

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, October 2, 2019, 3 p.m.
Holmes Student Center Sky Room
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Bateni, Buck, G. Chen, J. Chen, Chmaissem, Chomentowski, Collins, Creed, Cripe (for Riley), Demir, Duffin, Fredericks, Grund, Hanley, Hanna, Horn (for Zheng), Hua, Johnston-Rodriguez, Jong, Keddie, Kim, Koss, Kot, Lampi, Littauer, Macdonald, Mayer, McCarthy, McGowan, Millhorn, Millis, Montana, Mooney, Myung (for Shi), Nelson, Newman, Pendergrass, Petgas, Polansky, Qin, Reeves, Schraufnagel, Schuller, Sharp, Siegesmund, Sirotkin, Skarbinski, Slotsve, Staikidis, Surjadi, Tatara, Thu, Wahlund (for Beyer), Weffer, Whedbee, Wilson

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Beyer, Bujarski, Burton, Chakraborty, Farrell, Jaekel, Konen, Kuehl, Martin, Moraga, Penrod, Powell, Rau, Riley, Schatteman, Scherer, Shi, Subramony, Un, Vahabzadeh, Zheng

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Doederlein, Falkoff, Groza, Ingram, Klaper, Royce, White

OTHERS ABSENT: Ferguson, Gelman, Marsh, Kortegast

I. CALL TO ORDER

K. Thu: I call the second Faculty Senate meeting of the 2019-20 academic year to order.

Meeting called to order at 3 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

K. Thu: I'll entertain a motion to adopt the agenda. George [Slotsve]. Second? Any discussion? If not, all those in favor, signify by saying aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay, we have an agenda.

III. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 4, 2019 MINUTES

K. Thu: Next, approval of the minutes from the September 4 Faculty Senate meeting that are in your packet. Again a motion to approve the minutes? Peter [Chomentowski]. Second? George [Slotsve]. Any discussion, corrections, deletions to the minutes? I'm sure you all read them. All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Abstentions? Thank you.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

K. Thu: Next we have President's Announcements, but I have no announcements. So, just to mention that we all received an email concerning the Clery Report that was sent out yesterday or the day before. So I just wanted to make you aware that, what the facts and figures are concerning safety on campus. I think it's important for all of us to be aware of that.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

A. Listening Session with Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram

K. Thu: Okay, on Item V. A., Items for Faculty Senate Consideration, we have a guest with us today, Provost Beth Ingram. And by way of introduction, I wanted to also suggest we might start having a conversation – that's already been going on somewhat among faculty members – about the possibility of making admissions testing optional. So I'm interested in having that conversation. That would mean making SAT or ACT scores optional. In your packet, Pat added an article that came out in Inside Higher Education last week. I don't suggest you try to read it right now, but what it does is it talks about problems with admission testing, ACT and SAT. And so that might be part of the conversation with Beth today. I certainly would like to have that conversation.

So welcome to Provost Ingram. Provost Ingram joined us last May, I believe, coming from NDSU where she was provost and I believe vice president for student affairs. And then before that, she was at my alma mater, the University of Iowa, for a number of years. And she comes from an academic background. She worked up through the ranks, up to full professor at University of Iowa. And so we have very much an academic as our provost. Beth joins us today as just a listening session. I know that she and Sarah McGill, our CFO, have been doing a listening tour to various units. I think she's come to come of your units already. So I think this is basically a continuation of that effort as she just generally wants to hear what you have on your mind. I think she may stick around for part of the rest of the meeting, but this is an opportunity for her to introduce herself, and then for you to ask questions. So, Beth, you want to say a few words first?

B. Ingram: Sure. Thank you for giving me a little bit of time on your agenda today. I guess I don't need to cover where I come from. I'm an economist by training, and so that's my academic background. One of the things I really like about NIU is that I'm in a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which is where my degree is from. But at NDSU, I was in the ag college, which always struck me as a little bit odd. They only have an ag-econ department, so that's where my academic home was there.

It's been a great four-and-a-half months. I arrived in mid-May. The summer, you know, is a good time to sort of get acclimated. But it's been great having the faculty and students back on campus. And one of the things that attracted me to NIU is its mission – that we're a research university, and

so we expect our faculty to pursue research and creative activity, but we also think about doing that in service of the students that we serve, both undergraduate and graduate students. And we have a mission of being accessible and affordable, that this is a place where students from diverse backgrounds can come and we support them in being successful.

One of the events I got to attend a couple of weeks ago was the new faculty dinner. And about 40 faculty were there, new faculty. And one of the things that we do at that dinner, if you haven't been there, is every faculty member gets to stand up and introduce themselves, where they came from, what their academic background is, and what attracted them to NIU. And I would say 90 percent of the faculty there talked about our mission, and how our mission resonated with them. And that that's one of the reasons that they're here. I think that says a lot about NIU and about how the work that you are doing in recruiting faculty that want to join our community and support NIU and its mission.

As Kendall said, this is a listening tour, so I don't want to spend the time talking. But I want to hear from you, what's on your mind, questions that you'd like to ask me. Sarah [McGill] and I have been around to about ten or 12 departments. We're going to visit every department by the end of the spring. And one of the things I plan to do is compile those notes and make them available, so that you can hear what we're hearing out there among the faculty. There are themes that are starting to emerge, and I'd like to share that with the Faculty Senate, as well, so that you know what we're hearing.

With that, I'd like to open it up to questions or comments or things that you'd just like me to know about. If you want to talk about the idea that Kendall brought up, I'd be happy to talk about that as well.

K. Thu: Where would you like to start?

R. Siegesmund: Could you talk a little bit more about the kind of data-drive, data that you want to receive to make decisions about programs going forward?

B. Ingram: I'd say data-informed, not data-driven. The data supports the decisions that we make, but we're not slaves, or we're not beholden to the data. Somebody asked me this in, I think it was the School of Music. And here's the answer I gave there, because I think that it reflects my thinking, having been a provost for a while, and getting to know NIU a little bit. Every college and every department contributes to our mission. But they all do it in different ways. Some departments teach a lot of credit hours that support the general education curriculum or support entry-level courses, but they maybe don't have a lot of majors. Some departments have a lot of majors, but don't teach a lot of credit hours. Other departments are driven by the graduate programs that they offer, but maybe they don't serve the undergraduates. Some programs have a lot of artistic activity going on, or a lot of research activity going on, but maybe smaller teaching missions. Every department has a different mission.

What does that mean when you think about using data to inform resource allocations? It means that you have to have metrics that reflect the full gamut of what we do, and that those metrics are going to be different, depending on the college and the department. I'm not a person who says, "It's

student credit hours taught,” or “It’s research grants that you get,” or “It’s how many books that you publish,” because economists don’t publish books, but people in English do. Whatever we do in terms of metrics has to reflect the culture of the department and how departments fit into the mission of what NIU is about.

K. Thu: Well I have sort of a related follow-up question. I know that we’ve had conversations about decentralizing the budgeting process here. Had the same conversations with Sarah McGill, and that certainly related to colleges having more autonomy in what programs they want and faculty hiring. Could you speak to that a little bit?

B. Ingram: This comes up a lot when we’re out speaking to the departments as well. We have a budget model, and we have some systems that were put into place at a time when we weren’t sure that we were going to be able to meet the budget, during the budget impasse. And money was very tight. There had to be a lot of central control, just to make sure that we got through that time period.

Now it’s now several years later, and we still have a lot of those systems in place. Sarah [McGill] and I are committed to returning control, at least to the colleges, in terms of how you manage your budgets, how you distribute your budgets between salaries and operations, how you use positions that become open. And so we’re committed to a system in which positions don’t get clawed back, they stay in the college; the college is able to allocate positions the way that they need to; you are given more autonomy in how you budget the resources that you have. The strategic plan says that we’ll do that by 2023. Sarah and I would like to do it much, much quicker than that. There are things in the system, and I could give you a specific example if you wanted, but there are pieces of the system that just don’t let us do it right away. It’s going to take us a little bit of time to untangle some of the things that were put into place with respect to that budget control. But the idea is that people on a local level know much better how to spend their money than I do or than Sarah does. So we want to return the control. And the first step in doing that would be to return control to the colleges.

J. Kot: I just was wondering if you are aware of the Financial Aid is distributed at NIU, because we talk a lot and hear about retention. And there’s always been pressure on faculty that you have to retain students. Well I discovered in the last year, talking to not just students but even employees at the Financial Aid Office, that NIU does something pretty weird, namely, when it distributes financial aid, if you come as a freshman, you get the biggest package. You get a little bit of a cut as a sophomore. And then you get a really big cut in financial aid as a junior and senior. I think the theory is that, if we’ve caught you for two years, you’re going to stay anyway. It doesn’t work that way, especially with students like many of ours are fragile, very fragile financially. They will just drop out, even if they’re students in good standing. And that’s a practice that seems to be rather popular around here. And I was wondering if you could take a look at it, because it makes no sense.

B. Ingram: That’s come up in conversations as well. And I would say that I am aware of it, and we have been talking about how our entire financial aid system works, and how we use financial aid to support students. And one piece of that, which I think is very interesting, is related to this test-optional idea, that a lot of our merit aid goes to students with high GPAs and high ACT scores. But we know there’s a lot of evidence out there that ACT scores, actually, aren’t very predictive of performance in college. If you know somebody’s high school GPA, that’s the best predictor of how

they're going to do when they get here. And ACT and SAT don't add much to that. Well, if we're trying to encourage good students, who are going to be successful here, should we be rethinking how we do that merit aid and using other measures of merit that are much more reflective of the student's chance for success here. But I think part of that is: How do we allocate that aid over time, as well. And I agree, I think it's an important issue.

J. Hanna: I'm thinking about the issues that we're going to discuss for priorities in a little bit, and I wanted to know if there's been any attempt to look into the effects that have happened as a result of changing the general education program a few years back. There were some changes to requirements. We created new pathways. And I guess I'm sort of interested, before we get into this discussion, if there's anything that's been determined about how many students are doing the pathways, and about the effects of changes in the general education structure on enrollment and lower level courses.

B. Ingram: I don't know that I can comment on that very much, because it's not something that I'm that familiar with. I've heard anecdotally some comments about it, but I don't know that I have the data. My sense was that the Engagement Plus was actually, students were pursuing that, and the Jobs Plus. But that the other piece, Academics Plus

J. Hanna: I don't remember what they are now.

B. Ingram: I don't remember what the third piece is, Academics Plus? It's the gen ed plus piece of the program, that it might be time to take a look and see if that's working the way that the faculty thought it was going to work when you instituted it.

But curriculum is a faculty issue, and so things like that, I think, are really in your wheelhouse. And I'm more than supportive, and I can do things to help you by getting data or whatever. But it's really up to you to think about where you want to spend your time and thinking about the curriculum that spans the campus.

K. Thu: I'll add that I've brought this up at numerous meetings, because we put a lot of energy and effort into Gen Ed reform, and now we need to figure out what it's done, if anything. Was our time spent appropriately? This faculty body can't do that. We need to have the data. I think we need to work through the Gen Ed Committee and figure out a plan for actually looking at the outcome or the results (I don't like to call it outcomes), but what's actually happened?

J. Pendergrass: I'm on the Gen Ed Committee and, indeed, we're looking at the pathways, and we'll probably issue recommendations to the Baccalaureate Council this year.

K. Thu: Great, thank you. Do you have any idea what the timeline might be?

J. Pendergrass: No.

K. Thu: Other comments or questions? Well I know another concern the faculty have, and I know you've heard this in all of your faculty meetings, is what's going on with evaluating HR. And I know that Chris McCord had launched an effort to try to find out what the issues were. And I've

heard concern that, is something actually happen as a result of that effort. Could you comment on that?

B. Ingram: I've spent a lot of the summer – I've met with all of the groups in HR. I've been talking to people around campus. It's complicated, as you might expect, as most issues in universities are. I think there are really two threads: One thread is processes, and that's what Chris McCord and his committee were working on. How do we make sure that we have processes that make sense, that run well, that people are informed about, so that they can run efficiently. And how do we use technology to make those processes easier for us. And so there are some changes that are being made along those lines, probably not fast enough. But if we're going to use technology and a process, let's make sure that it makes sense to everybody, and it's easy to use, and it helps us, it doesn't create another barrier.

I think there's another piece, which is more philosophical. And that is: How does HR interact with the rest of campus to support what we need to do – to support our hiring, to get talented people here, to make sure that they're paid what we need to pay people in order to retain talent and to attract talent. And that's a bigger question, because it's based on the culture in HR and the culture on campus. And so I don't want to stop at just fixing processes, although that's important. I want to have larger discussions about: How do we make sure that HR is a service unit that helps us do the work that we need to do.

One thing that we've done just recently, mainly because – and all of this is sort of tied up with some things that happened last year with the movement from moving a lot of our staff from SPS to Civil Service, which was something that came down on us from above. I just allocated two new positions to HR so we can at least get caught up. So part of the problem is that they're just slammed, and they're just way far behind. And we've known for a long time that they're just not staffed at the level of any other university in the state. And they just haven't had enough people to do the work that they need to do.

I think that leads to other problems, because if you're overworked and you're behind, I know I get frazzled when I can't get my work done. And so I'm hoping that the two new positions that they will keep until we have a reasonable workload for everybody, will help at least in the short term, help them get caught up and give them some more time to work with people, as opposed to just worrying about whether they've gotten their work done over the course of the day.

So, I have one question for you, and it's sort of a communication question. One of the things that I did for a long time in my old position was that about every two or three weeks, I sent out a quick email just to the faculty that was just bullet points of things that were going on. It was really quick. It was probably, I don't know, that long as an email. Would people here find that helpful? It was usually a couple things that were going on in the Office of the Provost or something that was coming down the pike with respect to faculty that you might want to pay attention to. Would that be useful?

Members: Yes.

K. Thu: I think it would be very useful. In this position, I see things that are happening on the faculty side, and I see things that are happening from the administration side. And I see sort of a gap in between. I'm sort of, in part, a communication vehicle to make the connection. The more we can do along those lines, the better.

B. Ingram: Okay.

K. Thu: Other comments or questions? Well thank you for coming. I had a colleague once who is a veterinarian and he said, "well, we've got to bird dog that." So we've got to bird dog these issues. We have to keep after them. Thank you.

B. Rethinking Faculty Senate and Shared Governance

K. Thu: Okay, next I want to continue our conversation or actually continue in earnest the conversation about rethinking Faculty Senate and shared governance. There's a Powerpoint in your packet, and it's going to be projected up here. As luck would have it, and I mean that in a good way, this morning I had a conference call with all of my counterparts at our sister institutions in Illinois. And I had suggested to them that we put the structure of shared governance on the agenda. And it was a two-hour video conference call. Turned out we spent the first entire hour talking about the structure of shared governance, and I shared with them our structure [inaudible] captured accurately here compared to what is going on at our sister institutions. Basically, the stuff that you're going to hear here was confirmed. And there was a lot of robust discussion about what's going on elsewhere.

As mentioned at the first meeting, one of my priorities in running for this position was to take a hard look at our shared governance structure. And look at it, not just in terms of what it looks like here, but how it compares to our sister institutions, and whether it's working, and what we might do about it. So I want to spend probably 20 minutes, 15-20 minutes going through the Powerpoint slide presentation. Feel free to interject, jump in at any point. And then at the very end, we'll save some time for more general conversation. So if we could go to the first slide.

So what this packet contains, first of all if we go to the first slide, it's just a reminder of what our shared governance looks like. Well, this is the purpose. So I want to have a conversation about vesting Faculty Senate with academic authority, which is the way things are handled at other institutions, as you'll see. And then possibly simplify shared governance. I've heard loud and clear that we have too many damn committees. We're going to take a small step in that direction, hopefully, toward the end of the meeting, to get rid of a committee.

Sort of amusingly, one day I asked Pat, well how many university-wide committees do we actually have? And how many total seats do we have. And this is what she came up with – this is just an estimate. We have over 100 university-wide committees. And among those 103 university-wide committees, there are 1600 seats. Now a lot of us are members of multiple committees, so that means that we're in multiple places. So I don't know how that compares to other institutions of our size, but it just seems like a lot to me. Next slide.

So here's what we look like in terms of our shared governance. As you know, we have Faculty Senate, and we have a University Council. The Constitution and Bylaws require that the

membership of University Council is the president, provost and nine deans – and these are all voting members. And I can tell you, that doesn't exist at any of our sister institutions. It requires that over 50 percent of the membership of UC are tenured faculty, not just tenure track, but tenured faculty. That we have 16 students, two reps from SPS, two from OSC. And the University Council then has the power to establish educational academic policy of the university.

Faculty Senate then has its own set of bylaws. There are 76 voting members, and that means that every department or unit on campus has representation, so this is a faculty body. And the faculty, through the Faculty Senate, may communicate its concerns, recommendations and positions to the University Council. So even though the Constitution says faculty shall prevail on academic matters, the structure isn't set up that way.

So how does this compare to our sister institutions. So I've looked at the bylaws for shared governance at every one of our counterparts. I've also talked to just about everyone of my counterparts that at our sister institutions. So I'm going to go through those fairly quickly. Next slide.

Illinois State – this is what their Academic Senate – they have 29 tenure track faculty members, and then they have these other representations that is somewhat like what we do in UC; not exactly, but somewhat. And it makes clear that the Academic Senate will be the primary body to recommend educational policies of the university. And they have no University Council counterpart. And somebody asked me at the UC Steering Committee meeting, what do they do then if they don't have a body that deals with non-academic matters. What's typical is to have some sort of smaller executive committee that includes representation, for example, from each of the colleges, representation from Faculty Senate, representation from administration. And that body gets together as an executive committee, a steering committee, whatever you want to call it and makes recommendations about non-academic policy. Next slide.

Here's Western Illinois – 23 tenure track and instructors, all faculty. It serves as a means by which the opinions and viewpoints of the faculty may be determined. And again, there's no University Council counterpart. There's just a single body. Next one.

Governor's State – I actually had the opportunity to sit down with my counterpart there. Again, the senate is the elected and representative body of the faculty. And they shall consider and make recommendations and pass resolutions. There are 25 tenure track faculty and one senior instructor position. Again, there's no University Council counterpart. Next one.

Chicago State – same sort of thing. The senate focuses on academic concerns as admissions. The membership is one tenure track member from each academic discipline. And then it makes allowances where you have disciplines with more faculty. And then there's the provost or designee. This is an exception, actually. Where there are administration representations in the body, they are usually ex officio, nonvoting. Next slide.

UIUC – as you might imagine, it's much larger. They have 200 faculty members, 50 students and 10 academic professionals. Their bylaws are very clear and very strong. It says, senate shall determine for its campus matters of educational policy and the like. I would say that the University

of Illinois Urbana Champaign and SIU have the strongest faculty senate language. And then again, they have no University Council counterpart. Next slide.

Southern Illinois – 23 tenure track, 16 non-tenure track. Again, their language is quite strong. It says the Faculty Senate is the body empowered to act as an agent for the university faculty with delegated power to formulate broad policies and so forth. And again, there's no University Council counterpart. Next one.

Provost Ingram was gracious enough to send out an email – there's a provost listserv, apparently, asking about shared governance structures elsewhere. This is just sort of a smattering of responses. Basically, certainly not representative response from all institutions, but of the eight that responded, seven of the institutions have faculty senates as the primary body, similar to what we see at our sister institutions in Illinois. Okay, next slide.

Eastern Illinois – similar sort of thing, 15 faculty members. They do have this sort of executive committee that deals with budgetary matters, planning and budget. I see that sort of as what we do in our Resources, Space and Budget Committee, which has representation of University Council, Faculty Senate, staff and students. So they have what's called a Council on University Planning and Budget, where the senate chair comes; they have five faculty from the colleges; they have a union rep there, as well; grad student; and so forth. So that is somewhat like, I think, the spirit of our University Council, but I think it operates in a smaller scale and sort of like our Resource, Space and Budget Committee. Next slide.

So this is just a repeat of the Constitution and Bylaws that I already mentioned. The Constitution indicates that the faculty shall predominate in all policy decisions relating to the faculty personnel system and curriculum. But currently the power to do that rests in University Council. Next slide.

This is just a repeat of what I put up front. You can go to the next slide so we can get through all this.

The Faculty Senate has 76 voting members. The NIU Constitution recognizes the Faculty Senate and recognizes that they may communicate concerns and recommendations to the University Council. This conversation about moving more authority to Faculty Senate has been going on for many years. And what I'm trying to do is sort of move the conversation forward.

Challenges – senate and UC bylaws don't empower senate to prevail in faculty personnel. The shared governance for NIU rests in University Council. And for the most part, our peer institutions don't follow this kind of model.

What can we do – next slide – Well we can move language currently in the UC bylaws to Faculty Senate; amend Article 1 of the Constitution from the University Council to the Faculty Senate, making them the primary body for academic matters. And then move committees, where necessary. I'm going to show a chart here shortly.

But the University Council may retain non-academic duties. University Council is the primary body to amend the Bylaws and the Constitution. That still remains with University Council. They also

have a role in the hiring of the president and administrative members. They participate in the budgeting process, particularly through the Resource, Space and Budget Committee. They have a role in campus planning. We have a capital bill that, hopefully, will be funded at some point, and we're making decisions about which buildings to invest in and what maintenance plan we should be working on.

So what I'm suggesting is that this body, which is the faculty body, might prepare a plan and recommendations for shared governance changes to the University Council. And then prepare wording changes to that effect in the Constitution and Bylaws and, of course, keep everyone in the loop.

I want to point out that this doesn't change the approval process beyond shared governance. It still has to go through the provost, president. And ultimately, the Board of Trustees makes the final decision. That's the last slide, right?

So Vicki actually asked at one point, can we have a visual of this? And so I asked Pat whether she could help come up with a visual of what the organizational structure would look like if we made this change. So you all have this in your packet. It's exceedingly difficult to discern, because we have such a – why don't you go to the next one. So you have three charts. One is the university-wide organizational chart of shared governance. The second one is the current academic shared governance structure. So you go from the Board of Trustees, the president, and then the University Council. And then Faculty Senate is really an appendage to the current University Council. And then there's the subcommittee structure with all sorts of subcommittees that are part of the University Council. There are fewer that are in the Faculty Senate.

Now this is just one idea – I'm just throwing it out there so you have a visual. This is what it might look like. So this is just a concept for purposes of conversation. Rather than having Faculty Senate be an appendage of University Council, the academic committees would move under Faculty Senate, which is the way it's organized at our sister institutions. And you don't really have to change too much with those committee structures, because most of them are populated by faculty already. They're doing their jobs. And then University Council would retain the committee structure concerning non-academic affairs. So this sort of puts Faculty Senate and University Council on the same footing, but University Council dealing with non-academic matters and Faculty Senate dealing with academic matters.

So that is the long and the short of it. Questions? Concerns? Jim.

J. Millhorn: If this proposed change went through, would people who are currently on University Council still retain their status with Faculty Senate?

K. Thu: That's a good question.

J. Millhorn: Or are you going to separate that out? Would it be a truncated council?

K. Thu: I don't know yet. A lot of the details we're going to have to work out. And the membership on both bodies, the committee structure, the committee membership, that's going to have to be

worked through. What I would like to do today is, if you think this concept should be moved forward, I want to hear from you. Because to do that work, I need to have some sense that this body is in favor of moving in that direction.

J. Millhorn: Right now University Council as you have it, has 76 members.

K. Thu: No, 63 members.

J. Millhorn: Okay, let's say you took out 32 by eliminating the authority of those members elected to University Council. I mean this would be a much smaller body.

K. Thu: Right, which is the way it is at other universities, where they have these smaller executive committees to do that kind of work.

J. Millhorn: Those people were elected to the University Council with the notion from their electorate that they had this authority. And you're asking them to cede that authority.

K. Thu: That's right, let's be clear about that. Jim's absolutely right. We're asking University Council members to give up some power, and push academic matters into the Faculty Senate, and let them have authority over it. And to do that, we would need two-thirds of the University Council to agree. Two-thirds of the council members that are present at a meeting. So that's not a small order, and that includes Operating Staff Council is at the table. There's a lot of students at the table; they would have to agree to this, as well as SPS. And the administration would have to agree to it as well. So you're absolutely right. Those folks that were elected to University Council would have to agree that this is a direction we would want to go.

O. Chmaissem: I may have missed the previous discussions, but when you restructure anything, there must be a problem to address. Somehow, I'm failing to see the problem. What would we achieve with this?

K. Thu: Well I wouldn't characterize it as a problem. There is a problem in terms of efficiency, where academic matters aren't necessarily brought to the Faculty Senate, because it's known that Faculty Senate doesn't have any power. The other problem is that I've heard and I've felt in the past that coming to a Faculty Senate meeting is not as – you're not motivated to come to a Faculty Senate meeting, because we don't have the authority to deal with matters. So one problem is just efficiency. We can go through Faculty Senate. Then it goes to University Council. Then it goes to committee. It would be more efficient, I think, where everybody knows, including the administration, that Faculty Senate is the faculty body where academic matters are referred to and discussed and issues passed.

A. Keddie: Would it not, in fact, give more power to the faculty?

K. Thu: Oh yes.

A. Keddie: That's what I think it would do.

K. Thu: Absolutely.

A. Keddie: Because they don't have as much power through University Council, especially considering how many administrators are there.

K. Thu: Yes. And that's an important point. This is an empowering process, an empowering effort to faculty. Not everybody in here is in the faculty union, but we have a faculty union now; and I think this is just another step in the direction of insuring that tenure and tenure track faculty are the backbone of the university.

S. Johnston-Rodriguez: Well, having come from a very strong faculty governance system in Wisconsin and having been on both UC and now my third year here, I guess I can only say that there's such a difference from my previous experience where we actually were involved in the academic affairs and made decisions and set policy, to here. I mean it's night and day. And I feel – no I'm not meaning to disparage, but I feel pretty much in a figurehead position here, that we really do not have any voice. And so I kind of even question sometimes the whole purpose of Faculty Senate without that governance.

K. Thu: I've heard that a number of times. Thanks for sharing. Others?

G. Chen: Kendall, my understanding right here is that you are looking for support for the new opportunities or the concept of improving the efficiency of our shared governance right here. So I'm not sure if you are also willing to consider one more idea, the possibility of the following: merging Faculty Senate and the University Council together. Not saying right now. According to your previous slide, I saw that the faculty representatives in UC has 30-some seats. And in our Faculty Senate, we have 76 or so. So I'm thinking that, if we are merging these two bodies together, is there a possibility that the faculty representatives in the newly merged body can have a 76 seats in the new body so that we can run one shared governance body for the entire university, for either academic matters or the budget matters or whatever the business or other matters at university. I think that we really can all take care together, and that would be the organization or the structuring of the subcommittees under this if we all agree to merge together and with more representatives or seats of the faculty members. So that's my idea. I'm not sure if this is something okay or not okay.

K. Thu: A couple reactions to that. One is, we would then rival Champaign Urbana in terms of the sheer size of the people in shared governance. We would be massive. The other concern that I have is that it would diminish the voices of students and staff and SPS in non-academic side of the equation. I don't want to deplete their voices in those other matters. So I guess my reaction is, one, it would be very cumbersome to have a single body that size. And secondly, I'm concerned about what it means for Operating Staff Council and SPS and students. But, hey, this is part of the conversation, so I'm glad you're sharing. Anybody else?

J. Royce: Well, now that I have everyone's attention. Jeffrey Royce, president of the Operating Staff Council. If you don't mind me weighing in on the topic, Kendall.

K. Thu: Oh absolutely.

J. Royce: Especially with what was just brought up. As a staff member, I know one of the concerns of the SPS Council – my colleague, Cathy, is not here today – and the Operating Staff Council that, in general, through shared governance, you know, shared doesn't just end at faculty. It would include all representatives of the university. And on University Council, there's only staff voices, even though we represent probably three times as many people than faculty do. And students, obviously, proportionately, are even less so. There are 16 students representing probably 1,000 people each. And my concern – I don't want to speak on behalf of Ian [Pearson]. I see him across the room today – the curricular matters that University Council currently settles, at least has 16 student voices weighing into the conversation. And if curricular matters just go to the Faculty Senate, would you consider also adding 16 student voting position to the Faculty Senate so they retain their voice.

K. Thu: Good question. One of the things I clearly learned this morning from my conversations with my counterpart is that students are regularly part of the Faculty Senate and that they do have voting rights. So in my class, I regularly ask students, do you like this part of the course? Should I keep this part of the course going forward? So that consultation with students – they don't get to take my place and give their grade – but I listen to what they have to say so that I can improve the course. I'm very open to having students on the Faculty Senate, whatever number that might be. So absolutely.

I think at this point, we're going to have more conversations about this. This is certainly not the end point. It's just part of the beginning. What I would like to have is a motion to support additional effort to move in this direction. I know that's kind of vague, but if we're going to do this, there are two things that I think need to be clear. One, is that this is a faculty-led effort; and two, if I'm going to put a lot more effort into this, I want to know that you're behind it. That's not committing you to anything. I'm going to do the heavy lifting. And what I would do as a next step, if you approve the general idea, is I would bring to the Faculty Senate suggested language changes in the Constitution and Bylaws. It's not a glamorous work, but I've already started doing it, thinking that perhaps you would support this general idea.

So would anybody be willing to make that motion? I'm not sure I articulated it very clearly. Give it a try.

A. Keddie: Okay, I'll make a motion to move the process of reforming the shared governance process forward.

K. Thu: Fair enough. Do we have a second? Second to George [Slotsve]. Okay, additional discussion?

J. Millhorn: You're right. That's really vague.

K. Thu: Because

J. Millhorn: I mean, I'm voting on vagueness [inaudible]

K. Thu: Okay, other discussion?

V. Collins: I just want to bring back the concern, because it was raised in Steering Committee as well, in terms of just being very clear going forward, why we think this is important. And so I heard a couple of things, like from Gary, there's efficiency. There's another thing I heard about in terms of faculty power, in terms of academic policy. I just feel like we're making a vote to move forward, to move forward to do what? So does it need to be general, like you said, in terms of improving the process? Would it be helpful to have that clarity in terms of what the concerns, what we're trying to address in terms of improving, before just moving forward without clarity.

K. Thu: Going back to the question about is there a problem that we're solving. I think we're improving what we're doing. We're moving responsibility for academic matters to the faculty, fully to the faculty. And that's what we're doing. It's plain and simple.

H. Bateni: I'm just curious about the comment that was made earlier. So if some of the task of the UC is being transferred to the Faculty Senate, then the next step would be thinking that now students have less representatives, so let's change the Faculty Senate format to have more students. So what I am thinking – and I may be totally missing the point – but then the possibility that, little by little, we justify changing the format of the Faculty Senate to become just like UCPC [UC], because of those tasks being transferred. And then if there is any task from the Faculty Senate being transferred to UC, then we try to change the UC format to make it like Faculty Senate. And then, at the end after a few years, we're thinking of why not having just one body here to make all the decisions. So just a thought.

K. Thu: No, I understand. I don't want to just have this a process where we go around the block and end up where we started from. So I honestly don't know what the outcome's going to be. I think the conversation is important. I think we need to seriously consider whether we want to move in this direction. And I think we try to avoid doing what you just suggested, which is ending up with two bodies that are just some sort of morphing into what we already are.

J. Royce: I think I can clarify and elaborate on the question a little more, at least from the perspective of staff members. I think when we're talking about academic and curricular concerns, that decision needs to be with the faculty. That decision needs to be with the students and however you guys divvy that up. I think most staff members would not even want to have a say in that. But since University Council does do other things in addition to academic and curricular matters, it would be beneficial, as a staff member, to at least have an equal say in those items. So if University Council is maybe downsized and a little more – you know, equality is spread throughout with regard to representation from faculty, staff and students, and they can handle all those non-academic/curricular matters, and then the Faculty Senate would, hopefully, with some student representation as well, can have the final say on all academic matters, I think that just makes all of our voices a bit more accurate, a bit more equitable, at least in the proper proportions.

K. Thu: Well, thank you. I don't want to belabor this; I mean, we're going to have more conversations about this, obviously. And I know the motion is vague. But I just want to make sure that I understand from faculty that this is a direction you want to go. And then I would do the next step, which is suggest language changes and bring that back to you for vetting as well.

So we have a motion and a second on the floor. Any other discussion before we move ahead and vote? Okay, all those in favor, signify by raising your hand. Do we need a count, or can we just...let's use the clickers. You all have a clicker, right? If you don't have a clicker, we'll give you a chance to get your clicker. And while you're getting your clicker, I apologize that the meeting's going to last a little bit longer than normal. It's just that we have a lot of heady matters to get through. Okay, so I would imagine 1 is yes to the motion that we want to move this process forward. Two would be no, and 3 would be abstain. Are we ready, Pat? Okay, go ahead and vote now.

H. Bateni: Can you say that again.

K. Thu: One is yes, 2 is no, 3 is abstain. Everybody done? Do you want to grab another one? Maybe you'll have two votes. Yes, take that one out of commission. Okay, ready? Okay. We've got 43 for, seven against and three abstentions. So thank you very much.

Yes – 43

No – 7

Abstain – 3

So we will move on with this, and I will start working on additional potential language changes. And the conversation will continue.

- C. Prioritizing faculty issues
Ballots will be distributed at the Faculty Senate meeting.

K. Thu: Okay, next on the agenda is revisiting prioritizing faculty issues. I want to have a mulligan, or do-over, with what we did the last time. I wasn't satisfied with the conversation, and I wasn't satisfied with the voting. So, thanks to John Pendergrass for suggesting an alternative voting procedure. In your packet on page 29, and at your seat as well, there's a voting sheet that has all of the issues that were presented last time. And so you have five choices. You have a first, second, third, fourth and fifth choice. We're not going to be able to tally these in real time. It's going to take a little bit of time for Pat to go through and tally them all up. But I'd like you to indicate which one is your first choice, second choice, third choice, fourth choice and fifth choice. And then I think we discussed in UC [FS] Steering Committee, how we would actually present the results. And I don't think I can replicate that conversation. And, of course, if you want to say something about any one of these issue areas, please feel free to do so. And the idea here is for the Faculty Senate to decide what it is we want to focus on. And then once we know what those are, then what course of action we're going to take is going to be dependent upon what our options are. So if you'll fill that out – do you want them to leave it on the table? Leave it on your table upside down. Don't put your name on it. And we'll collect those at the end of the meeting. So that takes care of Items for Faculty Senate Consideration.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approve School of Nursing Professor Cristan Sabio to serve a three-year term on the Libraries Advisory Committee.

- B. Approve School of Family and Consumer Sciences Professor Xiaohui Sophie Li to serve a three-year term on the University Press Board.
- C. Approve School of Art and Design Professor Sarah Evans to serve a three-year term on the University Press Board.

K. Thu: Moving on, Roman numeral VI, we have the Consent Agenda, three items there. Approving the School of Nursing Professor Cristan Sabio to serve a three-year term on the Libraries Advisory Committee, approve of a term on the University Press Board, and approve Sarah Evans to serve a three-year term on the University Press Board. Okay. We need a motion to approve all of the items on the Consent Agenda. I have a motion [O. Chmaissem], do we have a second? [unidentified]. Second? All those in favor, say aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay.

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- A. FAC to IBHE – Linda Saborío – report

K. Thu: So now let's move to Reports from Advisory Committees. I think we only have a couple here. Linda, I know you're here, I saw you. You want to give a report on the FAC to IBHE.

L. Saborio: Good afternoon. I guess I could do this standing. This year I will be submitting a written report each month with updates and information regarding the FAC meetings. And then during Faculty Senate and University Council, I'm just going to highlight some of the important

K. Thu: There maybe senate members that don't know what FAC is.

L. Saborio: It's the Faculty Advisory Council to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. And we have one faculty representative from the 12 public universities, one faculty representative from community colleges that are on a rotating basis, and one from 12 public and proprietary institutions. We meet once a month at a different location around the state. For October, we're actually going to have a Zoom meeting, because we could not find an institution willing to host us that month. There is a bit of a cost involved. And in November, the meeting will actually be here at NIU. We'll be hosting them here.

So the FAC met on September 20 at Illinois State University. As this was our first meeting of the academic year, we spent a fair amount of time discussing potential topics for our working groups. Of particular interest is faculty's role in rebuilding higher education in Illinois now that we have a somewhat sustainable budget. I hesitate to say that, but it does look like we have good news coming from downstate.

Other issues include homelessness; mental health, in which there was a bill that was recently passed about mental health. Outmigration continues to be a problem. Students choosing not to attend any college also continues to be a problem. And how to package Illinois as the top choice for student education. Many of our top students are choosing to attend four-year institutions outside of the state, and they are being recruited quite actively. If you have a particular topic not listed here that you would like for us to consider, please email me directly with your ideas.

We also met with Rep. Dan Brady, and he mentioned the five percent increase that I think Kendall also mentioned for publics overall in the operational budgets, and the capital bill that was funded by the increase in the gas tax, the expansion of gaming and other initiatives.

We stressed to Rep. Brady our need to demonstrate stability in the state. Basically, we need to change the narrative about higher education in our state. And also the idea of reinvestment and more marketing would be a good start.

And finally, some good news, Gov. Pritzker announced nine appointments to the IBHE. We now have a qualified faculty member serving on the board – yes! Associate professor in higher education, Jennifer Delaney, from UIUC is the faculty rep on the IBHE.

And the full list of appointments has been included with my FAC report. Of special note is one of our own BOT members, Veronica Herrero is on the IBHE too.

So this concludes my report, and I open the floor for any questions.

K. Thu: Questions for Linda?

L. Saborio: Or a song and a dance.

K. Thu: Thanks, Linda. Thorough as usual. Appreciate it.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report
Jeffry Royce, Cathy Doederlein, Kendall Thu
Alex Gelman, Sarah Marsh, Jason Hanna

K. Thu: The next item is a report from the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. I just have a few items that I want to share from the last board meeting. Actually, the last board meeting is packed with a lot of things that are likely important to all of you, so my report is not going to be comprehensive. But I am going to indicate to you where you might go to look for some information.

Probably one important note was the presence of the faculty union at the last board meeting. They turned out in numbers, all their green shirts, their advocacy paraphernalia. And Mark Schuller, one of our colleagues, who is the vice president of the union, made remarks on behalf of the union. I think it was vary tactfully done. I think that we were well received. And I think, given the status of the tentative agreement between the Board of Trustees and the faculty union, I think that presence

made a mark. And I will say that Dennis Barsema, the BOT chair, was very supportive of our faculty. And Mark, do you have anything to say?

M. Schuller: That was an accurate summary. We had 72 people show up, and the administration countered with another \$1 million for funding, for travel for increases in salaries. The final draft of the tentative agreement, which will be voted on by members, is going to be finished within the next couple of days. But people know that they can vote on it. Members will have the opportunity to vote the 14th to the 17th, so two weeks from now, we'll be voting on our contract.

K. Thu: Thank you. So a few other highlights from the last board meeting. The university put in its budget request for FY21. They're requesting a base funding level that's an increase of three percent. And all the detailed budget numbers are in the minutes of the last board meeting. There were 11 capital projects put forward that totaled \$326 million. And there are 20 capital renewal projects totaling \$57 million. So if you're interested in looking at where your building fits, or where your project fits in all of that, there's a detailed list of what the university's priorities are, and then how those priorities are sorted out by the state as a whole. So, in other words, how do NIU's priorities fit into the state's overall priorities. All of that's listed in the minutes.

Just to give you a sense of what the top priorities are for capital projects at NIU, there's a health informatics and technology center that's number one. And there's a description of each of these in the minutes, as well. DuSable is number two. It sorely needs upgrading. Williston Hall is number three. Still Hall is number four. Gabel and Graham are number five. And Davis Hall renovation is number six. There's more to it than that.

Then in terms of renewal projects, there's something called Critical Electrical Infrastructure Improvements, which is the top renewal project. Swen Parson is number two. Gabel Hall roof replacement is number three. Music Building roof replacement is number four. And then there are some others there, as well.

A few other things that occurred at the last board meeting. Our faculty emeritus were recognized. We were given a detailed federal relations and sponsored programs report, so all the numbers about our grantsmanship are in the minutes of that last meeting. Then we had a presentation by Dr. Nicole LaDue from Geology, just to showcase faculty research, to let board members know what research looks like. And then there was a discussion of the new FMLA policy. But there's a lot more in the minutes that I would direct your attention to.

So that concludes my report from the University Advisory Committee.

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

K. Thu: We have no report from Katy, Peter or Keith.

- A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Katy Jaekel, Chair – no report
- B. Academic Affairs Committee – Peter Chomentowski, Chair – no report

- C. Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession – no report
- D. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Keith Millis, Liaison/Spokesperson – no report
- E. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – George Slotsve, Liaison/Spokesperson – report

K. Thu: George, do you want to say a few words about Resources, Space and Budget?

G. Slotsve: Sure. RSB had its first meeting on Friday, Sept. 6. And we got together and discussed topics that we'll be focusing on in the upcoming academic year. Among the topics that we'd like to focus on, were providing input and feedback regarding the developing the Facilities Master Plan, which you partially alluded to already. And connected to that is working on a way or place to gather campus information on facilities from the perspective of those that are working in these various places. We also discussed continued ways to try to better communicate budget and eventual decentralization of budget, as well as more relevant formats for disseminating that information.

Finally, Jeffry Royce was selected to serve on behalf of RSB on the Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee, so I'd like to thank Jeffry for actually volunteering.

K. Thu: Jeffry is everywhere. Thanks, George. Any questions for George?

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposal to amend Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 3.4 Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession
FIRST READING

K. Thu: If not, we can move on to New Business. If you turn to page 35 and 36 in your packet, we have a first reading of a proposed change to the Faculty Senate Bylaws. And this is to eliminate the Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession. It's one of our five committees in Faculty Senate.

There are three primary reasons for doing this. One is that we have heard loud and clear from faculty that there are too many faculty committees, and we're spread too thin. I can vouch for that. Secondly, the function of that committee has largely been subsumed by the faculty union in terms of the collective bargaining agreement. And thirdly, some of the functions of that committee can be moved to the Committee on Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, where it's necessary.

This is just the first reading. It doesn't require a vote. It's a change in our bylaws in Faculty Senate, so the voting will take place at the next meeting. But at this point, I would certainly welcome any comment or questions about this move. Therese.

T. Arado: One, I'm in favor of eliminating some committees; but, unfortunately, this is not one that I'm on, so it won't help me. But I just have a couple of comments regarding the reasoning behind it. I want to make people aware that rationale number two, while the faculty union does cover a number of things, there are a number of us in the room that are not covered by the collective bargaining agreement. So using that as a rationale has to be done in a thoughtful way, because actually a majority of the people sitting at my table are not covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

And the second thing is, if you look at the charges of Economic Status and Faculty Rights and Responsibilities, I think the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities charge would have to be adjusted in order to accommodate some of the things that were in Economic Rights and Responsibilities, which if this were to be eliminated, which is fine, I think we'd have to re-write the charge of Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

But again, I am not opposed to eliminating committees. Thank you.

K. Thu: Thanks, Therese. Other comments? Okay, if not, we will bring that back to the senate at the next faculty meeting for an actual vote.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

K. Thu: Are there any other items that anybody has?

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. [Policy Library](#) – Comment on Proposed Policies (right-hand column on web page)
- B. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- C. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- D. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- E. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- F. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- G. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- H. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- J. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council Curriculum Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- L. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), Student Senate
- N. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- O. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- P. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- Q. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- R. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- S. 2019-20 Faculty Senate meeting dates:
Sep 4, Oct 2, Oct 30, Nov 20, Jan 22, Feb 19, Mar 25, Apr 22

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

K. Thu: If not, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn. Jim [Wilson]. Second?

P. Chomentowski: Second.

K. Thu: All in favor?

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Thanks everybody. We'll see you next month.

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.