

FACULTY SENATE MEETING AGENDA
Wednesday, November 16, 2016, 3 p.m.
Holmes Student Center Sky Room

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

III. APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES](#) OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2016 FS MEETING

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Response to [resolution](#) regarding College of Visual and Performing Arts' Art Annex – Page 3
- B. Program Prioritization update
Matt Streb, Program Prioritization Liaison/Facilitator

V. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

VI. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. [Religious holiday observance](#)
Proposal to refer to Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Pages 4-6
- B. Brand Research and Refresh
Harlan Teller, Interim Vice President, Marketing and Communications
Abby Dean, Senior Director of University Marketing and Creative Services

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. [Resolution](#) regarding accommodations for students with disabilities – Pages 7-10

IX. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – no report
- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Cathy Doederlein, Greg Long, Holly Nicholson,
Rebecca Shortridge, Kendall Thu, Leanne VandeCreek

X. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Katy Jaekel, Chair – no report
- B. Academic Affairs Committee – John Novak, Chair – report
- C. Economic Status of the Profession Committee – Paul Stoddard, Chair - no report
- D. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Rebecca Hunt, Liaison/Spokesperson – report
- E. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – Jimmie Manning, Liaison/Spokesperson – no report

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

- A. United Faculty Alliance update – Virginia Naples, UFA President

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- B. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- C. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- D. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- E. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- F. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- G. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- H. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council Curriculum Committee
- J. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

October 21, 2016

To: Greg Long, President of Faculty Senate
Re: Environmental Health and Safety of Students, Faculty, and Staff.
From: John Siblik, School of Art and Design, College of Visual and Performing Arts

The faculty of the School of Art and Design has asked that at the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for October 26, the following resolution, related to the College of Visual and Performing Arts' Art Annex (located at 2211 Sycamore Rd, behind the strip mall that houses the Ellwood Steak House) be considered:

Whereas, the College of Visual and Performing Arts Art Annex is a three-story building at 2211 Sycamore Rd, DeKalb.

Whereas, the Annex serves as costume and set storage for the School of Theater and Dance and currently provides academic workspace for approximately 30 graduate students and 11 faculty members from the School of Art and Design.

Whereas, in July 2015, the Annex experienced flooding of its first floor resulting in significant damage to costumes, sets, and studios.

Whereas, in November 2015 the first floor of the Annex was evacuated, due to potential health issues.

Whereas, School of Art and Design students and faculty members continued to retain workspace on the second and third floors because there are no other available spaces.

Whereas, since July 2015 the School of Art and Design has been working with NIU administration to resolve the problem yet to date, there has been no ability to identify alternative environmentally safe, adequate programmatic spaces.

Whereas, the indoor air quality problem in the Annex is worsening, creating a difficult physical environment throughout all floors of the building that can affect students, faculty, and staff.

Whereas, the current environmental conditions in the College of Visual and Performing Arts Art Annex pose a significant threat to the health and safety of students, faculty and staff, as well as poses a significant liability for the University.

Be it therefore resolved that the University administration should move to immediately provide safe, adequate programmatic space for students and faculty of the School of Art and Design.

It is proposed that this item be referred to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, and that the committee members work with the Presidential Commission on Interfaith Initiatives to develop a syllabus statement regarding religious holiday observance and also to identify specific religious holidays of which faculty can be aware.

October 31, 2016

To: Faculty Senate

From: Greg Long

RE: Respecting religious holidays

Each semester, faculty receive a reminder (attached) regarding religious holidays with a request to avoid scheduling exams on major holidays. Although a reminder is helpful, a story is better. The following email was recently sent to President Baker from a concerned parent. I encourage you to read it and keep it in mind as you develop syllabi for spring semester and beyond.

Please note: This story had a happy ending. President Baker responded promptly to the parent's concerns and the professor readily accommodated the student's request when asked. In addition, I have had several email exchanges with the parent and gained their permission to share the email. My hope in sharing this story is to provide an opportunity for further discussion and awareness-building among faculty, staff, and students regarding religious observances and test scheduling.

Dear President Baker,

As an NIU Alum, I just received an announcement about your decision to protect free speech throughout campus rather than stifling uncomfortable debate and discussion in the classroom and on the campus. I do applaud that decision.

At the same time, as I prepare to commemorate the Jewish Holy Day of Yom Kippur, I heard from my daughter that she cannot attend services tomorrow because she must take an exam. I was appalled.

As an attorney, I know that she has a protected constitutional right to her religious observance. As a parent, I see that she is uncertain of how to stand up in front of a teacher and explain that she cannot take the exam on Wednesday because of her religion even if it would make it "difficult" for her to make up the exam.

One of my colleagues is a professor in Chicago and informed me that they receive a memo at the beginning of the academic year reminding them that they should avoid certain days for exams,

including Yom Kippur. Does NIU not have a similar policy? If so, why do any professors feel that it doesn't apply to them? Do they have to survey the class to impermissibly ask each student for their religious affiliation before deciding to schedule an exam on a particular day?

I remember clearly from my days at NIU that a few of my Jewish friends would have exams on the High Holidays. I always questioned them about why they were allowing themselves to be pressured into taking an exam on a day that should have been sacred. The response was that they were fearful of standing up for themselves as Jews for fear of retribution because of a pervasive anti-Semitic atmosphere at their college. In my own liberal arts college I never experienced that problem, and evidently my religious devotion was greater than theirs, but I NEVER understood it.

And now I don't understand how—40 years later—any student, particularly an unsure freshman—would be in a situation that they have to INSIST on having an alternative test day. It should have been enough to notify the professor that they would be missing class for Yom Kippur. Anything beyond that becomes a burden to the student and in violation of their clear rights.

In college, as well as in life, I am neither timid nor unsure of my religious convictions. But the Constitution is there for the protection of everyone, not just those who are brave enough to demand its protections.

My daughter does not want me to interfere on her behalf with her professor or with the department. She is an adult and wants to deal with her own problems. I respect her decision to fight her own battles and won't interfere...directly.

HOWEVER, I'm appalled that this situation arose and in the interests of free and protected speech, and a clear adherence to the principals and language of the Constitution, I strongly object.

I hope that my daughter will stand up for her own rights, but I am very saddened by the fact that she should have to do so (or not) because of intimidation by a professor who does not respect the faith of others.

Most sincerely,



Northern Illinois University

ANNOUNCEMENTS

NIU Official Announcement

As the dates for a number of religious observances approach, we wish to advise the NIU community of the university's policy regarding this subject. Included below is the university policy as stated in the institution's catalogs and Section I, Item 7, of the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual.

"Northern Illinois University as a public institution of higher education in the State of Illinois does not observe religious holidays. It is the university's policy, however, to reasonably accommodate the religious observances of individual students in regards to admissions, class attendance, scheduling examinations and work requirements. Such policies shall be made known to faculty and students. Religious observance includes all aspects of religious observance and practice as well as belief. Absence from classes or examinations for religious observance does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the period of absence. To request accommodation, students who expect to miss classes, examinations or other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance shall provide instructors with reasonable notice of the date or dates they will be absent.

"Students who believe they have been denied a reasonable accommodation should contact the person identified by the department to hear such complaints, usually the department chair. If the issue is not resolved at the department level, students may proceed to the office of the dean of that college and if it is still unresolved, to the Office of the Provost. Additionally, students may contact the ombudsperson for advice."

We encourage faculty and individuals in supervisory positions to be considerate of the interests of faculty, staff, and students who desire to participate in religious observances. Information regarding dates for religious observances can be found at a variety of online locations including: www.interfaithcalendar.org.

From: Debra Miller <dmiller20@niu.edu>
Date: Thursday, November 10, 2016 at 11:53 AM
To: "glong@niu.edu" <glong@niu.edu>
Subject: DRC Information RE: Resolution

Dear Greg,

Thank you for contacting the DRC to learn more about our services and needs. The Office of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management has been instrumental in supporting our efforts and we are hopeful that initiatives in the works and future requests will be fulfilled so that we can provide the best service to our students who frequent the center as well as faculty who depend on our services to support them and students in their classes.

I have condensed several areas of need (see below) and have attached related, more comprehensive documents.

Thank you again for your willingness to assist in furthering the mission of the Disability Resource Center on behalf of the university.

Sincerely,

Debra

Debra A. Miller, MA, CRC

Director

Disability Resource Center

Division of Student Affairs

& Enrollment Management

Health Services Bldg., Fourth Floor

Northern Illinois University

815-753-1375 phone

815-753-9570 fax

dmiller20@niu.edu

Location: The mission of the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is to create an accessible, inclusive, sustainable learning environment where disability is recognized as an aspect of diversity that is integral to the campus community and to society. Thus, the DRC should ideally reside in a centrally located, student-centered building that is accessible and ADA compliant, and sufficiently sized to better meet the ever-increasing student demand for disability services. The call for relocation has been demonstrated repeatedly not only through Internal and External Program Reviews but also in the form of student and staff concerns and complaints and infrastructure breakdowns.

Personnel: Last year at this time, November 2015, the DRC had a Director, an Assistant Director, and three Access Consultants. In December the Director left the institution and the Assistant Director moved into the acting Director role (The Assistant Director remains vacant but needs to be filled). In February of 2016 one Access Consultant retired and in April a second Access Consultant went on medical leave. That Access Consultant has recently been approved for SURS disability. In 2014 the number of students registered with the DRC was 774. In 2015 that number jumped to 886. Since October 12, 2015, the number continues to increase to **923**.

In August 2016 alone the DRC managed 156 student appointments; through MID-September we managed an additional 163 appointments. We have generated 343 Letters of Accommodation in six weeks as well as administered 320 accommodated exams.

The lone remaining Access Consultant is handling most new students. The Director is serving in the role of Access Consultant to absorb the caseloads from the two now absent Access Consultants (as well as her own which accrued over the past year out of need). This has taken the Director away from critical administrative and supervisory duties. The Director works 60 hours per week to provide direct service to students as well as handle all other functions. **An additional and significant concern** is that students who did not call to make an appointment prior to the beginning of the semester are now waiting weeks and weeks to get in to see the one Access Consultant or the Director (who should not be serving in that capacity). NIU student retention and usage data since the 2012 cohort depicts that students with disabilities are consistently retained at a higher rate than students who do not have a disability. Our

current staffing model will negatively impact student success and retention. **We need a minimum of three Access Consultants based on past need and increasing number of students who are registering with the DRC.** We currently have two positions posted.

Technology and Equipment:

Computer Replacement: The current stock of testing computers, with a few exceptions, was purchased in May 2008, resulting in an average age of 8 years. The operating system on these computers was upgraded from Windows XP to Windows 7 in April 2014 when Microsoft ended support for the XP platform. Over the following winter, most of the testing computers received additional memory cards in an effort to minimize incidents where the computer would shut down during testing, thus resulting in students losing data and causing them significant stress and anxiety in having to start over. In spite of the additional memory, some of the machines still experience shut-down issues.

Brailers: See attached

CCTVs: See attached

Unfinanced Initiatives: The University has committed to centralizing all accommodations through the Disability Resource Center. In addition to added responsibilities that were placed on the DRC to grant accommodations for students whose circumstances may fall under Title IX (e.g. individuals who are pregnant or nursing as well as those experiencing mental health issues due to experiencing personal violence), beginning with the spring semester of 2015, the DRC is now charged with accepting all students who need dietary accommodations in the dining halls. We have also experienced an increase in the number of students needing housing accommodations for comfort animals. New initiatives to work closely with Athletics and CHANCE proactively during the spring of 2016 have also increased demand for services. These initiatives have increased our student registration significantly which is a wonderful trend, but also a taxing one on our already limited resources.

October 16, 2016

Proposed resolution:

The Faculty Senate Steering Committee has asked that at the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting scheduled for November 16, the following resolution, related to the Disability Resource Center, be considered:

Whereas, students with disabilities have a civil right to an accessible education.

Whereas, increasing numbers of students use services at the Disability Resource Center.

Whereas, there is an expectation that students will be scheduled for appointments within two weeks of initial contact.

Whereas, despite two positions being posted, once filled there will be still be insufficient staffing to meet student needs and outreach to faculty and staff.

Whereas, assistive technology and testing computers are essential for service delivery, however, much of the equipment used in DRC is outdated and /or non-functional.

Whereas, students who are blind and require Brailled textbooks often fail to receive their books until after the semester has started.

Whereas, students who are deaf or hard of hearing require captioned video yet the University has no mechanism in place to ensure that videos created by faculty and staff are readily captioned.

Be it therefore resolved that the University administration should move to immediately address the staffing, equipment, and related service delivery needs of the Disability Resource Center thus assuring that students with disabilities receive appropriate accommodations, within a reasonable time.