I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by J. Stafstrom, seconded by M. Konen, to adopt the agenda moving Old Business to follow the approval of the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

II. Announcements

A. Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by T. Atkins, seconded by P. Braun to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2015 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

A. Course Repeat Policy Proposal

Birberick indicated that this subject was brought to the committee last year by Alan Rosenbaum on behalf of Faculty Senate. The current policy allows for repeat of any course in which a grade of D or F were earned (also a C if listed in the course catalog). The proposal was to allow repeat of any course with a grade lower than a C. Bill Pitney thanked the group for allowing him to speak. He indicated that after the issue was presented last year – this committee had said they wanted to take the
issue back to their departments and colleges for further discussion. Pitney said the Faculty Senate wants a change in policy to allow for a more authentic +/− grading system. If the course repeat policy was changed Faculty Senate believes that the +/− grading system could be revisited and changed. Pitney did some background work and indicated that currently UIC and Eastern Illinois University have the same policy as NIU; other state institutions allow a repeat for any grade. Pitney said last year the committee wanted to know what the benefit would be for students. After speaking with some students about the issue, Pitney indicated that students said they may have extenuating circumstances, issues, challenges during the course of a semester and while that may not be at the level of needing an incomplete - it does have a negative impact on their academic performance. Students feel that the ability to retake a course will allow them to show what they are truly capable of. The effect on transfer was also a concern of the committee, Pitney said as far as he can tell it would not have an impact on transfer students.

Stafstrom asked for confirmation that the most recent grade is the one would be counted in the student’s GPA even though all attempts are recorded on the transcript. Birberick and Pitney said that is the case. Birberick added that students have discussed with her the issue of accepting D grades in transfer - also indicating they didn’t see equitable treatment of transfer students if a student attempted to transfer in a requirement where a D was earned at another institution.

Aase asked what the impact of allowing students to repeat any grade would be. Could a department or college allow repeats if there was sufficient classroom space? Birberick indicated she didn’t know if that would be possible. She did point out that currently a student would not be allowed to register if they were making a third attempt at the same course. That student would have to be granted permission for the third attempt. Aase asked if it would be possible to have preference for registration to individuals who have not enrolled in a course before individuals who are on a subsequent enrollment. There was discussion about any limitation being placed on repeats - meaning that any course could be repeated regardless of the grade earned. Aase brought up the discussion from last year. Klonoski added that the University of Iowa allows three repeats regardless of initial grade earned. Birberick added that from the student perspective it was the issue of transferring in courses; specifically where courses could be taken. A grade of D earned at NIU must be repeated at NIU however an F grade may be repeated at another institution. Thompson brought up the advising component regarding students needing a specific grade in a course and weighing whether a drop/withdrawal would be the better option and that brings up additional issues. Sunderlin said allowing repeats for any course may cause the delay of degree completion and that isn’t the kind of culture we want to support. Kot brought up the cost issue - who would be willing to pay for multiple attempts? Birberick indicated that when Rebecca Babel spoke to the committee last year she indicated that students who receive aid were restricted
as far as receiving aid for repeats as well as maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

Birberick summarized the items to further investigate: 1) are repeats allowed for all grade levels; 2) ask R&R about priority registration for classes that have limits; 3) number of times you can repeat. There was further discussion on whether repeats would be allowed for grades higher than a C. Birberick said she heard the committee indicating that they are open to changing the repeat policy but going in a different direction than the proposal suggested by Faculty Senate. Pitney suggested that the benchmark data from other state, as well as MAC institutions be shared with the committee. Birberick said that draft policy changes could be developed and sent out for colleges input. She will work on that with Stafstrom and Pitney.

B. Update on Undergraduate Curricular Restructuring

Birberick talked about the work being done regarding restructuring the undergraduate curricular progress. The proposed model was given to committee members. The Academic Policy subcommittee of the University Council has approved this proposed model that streamlines the curricular process. Birberick explained the Baccalaureate Curriculum Council (BCC) would engage in the duties currently performed by the UCC (Undergraduate Coordinating Council), CUC (Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum) and APASC (Admissions Policy and Academic Standards Committee). The BCC would be the curricular body for programs that do have a college such as UNIV, the Center for Black Studies as well as International. The membership would have the same faculty representation that the UCC currently has; the student representation would remain the same as well. The ex-officio members of the APASC committee would be added to the membership of the BCC as ex-officio, non-voting members to allow for the university-wide perspective for policy creation. They will report directly to the University Council.

Birberick indicated that the proposal was put before the University Council for a first read at yesterday’s meeting. Pitney indicated there were no voices of concern but in all his years at NIU one of the concerns has been how time consuming and cumbersome the curricular process is. Pitney said the discussion of committee consolidation began when he was chair of CUAE and met with the chair of CIUE, whose duties had been diminished by budget cuts. CUAE listened to a lot of reports but didn't really have any action items under their purview. The model parallels the current graduate curriculum model, which has worked. It takes away some of the oversight duties of the UCC. The GEC and Honors committees’ duties basically are unchanged. The reporting committee changed from the UCC to the BCC. Pitney said that the oversight of alumni mentoring of students was added to the combined CUAE/CIUE committee. Pitney said he benchmarked this model and committee
members who were interested could check out Oregon State University or the University of Nebraska.

There was a brief discussion of how the committees would be populated. Pitney indicated that there is precedence of how to proceed when committees are either dissolved or combined. He indicated that right now his office is proceeding as if this proposal does not exist - sending out calls for committee nominations. Once the proposal is approved, they will ask the colleges to aid in selection based on membership of the former committees. Stafstrom pointed out that the information presented to the University Council is available for viewing on their website.

IV. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee

No minutes to receive.

B. Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education

L. Matuszewski reported that the David Raymond Technology in Teaching grant application was reviewed. It met the criteria and therefore, Jessica Reyman from the Department of English would be awarded the grant. She will make a presentation at the end of the month. In addition they finalized plans for the EUIA/EUTA awards. She also said that they discussed an item brought up at UCC on whether the notification was reaching a broad enough audience - they decided that next year the Student Association would added to the notification groups (which include the chairs and deans and advertising in the NIU Today). They discussed the nomination forms for the Excellence awards and clarified who was responsible for completing the various sections. Lastly, Ed Klonoski gave them an update on PLUS.

C. Thompson made a motion to receive the February 6, 2015 minutes of the CIUE, seconded by M. Shokrani. Motion passed unanimously.

C. Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment

No minutes to receive.
D. Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum

T. Atkins reported that the agenda was very short. They reviewed new courses in Sports Management that were approved. Ed Klonoski gave them an update on PLUS.

P. Braun made a motion to received the March 19, 2015 CUC minutes, seconded by Carol. **Motion unanimously passed.**

E. General Education Committee

J. Kot reported that this meeting consisted of the review of the ten Pathway development funding proposals. Eight were selected for funding. The other two the committee felt were much less developed than the others. GEC recommended those two contact the other Pathway groups that had been approved.

M. Shokrani made a motion to receive the February 26, 2015 minutes of the GEC, seconded by P. Braun. **Motion passed unanimously.**

F. University Honors Committee

No minutes to receive.

IV. Other Reports

A. University Assessment Panel

M. Ayers reported that the last meeting of the UAP was actually the Assessment Expo. The Expo was a Showcase of the Best Assessment projects that had been reviewed last year.

V New Business

None
VI  Adjournment

P  Braun made a motion, seconded by G. Aase to adjourn @ 2:35 p.m.
Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Ratfield
Administrative Assistant
Office of the Provost