I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A motion to adopt the agenda was made by S. Marsh, seconded by G. Conderman moving items where guests are involved up in the agenda (New Business, CLAS special hour requirement- Dave Ballantine and Old Business –accelerated program issues-Matt Streb). Motion passed unanimously.

Because there were new members present, S. Estes asked members to introduce themselves.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

A motion to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2015 meeting was made by D. Zinger, seconded by D. Gorman with a correction to the percentage listed on page 3, from .0003% to .03% as well as the addition of “No action was proposed” as the last sentence in the Proposed Change to grade point marks for B+ and C+ discussion. Motion passed unanimously.
III. NEW BUSINESS

A. CLAS #1, September 9, 2015 Special Requirements in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

D. Ballantine, Associate Dean, CLAS, explained that the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is the only college in the university that has a limit on the number of credits from the home department, within the major, that can be applied toward the 120. He said the reason for the limit is historical, it was a mechanism to ensure a broad-based liberal arts education for all the graduates of CLAS. The increase in credit hours is being suggested to allow students to pursue additional hours within their department that may benefit them in the job market or career wise. They realized students participating in engagement activities: undergraduate research, independent study, internships, etc. were exceeding the 50 hour limit, these were the best students and they didn’t want to discourage them from pursuing these activities. The college didn’t want to eliminate the limit so an increase was thought to be a better solution. Ballantine indicated the accelerated programs were also a contributing factor to the increase in hours.

S. Marsh asked for clarification on the “high” number of students needing waivers. Estes indicated he doesn’t keep track however he did say that with certain majors, like GEOG or CSCI it is common and sporadically required in other majors. There was also discussion about whether or not the requirement is actually needed since general education requirements are providing more breadth as well as typing in with majors. Concern was raised over the potential for the limit to be made higher as program requirements are added. Ballantine pointed out that all programmatic changes must go through and be approved through the entire curricular process.

A motion to approve the CLAS limit of hours in a single department from 50 to 60 hours was made by J. Wolfskill, seconded by D. Gorman. **Motion passed unanimously.**

B. Course Repeat Policy – referred by UCC

Birberick gave the background information. While A. Rosenbaum was Executive Secretary of the University Council/President Faculty Senate he brought the issue of the course repeat policy to the UCC. Discussions were launched about the current repeat policy. B. Pitney then became the Executive Secretary/Faculty Senate President and the discussions continued. In addition, there was a plea from students for changes to the policy as well. Information provided by UCC includes comparable institutions and their repeat policies as well as a narrative summary and the discussions continued. The UCC also invited Rebecca Babel, Director of Financial Aid, to speak to them regarding the impact the repeat policy has on students’ financial aid. There were many things going on last year that took precedent over this. Greg Long is now the Executive Secretary/Faculty Senate President and he has asked UCC to take the issue back up. At the October UCC meeting it was decided that since this is a policy issue, UCC would send it to APASC to review the information and make a recommendation. In addition,
if APASC wishes to change the policy, they should come up with appropriate catalog language. Birberick met with Estes and they thought the most effective use of time would be to have a subcommittee that would review the materials and, with a deadline, come up with a recommendation and then send it out to the whole committee for feedback.

Birberick indicated when the topic was first brought to UCC, the issue was to change the policy to include C- however the UCC rejected that because the current grading scale does not include a C-. The UC was proposing the change in anticipation of some future change in the grading scale. The UCC said that the issue could be brought forward if a change to the grading scale were put forward and a proposal to change the repeat policy could be put forward at that time. Parallel to that, there were concerns raised over the current policy (by students and faculty). One of the issues was about the ability to repeat an F grade at NIU or another institution but a D grade could only be repeated at NIU. Estes added that a repeat at another institution does not carry the repeat benefit as it would at NIU. Credit can be earned from the other attempt but the grade earned at NIU remains on the student’s record. Birberick indicated that the conversation began to broaden and the question was raised why we only allow repeats of Ds or Fs. Johns added that the discussion included any grade being repeatable, allowing students to repeat until they achieve the grade they want. He said there was some talk about limiting the total number of repeats per career. Johns said the discussion included which grade would appear on the transcript and which grade would be counted in the GPA. We are currently using the last attempt but some schools use the highest grade. Estes pointed out that if a student earns a D and repeats the course and earns an F, not only does the F count but they lose the credit they earned for the course with the D grade. Wolfskill said that the current policy does not state that credit is lost.

Marsh said she wanted to see that this affected a significant number of students. She would like to see data that would show evidence a change in the policy is warranted. Estes agreed that data may be needed. He said reviewed 3rd attempt data for his college from Fall 2013 and about 60% were still at Ds and Fs. Wolfskill said in his department alone, they have at least 50 third attempts per semester so he imagines the 2nd attempt numbers are even higher. Resources needed to accommodate repeats was also part of the discussion.

S. Marsh made a motion to retain the current repeat policy with the change to the highest grade counting in the GPA, seconded by R. Johns. There was some discussion about what would show on the student record while the student was enrolled in their second attempt. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Birberick asked if the committee wanted to take the issue of repeated courses in transfer. There was some discussion. It seemed the concensus was to leave this as is. C. Garvey pointed out that the language “the calculation of the GPA for admission will not count repeated courses...” assumes that Admissions is still doing an evaluation of all credit at the time of admission, which is not happening. She pointed out that it is being done but after admission. They take the GPA listed on the transcript of college-level transferable
courses but are not doing a course by course articulation of the courses against their Northern record. There was some discussion about allowing credit from other institutions as well as including the grade in the GPA calculation.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A motion to defer the two items of Old Business was made by J. Wolfskill, seconded by S. Marsh. **Motion passed.**

V. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn @ 4:32 p.m. was made by S. Marsh, seconded by D. Zinger. **Motion passed unanimously.**

*Respectfully submitted,*

Jeanne Ratfield  
Administrative Assistant  
Office of the Provost