seconded.

Board discussion followed.

Chair Barsema asked if the two-year successor agreement was standard for the length of the agreement. President Freeman responded that given these unprecedented times the decision was made to extend existing contract terms for two-years and to renegotiate later once the pandemic is over. President Freeman's response was confirmed by General Counsel Perry.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.b.3. Collective Bargaining Agreement for Teamsters Local #330

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.3. for approval

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve item 8.b.3. Trustee Gayles so moved, and Trustee Butler seconded.

Board discussion followed.

Trustee Gayles asked if the rationale for the one-year successor agreement matched up with the previous bargaining agreement that was just reviewed and approved. President Freeman responded that the same principle will be used for all contracts during this unprecedented period. General Counsel Perry mentioned that this contract is retroactive back to July 1, 2020 and the previous contract for International Union of Operating Engineers Local Union #399 is retroactive back to July 1, 2019.

Chair Barsema noticed that this bargaining unit only had five members and asked if there is a minimum requirement for members for a union. General Counsel Perry responded by saying there is not a minimum requirement for how many members a union must have.

Chair Barsema wondered if in general, smaller bargaining units take less time to negotiate with than larger bargaining units. General Counsel Perry responded that it could depend on the bargaining unit and what topics are being discussed and negotiated. The voting process usually is faster since there are less members that need to vote.

Trustee Gayles asked, as this is a one-year successor agreement, when can they expect negotiations to start up again or have they already started. General Counsel Perry responded that negotiations have already started for this bargaining unit.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.b.4. FY21 Revised General Fee Pricing Recommendation

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.4. for approval.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve item 8.b.4. Vice Chair Wasowicz so moved, and Trustee Herrero seconded.

Board discussion followed.

Trustee Gayles mentioned that during this time with this being a temporary move, that they maintain vigilance over how long they need to redirect those funds. Trustee Gayles is concerned that this could turn into a slippery slope of using dollars to pay for items related to the pandemic, but really the dollars are designated for operational expenses. Trustee Gayles asked the timeframe for redirecting the funds. President Freeman responded that this is for FY21 and expressed hope that the university would not have to bring this forward in FY22. President Freeman stated that leadership has been thoughtful regarding the use of fees in this unprecedented environment, understanding our obligation to take care of our campus community, particularly our students.

Vice President Chinniah added that she and Provost Ingram had the opportunity to talk with the student leaders about the intended and proposed plans to redirect a portion of the student fees. They confirmed their commitment to work with them to ensure that the funding expectations for student government and other types of student organizations would not change, as they set their budgets at the end of last year.

Provost Ingram added that there was a willingness to work with the students to show transparency, and to make sure the students understood where the money was going, and they did. The students made a request to make sure it supported students and it was agreed to the reallocation.

Trustee Butler appreciated the commitment to fund student organizations as planned for FY21. He continued to ask about the debt service that is covered by the fee structure in order to ensure the university is not unduly burdening itself for future increases in debt service due to this decision. Trustee Butler asked if there was confidence that all debt service obligations will be met during this period?

President Freeman stated that the university is committed to meeting the debt obligations of the university, and as our actions over the last several years have shown we're very sensitive to the cost of higher education, and the struggles our students face to pay for those classes. President Freeman also mentioned that tuition and fees have been held flat with even decreasing student fees throughout the past couple of years.

Vice President Chinniah responded to Trustee Butler that yes, they plan to continue to meet the obligations and the numbers that are set forth that provide the flexibility that is needed to do so.

Present Freeman added that they are trying to make decisions in the moment that address our needs to react to the situation at that time.

Chair Barsema asked whether this allocation would prevent critical items from moving forward. President Freeman responded that due to COVID-19, there are items that will not be able to move forward. The reallocation does prevent challenges for units that normally receive fees, however, everyone understands that the additional expenses associated with managing during COVID-19 are not optional.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 8.b.5. FY21 University Revised Internal Budget

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.5.

Vice President Chinniah walked the trustees through the FY21 University Revised Internal Budget item.

Board discussion followed.

Trustees thanked university leadership for continuing to manage the budget to ensure a sustainable future for NIU, its current and future students. Further, they expressed their appreciation for the campus community's work to increase student enrollment and retention.

Chair Barsema asked to see reports showing the miscellaneous items and whether they can be reallocated to direct line items.

President Freeman noted that future receipt of federal aid to the state and the university will make a very big difference. When the university will receive the federal aid is still unknown. She is hopeful that everyone can start to balance the crisis response with the longer-term crisis recovery planning.

Chair Barsema asked about debt services and why it had not gone down more considering the recent refinancing. Vice President Chinniah responded that a savings was seen in FY20 and it is factored in and an additional \$1 million will be saved this year.

Trustee Herrero asked what has impacted the increased amount in contractual services, and whether the GEER grant is reflected in the report. Vice President Chinniah responded that the increase in contractual services has to do with increased costs incurred to be prepared to open campus this fall during the pandemic including PPE, technology needs, and additional services provided. Vice President Chinniah added that the funds that were received through the GEER grant, NIU has currently received \$2.9 million, are not represented due to the timing of the creation of this report and provided additional details regarding the funding reporting

Vice Chair Wasowicz asked what items generally go into the cost of sales area of the budget. Vice President Chinniah respond that it includes all of the items that are purchased for resale on campus, which includes food that is available through our dining units, parts and supplies that are charged out through the campus work order system, cost for paper for our copy service for our Anywhere Prints contract. She noted the initial projection for FY20 would likely be significantly decreased due to planning for campus to reopen and for students, staff and faculty to return. There may also be decreases in the travel line.

Agenda Item 8.b.6. FY20 Report Tuition and Fee Waivers

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.6.

Vice President Chinniah confirmed that the information in this report to the Board needed to be released in preliminary format to honor certain stipulations with the IBHE. NIU is required to disclose and it includes two types of waivers. The top portion provides a summary of mandatory waivers that NIU is required to provide, and these are waivers that may be contributed to certain state requirements or other requirements that NIU needs to honor. These are items that NIU may have to provide but NIU does not necessarily receive funding for, so it is a nice representation of just the summary of activities that NIU does to support different activities, goals, or priorities. The discretion waiver category are waivers that NIU provides based on benefits made available to employees based on typical offerings that a research institution would provide. So, you may see things like graduate assistantships, research assistantships, and teaching assistants that are considered a cost of doing business.

Agenda Item 8.b.7. University Libraries Overview

President Freeman presented agenda item 8.b.7. Dean Fred Barnhart presented on the University Libraries.

Board members thanked Dean Barnhart for his presentation and discussion followed. Discussion centered on ways in which the Library is utilizing technology to support students through the Learning Commons, which will bring in new technology and support technology exposure for students that may not have experiences working in a makerspace, on a 3D printer, or on a high processing computer. Further, there was discussion on utilizing the library as a community space and a cultural space.

Trustee Veronica Herrero left the meeting at 11:05 a.m.

Chair Barsema thanked Dean Barnhart for a wonderful presentation and all he does for NIU.

CHAIR'S REPORT NO. 95

Chair Barsema presented the Chair's report.

Agenda Item 9.a. Board of Trustee 2021 Meeting Dates Approval

Board Chair Barsema presented agenda item 9.a. for approval.

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to approve item 9.a. Trustee Athas so moved, and Trustee Shields seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

OTHER MATTERS

No other matters were discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Chair Dennis Barsema announced that the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held December 10, 2020.

CLOSED SESSION

Chair Barsema stated that the Board needed to go into closed session and would not take up new business following the closed session. He asked for a motion to close the public meeting to conduct closed session to discuss the following subjects as authorized by the Open Meetings Act: personnel matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(1)(2)(3) and (21) of the open meetings act; collective bargaining matters as generally described under section 2(c)(2) of the open meetings act; litigation and risk management matters as generally described under sections 2(c)(11) and (12) of the open meetings act; and closed session minutes matters as generally described under section 2(c)(21) of the open meetings act.

Trustee Gayles so moved, and Vice Chair Wasowicz seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Ms. Doyle to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Absent

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting closed at 11:14 a.m.

At 2:01 p.m. the Board returned from closed session.

Chair Barsema asked Dr. Streb to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Present

Trustee John Butler: Present

Trustee Montel Gayles: Present

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Present

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Present

Trustee Aidan Shields: Present

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Present

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Present

The motion was approved.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Barsema asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Trustee Pritchard so moved, and Trustee Herrero seconded.

Chair Barsema asked Dr. Streb to conduct a roll call vote.

Trustee Rita Athas: Yes

Trustee John Butler: Yes

Trustee Montel Gayles: Yes

Trustee Veronica Herrero: Yes

Trustee Bob Pritchard: Yes

Trustee Aidan Shields: Yes

Vice Chair Eric Wasowicz: Yes

Board Chair Dennis Barsema: Yes

The motion was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Crystal Doyle

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.

FY21 GOALS FOR NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY AND PRESIDENT LISA FREEMAN

Background/Introduction: Since March 2020, the faculty, staff and students at NIU have dealt with the immense changes, both personal and professional, caused by COVID-19. Although NIU will continue to respond to this disruption, we must now look beyond the present to position NIU for future success. The FY21 goals articulate how we will do so over the next year.

These goals were created in alignment with NIU's mission, vision and values as well as with the Strategic Action Planning Framework presented to the Board of Trustees and university community in FY20. Together, they emphasize the following six themes: empowerment and shared responsibility; student recruitment, student success and student experience; academic excellence and curriculum innovation; diversity, equity and inclusion; research, artistry and engagement; and resource development and fiscal responsibility.

The goals reflect feedback received from the university community, including opportunities to position NIU to recover from the financial shock of the pandemic and emerge stronger. They connect cost containment and investment decisions to our enduring commitments to strategic enrollment management, equity in attainment, inclusive academic excellence and a robust research and innovation portfolio.

Additionally, the FY21 goals were constructed recognizing that NIU's dedicated faculty and staff are already balancing extraordinary responsibilities in a demanding time. The intention is not only to direct focus to the university's most essential priorities, but also to encourage members of our community to set aside or suspend less-essential activities.

As a research institution, NIU appreciates the breadth of approaches to what constitutes evidence in various disciplines. The metrics in this plan reflect the diversity of methodology and include both quantitative (e.g., numerical targets or statistical analysis that measure specific numerical outcomes) and qualitative measures (e.g., focus groups that provide insight on how people experience NIU). The assessment of NIU's success will be guided by effective practice research and expertise about how best to measure progress on our goals.

In this context, as we continue the process of moving to multiyear planning, the university will pursue the actions described below to assess and align programs and functions with NIU's strategic priorities. In some instances, supporting work is already underway due to previously announced workgroups and plans. In others, final action will be taken after further analysis, data collection and collaborative decision-making across departments, colleges, and divisions. Unquestionably, the current economic and public health crises are accelerating trends that were already in place, and we must respond.

1. EMPOWERMENT AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

Our strategic action planning framework emphasizes our commitments to supporting the development of leaders, communicating transparently and effectively, and creating a culture of shared responsibility. These actions will be heightened in importance as we pivot and expand our focus from crisis response to crisis recovery. To be successful, NIU leaders will need to think beyond this fall and fiscal year to plan for long-term sustainability in an environment that has been significantly and permanently altered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

EMPOWERMENT AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY GOALS			
	Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
1A.	Use expertise available through internal and external partnerships to address our organizational need to align decision-making at all levels with the university's strategic priorities, keeping both immediate and long-term goals in mind as we respond to complex, rapidly changing circumstances.	Participation in and assessment of workshops/professional development sessions, and deployment of associated tools and techniques. FY21 deliverables that demonstrate strategic focus, such as multiyear, unit-level plans.	This work will enhance our ability to see new opportunities embedded in present circumstances and enable our success in attaining all other annual and longer-term objectives.
1B.	Continue to identify and revise practices, policies and procedures that need to be transformed, simplified, or eliminated.	Development and implementation of simplified administrative and academic processes and workflows in three or more areas prioritized by the university community. <i>Note:</i> Areas identified include contract approval; payroll-related procedures including approval and processing of additional pay; classroom scheduling; academic program review; assessment of student learning; and topics historically covered by the Academic Policy and Procedures Manual.	Simplification of work is needed across NIU to alleviate stress, improve productivity and responsiveness, and create opportunities for resource reallocation. These outcomes will enhance our success in attaining all other annual and longer-term objectives.

2. STUDENT RECRUITMENT, STUDENT SUCCESS AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE

We will continue to pursue the goals articulated in NIU's [Strategic Enrollment Management \(SEM\) plan](#), [SEM Accountability Plan](#), and our recently finalized [ILEA Equity plan](#), refreshing the plans as needed to reflect our dynamic environment so that our strategies, tactics and activities continue to support the three overarching SEM goals.

- Strengthen our distinctive identity as a public university that combines educational opportunity with student engagement.
- Achieve student enrollment that respects our mission and values while positioning NIU for fiscal sustainability.

- Support equitable access, opportunity and success for students from diverse backgrounds where [diversity is defined broadly](#).

We will also take specific actions to support the aspirations in NIU’s equity statement:

- Northern Illinois University strives to improve outcomes for all students by identifying and removing barriers that hinder the academic achievement and student experience of historically and currently underserved populations.

STUDENT RECRUITMENT, STUDENT SUCCESS AND STUDENT EXPERIENCE GOALS			
	Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
2A.	Create an NIU-specific set of social mobility outcomes data to complement our current narrative-driven approach and include outcomes-related content in promotional materials shared with prospective students and families, as well as current and prospective employees, partners, and donors.	Development of the social mobility outcomes data set, integration with promotional materials, and deployment by Enrollment Management Marketing and Communications (EMMC) and other units (ex: Career Services; Human Resource Services (HRS); Research and Innovation Partnerships (RIPS); Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development (OERD); and University Advancement) Fall 2021 student enrollment equal to or greater than SEM target of 17,005.	The main driver for this work is unrealized opportunity to reinforce our brand identity and more clearly articulate the value of an NIU education to prospective students and families. However, it should be noted that development of the social mobility dataset will also support our efforts in pursuit of academic excellence and curricular innovation, diversity, equity and inclusion, strategic development of research and engagement initiatives, and fiscal sustainability.
2B.	Maintain focus on closing gaps in degree attainment for low-income, Black and Latinx students using the institutional strategies, objectives and tactics presented in our SEM plan , SEM	Fall 2021 student enrollment equal to or greater than SEM target of 17,005. Achieve a fall-to-fall retention rate for first-time, full-time students between 76% and 80%, sustaining the progress demonstrated in	Efforts focused on equitable outcomes for students across racial and socioeconomic groups address institutional goals beyond those

	<p>Accountability Plan, and ILEA Equity plan, and look for additional ways to support NIU equity goals through participation in a new state-wide collaboration of public and private sector leaders, “The Equity Working Group for Black Student Access and Success in Illinois Higher Education,” and implementation of our Higher Learning Commission Quality Improvement Project which focuses on student success in gateway courses with a special emphasis on underserved students.</p>	<p>Fall 2020 when first-year retention rate increased from 72% to 78%, and retention rates for Asian, Black and Latinx students each increased by 10 percentage points.</p> <p>Sustaining this progress is consistent with the five-year plan that NIU committed to in 2017 to eliminate achievement gaps in retention rates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the first-year retention rates for Latinx and Asian American students at or above the institutional average, understanding that “at average” can fluctuate annually by 1% or 2%. • Reduce the first-year retention rate gaps for Black new freshmen to 10% or less within three years, understanding that success will mean consistently staying within 1% to 2% of that range for at least three years. <p>Participate in the “The Equity Working Group for Black Student Access and Success in Illinois Higher Education.”</p> <p>Implement our Higher Learning Commission Quality Improvement Project.</p>	<p>related to student success, most specifically our strategic goals related to diversity, equity and inclusion, resource development and fiscal responsibility.</p>
2C.	<p>Initiate a review of the policies and practices that NIU uses to maintain an environment conducive</p>	<p>External benchmarking of the model and processes that NIU uses to recognize and allocate resources to student groups and activities, completed and</p>	<p>These analyses are an important first step toward identifying and addressing any</p>

	<p>to learning and engagement, focusing this year on those used to recognize and allocate resources (including but not limited to funding and space) to student groups and activities; and those used to address academic, residential, student conduct and disciplinary conflicts.</p>	<p>used to recognize and address issues associated with unnecessary complexity, excess risk to the university, or real and perceived inequities.</p> <p>Analysis of institutional data related to student conduct referrals and outcomes, disaggregated by gender, ethnicity and race, completed and then used to recognize and address any issues associated with real and/or perceived inequities in the student conduct pipeline and processes.</p>	<p>inequity or perceptions of inequity associated with the systems that impact the experience of our diverse students and their organizations.</p> <p>In addition to advancing our strategic priorities related to the student experience, this work will support our commitments to seek and be strengthened by the diverse experiences of our university community members, and relentlessly confront the challenges associated with structural inequity.</p> <p>Moreover, this work is complemented by initiatives described in the ILEA Equity Plan.</p>
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

3. ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND CURRICULUM INNOVATION

The questions that the university should be using to drive curricular change are broad, and might seem overwhelming: How do we align our academic programs with NIU’s mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities? How do we differentiate our programs from competitors’ programs to enhance NIU’s impact and stature? What do we need to stop doing so that we have resources to invest in program enhancement and incentives for curriculum innovation?

The global pandemic provides a compelling reason to be aggressive and imaginative in questioning how effectively our current academic programs are meeting the needs of our undergraduate and graduate students, promoting enriched and dynamic interactions among

students and faculty, and addressing the needs of our region, nation and world. We must respond.

Feedback received from students, faculty, staff and administrators suggests that there is genuine desire to reshape the undergraduate academic portfolio to streamline undergraduate degree offerings; increase the integration and focus of our general education program; reduce course redundancy and the reliance on small courses; and provide clear pathways to graduation. Work to address these issues is in progress through the collaborative efforts of faculty and deans with support from the provost’s office, and the goals will be evident in their multiyear plans.

For our graduate students, we have an ethical obligation to ensure that the graduate programs that we offer recruit students from diverse backgrounds who can successfully complete and enter the career they desire. This means that we must not only understand the graduate experience more fully, but that we must rebalance the graduate program portfolio to eliminate programs that are underperforming and invest in programs that are high quality and in high demand. Our FY21 goals lay groundwork critical to achieving these outcomes.

Across our university, there is also strong interest in rethinking, reframing, and reconstructing our undergraduate and graduate curricula to make them more relevant, more inclusive, more interdisciplinary and more integrated with each other. The work to realize these aspirations will not and cannot be completed in the course of one fiscal year, but it must begin. And, the processes employed must allow us to work with speed consistent with the needs of the university, our students, faculty and staff and the communities we serve.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AND CURRICULUM INNOVATION GOALS			
	Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
3A.	Identify and begin to remove structural barriers that inhibit transdisciplinary scholarship, and discourage curricular innovation and experimentation, appreciating that doing so might also help dismantle systems that contribute to inequitable outcomes for faculty who are Black, indigenous or people of color (BIPOC).	Formal recommendations about ways to remove existing barriers and promote transdisciplinary scholarship and curricular innovation. (The expectation is that these will be developed through collaborative processes with leadership from EVP/Provost, VP Research and Innovation Partnerships, Faculty Senate President and VP Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.) Recommendations used to produce a multiyear strategy and timeline for implementing necessary change.	Academic excellence and innovation are the essence of our work. Our goals related to student recruitment, success, and experience; diversity, equity and inclusion; and research, scholarship, artistry and engagement are critical and synergistic elements for achieving

3B.	Identify opportunities for strengthening graduate programs and enhancing the graduate student experience.	<p>Metrics for evaluation of graduate programs developed through collaborative efforts of Office of the Provost, deans, and graduate faculty.</p> <p>Established plan for collecting and distributing relevant graduate program data.</p> <p>Graduate program assessment and follow-up incorporated into college multiyear plans.</p> <p>Timeline and strategy for acquiring, reviewing and acting on data needed to understand and improve the graduate student experience from recruitment and admissions to degree completion and career placement, with a special emphasis on the experience of BIPOC and international graduate students.</p>	<p>academic excellence and fostering curricular innovation.</p> <p>Our dedication to the academic mission drives our efforts to align resources with strategic priorities and achieve long term financial sustainability.</p>
3C	Leverage lessons learned about course modalities during COVID-19 to position NIU to provide expanded degree opportunities for adult learners and place-bound students and respond to workforce needs of region and state.	<p>Propose two or three streamlined and relevant degree and certificate programs that enable timely completion.</p> <p>In collaboration with external partners, define the target student audience for these programs.</p> <p>Develop and deploy a communications and marketing strategy to also include messaging to students who left NIU prior to degree completion.</p>	

4. DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION

All Huskies strive to live NIU’s commitment to social justice, equity and inclusivity. Those traits are woven throughout our mission, vision, and values, underpin our efforts to foster a welcoming university and inspire us to go beyond to identify, address and eradicate inequitable practices. We have demonstrated our willingness to recognize and remove

barriers that disproportionately hinder the academic achievement and student experience of historically and currently underserved populations. For example, we removed consideration of standardized test scores from the general admission and merit scholarship processes; worked to close gaps in degree attainment for low-income, first-generation, African American and Latinx students; required implicit bias training for hiring committees; and instituted cultural competency training for staff and faculty.

To advance social and racial justice we must work to sustain the successes we are seeing from these ongoing efforts, as we continue to examine and question our policies and practices. This approach will help us to focus talent, time and resources on dismantling and rebuilding the systems that will have the greatest impact. We have recently heard from numerous students, faculty and staff members who want to be part of these efforts and including their voices and energy will enhance the success of our efforts to achieve positive change. Accordingly, this year’s goals are informed both by our progress to date and by feedback received from members of our university community.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION GOALS			
	Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
4A.	Expand social justice education and training to include anti-racism training and continue promoting social justice topics and programs that convey NIU’s values and support an environment where Huskies can grow, achieve, serve and transform themselves and their communities.	Design and implementation of anti-racism training. Continued delivery of current social justice programming	We know that our dedication to being welcoming and inclusive to diverse students with different lived experiences resonates with prospective students, high school counselors, current students, staff and faculty and alumni. Thus, it is not surprising that the diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives proposed in this section synergize with the university’s goals related to enhancing student outcomes and experiences, increasing academic excellence, encouraging innovative research, scholarship,
4B.	Continue our efforts to increase the recruitment, hiring, retention and professional advancement of diverse faculty, staff and administrators. In addition to sustaining and strengthening the recruitment, retention and onboarding practices that we have found to be effective, we will take action to recognize and remove additional barriers that impede the success of NIU employees who are BIPOC.	Develop and begin to implement professional development and mentoring plans that support the retention and success of BIPOC faculty and staff. Tangible progress made with respect to analysis and revision of the policies, practices and processes used by NIU to evaluate faculty and staff members’ contributions and accomplishments at critical stages of their careers. Specifically, evidence that the EVP/Provost and the VP for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion are working with deans, division leaders and	

		shared governance groups to examine the standards, assumptions, priorities and processes used to evaluate faculty and staff members' contributions and accomplishments at critical stages of their careers.	artistry and engagement, achieving fiscal sustainability. In FY21, our work to support our ongoing
4C.	Create a new webpage that not only highlights NIU's diversity, equity and inclusion goals, but also shares our plans and progress. The intent is to enhance transparency and accountability, as well as to provide a place for members of the Huskie community to become more engaged in this work.	Active webpage that highlights NIU's diversity, equity and inclusion goals, engagement opportunities, action plans and progress; included will be an indicator of NIU progress toward increasing vendor diversity and expenditures under the Business Enterprise Program (BEP) Act, 30 ILCS 585.	commitment to equity, inclusivity and social justice will go beyond pursuit of goals 4A-C. We will strive to achieve important, related outcomes detailed elsewhere in this document, especially those focused on equitable outcomes and student experiences for undergraduate and graduate students across racial and socioeconomic groups.

5. RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, ARTISTRY AND ENGAGEMENT

NIU will continue to prepare our students and the communities we serve for a century of change by bringing our resources to bear on complex challenges, such as responding to environmental and ecosystem change and adaptation; advancing technology; preparing for shifting demographics; and interpreting the world around us. We will leverage the university's established and emerging strengths to support opportunities for transdisciplinary research, scholarship, artistry and innovation that contribute to our teaching and service missions; strengthen our designation by Carnegie as a community-engaged institution; and enhance our recognition by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) as an Innovation & Economic Prosperity University.

RESEARCH, SCHOLARSHIP, ARTISTRY AND ENGAGEMENT GOALS			
	University Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
5A.	Launch a strategic development team comprised of members from the divisions of RIPS, OERD and University	Formal establishment of the strategic development team. Identification and development of public and private funding	This strategic development team models the creative and collaborative approach being

	<p>Advancement to link university expertise, networks and philanthropy and mobilize collective assets to advance institutional research, artistry, and engagement priorities.</p>	<p>opportunities and partnerships (ex: grants, gifts and collaborative relationships) with the potential to advance key university initiatives- specifically, projects associated with COVID-19, the Northern Illinois Center for Community Sustainability (NICCS) and/or the Emerging Research Initiatives prioritized by the competitive process initiated and paused in FY20.</p>	<p>encouraged throughout the university.</p> <p>The work of this team and the outcomes of its efforts have the potential to accelerate the progress of university priorities beyond research, scholarship, artistry, engagement and innovation, including those associated with student recruitment and student success; academic excellence and curricular innovation; diversity equity and inclusion; and resource development and fiscal responsibility.</p>
--	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

6. RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY

In March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting disruption of normal university operations preempted FY21 budget development because of the immediate need to address concerns related to the health and well-being of our students, faculty and staff. Since that time, COVID-19 has continued to present university leadership with mounting uncertainties, while adversely impacting NIU’s financial position. The adverse financial impact of COVID-19 is being felt across our university, and the decisions that NIU makes in FY21 will determine how the university is positioned to recover and emerge stronger. NIU will incorporate lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic as we continue to implement our multiyear budget and financial planning processes in support of university priorities.

As we transform our operations, respond to and create change, we will be mindful of the need to make financial decisions that both protect strategic priorities and provide for long-term sustainability. This will mean investing in some areas and cutting back in others. Our immediate and longer-term goals reflect these challenges.

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY GOALS			
	Goal	Metric(s)	Synergies
6A.	Continue to refine and implement a multiyear budget and financial planning process. In recognition of the complex, rapidly changing circumstances associated with the global pandemic, we commit to engaging the Board of Trustees quarterly to communicate the status and progress toward targets, and to communicating transparently with the university community about the financial health of NIU.	Quarterly budget updates to the Board of Trustees and NIU community.	NIU is committed to making financial decisions that are academically responsive and fiscally responsible. As the university grapples with the unanticipated, pandemic-associated increase in expenses and decrease in revenue, we will avoid risking our strategic priorities. We will work collaboratively across divisions to develop multi-disciplinary solutions to challenges we face.
6B.	Assess and modify our space use and physical footprint in light of our changing needs and in support of other strategic goals.	Effective rationalization for space use, with improved utilization rates. Actions taken to align NIU's physical footprint with evolving academic priorities and economic conditions.	
6C.	Partner with the NIU Foundation to finalize campaign readiness and ensure that the university begins a multiyear fundraising initiative by July 1, 2022.	Achieve \$20 million in total philanthropy. Complete comprehensive case for support. Launch feasibility study no later than October 1, 2021.	Fundraising efforts and campaign priorities will align with the university's strategic action planning framework and support student success; student experiences; academic excellence; equity and inclusion initiatives; research, scholarship, artistry, and engagement.

Recommendation: The University requests Board of Trustees approval of the FY21 Presidential Goals.

**RECOMMENDATION FOR FACULTY TENURE AND/OR
PROMOTION**

NAME

COLLEGE/DEPARTMENT/SCHOOL

Hired at the Rank of Associate Professor with Tenure

Gwen Gregory
Abdoulaye Diallo

University Libraries
Interdisciplinary Health Professions

Recommendation: The Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee recommends Board of Trustees approval of the Recommendation for Faculty Tenure and/or Promotion.

DEKALB CAMPUS – CENTRAL CAMPUS ROADWAY IMPROVEMENTS

Summary: The project takes advantage of available Federal Highway Administration grant funding requiring 20% matching funds. Eligible work is limited to roadway improvements, and three campus locations present a current need for road improvements supporting bus routes and crosswalk Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements. These locations include roadway improvements for the Holmes Student Center (Carroll Avenue) bus turnaround and the DuSable complex (University Circle Drive) bus turnaround, and crosswalk improvements at the intersection of Lucinda Avenue and Normal Road. Should construction commence as planned in FY22, design expenditures would be necessary in FY21.

Background: In early 2004, NIU received the first allocation of a substantial Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) highway grant to construct roads on the property west of the Convocation Center. The total Federal Highway Grant was \$8,320,000. The far west campus road project was completed and left a remaining balance of \$234,000 in the available grant funding.

In recent discussions with Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) representatives administering the grant funding, the identified scope for this project has preliminary support and could be executed in summer/fall of FY22. The budget for all three projects combined approximate the remaining funds and the required NIU funding for design and 20% of construction costs. Design efforts would be executed in FY21 and construction scheduled for early FY22.

Funding:	Federal Highway Grant Funds:	\$234,000
	NIU local funding:	<u>\$123,600</u>
	Total project cost:	\$357,600

Recommendation: The Finance, Audit, Compliance, Facilities and Operations Committee recommends Board of Trustees approval for the DeKalb Campus – Central Campus Roadway Improvements.