

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday, October 28, 2020, 3 p.m.
Microsoft Teams Meeting
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

*All Faculty Senate members will receive an Outlook invitation to this Teams meeting.
Others wishing to join the meeting, please send your request to Pat Erickson at pje@niu.edu.*

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Akst, Aygen, Berke, B. Beyer, Books, Borre, Buck, Butler (for Dmitruk), Carpenter, Chen, Cheyney, Chomentowski, Clark, Creed, Demir, Doederlein, Duffin, Fredericks, Furr, Grund, Hu, Hunter, Hua, Ito, A. Johnson, L. Johnson, N. Johnson, Kasper, Keddie, Kuehl, Laben, Lampi, Liberty, Maki, Mayer, McCarthy, McGowan, Mellon, Miguel, Montana, Nesterov, Onder, Palese, Penkrot, Petges, Pohlman, Qin, Richter, Riggs, Royce, Sharp, Sirotkin, Slotsve, Smith, Subramony, Sullivan, Surjadi, Tatara, Thu, Valentiner, Whedbee

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Allori, Dmitruk, Fanara, Jong

OTHERS PRESENT: Barnhart, Bryan, Douglass, Falkoff, Frazier, Ghrayeb, Ingram, Klaper, Rhode

OTHERS ABSENT: G. Beyer, Ferguson, Jaekel, Marsh

I. CALL TO ORDER

K. Thu: Well, my laptop clock just turned to 3 o'clock, so I think we're going to go ahead and get started. Good afternoon everybody. I'll call the meeting to order.

Meeting called to order at 3 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

K. Thu: Pat, do we have a quorum?

P. Erickson: We do have a quorum.

K. Thu: Okay, thank you.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

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

C. Doederlein: So moved.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

E. Fredericks: Second.

K. Thu: I heard Elisa, okay. Is there any discussion, comments on the agenda? So, Pat, how do you prefer the voting for adopting the agenda? Do you want to do it in the chat box or do you want to have people just chime in by voice.

P. Erickson: Well, I'm not the chat box monitor, so I don't want to speak for that person.

K. Thu: That's right, Natasha is our chat box monitor again. Thank you, Natasha.

N. Johnson: It's fine with me.

K. Thu: We're working on a different system, possibly using Polly to do voting, but we don't have the site license yet squared away. So, for the important items, we're going to still use Qualtrics. So, go ahead and indicate in the chat box yes to adopt the agenda, no to not adopt it or a for abstention. Natasha, once you're convinced it's passed, just let us know. That's a lot of yesses. I think it's passed, hasn't it, Natasha?

N. Johnson: Yes.

K. Thu: Thank you, we have an agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 30, 2020 MINUTES

K. Thu: Next is approval of the September 30 meeting minutes. They're on pages 3 to 6 of your packet. Again, I'll entertain a motion to approve the meeting minutes.

D. Valentiner: So moved.

K. Thu: David made the motion. Do we have a second?

E. Fredericks: Second.

K. Thu: Thanks, Elisa. Any comments, corrections, edits to the meeting minutes from the last time? Oh-oh, you can't hear me. Can everybody else hear me?

Unidentified: I can hear you.

Unidentified: I can hear you.

K. Thu: Must be something on your end if you can't hear me. Let's go ahead and vote then. Everybody in favor, say yes, no if you don't want to adopt the minutes, and then a for abstention. All right, Natasha, I think it's overwhelming.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

K. Thu: Pat, do we have any timely requests for public comment?

P. Erickson: We do not.

K. Thu: Okay, thank you.

VI. FS PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

K. Thu: Next is Faculty Senate President's Announcements. I have a few that I want to touch on. First, as you all know, University Council to suspend or do away with spring break this coming spring semester. As you may remember from our last senate meeting, I solicited input on the possibility of having a couple days off so that we don't have to go through the entire semester without a little bit of down time. So, I think it was actually in conversations with Brad Beyer and Antonio Johnson – I think the idea came from both of you, our student leaders. So, we came up with two days, one is the Friday of spring break. So, the university will be closed. Not only will classes be canceled, but the university will be closed so that staff will have that day off as well. And the other days is – I don't know whether I have this correct – I believe it's February 11, yes, February 11, which is a Thursday. So, we didn't want to have two days off that would hobble Monday, Wednesday and Friday classes. So, instead, we picked a Thursday right before Valentine's Day. And that had the added advantage of some students don't have class on Friday, so they would have a four-day weekend. So, I want to thank Brad, Antonio and all the others who provided me input. I think that date makes sense. It's sort of halfway between the start of the semester and the former spring break, which is when you get another three-day weekend. And then, of course, the semester will end one week early. Given what's going on with COVID and the rapid increase of COVID lately, and it's likely going to continue through the winter months, it makes even more sense. So, that said, I know it's a challenge for all of us to think about not having a spring break. It's not a permanent decision. It's just for this spring semester alone. But we're just going to have to pull together and support each other and do the best we can.

A couple of other announcements, work continues on revamping the APPM, that's the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. Some of you may be familiar with it. Some of you may not be. But it is a manual that has been cobbled together over the years and it looks like a Byzantine collection of policies. And the policies, themselves, have not been updated, in some cases, for 30 to 40 years. In some cases, they're placed in the APPM in the strangest locations. So, the idea is for us – and when I say us, there's a core group of myself, Brad Bond, Chad McEvoy, Omar Ghayeb, Becqui Hunt, I think that's it. And then we reach out to the groups we need to reach out to for the sections that we're responsible for. The ultimate goal is to not have an APPM anymore, but to have all those policies that are in there, get them updated and placed in the Policy Library. And we hope to be able to get that done by next March. I know my section that I'm responsible for, Section 1, I think we're going to be done by the end of the calendar year. Some of those updates, some of those revisions,

depending upon ownership, will have to come to Faculty Senate for approval. And hopefully, we can get everything to you in plenty of time so that approvals can take place before the end of the academic year.

Pat just informed me this afternoon that we're making great progress on filling the senate seats. Of the 70 seats that we have in senate, 66 have been filled. So, I want to thank Pat, as always, for her diligent work in getting those seats filled. We do have some committee vacancies that we need to still attend to. Even before we changed shared governance, it can also be a challenge to fill certain seats, but we're working away at it and I'm sure we'll continue to make progress.

So, those are my announcements.

VII. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Social Justice Committee update
Committee charge: To identify factors contributing to institutional racism at NIU, particularly policies, procedures and practices and take actions to correct them.

K. Thu: Next, we want to turn to Items for Faculty Senate Consideration. We have two items here. The Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee update. I want to say a few words about this, and then I want to let the committee chair, Ismael Montana, add to it.

The committee has met twice. There are 12 members of the committee. There are two students, one staff, one instructor, and the rest are tenure-track faculty. And that's roughly proportional to what Faculty Senate composition as a whole is like. The committee has met twice. I would say they are currently in the data collection phase. We got a large swath of data from Jeff Reynolds covering the diversity of our faculty and staff. We are in the process of sifting through that. The committee would like Jeff Reynolds to come to its next meeting to walk us through the data results that we were presented.

And then the committee also approved the charge to the committee, which you can see on your agenda there. It's to identify factors contributing to institutional racism at NIU, particularly policies, procedures and practices and take actions to correct them.

And then at the last meeting, which I had to leave 10-15 minutes early, the committee decided to break out into three subcommittees. And I'm going to turn it over to Ismael. Maybe, Ismael, you can talk to us a little bit about the three subcommittees and anything else you'd like to add about the committee's work.

I. Montana: Thank you, Kendall. I think you pretty much laid out what the committee has done so far, in the sense that, since it was formalized, we had two meetings. We convened two meetings, October 6 and October 20. And during the course of these meetings, we reviewed the Faculty Senate charge to the committee and had spirited discussion and final result is the draft charge that is before Faculty Senate displayed here.

One of the things that we consider as a first step and priority at this point for the committee work is procurement of data, because we want to make sure that our work will be hinged on review of institutional data, because we're going to be identifying or kind of reviewing the policies and procedures, as well as practices, in order to review areas that we may deem actionable in the final report that we will be issuing and presenting to Faculty Senate.

In order to move the work of the committee forward, we thought it would be more practical if we could divide the work of the committee into three subgroups, each group focusing on different areas of the committee charge. So, we will have, for instance, one subcommittee that will look at the institutional racism, its structures as it relates NIU institutions, demographics and other matters. The second subgroup or subcommittee will focus on matters of academic affairs. And then we will have a third that will work on issues of diversity, equity and inclusion.

And, like Kendall mentioned, we make some progress in terms of the first step of our work. And that is procurement – we received some data that we are reviewing now. And Jeff Reynolds, who is the head of institutional data. So, he agreed to appear before the committee and discuss some of the data that we are working with. But that is just one step.

The second step that the committee is considering is the second phase. And during that phase, we intend to work with other institutional bodies within NIU and coordinate with those bodies in order to move the work forward. I have been contacted by Vernese Edghill-Walden, who is making similar kind of coordination to bring together different bodies within NIU data working along the same lines so there is that development that is happening also. And as information becomes available, I will bring that to the committee, and we will see how we can work with those other groups that Office of Academic Diversity's agreeing to bring us together.

So, I think that's what I want to just add and will be happy to answer any questions.

K. Thu: Any questions for Ismael or other committee members? You probably will have more questions once more substance comes out of the committee. And just as a reminder, I've asked the committee to provide a set of recommendations to the full senate by next March. That will give us a little wiggle room to provide some feedback and ultimately, hopefully, approve the recommendations. And I've also been keeping the provost and the president up to speed on what the committee's doing so there are no surprises down the road. Questions or comments from anybody? Well, thank you, Ismael, for the update and also a note of appreciation to all the other committee members, as well.

B. Student Mental Health Initiative
Brad Beyer, Speaker of the Senate, Student Government Association

K. Thu: With that, the next item under Roman numeral VII is our Student Mental Health Initiative. We were planning on having a presentation by Ian Pearson last spring, but as we all know, something happened on the way to the forum last spring. So, Brad Beyer has graciously agreed to do the presentation this fall. Brad is the speaker of the Student Senate. And Brad, I'm going to say thank you for coming to the senate meeting and doing the presentation. And I'm going to turn it over to you.

B. Beyer: Thank you, Kendall. Can everyone hear me?

K. Thu: Yes.

B. Beyer: Okay. And I'm working on getting my screen shared. Thank you. Like Kendall said, for those of you who haven't met me or seen me around, I am the speaker of the Student Senate with the Student Government Association. And, again, I'm just doing a kind a comprehensive overview of mental health concerns amongst college students. I'm going to go kind of into the history of the SGA's involvement with student advocacy, but then really read into the purpose of this resolution. The Student Senate pass a resolution encouraging faculty members to include resource information in course syllabi. So, last week at our FS Steering Committee meeting, we had discussed me, after this presentation is over, getting a statement together that could possibly go to the Office of the Provost and then distributed out to the department chairs. And then, hopefully, we could see that for spring semester for courses.

For the history, kind of why we're doing this, actually almost a year ago today, October 27, 2019, the SGA Senate passed a resolution urging faculty members to include resource information in course syllabi to promote mental awareness, but also to help decrease the stigma. Now my intuition told me that it passed unanimously, and I spent an embarrassing amount of time digging through binders in my office trying to find the senate agenda pamphlet from that meeting, just to be sure that it did, in fact, pass unanimously. But I was able to verify that it did pass unanimously in the Student Senate last fall. And as Kendall mentioned, Ian was supposed to do this, I believe in January or February. But then it got pushed back to March. And then it kept getting pushed back, obviously, because of COVID. But better late than never, we're delivering on the promise. So, this has been a project in the making for a while.

SGA's Past Efforts – So, I'm sure many of you have seen stuff like this around campus. We have really prioritized mental health awareness through projects like the NoShame Campaign. That was something that was relaunched and well done, I think in 2016 or maybe it was 2017, I can't quite remember. But the NoShame Campaign was to end stigma and silence of mental health issues. And then last year, Project Orange was kind of an anti-violence awareness initiative, and we also tied that into mental health as well. I actually just had our kind of quasi, middle-of-the-semester meeting with President Freeman, myself and Antonio Johnson, just did that earlier this afternoon. And she seemed pretty excited that we were keeping up on our tradition of SGA advocating on mental health. And so we're keeping up with tradition in that sense.

I worked with Counseling and Consultation Services to put this presentation together. And locally, the NIU stats showed that the top five concerns reported by students last academic year: Number 1, anxiety and stress, followed by depression, family concerns, self-esteem concerns, and then relationship problems. And these are the biggest concerns that are reported by CCS here at NIU. They currently serve about 900 students and have been able to reach about 900 more through virtual engagement. But again, these were the biggest concerns that were reported by students directly to Counseling and Consultation Services here on campus.

The national statistics, the National College Health Assessment is done every year. NIU does it every three years. And from the spring 2019 assessment, they found that, in the last 12 months, so for the school year, these were the results that were reported by students. Fifty-six percent felt that within the last 12 months, things were hopeless. Eighty-seven percent felt overwhelmed by all that they had to do. Forty-five percent felt so depressed that it was difficult to function. Nearly 66 percent felt overwhelming anxiety. About 13 percent seriously considered suicide. And two percent had attempted suicide. And again, these are the national statistics that come from the National College Health Assessment. Like I said, NIU does it every three years, and what I was told was that the national findings are very consistent with what we see here at NIU with students. They did this survey earlier in the year for 2020, but because like I said, they do it every three years, the last time was in 2017. So, when they did it again in 2020, not enough people had responded to the survey to the point where it was generalizable, but the data was informative, at least, that even now, these trends are still holding consistent locally with NIU students. The reason why not enough people responded, I don't know the specific reason. I was told that it didn't have anything to do with COVID. It was just that, this time around, it wasn't successful in terms of getting enough students to respond to it. But again, the point is that our findings locally are pretty consistent with the national data, and this is the national data as it relates to college students and mental health.

Now, kind of specifically with COVID, Active Minds does an annual survey that is put out in the spring, and I believe it's a think tank out of Washington, D.C. And it's a big study that they do for the entire nation. And they wanted to follow up with their spring survey that they put out every year. And they did one this past September, and their goal was to try and better understand the pandemic and, specifically, the toll that it's taking on students. So, they surveyed both high school and college students, but these data points come specifically from the college students that they sampled. Six months after the pandemic began, this is in September, 89 percent said COVID had caused stress or anxiety. Seventy-eight percent felt loneliness or isolation, clearly because of social and physical distancing. And almost half had experienced a setback in finances. I personally relate to that one. I'm not alone in terms of a lot of students, again, myself included, lost out on internships and other summer job opportunities, because of the economic contraction that was associated with the pandemic. So, it's been stressful trying to cover rent and support yourself during the school year when summer jobs didn't pan out the way that they wanted. Again, that was a follow-up survey that was done to see the toll that the pandemic and COVID-19 was really having on college students' mental health.

I mentioned earlier that I worked specifically with Tim Paquette; he's the director of Counseling and Consultation Services. And then I also worked with Andrea Drott from Wellness. And the conversation that we had had, they ended it by saying that, in terms of feedback – again, like I said, they see that NIU student concerns are consistent with the national data for many years now. I believe he said something like, for the past decade or so, they've seen it pretty consistent. But the stigma associated with seeking support is decreasing, so more and more students are willing to openly discuss mental health concerns. And as a result of that, the local trends emphasize the importance of informing students of the available mental health resources on campus. And so, as more students talk about it, it begs the question that CCS and our other support offices around campus would benefit from some exposure.

And to conclude, this is the final statement from the resolution: “Therefore, the students of Northern Illinois University represented in this Senate urge faculty to include information for the Family and Couple Therapy Clinic, Community Counseling Training center, Counseling and Consultations Services, and the Psychological Services Center on their syllabi each semester.” And so by doing that, that’s providing the exposure that would benefit these resource offices on campus.

And that’s really all I have. It was kind of a crash course, but I was hoping it would be informative enough to the point where it would really convey the importance of having this in syllabi. I’ve had professors in the past who’ve included it. I have a professor right now who has a little blurb in the syllabi about it. And so a little additional additions to course syllabi, especially for important topics like this, are important. So, that’s it for me, and I think we were going to do Q&A, Kendall, is that right?

K. Thu: Yes, thanks, Brad. It’s obviously troubling and a huge challenge. In talking about providing services to students, did you learn anything about how that can be done online or virtually, because, obviously, most of our students are not on campus?

B. Beyer: No, CCS is offering virtual counseling right now. He was saying that they’ve been able to reach a pretty decent audience virtually as well. So they have done it, and I do know for a fact that they are doing the virtual counseling with one-on-one right now.

K. Thu: I would guess that some students are more willing to do it virtually rather than physically walk into an office, but that’s just a guess. So, questions or comments from anybody in senate for Brad, or just in general about the topic?

J. Laben: [via chat box] Is the consulting services overwhelmed by the demand for counseling?

B. Beyer: I can’t comment specifically. I didn’t get that impression from Tim when I talked to him. I think someone at the FS Steering Committee meeting last week asked, would they benefit from more resources. And I had reached back out, but I never heard back, so I don’t know specifically. My intuition tells me that they probably are seeing more. I don’t know if it’s to the point where it would be considered overwhelming, but I can look into that and then reach back out.

K. Thu: That sounds good. I see that Elisa has her hand up, Elisa.

K. Fredericks: I was wondering if we could just send out a little bit of what could be included in the syllabus again.

K. Thu: Yes. Do we have a template for that, Brad? Or maybe some of the faculty have it already?

E. Fredericks: Maybe we can send it out again. Thank you.

K. Thu: We can get that sent to the Faculty Senate members. Other questions in the chat box.

N. Johnson: A couple comments.

K. Borre: [via chat box] I have referred a couple of students and they were seen within a few days.

J. Akst: [via chat box] Has syllabus language already been developed (similar to the DRC)?

K. Thu: I think somebody must have this template that we can circulate to faculty, and you can circulate it to your departments, to drop in. The number of items that we're putting in syllabi these days is a little bit worrisome, because it's getting so packed with statements, I just don't know whether students are going to be paying attention to it. But this one, where you're actually having resources and a direction of where to go in the syllabus, is important. Other comments or questions?

J. Laben: [via chat box] One of my students wanted more help but was told to read a pamphlet.

B. Creed: Can we have a two-minute video for students to embed in our Blackboard courses? To get around the "crowded" syllabus?

K. Borre: Can't the resource information be a part of the Blackboard organization?

K. Thu: It's a challenge with the crowded syllabus, but even if they don't read it at the outset, just knowing that they can go to the syllabus for resource direction is important. And yes, they can put it in Blackboard as well. Other questions or comments? I tell you, in addition to just the level of mental health issues that we have, are the figures on suicide attempts, suicidal thoughts. That really grabbed my attention. We've got to do everything we can in this virtual world to support our students.

F. Surjadi: [via chat box] The Couple and Family Therapy Clinic is accepting new clients and they are offering video and phone sessions. <https://www.chhs.niu.edu/clinics/couple-family-therapy/services.shtml>.

J. Akst: [via chat box] Great (and troubling) presentation. Thank you for sharing that information.

S. Richter: [via chat box] We have a list of suggested/potential resources to include in a Blackboard course. I'll grab that to share here.

K. Thu: Well, Brad, thank you very much. I appreciate it. This doesn't have to be the last word on the subject. If there are updates that you want to bring to Faculty Senate, by all means. And by the way, can we have this presentation posted on the Faculty Senate website.

B. Beyer: Yes.

K. Thu: If you can send it to Pat, I'm sure she can get it posted for us.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

K. Thu: We have no consent agenda.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 4.5.1 Baccalaureate Council membership and Article 4.6.2.1 General Education Committee membership – Omar Ghrayeb, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies
SECOND READING/VOTE

K. Thu: Let's move on to Unfinished Business. We have a second reading of a proposed amendment to the Faculty Senate bylaws that was introduced at the last meeting. Omar, are you with us?

O. Ghrayeb: Yes, Kendall, I'm here.

K. Thu: Why don't you just walk us through this again. I think everybody has a general understanding, but any time we do a bylaw change, we want to make sure that everybody understands what's going on.

O. Ghrayeb: Sure, good afternoon, everyone. Let me start by apologizing for not being on the cam, because my WiFi is not working, and I'm using my phone.

The amendment, in a nutshell, we sincerely value student input, especially on committees like Baccalaureate Council or the General Education Committee. It's critical as we are modifying, adding, deleting curriculum, and their voice is critical. However, for the last two years as I was involved in both committees, the student representation, we are lucky if we have one or two students. In the existing process, students come to serve on these committees through their college Student Advisory Committee. What we are proposing is to add another venue. Of course, we are not substituting the SAC input. However, if the SACs don't nominate students to serve on these committees during the time window – and after talking to different colleges, I think the SAC will be given three weeks from the beginning of the semester to make the nomination – otherwise, we are allowing the committees know students who are willing to serve, that would be the second option. Again, the focus of this amendment is that we really want students to serve on these committees.

K. Thu: Thank you, Omar. And just so you know, we have the proposed changes projected, as well as the rationale at the top. And as Omar has already said, the gist of this is creating additional venues or strategies for getting students represented. Any questions? I'm sorry, I should have entertained a motion to approve before we even started this. So, at this point, I'll entertain a motion to approve, get a second and then we can discuss if you like. So, do I have a motion to approve?

D. Valentiner: I'll make the motion.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

B. McGowan: I second.

K. Thu: Okay, Beth McGowan seconds. Now we can go back to discussion. Any comments or questions for Omar? This is pretty straight forward. I don't think there's anything controversial

here. It's just an effort to get more student involvement. Okay, if not, we're going to do a Qualtrics survey, because we need to have a record of the vote. And I'll talk very slowly so Pat can pull that together and put it in the chat box. And here are the voting members so, if you're not a voting member of the Faculty Senate, please don't fill out the Qualtrics survey.

P. Erickson: And, Kendall, just so everybody is aware of what's required to pass an amendment to the Faculty Senate Bylaws, there are two thresholds. First, we must have two-thirds of the voting members present. And for us today, that would be 44, and we've more than made that mark. And then, once we start voting, we need two-thirds of those voting to approve.

K. Thu: Thanks, Pat.

B. Penkrot: Can you please review what lines 1 through 10 represent?

P. Erickson: Sorry about that – I assumed way too much here. There are options 1 through 10. We're not going to use all the options. And 1 is yes, 2 is no, 3 is abstain. Sorry about that and thanks for asking.

K. Thu: Thank you. So, are we ready to vote, Pat.

P. Erickson: Sure.

K. Thu: So, remember to get your vote on record, you'll have to vote using the Qualtrics survey in the chat box, rather than a separate vote in the chat box. So you have to respond to the actual survey, which Pat posted.

P. Erickson: And that should be a hyperlink in the chat box.

K. Thu: Right, and let us know if any of you have problems. We'll give you a minute or so to fill it out.

P. Erickson: We've had 45 responses so far. I know that there are more voters in the room. And, Kendall, this might be a similar situation where Qualtrics just is a little slow on populating the report. If you want to go on while people continue to vote on that, maybe we could come back to it.

K. Thu: I think that's a good idea. I think that's how we handled it the last time. So, Pat, you just alert us when you have the results, and we'll come back to you.

P. Erickson: I will.

[At this point, the membership went on with the agenda and came back to complete this discussion at a later time in the meeting per below.]

K. Thu: That brings us to reports from councils, boards and committees, unless, Pat, you're ready for us to go back and look at the vote.

P. Erickson: Yes, Kendall, I am ready. Let me just pull that up and slide it over to the screen I'm sharing. Looks like we have 53 yes votes, zero no votes and one abstain. So that passes.

K. Thu: The change passes. Thanks, Omar, for doing that. Appreciate it.

O. Ghrayeb: Thank you, Kendall, and thank you everyone. This will be really helpful.

X. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 3.3 Faculty Senate Personnel Committee
FIRST READING

K. Thu: So that brings us to item X. under New Business, proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 3.3 having to do with the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee. Just by way of backdrop, as many of you know now, the University Council Personnel Committee was moved over to the Faculty Senate. The name changed to the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee. Nothing else changed. This proposal – and this is just a first reading, so we don't vote on it – is to specify that the vice provost of faculty affairs, these days Chad McEvoy, would chair that committee. In the past, it has sort of been uneven. At times, the provosts, themselves, chair the committee. At other times, the vice provost has chaired the committee. This has the support of Beth Ingram and her office, that the vice provost for faculty affairs would be the chair of the committee. Any questions about that at this point? So, it's more of a bylaw housecleaning detail. We do have a question, go ahead.

Unidentified: Okay, just a quick question since I'm not really familiar with the system, and this is my first meeting of the Faculty Senate, what exactly is the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee actually supposed to do?

K. Thu: Good question. Like Pat, I sometimes make too many assumptions that everybody knows this. The Faculty Senate Personnel Committee serves two very important functions. It looks at tenure and promotion cases that are in dispute. And secondly, it has a voice in approving sabbatical proposals. So, those are the two primary things that they do. And they typically meet most heavily in the spring when those issues come up. And so, 99 percent of what it does has to do with tenure-track faculty. Good question.

Unidentified: Okay, thank you, Kendall.

K. Thu: You're welcome. Other questions? Okay, so we will be voting on this at the next Faculty Senate meeting.

XI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

K. Thu: Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committee, we've got an important report from Linda. I hope you're with us, Linda.

L. Saborío: Good afternoon everyone. Today I'm actually going to focus my report on the IBHE's Strategic Plan meeting that was held on October 26. This past Monday, the IBHE convened to discuss more details about this strategic plan that I mentioned at the last Faculty Senate meeting. [inaudible] IBHE role in [inaudible] advisory committee role in identifying and articulating specific strategies and establishing measurable metrics. They've hired UPB Consulting rep for consulting, and the rep [inaudible] presented along with a few IBHE members and staff. They talked about the statutory language for creating a master plan, timeline [inaudible] phase one data results context for the strategic plan and priorities for the strategic plan. And I'm not going to go over all of these, just a few of the items.

So, the theme from the phase one focus groups and discussions were stakeholders and board members, university presidents, the student advisory board. The top six priorities identified were: Number one is equity, how to ensure affordability, accessibility, in particular to underrepresented groups. Number two was cost, two items there. We need a funding strategy that provides stability even in uncertain times, and how to address student debt. And then three was operating structure. Four, instruction. Five, work force talent development. And six, high school transition.

Phase one data results with over 3,000 responses at the time of the meeting, the top three themes identified there were: Number one was cost again, 19 percent. Two, equity with 17 percent. And equity is actually the most important theme from among BIPOC population. And three was enrollment at 16 percent. So, not much difference between the top three items there. Very interesting. And they did talk about how they did a cross section of it, and it came out about the same, the top three: cost, equity and enrollment.

For phase two, the focus groups will be regionally based – that will be interesting – with more survey engagement, discussions and written input opportunities. They're going to be provided through social media, virtual town hall discussions and through email.

Ginger Ostro also presented a slide that was well received by the members. It was titled Context for the Strategic Plan. And this slide focused on the COVID-19 impact and how it reshapes the educational experience. The inequities are more evident. Changes in the nature of work are accelerating. She talked about innovative [inaudible] traditional post-secondary education and how they're growing, such as corporate training, badges, micro-credentials and [inaudible] models. And she talked about budget challenges that have exacerbated during this time.

The core principles identified by the IBHE for the plan, and these are very interesting. This is a list I'm going to give you. Students are our priority. Equity drives our system. A varied system is essential for success. We are part of the P-20 education continuum. Higher education enriches life. And talent drives our economy. Very interesting, right.

From a faculty perspective, I was pleased to see the board's recognition of the importance of higher education, not just as a tool for upward social mobility, but also a means of empowerment and a pathway for individuals to thrive and to become civic-minded, independent thinking citizens.

But some impressions about the discussion, it is very student oriented. And this is good. We do

need to focus on accessibility, affordability, equity and degree attainment, which was one of the three priorities there. But I'm wondering about the role of faculty and how our research and scholarly endeavors fit in with the plan. And it's interesting that I'd written my report for the meeting today, and at 2 o'clock I met with President Freeman to discuss the IBHE's strategic plan. And she had something to say about my concern about faculty research and scholarly endeavors, and how they fit into the plan. So, to give you a little background, a colleague of mine from Western Illinois University made some comments during the public comment section of the meeting about the 40 major thresholds. That was a suggestion by the IBHE for program retention. It was just a suggestion that was forwarded by the IBHE for the board several years ago. And she framed her argument as more of "let's save the liberal arts" argument. But President Freeman suggested that maybe we could consider reframing this as more of an equity argument, that these programs provide students from diverse backgrounds with opportunities to engage in quality research with faculty members. And I think this is a very poignant point. And I don't know if I can get some of your comments about it, this idea of reframing this argument rather than it's a matter of saving liberal arts and saving faculty jobs, it's an issue of equity and diversity.

And then I just received an email from President Freeman that says on the president's call today, it was mentioned that the PEF from the September meeting was posted, along with an email for feedback. So, I can copy this link and put it into the chat box.

<https://www.ibhe.org/IBHE-Strategic-Planning-meetings.html>

And she said, "I shared the concern about research scholarship and engaging students, and it was indicated that faculty voices on this would be welcome. So, they want to hear our opinions and suggestions and our comments. And I'm going to open this up for any discussion or questions.

K. Thu: Thank you, Linda. I had a parallel conversation with President Freeman earlier this week.

L. Saborío: Yes.

K. Thu: And so, I agree with working in equity. It's always a challenge to get boards of trustee with the IBHE to appreciate and understand how important research is. And for our institution, we need to have a specific reminder that we are a research institution. UI Champaign/Urbana, they don't have to have that. But we, as an institution, need to remind everybody that we're different than Western or Eastern.

L. Saborío: Right, and we're a high-producing research institution.

K. Thu: A high-producing research institution.

L. Saborío: Yes, I agree.

K. Thu: And the fact that we involve students at all levels, not just graduate students, but undergraduate students in the research enterprise, I think it's important to get in there. So, I agree with what you're saying, Linda, and with what President Freeman has said.

L. Saborío: Right, it's a good way to reframe that argument, isn't it? Any other comments or questions?

K. Thu: I encourage you to contact Linda. I encourage you to provide feedback on the document that she's providing. It may seem so distant to us that it doesn't matter, but it really does matter. And if we don't get our voice out there, in this day and age when we're voting, you're going to be voting, basically, on the IBHE plan. Maybe we should point out that the IBHE is the Illinois Board of Higher Education. It's the board that oversees higher education throughout Illinois. And as a body, they need to hear from faculty and staff, as well. So, I'll stop there and let anybody else chime in.

L. Saborío: I think go to their website. I think they have a description of various boards in Illinois, such as the Community College Board. And there are others. There's a student advisory board.

K. Thu: Any questions or comments? Well, you can send your comments directly to Linda if you like. I'm sure you appreciate that. And if you have a few minutes in between tasks, certainly just send off a quick email to Linda what you think are the top three things that you want to see in the plan.

L. Saborío: Yes, any comments are appreciated. Thank you.

K. Thu: All right, well, thanks, Linda. Appreciate it.

B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Natasha Johnson, Cathy Doederlein, Kendall Thu
Katy Jaekel, Sarah Marsh, Greg Beyer

K. Thu: Next, the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. There has not been a board meeting, so there's no report there.

C. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Peter Chomentowski, Chair –
report

K. Thu: That brings us to Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee. And, Peter, I know you have an update on what that committee's been charged with and what you're doing. So, I'll turn it over to you.

P. Chomentowski: We've been tasked with looking at the bylaws and the constitution, and looking at what is the definition of faculty, because the definition has been brought up to be pretty broad across both the constitution and bylaws of even departments. So, we're looking to see if we can actually go through the Board of Trustees' different bylaws and the Policy Library and seeing what the appointments are for non-tenured and tenure-track and then making some recommendations about maybe looking at how to have different categories under faculty. This was brought to us by Kendall, and so, we've been tasked to go through the documents. And we're just starting the process to see what's written at NIU. But, there's a lot of discrepancy between the different bylaws and the constitution, exactly what is a faculty member. Kendall?

K. Thu: Yes, that's exactly right. We need some consistency. The constitution definition of faculty is not consistent with other parts of the bylaws. It's not consistent with the APPM. Jerry Blazey just shared with Peter and I yesterday the categories in the APPM. And it's evident that there's a fundamental need to clear up or clean up the way we talk about different categories of faculty. In fact, in the APPM, the definition of an instructor is actually wrong. I guess that comes as no surprise, given how outdated the APPM is.

And Peter's done some work looking at other institutions and suggestions. So, he and I have been working on possible language. In fact, I think you sent me a document this afternoon, Peter, that I haven't had a chance to look at yet. And give that recommendation to his committee. And eventually, that committee will make a recommendation to the full Faculty Senate. And again, I said, well, can you get this to us by next March so that we have time to look at it and provide some feedback and maybe approve it before the end of the academic year. So, there's nothing specific yet to share with you, but we just wanted to update you to let you know this is going on. Any questions on that? Okay, thanks, Peter. I appreciate your work with the committee.

P. Chomentowski: You're very welcome.

- D. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Ben Creed,
Liaison/Spokesperson – no report

K. Thu: No report from Rules, Governance and Elections.

- E. Student Government Association – report
Antonio Johnson, President
Bradley Beyer, Speaker of the Senate

K. Thu: So, that brings us to the Student Government Association. Antonio, do you want to go first?

A. Johnson: Yes, thank you, Dr. Thu. Today I don't have a report. I've just been working with the students of Black Studies on their demands, meeting with the chief of police, the president's office and the Division of Student Affairs on that matter. Thank you.

K. Thu: Okay, thanks, Antonio. Brad?

B. Beyer: Hi everyone. Don't have a huge report, other than we're kind of coming into the home stretch for Student Senate meetings. We have four meetings left for the year, 2020, so, we'll be done on November 22, and then we go into recess until January 17. So, I'm looking personally forward to a little well-deserved break. It's been a long semester.

K. Thu: Yes, it has.

B. Beyer: But, that's really it for me. I echo what Antonio said. We're doing lots of behind-the-scenes work, one of which you all just saw in the presentation. Just looking forward to resetting

over break and then, hopefully, having a better idea, now that we understand what virtual college looks like, we can plan for a good spring semester. Thank you all again.

K. Thu: Thanks, Brad and Antonio. Thanks for all you're doing above and beyond just the normal coursework. I know it's a heavy lead, and I appreciate all that you're doing, so thank you very much.

F. Operating Staff Council – Natasha Johnson, President – report

N. Johnson: For the Operating Staff Council, we are still going over our bylaws, changing some information so the president can have a two-year term, and just updating some more of our bylaws. And everyone's looking forward to hearing from Pulchratia Smith in December about bumping rights to get an understanding how that was. We just did Council of Councils, and it was virtual. It was really nice. They gave the information about bumping rights and different things that are going on within the state, so very informative. And I'm looking forward to being able to share with those who were not able to go. And then, finally, just making sure that everybody understands that, at the end of the day, there's a lot to be grateful for. There are a lot of things that have happened and that we have no control over. But at this point, sometimes just being alive and having your health is something to be grateful for. So, just reminding people that sometimes see the light at the end of the tunnel.

K. Thu: Thanks, Natasha. Just so we don't assume that everybody knows what bumping is, do you want to say a couple words about what that actually is?

N. Johnson: Essentially, if your position is eliminated and you have bumping rights, how long have you been working in a specific position, what are the rules in case they need to lay people off, what rights do you have. It's very complex, which is why Pulchratia and her team have come up with some information and some diagrams so people can see and understand, because if you're the person in this situation, you want to know that everything was fair. So, that's pretty much what it is, just so you can have an understanding of, if this happens to your classification, what's going to happen to you.

K. Thu: Okay, thank you.

G. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Cathy Doederlein, President – report

K. Thu: All right, now let's turn to Cathy. Cathy, do you have anything to report?

C. Doederlein: A couple items we actually already had – a presentation from Pulchratia, as well as some others in HR, they came to our last meeting, as well as Dr. Vernese Edghill-Walden. And then we also, at the same meeting, had President Freeman. So, it was a very robust meeting, a lot of good conversation. It was useful, since there are many SPS that are making the transition to Operating Staff, I think it was useful for them to better understand the potential rights, as well as risks, that come with the potential of bumping; so, shifting and potentially taking on somebody else's role and the domino effect of that. It is overwhelming and confusing, to say the least. The team in HR does a great job of trying to make it as not-confusing as possible.

We have an event going on tomorrow that really anybody's welcome to join, though we've marketed it specifically to SPS. It's a campus clean-up event. A couple members from our council had wondered if there might be a way with a fairly large amount of trash seeming to pile up on campus, if we could volunteer to offer some assistance without running afoul of any collective bargaining agreements or anything like that. So, between 1 and 4 p.m. tomorrow, people are welcome to stop by the Campus Life Building to pick up some supplies to then go around different parts of campus to pick up recyclable items, as well as to pick up trash. There will be specific instructions on where to take things, just to try to clean up just the random debris and garbage that has accumulated in different places on campus. We're hoping to make this a routine event, maybe once a semester, and just encourage everybody to help in the process of keeping campus clean. Of course, wear masks and plan for social distancing and all that good stuff. But we appreciate and welcome anybody who might want to join us. Again, that's 1 to 4 tomorrow. Stop by the Campus Life Building for supplies. Thanks so much.

K. Thu: Thanks for sharing and thanks for that initiative. I think that's a great idea to bring people together. With all the layers of stress that we're dealing with these days, that's one positive thing that we can do. And it always makes you feel better, as well. So, please join Cathy if you can.

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](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- Q. [Annual Reports](#), 2019-20
- R. FS 2020-21 dates: Sep 2, Sep 30, Oct 28, Nov 18, Jan 20, Feb 17, Mar 24, Apr 21
All 2020-21 FS meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams. The Teams meeting link and the agendas will typically be sent via email on the Friday preceding each FS meeting.
- S. Revisions to Spring 2021 academic calendar

K. Thu: I just want to point out that the revised calendar for this academic year is included in your packet. I believe the provost has already sent out an announcement about the calendar. Here it is.

So, as have, as I've mentioned previously, canceled spring break. February 11 and March 12 will be days off for everybody. And then the semester ends one week early. And I believe I got an email from HR this afternoon; they wanted to update their calendar as well.

Other than that, I just want to encourage all of you to support each other; take some time out, go out for walks, do whatever you need to do to recharge and rejuvenate. I know my daily walks are very helpful for my own mental health. And also reach out to your colleagues just to see how they're doing. There's nothing like getting an email or being on a Teams call when somebody says, "how are you doing? What's going on with you?" And it's just more important than ever these days.

And also, please vote. Vote. Vote. Vote. And take care of yourselves.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

K. Thu: I'll entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting.

N. Johnson: So moved.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

B. McGowan: Second.

K. Thu: All those in favor, indicate by saying yes in the chat box. And while the yesses come flying by, take care everybody, and we'll see you in a month. The meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.