

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE MEETING
Wednesday, October 30, 2019, 3 p.m.
Holmes Student Center Sky Room
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Bateni, Bowers (for Shi), Buck, Burton, G. Chen, J. Chen, Chmaissem, Chomentowski, Collins, Demir, Duffin, Dzurian (for Riley), Farrell, Fredericks, Hanna, Hua, Jaekel, Jong, Keddie, Kim, Koss, Kuehl, Littauer, Macdonald, Mayer, McCarthy, McGowan, Millhorn, Montana, Nelson, Newman, Pendergrass, Polansky, Powell, Qin, Reeves, Schatteman, Schraufnagel, Schuller, Sharp, Siegesmund, Skarbinski, Slotsve, Surjadi, Tatara, Thu, Un, Vahabzadeh, Villanueva, Weffer, Whedbee, Wilson, Zheng

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Beyer, Bujarski, Creed, Grund, Hanley, Johnston-Rodriguez, Konen, Kot, Lampi, Martin, Millis, Mooney, Moraga, Penrod, Petgas, Rau, Riley, Scherer, Shi, Sirotkin, Staikidis, Subramony

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Doederlein, Falkoff, Groza, Ingram, Jensen, Klaper, White, Whitelaw

OTHERS ABSENT: Ferguson, Gelman, Hanna, Marsh, Kortegast, Woodruff

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 3 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

K. Thu: First I'll entertain a motion to adopt the agenda.

G. Slotsve: So moved.

K. Thu: George. Patricia [Skarbinski] second. Any additions, deletions, changes? All in favor, signify by saying aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Abstentions? Thank you very much. And by the way, when you do speak, please state your name and your department, because Pat goes through the recording and doesn't necessarily remember who's saying what when she's listening to the recording and making a transcript for us.

III. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 2, 2019 MINUTES

K. Thu: I'll also entertain a motion to approve the minutes from the last Faculty Senate meeting. Richard [Siegesmund]. Second?

K. Jaekel: Second.

K. Thu: Katy. Any corrections to the minutes? I'm sure you've all dutifully read them. All in favor signify by saying aye.

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay, we have passed minutes.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

K. Thu: A few pre-presidential announcements here. First of all, if you have a plastic cup, please don't throw it in the garbage. Just leave it on your table. I'm going to come around and collect them, and I'll put them in the recycle bin for us.

Secondly, our next Faculty Senate meeting is November 20, and as Pat has reminded me, that will not be in here, it will be in Altgeld 315, which is the Board of Trustees room. For some reason, somebody reserved this room before a year ago, so we don't have access to it. And Pat will send out a reminder as that meeting draws near. So that will be in Altgeld 315.

A. Support for Undocumented Students at NIU

K. Thu: A few announcements under Roman numeral IV. First, support for undocumented students at NIU. On pages 8 and 9, you'll see a couple pages of a document put together by Mark Schuller and Beatrix Hoffman, who are faculty members here. And it's an effort to solicit support for our undocumented students. And you'll see in the document that part of what undocumented students have to do is to pay almost 500 bucks in a renewal fee to keep their status and benefits at NIU. And so the document, itself, is a call for faculty to help support students who are in that category.

And Mark is in the back of the room. Mark, do you have any comments about this?

M. Schuller: [inaudible]

K. Thu: Katy?

K. Jaekel: No, just wondering if Mark wanted to use the microphone.

K. Thu: So at the bottom of page 8, there is a link there that will take you to the place where you can make a donation if you so desire. And then there are some other suggestions on page 9. So I'm just bringing that to your attention.

B. U.S. News & World Report ranking of NIU

K. Thu: Then a little bit of good news. I stumbled upon this news item from the U.S. News & World Report ranking of NIU that just came out. It came out with their global rankings. And of the 254 U.S. institutions that were included in the global ranking – as much as you can trust these sorts of things – you’ll see on page 11 where NIU shook out in terms of the rankings of Illinois institutions that made the global ranking. So, if you want to scroll down, you’ll see that we came out at 154. But I think what’s notable is we came out above Loyola, Southern, Illinois State and DePaul. So that is among the 254 schools that made the global ranking, NIU was in the middle of the Illinois institutions that made that ranking. So a little bit of good news if you believe in that sort of thing.

J. Millhorn: Let me interject something with regard to that. This is not the U.S. News & World Report ranking based upon popularity. This is founded from the web of science, and this is based on research output, and only research output.

K. Thu: That’s right; thanks for clarifying that. So it’s good news for us.

C. National Association of Faculty Senates

K. Thu: Also I wanted to let you know that NIU is now a member of the fledgling National Association of Faculty Senates. This is an organization that came together for the first time last year. It had its second annual meeting a couple weekends ago. I attended by Zoom, and there were probably 40 to 50 institutions represented. The purpose of the association is to provide support for faculty senates across the country, and the meeting was largely consumed with building bylaws and a constitution. So for the steep price of \$50 a year, we can become voting members, and we are voting members, and I look forward to working with that organization going forward. I think it was George Slotsve who forwarded the email to me to alert me to their existence. So I’m glad we’re in on the ground floor on that.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. Undergraduate Admissions Testing Optional
Beth Ingram, Executive Vice President and Provost
Sol Jensen, Vice President, Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications

K. Thu: Katy [Jaekel], do you want to come up and join me? Under Items for Faculty Senate Consideration, we have consideration of changing our admissions policy at NIU. And under the constitution, faculty are designated as the body that will prevail in admissions standards. And so I wanted to bring it to this body first, before it goes to Baccalaureate Council, if it gets that far.

So on pages 13 through 46 – sorry for the volume, but an important issue – we have on the initial page the actual proposed change to the admission standards, that’s the summary. The documentation that follows consists of newspaper articles, references to studies, links to studies, links to organizations that have reviewed testing optional admissions standards. And so what’s before us today is to talk about, and possibly consider passing a motion to drop the testing portion

of our admissions, namely ACT and SAT. And I'm just going to say a few more words about it, and then I'm turning it over to Katy and Sol and Provost Ingram, because they know much more about this than I do.

Two primary issues with testing are: one, it's an equity issue. That is, if you have the money or the resources to get tutoring to take the test. If you have the resources to take the test multiple times, then you're more likely to do better. So people who take the ACT – I know this because my daughters took it – somebody who takes the ACT twice, the second time, they're a little bit more likely to do better. So it's an equity issue. And secondly, what the test measures usually are the socio-economic backgrounds of the people who take it, rather than being a predictor of success as measured in grade point average and graduation.

So the proposal before us, you'll see the existing admission policy's up top. And then there's a proposed one that follows. So I just want to walk through that very briefly. Then I'll turn it over to our guests. The current minimum high school gpa for admissions to NIU is 2.75 or the upper half of your graduating class, and a minimum 19 ACT or a minimum 990 SAT. That's automatic admission. If you have a gpa between 2.5 and 2.75, then you have to have minimal ACT score or SAT score that's even higher, 23 for ACT and 1070 for SAT. If you get those scores and you have a gpa in that range, then you're automatically enrolled. Anything below 2.5, you have to petition for admission to NIU, which means it's reviewed by committee. And I think, Sol, you sent me a note saying we have very rarely admitted anybody with less than a 2.0, correct?

So the proposed new admissions policy would be to raise the standard, the gpa standard to 3.0, something that faculty have been asking for, actually, for many years since I've been in shared governance. So if you have a high school gpa of 3.0 or higher, then you are automatically admitted. I think there's a few other things that might go with that, but you can speak to that. And then for 2.5 to 2.99, there would be holistic review, something akin to what we do with CHANCE admits. I'll let Sol talk about this.

When we discussed this in the Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting – we had a very lively, and I think useful, discussion – there were some voices who wanted to retain the test in that gpa range as optional. I don't think that was the majority of the folks in the Steering Committee, but to reflect the voices that we heard in that discussion, I wanted to make sure that that's on the table for you. And then that would be a holistic review as well. And then 2.0 to 2.49, it would be a committee decision for admission. And then anything below 2.0, it would be again a committee review.

So those are the bare bones, and I want to turn it over to Katy [Jaekel] and then to Sol Jensen and Provost Ingram for further comment, as well. Then, of course, we'll open it up for questions and comments.

K. Jaekel: Hi I'm Katy Jaekel. I'm an assistant professor in the Higher Education Program out of Counseling and Higher Education. Much of the higher education literature is really showcasing that these are not good indicators, these tests, SAT and ACT, are not good indicators of student success. There are many, many institutions that are moving away from these particular measures and instead looking at things like grade point options. Kendall mentioned holistic reviews where we look at some broader things, whether that's essay, whether that's interviews, whether that's sort of life

experience, taking into consideration something broader than these tests. Typically, we think of these tests as indicators of how our students will do oftentimes within the first year, but aren't always good indicators of that per se, primarily because oftentimes these larger tests are normed on white, upper middle class students and oftentimes don't take into consideration different learning styles, different learning abilities and disabilities.

And so in looking at how these exams are often used, they become barriers. They become financial barriers for many of our students. They become barriers, because many – again these exams aren't necessarily written for them – and so there becomes then a hurdle for many students to gain entrance into higher education, be it at this institution or at others.

And so much of the higher ed literature really is sort of advocating that we move away from these sort of high stakes exams and instead looking more holistically. There's a big argument, well then our rigor or quality goes down. And actually, that's not been the case. Oftentimes we get higher qualified students when we axe these. And we get students that have wider range of diverse experiences, diverse perspectives. And in that way, oftentimes we get even stronger candidates within higher ed.

K. Thu: Thanks, Katy. As you can tell, she knows a lot more about it than I do. And I know that at NIU we have internal data that bears this out for NIU as well. So, Beth [Ingram], do you want to speak to this?

B. Ingram: Yes, so I'm here to answer any questions that people have, but I wanted to talk briefly about the data analyses that have been done here by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Katy talked about the national data. We have data here for NIU as well that shows that ACT scores are not predictive of first-year GPAs, academic good standing, retention, graduate rates. Once you account for high school GPA, the ACT is not predictive of what happens in a student's career at NIU. So we've looked at data specifically for NIU, as well as national data.

S. Jensen: Good afternoon. My name is Sol Jensen, vice president for enrollment management, marketing, communications. Thank you for inviting us to speak about this important topic. I'll just add that – it's hard to add anything more – but I'll add a little bit of history, as well that we've actually been studying this, and first started studying this from a merit scholarship perspective over a year ago. And we have a partner that helps us with leveraging scholarships and financial aid. And this is when we first started to identify that our underrepresented students are actually getting a double whammy, because they typically come from lower income communities, attend schools that don't have the types of resources that can offer the types of test prep or advanced course work that students who score really high on the test scores do. And then when we have a scholarship criteria that uses the test as a weight or a component, here we have our students who are most at risk, most underrepresented, and we're giving them the least scholarship dollars. But it's not representative of how likely they are to be successful once they enroll. And in fact, as the provost was mentioning, the students who are in good academic standing, regardless of test score, seem to fit the change of requirements that are being proposed here today. And I think what you find is that quite a few of the students who leave who are still in academic standing, it's obviously not because of academics, because they're in good academic standing, but we didn't give them the scholarships that were

based on test scores which is not just to help them enroll, but then to help them retain and to graduate and be successful students.

K. Thu: Thanks, Sol. I wonder if you could say a few words about what holistic review is, and our capacity to actually do it at NIU if we go in this direction?

S. Jensen: Sure. I've been at a couple different institutions who have done holistic review in the admission and, in some cases, scholarship process as well. Our director of admission has worked at some pretty prestigious institutions like Cornell, Grinnell, University of Illinois. And he's very familiar with the holistic review process as well. The types of things that we're really looking for could be in different phases, if you will. For some students, it may just be reviewing more closely their high school transcript, looking at the types of courses they took. How rigorous were they? Some of them could be looking at grade trends. So obviously, we like to see students who, maybe they had a bad first year or second year, but since then we can see that there's positive trends that show some growth and they've overcome. And often cases, what we like to do is actually – you know Katy talked about an interview. An interview might sound like a formal word. It could be a real interview. But it also could be, in many cases, just a phone call and having a conversation with that student to say, you know we've been reviewing your transcript, and we see that your sophomore year you really struggled. Can you tell us a little bit about what was going on? And oftentimes, you hear about a divorce in the family, or a death, or a family was in the military and they moved multiple times. And this is really what we're getting at with holistic. It's looking at the whole. It's looking at the whole person, not just a test score or a cognitive piece of things. We're looking at some of the non-cognitive. And we can get into leadership, volunteer work, community service, how students overcome adversity, how they've handled discrimination. And these are the types of things that I think we all want in students and what makes students successful, being able to overcome different challenges in their life, which they're going to have in college, so recognizing that they're going to have those. But it kind of gets to that grit factor that you've heard a little bit about over the last decade, the grit, motivation. We have in our students, but this is trying to use a process that the admission standpoint, or the admission time frame, as opposed to just having this become a characteristic that's developed once they're here.

K. Thu: Thanks, Sol. And just to clarify the process. This is a prime example of why we should change the structure of shared governance, because this should be the body where we actually decide for ourselves. But since we don't have policy-making authority yet, this body can make a recommendation to the Baccalaureate Council, which is affiliated with the University Council. That's where it would go next. And that body, which is primarily faculty, would then take it up for consideration, depending on what you want. George, go ahead.

G. Slotsve: I was at the Steering Committee meeting, and I just wanted to mention that I suggested that we not even take the SAT, ACT, whatever, as even optional information. If they're biased, if there's a cultural bias in them, if they're non-predictive overall for the population, restricting it to the 2.5 to 2.99, they're still not predictive, they're still doing to be culturally biased. So even at the margin, it makes absolutely no sense to use that type of a criteria for admittance. I could probably make a very good case that it would be better to flip a coin. I'm serious. It would be fairer to flip a coin at the margin than use this information. So I would strongly recommend that, if we're going to go this route, we completely exclude the information and do not even consider it.

K. Thu: Thanks, George. And just to clarify, I've put them in parentheses, because I wanted to reflect a few voices in Steering Committee that had indicated some support for that route. So it's unclear yet. We're going to have to vote on either of these options eventually. John?

J. Pendergrass: In concerning the optional testing there, whose option is it?

K. Thu: Well it could be the student's option, right?

J. Pendergrass: And so if it is the student's option to submit, then isn't it not just another data point.

G. Slotsve: Nope.

J. Pendergrass: Well it is a data point, whether you like

G. Slotsve: It's a data point, but the selection bias in there. So I can't just take it

J. Pendergrass: What if the student is a non-white, underprivileged student who happens to score well? Does it not add to the

G. Slotsve: And what if it's a white student who scores better? I mean, this can cut both ways. There's self-selection that's going to be going on here. So what we would call self selection bias in this process.

J. Pendergrass: But it's the student's option. We're not requiring the student to do it.

G. Slotsve: It's the student's – it's always the student's option. I get at the margin. I've got two students who did poorly in high school, one minority, one non-minority. Both do particularly well on this exam. But the non-minority student does slightly better because of the bias that's built in. If that at the margin is the last student I'm admitting, I've already biased the system toward admitting the non-minority student. So if it's biased overall, it's still biased at the margin, and at the margin I'm still going to be using incorrect information. And I'm just – on top of it, there's something called self selection that's going to occur there, I agree, but I just don't buy the argument.

J. Pendergrass: I'm completely for getting rid of the testing in general. I just wanted to understand the option. Thank you.

K. Thu: Others? This is a very important issue for our university, and faculty need to be the standard bearers here.

O. Chmaissem: I agree we have to change something, but I'm not sure that we need to give all the power to one person. The director is going to look at several hundred of applications, between 2.5 and 2.99, give one person the decision, the power to make admissions. That seems a bit arbitrary, and maybe sloppy, as well.

K. Thu: Pardon me?

O. Chmaissem: And also maybe it could be sloppy as well if you have several hundred applications to look at, I don't know how.

K. Thu: Does anybody want to comment on that?

S. Jensen: Sure. We're actually one of the few institutions that I even know of who the director of admissions currently has absolutely zero authority to admit anyone. I think that's absurd. We have a high school counselor advisory board, who learned about this recently, and they really don't understand. So I get the point about it's a large number. But I think what I'd go back to is, if you look at our current criteria, our current criteria goes down to a 2.5 with a certain test score, they're automatically admitted. What we're actually saying now is, for those students who potentially, previously would have automatically been admitted, we're actually going to give them another look. We're going to spend more time giving them a look, whereas before nobody would have looked at them. So I know there's a concern maybe about one person looking at them. But currently, nobody could be looking at them. It's just an auto admission. So we want to take that diligence to spend more time, to review, are there any potential red flags that we want to call and speak to the student about? My experience, as well, has – and I know Quinton, our director, will say this too – is that, actually, this type of a process allows us as an institution to gain a stronger relationship with that perspective student. And for someone like me who's, I guess, been doing this almost 20 years, these types of students who are sort of on that margin, if you will, at least in terms of admission, when you speak with them and can hear more about their life story and be able to understand that, like let them prove to you that they're going to be successful – and not that there's anything binding. You know, when I'm speaking to you and saying, you know what, I believe in you. I believe, based on our conversation, I believe you're going to be successful. And there's something even with additional motivation there. Now I'm the student. I've got someone who's in my corner at NIU, and maybe there's even a little bit of accountability. Not again, that there's anything that's binding. But you know, if I'm on the call with that individual, I'm saying, I believe in you. In my case, I'll just use an example. I've admitted some students who were like this type of student we're talking about and developed a great relationship. End of that first semester, I have lunch with that student, check in on that student, see how they're doing. It just creates that extra touchpoint, and it really sends a message to the student, this institution believes in me. They care about me. And I feel more empowered that I'm going to be successful when I'm done.

B. Ingram: Could I just add something? I think I heard your question a little bit differently. Here's how I would frame it. If you look at the data, the students down to about 2.7, 2.8, don't look that much different from the kids at around 3.0, just in terms of success rates. And so I think, when you look at those criteria, from 2.5 to 2.99, there's a bias toward admitting. And so then you're looking for factors that would cause you to exclude a student. So the bias is, these are students that are probably going to succeed unless we see something in their high school transcript that is a red flag, like they've got a 1.9 in all of their core courses, and they've got a 2.5, because they took a lot of other courses that we wouldn't think of as academic predictive.

The committee review comes in for the kids between 2 and 2.49 when you really want to look at those kids, and you're looking for things that help you evaluate whether they can be successful. So

down there, the bias is probably against admitting, but now you're looking for those things that show up in their record, that show they're motivated, that maybe high school is just not their thing. Maybe it was a time in their lives when lots of things were going on, but they were in leadership groups, or they found a passion in playing the oboe or whatever it is that shows you that they can make it here, even though in high school, maybe that was not their place to shine. And so when you think about this, the important committee review is the place where you want lots of eyes on it, I think is in the right group. Now if you wanted to, we could say, if you're more comfortable, go up to 2.6 on the committee review. This is kind of a first proposal, so there are tweaks on it that the faculty, I think, need to weigh in and think about.

K. Thu: I also want to point out that this doesn't change the course requirements in high school. If you'll scroll down, Pat, we still have the English, math, science and social studies and related requirements there. Vicki?

V. Collins: I just have a quick question based on what Omar said. And my understanding of his question just had to do with who's conducting the review. So my question is how is this done in other institutions? Is the holistic review typically done just by one person? And then the committee? If you could just answer that.

K. Jaekel: I've not been at an institution where it is just one person's job to do all of it, because that sounds like a really, really hard job. I think typically what happens is that admissions folks are hired, and they are taught and trained for that particular institution's criterion and looking at it. These are folks who are well positioned to do this. And then so there are several. So if the concern is like one person being overworked as all of these things come in and they're trying to make decisions as they come in. That's not the case. We have a much bigger case than that. So, no, it's not one person doing sort of these holistic, we have a team of – and here at NIU, many of whom are my students – well qualified, wonderful people.

B. Ingram: But it is often one person that's reviewing a file. It may be ten people reviewing a bunch of files, but any single student would just have one person looking at their file.

K. Jaekel: Correct.

G. Chen: You made a good point regarding that it's not going to be one person or even multiple people reviewing together when they are reviewing, no matter which case, they have to beforehand, they have to be trained to be capable of reviewing. But the key point that I do not see right here. But first of all, I am for, I am in support of taking off the test score. Now I agree with that. But what I cannot say I disagree with something of this, but I am not comfortable with voting yes, because that range of 2.5 to 2.99, just based on the holistic review, without allowing this body, the faculty members, to see what is a clear set of criteria that is going to be based off allowing a group of people in your office doing this holistic review. I would like to see that clear list of the criteria before I'm comfortable doing my duty, my vote. That's my voice. Thank you.

K. Thu: Thank you, Gary.

K. Jaekel: So importantly, not my office, I'm a faculty member too. But I think we don't know the criteria. I think those would be ones that we would develop together, I would imagine, to what is it that we can do? What are the data points that we are after? I don't know that there is a set rule of what they are right now.

B. Ingram: I think one thing that probably isn't clear is, even if this proceeds, if the faculty decide that this is a direction they want to go, this would not happen until the entering class of fall of '21. And so there's a lot of time in there to think about the criteria, to bring it back to the faculty to say here are some suggestions for what might be evaluated. So this isn't something that's going to happen in fall of '20. It'll be fall of '21's admissions class, at the earliest, at the earliest.

K. Thu: So one approach, Gary, would be that we might vote to support the general concept, but then we want the Baccalaureate Council to come back to us with the actual criteria for the holistic review. That's just one way to do it. There is a little bit of a time crunch if we're going to get this in place for the fall of 2021, because it does have to go through UC as well. But if there's a general consensus that we want the criteria before we even vote on it, then that's the way we're going to go.

A. Keddie: I do agree with getting rid of the SAT. However, what concerns me a little when I look at those categories is, in our present policy, it looks like it's under 2.5 that they appeal for a petition for review; whereas, now it's under 2.0. It looks – maybe I'm misinterpreting – but it looks like the bottom has been lowered a little.

K. Thu: Well I think what it means is that the standard overall is going up, is the way that I understand it. That's the way I interpret it.

A. Keddie: It looks like the standard is going up at the top, but it's also going down at the bottom, because it looks like if you're under 2.0, it looks like you automatically get a review now between 2.0 and 2.5.

K. Thu: I see. I misunderstood what

A. Keddie: Yeah.

K. Thu: Got it.

A. Keddie: And you might be considered if you're under 2.0.

B. Ingram: Perhaps this is a question for Sol. If you're below 2.5, do you have to petition for review, or are you just? So the petition word is incorrect up there. Below 2.5 is just a review. There's no petition for a review.

K. Thu: That was my mistake.

B. Ingram: I think the petition for is the part that's getting confusing.

K. Thu: And Sol said that there were 300 and some odd applicants with GPAs below 2.0, and we only admitted one of those people.

S. Jensen: Last year.

K. Thu: Last year.

R. Villanueva: I just have a question. What happened with the merit scholarships? With this new system? Because the merit scholarships, right now, are matched between the ACT and the GPA, right? And there's kind of like a graph that has. So what happens now if you have this margin of 3 to 4 GPA, only to decide to rank people based on this holistic approach?

S. Jensen: The holistic approach is only what's being proposed for admission. We are not looking at test optional for merit scholarships. We're going to be test-blind. We're not going to look at tests at all for merit scholarships.

R. Villanueva: But that's a very important part of admissions. I mean if people can't afford school, they don't get merit scholarship, a lot of people, especially the underrepresented. So if admissions doesn't include the ACT, how are you going to know?

S. Jensen: We'll use the high school GPA.

R. Villanueva: That's it? That's kind of biased too, because GPAs in high schools have so many variables. They don't really represent what the students are.

K. Thu: My understanding is that high school GPAs are normed in a district or some other way, so that two radically different high schools with different performance standards, that their grades might mean different things. Can you comment on how the norming occurs?

S. Jensen: Well they're all normed to a 4.0 scale, for sure. There are different scales and we can take into account some level of difference, but typically we don't. We understand that there are going to be some students who take more rigorous course work, that attend schools that might be more rigorous than others, and I would say they're going to be pretty well prepared. But really, with our change of scholarship – and we have not set this yet. We've made the commitment to do it, and we have not actually determined what our breaking points are. We also do not have anymore scholarship dollars to use, so we have to make sure we're spending about the same as we are currently. We know that removing the test score and keeping the GPA at the same level it is right now could expand our scholarships to a point that we don't have the funding for them. Ultimately, we're still in development of what that new scholarship – not even a matrix at this point – but the new scholarships for merit will look like. But right now, we're not going to look at tests. It's really about equity and trying to make it more equitable from the scholarship standpoint.

K. Jaekel: I would also say that we want students to succeed in higher education, and right now GPA is a good point of data to give us the information of whether or not they will succeed. And so while GPA may be seemingly biased – and I think in a lot of ways it can be really a good indicator

in some places, but there are some outliers – we still need something to insure that folks are going to be able to learn and succeed.

K. Thu: We are going to have to draw this to a close at least at this meeting. What I'm hearing is that there seems to be support for the general concept of moving in this direction, but there are still some details that need to be worked out. May I suggest we perhaps vote on moving in this direction as a concept, ask the Baccalaureate Council to work with Sol and work out the details, and have that brought back to us for review? Does that seem like a fair approach? Okay. Is that okay with both of you? That way, the Baccalaureate Council can dig in deep.

Unidentified: [inaudible]

K. Thu: Yeah. Absolutely. So I would entertain a resolution to ask the Baccalaureate Council to move in this direction and then bring back the details of the plan to us.

G. Slotsve: I will make that motion as you have just worded it a few minutes ago.

K. Thu: I don't think I can repeat it.

G. Slotsve: I guess that we'll ask them to explore and then report it back to

K. Thu: So basically, we're supporting the concept of moving away from the test. We're going to ask the Baccalaureate Council to operationalize it, but then we want it brought back before us again.

G. Slotsve: Yes.

K. Thu: Okay. Do I have a second?

S. Weffer: Yes, I'll second.

K. Thu: Okay. Further discussion before we vote? I think we should use our clickers on this. So if there's no more discussion, let's go ahead and vote. One will be in favor of the concept in moving it to Baccalaureate Council, and 2 will be no, and 3 will be to abstain. And Pat, you let us know when you're ready. Thanks, Katy. Are we ready? Okay, go ahead and vote. Do we have everybody? Okay, what are our results? Forty-one in favor, six not in favor and two abstentions. So there's a fairly clear signal that this is the direction we want to move in, and I'll relay that to the Baccalaureate Council and ask them to do the legwork for us. Thanks, everybody. Thanks, Provost Ingram.

41 – Yes

6 – No

2 – Abstain

B. [Create an Accessible Syllabus](#)
Katy Whitelaw, IT Accessibility Officer

K. Thu: The second item for faculty consideration comes to us from Katy Whitelaw, who is our IT accessibility officer. And so, Katy, do you want to come up here, or where do you want to go? She's going to come to her seat. She's going to talk to us about creating accessible syllabi.

K. Whitelaw: Hi, I am Katy Whitelaw, and I've been NIU's information technology accessibility officer since January of 2018. I'm a member of the Ethics and Compliance Office. In January of 2018, federal and state laws regarding technology accessibility were refreshed and updated. And NIU's policy on purchasing, developing, maintaining and using accessible EIT, or electronic and information technology, became effective.

The law says technology has to be accessible to people who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, unable to use a mouse, unable to use a keyboard, and wheelchair users. And the law defines accessible as a person with disabilities is able to independently use electronic and information technology to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services in the same timeframe as a person without disabilities.

I want to talk just a minute about a really important assisted technology. It's called a screen reader. And if you do any research into accessible technology, you'll start hearing about screen readers pretty early on. They were developed first for people who can't see. They read text. They don't read images. They're built into all your desktops, laptops and smart phones right now. And they use only a keyboard to navigate, right, because if you're blind, you can't use a mouse. And because of this, if something is accessible using a screen reader, it's also accessible to people who are unable to use a mouse, for whatever reason.

The accessibility law applies to digital course materials, like Word documents, videos, pdfs, textbooks, online courses, math, diagrams, charts, illustration, software and equipment. And we're probably not going to be compliant by the end of this semester. It's a big project, and all universities are under Section 508, which this law is about. And we also have Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act, which we have to comply with also.

So, we have to start somewhere, and I want to tell you how you can make your syllabus accessible. It's probably the first thing your students see about your class. And here's the basic concept: Use Word's tools to create semantic or real headings, lists, tables and columns, so screen readers can identify them. Also give links descriptive titles that indicate where they go, and add alternative text to images for people who can't see them.

Starting with headings, use the headings styles in the home tab, instead of a paragraph in a different font. Screen readers have shortcuts like list all the headings in this document, or I just want to go to the next heading, or I need to go back to the previous heading. It's a way to skim, just the way sighted people do. You can customize your headings by right clicking on each style. And a really great benefit is that Word will create a table of contents for you based on those headings. You click on the table of contents button in the references tab. Now each item in the table of contents is a link to that location. And this is really helpful for everybody if you have a very long syllabus.

Same idea with lists. Use lists in the home tab, instead of tabbing and using something for a bullet point. Use a bulleted list for an unordered list, and use a numbered list for an ordered sequence like steps in a procedure. Using a numbered list is a cue to all your students that the order matters.

Use tables in the insert tab, instead of tabbing around to create a table. It's much easier for you than trying to fake it with tabs, and screen readers have special commands that help them navigate around tables. Tables are pretty easy to create and edit. Click anywhere on a table to get the table layout tab. You can insert rows above and below your cursors, and columns to the left or right of it. Same thing with deleting rows and columns.

Use real columns instead of using tab. If you use tab, the screen reader is going to read across each line. If you make columns, the screen reader recognizes the columns, and it will read down and not across. And, if you need to edit the content, it's a lot easier if you're in columns.

Screen readers will list the links in a document as another way to move quickly around in it. Give links descriptive titles, because sighted users will also use links to skim. In the first example, ~~click here~~ is crossed out, because if you have links like ~~click here~~ and ~~here or this~~, in a list of links, that's not going to help the user figure out where the link will go.

Next is a long URL, and that's crossed out too, because the screen reader will read this URL out loud if that's the title of the link. And it's not very helpful. With a little re-write, you can call a link by where it goes. For example, the third item is ~~accessibility statement for syllabi~~, and that's a link. Now when a sighted user or a screen reader user skims the page, the links will provide information.

Give images alternative text. Alternative text is a short description added to an image that will be read by the screen reader. It conveys the meaning or gives a description of the information in the image for people who can't see it. If you don't have alternative text, the screen reader will probably read the file name, which could be something like ~~ing45_856735.jpg~~.

After you choose an image, you choose edit alt text, way down at the bottom, and you get a dialog box where you can either enter alternative text or you can mark the image as decorative, because it really doesn't have any information. It makes the document look better to sighted people, but a screen reader will skip right over it.

Word will actually check the accessibility of your document for you. Under the review tab, if you click check accessibility, it'll give you a list of any accessibility issues and how to fix them. Most of the things you do to make Word documents accessible are beneficial to you and all your students, like automatic tables of contents, the meaning conveyed by numbered or bulleted lists, and descriptive link titles. There are larger benefits. We can recruit students with disabilities, because we are an accessible university. We can retain those students all the way to graduation, and we can earn a reputation for being a center of excellence for accessibility. And we reduce the risk of litigation.

Are there any questions? Yes.

G. Slotsve: I'm not disagreeing with anything that you've said, Katy, but everything's been done in terms of basically Word here. There are a number of us who do not use Word.

K. Whitelaw: For your syllabi?

G. Slotsve: Not even for the syllabi. Often we'll use LaTeX. And if I'm doing stuff, I might use something called LaTeX, and I'll just use it straight through for the whole course. Is it the same in LaTeX, if I use the bullet points and all of these rules, the screen readers will pick it up correctly and appropriately.

K. Whitelaw: I don't know LaTeX. I'm hoping the concept is the same, that if you have choices.

G. Slotsve: No, it isn't choices. You're literally coding in, putting this in as a code. It's very different, and it's made primarily because of math.

K. Whitelaw: Yes.

G. Slotsve: You're doing it, because it does a very nice job of the mathematics.

K. Whitelaw: Yes.

G. Slotsve: And a lot of papers and research is now being done this way. And Word is just terrible at that. So I just want to mention that one of the issues that we also face is people moving back to old technology like Word and things like that on certain documents. But if that's what you're recommending, then on top of everything is we all do it in Word or something. I'm just pointing out there are other issues here too.

K. Whitelaw: Right. I'm not recommending that everyone does their syllabus in Word. I think a lot of you do, and once you know how, it's easy to make an accessible syllabus in Word. I don't know LaTeX. If it's the industry standard, if it's required, the law gives you an exemption on it. But think about it. If you have a blind student, a bright blind student, take away the disability, you've got a student who wants to succeed, can the student access your syllabus? The Disability Resource Center can help bridge the gap. But if your documents are accessible in the first place, that would let our Disability Resource Center tackle even bigger, more complicated problems; and there are plenty.

K. Thu: Well thank you, Katy. Can we put this PowerPoint up on our senate website or someplace where it's accessible. And then I would imagine that your office will do training for units that ask.

K. Whitelaw: Yes, I'd be happy to.

K. Thu: Because we're not all going to remember all this stuff, right?

K. Whitelaw: And if any of you use paper, I have some brochures that say everything I just said. It's also on the website.

G. Slotsve: One last point, it was just pointed out. I can take LaTeX and make pdfs out of everything if that helps.

K. Whitelaw: No.

G. Slotsve: It doesn't, okay.

K. Whitelaw: Pdfs are another layer of difficulty making things accessible, and I just want to point out that, if you scan a document and make a pdf out of it, that's an image, so a screen reader can't read anything on it. Just so you know.

K. Thu: Thanks, Katy. Appreciate it.

[NOTE: At this point, the members skipped down to Items VII and VIII on the agenda, with the plan to return to Item V.C.]

C. Prioritizing faculty issues

K. Thu: Okay, if no comments or questions, then we'll just move on. Then let's go back to Item C under Items for Faculty Senate Consideration. So I'm mindful of time here, so we'll try to get through this as quickly as possible.

Okay so we went through the exercise of identifying what our priority issues are for Faculty Senate, and then the second step is, what are we going to do about it. And so our top issue area was enrollment/recruitment and retention. And Sol has agreed to stay for a little longer at this meeting. I'm interested in what can shared governance do, maybe not do, in each of these priority issues areas. And perhaps what we can do is talk about the top vote-getter now, and you throw out ideas for what we might be able to do. Maybe there are things that you are already doing in your unit that you want to share that other units might adopt. But I don't know, Sol, do you want to say anything before we try to generate some discussion on that priority issue? I know it's your priority.

S. Jensen: It certainly is our priority. Hopefully, many, most of you have had a chance to even take a look at our Strategic Enrollment Management Plan that we put out last spring. That's our playbook. That is truly our plan. We are continuing to move forward with it. We're having success with it, even in the short amount of time that we had before last year's incoming class.

Now one of the things that I mention any time I speak about the SEM Plan, though, is that this is a living, breathing document. It can continue to change. This is not, again, one of those plans where you spend a long time creating it and then you never look at it again. We have a monthly meeting with the president, and we are updating her every single time on where we're at. We're creating dashboards to determine progress, how far along we are on every single tactic.

Relating back to the question at hand about shared governance, and particularly faculty for this meeting, I think probably the simplest thing that can be done is – one of the items we talk about in our SEM Plan is that everyone who has any affiliation with the institution can become a brand ambassador, if you will. We represent NIU in a positive way everywhere we go. If you're on social

media, that's re-posting or sharing the good stuff that's happening. It's trying to educate yourself on the positive stories that we try to put out in NIU Today about the great things that are happening across campus, things that you may not know about, because they're happening in a different department or college. But we want the entire campus to have an understanding of the great things that are happening, because these are brag points that we can then speak about while we're talking with neighbors, or friends at church, or just anyone that we interact with who may have college-bound students. I think that's the easiest one.

I would also add that you all can help us with some of that content. If you know of great things that are happening in your department or individuals, whether they're students or faculty, who are receiving great achievements or accomplishments, these are the types of stories that we may not know about, but we'd love to investigate more so that we can then share it with the rest of campus.

I think relationships are huge. As I went around, when I first started here a couple summers ago, I spent about six months of time, and I went around and met with the chair of every department. And I think what became evident to me at that point was that many of the departments and individual faculty members have strong relationships on your own with educators at the high school levels, at community colleges. In many cases, you have taught them and now they are educators at community colleges. So, how can we utilize those relationships that you already have, especially at feeder schools, whether high schools or community colleges.

And maybe the final thing I'll just add is, the first time I met with Kendall once he had received this appointment, and he asked me the same question. And I said, I would love to get more of our faculty in the classrooms of high school students or community colleges, and to be able to share your expertise and to really help students across the entire region, across the state to know of the excellence that we have in the faculty here to – twofold – to motivate students that they can go to college or institutions like NIU, but also to demonstrate to students who may have a different perception of NIU, academically, that we have some of the top faculty and some of the top academic programs in the state, if not broader region.

K. Thu: Thanks, Sol. Simón? And this could be as simple as sharing what you're doing and what you see as success for you doing it, if you're doing anything.

S. Weffer: One little thing, and this has probably already gotten back to you. I'm working as part of the Latinx Recruitment Task Force. But simple things, such as we just finished Hispanic Heritage Month, and nowhere on the website and nowhere in NIU Today was there anything about Hispanic Heritage Month. You search NIU Today, the last time was 2015. So now we're talking four Hispanic Heritage Months through. And if Latinos are going to be a big push of the Strategic Enrollment, we can do little things to make that positive.

S. Jensen: Yes.

S. Weffer: I think I would also advocate some language change. I think we need to get away from Hispanic-serving institution and move toward something more like Hispanic nurturing. I think we shouldn't be framing ourselves – I mean, I understand HSI is a buzz word, but it would make us unique, and we should get out of the idea that we're serving as opposed to nurturing. That's what

we're doing as educators, I would hope, if we're going to target this population, which is one of the few growing populations in Illinois. So those would be my two suggestions.

K. Thu: Thanks, Simón. Others? Gary.

G. Chen: I have been doing what you have mentioned personally, but every time when I'm sharing small things or some little bigger things of stories, trying to get to the parents that I know, their young kids are getting to the decision for college. Always, always one question stump me, I really cannot respond at all. They ask that simple question, and I stop, I have no answer. Is your campus safe? Is the campus surrounding community safe? I didn't want to lie and creating good story. I'm living in DeKalb, so I know it. That's why every time I receive the same question, I really could not respond honestly. And I try zig zag, not answering the question directly, just like everyone else. But my question is, I hope this can be included a part of this enrollment and recruitment. It's not going to related to retention. I know Kendall, we had this deeper conversation previously. I believe if our NIU campus is perceived safer campus as well as the communities, those parents and the kids, they are going to have an easier decision to come to us. We will spend less dollars in marketing money. So that's my opinion. I hope this can also be part of SEM's strategic planning in the near future.

K. Thu: Thanks, Gary. I think many of us in the room have heard from parents who share the same sentiments about the concerns over safety, and you can't respond with just numbers. You have to have probably stories from parents, stories from students here, who have had positive experiences. So something we can do would be to help craft potential response narrative. I think we have a little bit of that already, but to share that with all of you and adapt it to whatever situation you have in your particular units.

J. Burton: I think one thing that we could do very simple as faculty is we could actually go to graduations. At a previous institution, we had a very large percentage of our faculty would show up in our fancy gowns. But going to undergraduate graduation at NIU, it's actually very sparse. We get a row or maybe two rows, if we're lucky, of faculty. And for our recruitment kind of point, if you have family members who are thinking they might want to go where their older brother or sister went, if they see us in force, that might be a sign that, hey, this faculty is really looking out for us, because we do. But maybe that's just a representation of it. Just something to think about. I'm just brainstorming here.

K. Thu: Yes, absolutely. That's what we're doing. Other ideas? Scot?

S. Schraufnagel: I'm not sure if you are familiar, Sol, with this particular initiative, but I think you must be, because you supported it with some money. But I'm part of the School of Public and Global Affairs, and we've sponsored these events bringing high school kids to campus. And we've done it three years in a row now, and this last year, it really took off – 262 high school advanced placement American government and econ students, and, more importantly, maybe 20 high school teachers came to DeKalb for a – we had a faculty round table and a keynote speaker. And we got money from Admissions to pay for lunch and a t-shirt. And I know that it's already paying off. I've had students come up to me, just in the last year – I remember you from that event. And so I think the more we do that sort of thing, I think the better off we would be.

K. Thu: So that's sort of fitting with what you're talking about, about getting faculty in front of students early on. When I was chair for nine years, every year I would go to Sycamore High School. They have a college-bound session each morning. I would talk to students, not just about going to NIU, but about getting prepped for college in general. And then I would share the stories of our two daughters. And I know some of those folks may not all have gone on to NIU, but it is effective when you get to that point, because, if they see you again, then they make that connection again.

The other thing that we've done in our department when I was chair is, I went out, I got a list of the top feeder schools, junior college feeder schools, and I went out and met with the faculty and students in each of those junior colleges. And what the faculty said to me was, well we either send your majors into the city, or we send them west out to DeKalb. And once we met with them personally, we got more students coming from the College of DuPage, for example. So those personal connections do make a difference.

Somebody else had a comment. Go ahead.

S. Vahabzadah: First of all, I think that we should invest in student organization chapters. For example, our college has Supermileage that, after six, seven years, it got a very good reputation. And many students come to our department just to be able to part of that student organization.

Another thing that I see quite a few [inaudible] is about the construction at NIU roads, lack of parking in front. For example, in front of our college, we have a parking space, which is not even enough for faculty. Students come late, they have to look for the parking. And in winter it gets muddy and lots of issues. Students get very upset.

K. Thu: Understood. A couple more comments, and then we'll have to draw this to a close. Hamid?

H. Bateni: I actually have a question. Can I ask it? Or is it only suggestions that we can make, or can I ask a question?

K. Thu: Oh you can ask me a question, sure; not about my personal life, but

H. Bateni: Well I was wondering if there has ever been a study to find out what is the reason for retention and problem that we have with recruitment? My view is that this is a multi-faceted phenomenon, and there are a number of reasons, which can contribute to this issue. And if I know as a faculty that one portion I would be able to help, like what portion of this whole thing – if you give 100 percent, do you think that if I do my best, would I be able to take care of 90 percent of it or 10 percent of it. And where is the other 10 percent or 90 percent coming from? So that would make it more clear what direction I have to move.

K. Thu: Somebody help me out here. I vaguely remember something being done in that way a number of years ago, but I don't remember the details, Sol?

H. Bateni: Let me give you an example. Like right here, when faculty are speaking about this, like when Gary brings up the issue of safety in DeKalb, that's not something that I can help with, right? Or parking issue at Engineering is not again something that faculty can help. But this shows that in

the mind of faculty, there are a number of reasons that does not even go back to faculty. So the question is, I think we need a very clear study that says, well this is the reason. Like perhaps the research being done on people who apply to NIU, people who do not apply, but they could potentially apply, and people who leave NIU. So to find out what there is behind it.

K. Thu: Very good point. And I don't have a good response to it. I could work with you, Sol, to see what we have done in the past on that front, because I know some stuff along those lines has been done. I just don't remember the details. So let me see what we can pull out. I'll canvas.

S. Jensen: In 2016 we did a study, it was a perception study. But it was really – it was a perception, which included faculty, their perception of the institution. It was not as targeted about these types of activities and their success or not. I will add that we're doing another perception study, so we actually just last week had focus groups. I'm not sure if we had any faculty here who participated – thank you. Those focus groups, in turn, in about another month or two will turn into a survey that will go to all faculty. So I do hope that you would participate in that, which will give us additional information, feedback on the faculty's perspective of NIU, but it's not necessarily getting to the point of what activities you're doing that would help with recruitment and retention.

K. Thu: Yes, it's difficult to get, I would think, to get the attitudes and perspectives of those students that don't come to NIU. But maybe there's a way to do it. We're going to have wrap this up fairly quickly, but if you have ideas, Hamid.

H. Bateni: Just quickly, we can find out people who decide not to apply to NIU, but they are in the area, but they go to, let's say, UIC or other universities. Just getting a sampling of those people.

S. Jensen: Our study does include what we call lost students, so students who we admitted, so they're students that we wanted, we admitted them to NIU last year, but they chose to go to another institution. So they are included in the survey.

K. Thu: John, last comment.

J. Pendergrass: I think this body would be great at bringing forth research and other activities of faculty in departments that can be showcased in social media outlets, might be helpful. Where else do you have a group of folks who know what's going on.

K. Thu: I always say that, if you can get the student in my department or on campus, I can sell them. But I've got to get them here, or I've got to get in front of them somehow. We're the biggest advocates for our programs.

We'll pull all those ideas together, and we'll send them back out to you. We'll keep working on this front. I know the second priority issue is tenure-track faculty lines and, hopefully, I can send some stuff out about that as well, some data about our tenure-track faculty, the numbers over the years.

Okay, I see people are starting to filter out, so let's quickly go to Reports from Advisory Committees. And thanks, Sol. I appreciate it.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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

K. Thu: Pat has just passed along a note here about the possibility of shifting the agenda a little bit, because we need to have a quorum in order to make our bylaw changes. So what I prefer to do, and I'm sorry, Sol. I'm just going to jump ahead, and we'll come back to you. Under Roman numeral, we have Unfinished Business. That's the proposal to do away with the Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession. This is a second reading, so it requires a vote. We have to have 49 members here to do the vote.

So let me point out that VII. A. is actually linked to VIII. A. at the top of the second page. Because, I think it was Therese, who suggested that for non-union faculty, there still needs to be a venue for economic issues to be aired. And so when Katy [Jaekel] and I met the last time – this is her committee – we propose to amend the Faculty Senate Bylaws for the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, and we added a bullet line in there that allowed for economic issues to be considered in her committee. It's not always going to be her committee, but it's her committee now. So just so you understand, they're both linked.

So if we could move ahead to Unfinished Business A, proposal to delete the Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession. This is a second reading, and it's an action item. It's in your packet on page 48 to 49, if you want to look at it. First we have to establish quorum, correct?

P. Erickson: We actually need more than a quorum. We need 49 present.

K. Thu: 49. Just click 1 on your – unless you consider yourself not present. It's like the little engine that could. Oh-oh. Two more. One more. Almost there. There we go. Just barely made it. Somebody out there is creating a cliffhanger for us. Okay, so we have a quorum.

So again, this would be to remove the Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession, one of the five senate committees. So that means we would go from 103 committees university-wide to 102 committees university-wide. It's a start, right? So we have to have a motion, right? So we need a motion.

O. Chmaissem: So moved.

K. Thu: Sean, Richard, whoever you select. Anymore discussion? We don't have discussion – we do. We need a second? Richard [Siegsmund] seconded it. Any final discussion? We went through this last time. Hearing none, then. Oh, go ahead.

K. Duffin: As I look at the reasons that are listed there, I'm really concerned about one of the reasons for getting rid of this committee is that we've successfully outsourced responsibilities given

to us by the college in the university bylaws to an institution that is outside of that structure. If that's the purpose of what we're doing here, I'm concerned.

K. Thu: No, it's going to another Faculty Senate committee. So it's not actually outside of Faculty Senate. It's

K. Duffin: [inaudible]

K. Thu: Number 2 is for faculty members that are in the union. So the union, there's provisions in the union for doing this kind of work for union members, and that – oh I don't know what the word is – prevails over this language, if that makes any sense. But we have non-union faculty members that may want a committee to deal with economic issues of the profession, and so that's why we added that to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee. Any other questions or concerns? Okay, 1 will be to do away with the committee; 2 is to not do away with the committee. 3 is to abstain. So please vote now. Are we good to go? Okay, we're ready. We have 44. Congratulations for getting rid of a committee.

44 – Yes

4 – No

1 - Abstain

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposal to amend Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 3.2
Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee
FIRST READING

K. Thu: Then related to that, as I mentioned, is new business. This is a first reading for amending Faculty Senate Bylaw, Article 3.2. It's for adding a responsibility to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee. It's on page 50 of your packet if you have a hard copy. I think I'll just read it to you. Again, Katy and I met on this and tried to make it as simple as possible. So a bullet has been added to the responsibilities of that committee. So the added responsibility will be: Faculty compensation and benefits, not covered by the collective bargaining agreement.

So we don't vote on a first reading, but certainly if you have any comments or concerns or questions, I think it's pretty straight forward.

IX. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- A. Faculty Advisory Council to IBHE – Linda Saborío – report

K. Thu: First report is from Linda Saborío, the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE. Linda, I see you back there.

L. Saborío: Good afternoon. The FAC did not convene in October as a full committee. Instead we met in our caucus groups. The public caucus met via Zoom, and we discussed topics that we would

like for us to focus on this academic year in our working groups. And we've decided that these topics include: dual credit, competency-based assessment, student mental health, shifting demographics and the impact on higher education in the state, and finally, rebuilding universities in a post-budget deficit. And that was really a summary of what we discussed in our meeting. It was a brief meeting.

In November, we will be here at NIU. So far, I've invited two state representatives, Pritchard, the former state rep, will be here, along with Keicher. I thought it might be a good idea to have outgoing state rep along with the incoming, to speak with our group. Any questions, please let me know.

K. Thu: Thanks a lot, Linda.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Jeffry Royce, Cathy Doederlein, Kendall Thu
Alex Gelman, Sarah Marsh, Jason Hanna

K. Thu: The second item under Roman numeral IX is University Advisory Committee to the Board. There is no report, because there was no board meeting. I do want to remind you that the board will be meeting on the 14th of November, full special meeting to vote on the collective bargaining agreement. And hopefully, that will get in place quickly enough so that we can get some more money in our pockets before the holidays.

X. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Katy Jaekel, Chair – no report

K. Thu: Moving down to Reports from Standing Committees, we have none from Faculty Rights and Responsibilities.

- B. Academic Affairs Committee – Peter Chomentowski, Chair – no report

K. Thu: Nothing from Academic Affairs.

- C. Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession – no report

K. Thu: We now no longer have Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession.

- D. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Keith Millis, Liaison/Spokesperson – report

K. Thu: So let's go to the Keith Millis proxy, which is Richard [Siegesmund] for Rules, Governance and Elections.

R. Siegesmund: The specific recommendations for changing the Constitution and the Bylaws and the Faculty Senate Bylaws to make Faculty Senate responsible for academic affairs, those specific

changes have moved to the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. And we will have a meeting on the morning of the next Faculty Senate, so November 20. And so next meeting we should have a report as to what that committee has recommended on making those specific changes to those three documents, the Constitution, Bylaws and the Faculty Senate Bylaws.

K. Thu: Thanks, Richard. And then at that time, the I would imagine that those proposed changes are going to be out in the public domain, and you'll all get to see them. And we'll have a discussion at the following Faculty Senate meeting.

E. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – George Slotsve, Liaison/Spokesperson – report

K. Thu: This brings us to Resources, Space and Budget Committee. George Slotsve is our liaison/spokesperson, George?

G. Slotsve: The RSB Committee met on Friday, Oct. 4. President Freeman attended the meeting to answer questions from the committee. There were a number of questions posed regarding the new health sciences building. President Freeman indicated that the designated funds should be provided in stages over the next six years. The funds will be the result of revenue from bonds and legalized gambling. Funds will be allocated for the planning stage, and the planning stage for the new health sciences building will begin this fiscal year. The building will combine health sciences programs that are currently housed in several locations across campus. It will have one place that we can try to house all these programs. Additional information on building and planning stages will be forthcoming later this year.

Other questions that were posed to President Freeman involved building access issues, specifically related to elevators in Holmes Student Center and Health Services, where DRC [Disability Resource Center] is located. There are both short- and long-term plans in place to provide the needed repairs in both locations. Currently work is being done to insure at least one elevator in the Health Services building is working at all times. Later this year, there should be a time line and location identified regarding the relocation of DRC to a more accessible location.

The minimum wage increase was briefly discussed. The current budget takes the new minimum wage increase that will take effect in January, that's already been taken into account. And the committee also started a discussion with VP McGill about moving budget oversight to the local level, trying to return some of these financial decisions back to colleges and departments, but that conversation will continue again at the November meeting. The November meeting is this Friday.

K. Thu: Thanks, George. I will say the decentralization process is moving ahead. What that means is that, if you want to buy a toothpick, you don't have to go through the Provost's Office anymore. But primarily, it's giving colleges their budget, and then letting them decide where their priorities are, in terms of hiring and not running that through the Provost's Office all the time. The last conversation I had with Provost Ingram, she actually asked me, well do you want colleges to have the budget for promotional increases. And I said, no, you keep that centralized, so if you become an associate professor, a professor, you get an increase in base pay. You don't want that deployed to individual departments. But it shows that she's actively thinking about it, and I think we're moving

in the right direction. It also means that colleges are going to be responsible for living within their budgets as well, but I think that's the right thing to do.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENT

K. Thu: And we have no public comment? If not, I'll entertain – go ahead.

E. Fredericks: One more thing. We are back again with the David W. [Raymond] Grant for Use of Technology in the classroom. That grant is due on January 31. So I have some fliers. You might have gotten some on the Internet, or in the mail.

K. Thu: Didn't that come out just today? I got one.

E. Fredericks: But just in case. Thank you.

K. Thu: Yep, you bet. Other comments?

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 2

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

K. Thu: Move to adjourn? Second? All in favor?

Members: Aye.

K. Thu: Reminder, leave your plastic cups on your table, and I'll pick them up.

Meeting adjourned at 4:26 p.m.