

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE
Wednesday, March 30, 2022, 3 p.m.
Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center
231 N. Annie Glidden Road
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Akst, Billingsly (for Cheyney), Bohanon, Books, Chomentowski, D. Collins, V. Collins, Creed, Duffin, Fredericks, Gorman, Grund, Hua, Isawi (for Hu), Ito, Johnson, Jong, Keddie, Lampi, Liberty, Lulinski, Maki, Marsh, McConkie, McGowan, McKee, Mellon, Montana, Montgomery, Moraga (for Chen), Nesterov, Nicholson (for Birch), Palese, Penkrot, Qin, Richter, Rossetti, Serowka, Sharp, Slotsve, Smith, Staikidis, Stange (for Hunter), Sullivan, Vahabzadeh, Valentiner, Whedbee

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Birch, Bradley, Bujarski, Carpenter, Chen, Cheyney, Chung, Clark, Demir, Duffrin, Engel, Haidar, Hu, Hunter, Knoll, Miguel, Qamar, Sirotkin, Vaezi

OTHERS PRESENT: Boston, Bryan, Flynn, Griffin, Groza, Howell, Ingram, McEvoy, Saborío

OTHERS ABSENT: Beyer, Falkoff, Ferguson, Jaekel

I. CALL TO ORDER

P. Chomentowski: Good afternoon, everyone. I am going to call the Faculty Senate meeting to order for Wednesday, March 30, 2022.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

P. Chomentowski: Pat, let's move on to verification of quorum. Pat, do we have a quorum?

P. Erickson: Pat, we do have a quorum.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to the adoption of the agenda. Can I have someone make a motion and a second to adopt the agenda for today's Faculty Senate meeting.

B. McGowan: So moved.

M. Stange: Second.

P. Chomentowski: All right, all those in favor, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, please say no. Any abstentions? All right, adoption of the agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 23, 2022, MINUTES

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to the approval of the minutes. Can I have someone make a motion and a second to approve the February 23, 2022, minutes from the Faculty Senate?

F. Bohanon: So moved.

V. Collins: Second.

P. Chomentowski: Any discussion about the minutes from the last meeting? All those in favor, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, please say no. Any abstentions? The Faculty Senate approves the minutes.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

P. Chomentowski: Pat, do we have any public comment?

P. Erickson: No public comment today.

VI. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

P. Chomentowski: I'm going to move on to Faculty Senate president's announcements. The first announcement that I'm going to make today is that George Slotsve has been our Faculty Senate vice president for 12 years. It's kind of been a parliamentary procedure, you might say, that every year someone would nominate George, and in his kind and humbling way, he would accept the nomination. And we would basically move on as the Faculty Senate members, knowing that we have a vice president. With that said, George is finally going to not accept nomination this year for Faculty Senate [vice] president for the 2022-23 year. I would like to take a moment to thank George Slotsve for his 12 years of service as Faculty Senate president. And we would like to present you with an award if you could come up here, George, please, as a token of our gratitude for all of your service. So, how about we give a round of applause for George.

G. Slotsve: Thank you very much. It's been a pleasure serving [inaudible].

P. Chomentowski: So, some more fun. I have been in Faculty Senate, since 2015, and in that time, Dr. Ferald Bryan has been a common fixture at the head of the table at every meeting I have attended. That led us to do a little searching – Pat did – and found out that this is Ferald’s 25th year as parliamentary for Northern Illinois Faculty Senate. We, the NIU Faculty Senate, would like to say thank you for all your years of tireless service as parliamentarian, and we would like to present you with a gesture of our gratitude for all your hard work. How about a round of applause for Ferald.

F. Bryan: Thank you very much [inaudible].

VII. PROVOST’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

P. Chomentowski: Now, we will move on to the newest of our things for Faculty Senate. You’ll see we have a thing called Provost’s Announcements. We have now allotted time for Provost Ingram to come to Faculty Senate. And she’s going to be doing this every meeting to present new information for faculty, staff. And you can ask questions about the information she’s going to present.

B. Ingram: Thank you. Thank you for giving me a few minutes at your meetings to just make a few announcements, answer any questions you have and alert you to things that might be going on in the Provost’s Office that are of interest to Faculty Senate.

And the second thing I wanted to say is congratulations to all of the award winners – staff and faculty. You know it’s award season right now, and I go to lots of events. And it’s so nice to be back in person and to be giving these awards in person this year. And I just wanted to say congratulations to all of the people that got recognized this year for their service to NIU. And also to thank all of you for the hard work that you’ve done this year to keep the university running and on track. It’s been a challenging year, and it’s so nice to be back here at nearly the end of the term to see everybody face to face, and to be able to thank you in person for the work that you do.

I just wanted to alert you to a few things that are going on, and then I can answer any questions that you have. The first one is searches for executive level positions. We have three searches that are in some part of their process. The vice president for student affairs – we have visitors coming in starting next Sunday. We’re expecting four candidates in. There is an open forum that will stream. I encourage you to listen to the open forum. And we usually record it, although I won’t say that, but I encourage you to listen to the stream of the comments that the candidates make. And feel free to send your feedback on the Qualtrics survey. And that starts on April 4.

As you probably know – and some people have been affected by this more than others – Dean Lynda Ransdell has taken another position and will be departing on June 30. We expect to move promptly to fill her shoes with an interim appointment and to begin the search process. And we’ll be using an executive search firm pending an informational item in front of the Board of Trustees.

Sarah Chinniah, the CFO and vice president for administration and finance, is leaving sooner than that on April 20. And again, we're moving promptly to find an interim to serve in Sarah's shoes while we conduct a search for a permanent replacement. And I will be chairing that search committee.

Both of those searches will commence now. The academic search, the work will take place in the fall when the faculty are back on campus.

I wanted to alert you to the Emerging Faculty Leaders Program. A call for applications went out about a week ago. This is a program that Chad runs with Alicia Schatteman. And I would urge you, or people you know, to apply for that program. It's a year-long program. I think the participants this year found it very useful, especially if you're aspiring to some other sort of leadership position on campus. And the deadline for that is April 15.

Finally, our Board of Trustees Professor, Kathleen McFadden, is giving a talk in the library on April 4 at noon. I'd encourage you to attend. The last one was very lively and interesting. And there are treats there if you want a little extra incentive to come and listen to Kathleen talk about her research and answer questions from the audience.

So, those are the things that I have on my list for today, but I'd be happy to answer any questions you have about others things going on, on campus, or anything else. I will be talking about the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan a little bit later, and I can answer questions then, as well. Great, well, thank you for the time. I appreciate it.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

VIII. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. Anti-Racism Statement – Presentation and Feedback
Tamara Boston, Project Coordinator
Division of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Joseph Flynn
Associate Director of Academic Affairs, Center for Black Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Curriculum and Instruction

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to items for Faculty Senate to consider. We have some guests here today who are going to present on the Anti-Racism Statement – Joe Flynn and Tamara Boston, if you could please take the front.

T. Boston: Hello, everyone, and thank you for having me here. I know that some of you may have already seen this presentation, and I know that some may have not. But, for the sake of making sure that we have presented the anti-racist statement to the entire campus community, we wanted to make sure that we also came to see you all in Faculty Senate.

The anti-racist statement was really borne out of the events that happened in 2020 where we say, of course, the murder of George Floyd, the use of calling the corona virus the Wuhan or Chinese virus, just a lot of racial hate that had taken place across the country and around the world. The university, just like we did with the equity statement, we went to the Committee for Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence and discussed drafting an anti-racist statement. And, like the equity statement, we have been going to the shared governance groups, as well as student organizations and faculty senates across the colleges to present the statement. And we have been asking for feedback since we drafted the statement last April. But with last semester being an abbreviated semester, and the announcement went out a few days before the end of the semester, we thought that it would be best to re-issue the announcement and then visit the different groups on campus. And so, now, we are still taking feedback on Qualtrics. The presentations states, I think, it ends on March 16. But, because we were not able to come to your last Faculty Senate meeting, we are extending that until the second week of April, which I think is April 15, I think is the deadline. But it is open, and you are welcome to provide feedback.

Some of the language that has come out of the Qualtrics data looks like some of the language that we have encountered when we met with you face to face or via Zoom or Teams. And that is some great points have come up. And a couple are here on the slide, including making sure that the statement is actionable. We've been asked to identify, when we say anti-racism, identify who we are speaking about. The intersectionality of our students. How do we address that, as well as that the statement needs to be actionable. And, just like the equity statement, we used the equity statement – the equity statement was, actually, drafted in 2019, and then it went before the Board of Trustees, I believe, in January of 2020. It became embedded in everything we did, and the next thing you know we had a pandemic. And because of that equity statement, we were actually able to create policies and practices that were equitable for our students across campus. We use that equity statement to drive everything that we do. And so, with the anti-racist statement, it is not a statement that lands on the front page of niu.edu. It is a statement that will drive all the work that we do.

J. Flynn: Hi, everybody. How are you doing? I hope you're having a wonderful and lovely rainy day. The statement says, and I will read verbatim:

Anti-racism recognizes the experiences and the impact of racial oppression. Anti-racism is defined as values and actions that promote, practices, policies and environments that actively work against all forms of racism. The goal of anti-racism is to create a united and proactive community, recognizing all humanity, especially historically marginalized groups. NIU is committed to eliminating racial inequities and marginalizing practices due to assumptions and stereotypes based on an individual's racial identification.

Of course, we are seeking your immediate reaction or your thoughtful considerations and concerns. But before we open the floor, I do want to say right up front that one of the critiques – and I definitely don't want to call it a criticism – one of the critiques that we've gotten pretty consistently across the board is taking that last sentence, "NIU is committed to eliminating racial inequities and marginalizing practices," etc., etc. through "racial identification," to the front of the statement so that it's much more declarative about what our position as an institution is. And then how we see what that work looks like. So, that's the statement, and so now we are open to hear any comments that anyone has to say publicly.

I'm sorry, I completely forgot to tell you about the process. The process to all this, how all this came about in the first place, was a really deliberative process. We initially had a subcommittee from the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We began by looking at both scholarly definitions of anti-racism and also looking at model examples of anti-racism from within the MAC conference, as well as other notable universities across the country. Then each of us went to design or draft our own statement. And then when we reconvened, we went through those statements and figured, well, which language works best. It was truly a collaborative exercise, and no one person's statement was privileged over another person's statement. It's literally fused together. Initially, the statement was almost about a page long. It was about a good 250-300 words, and we realized that that would not really be all that effective. So, as you read, you may have additional questions about the statement, but trust me, we have probably thought of those same questions ourselves, but we decided that if there was additional information needed, we could add an appendicized statement to the initial statement to flesh out more ideas in depth if that should be needed. So, this is the edited version of where we originally started. And so, of course, once we finish this process and have everyone's opinions and recommendations, then we'll take one final crack at any fine-tuning that comes out of the process and then share that.

So, with all that being said, thank you for that moment of history, and now we would love to hear if anybody has any comments.

E. McKee: Hi, Emily McKee for Anthropology. First, I'm really glad to see it moving forward and really glad to see that it's going to be actionable and at the center of work. And I wanted to clarify – are you looking for feedback and support for previous comments that you've already gotten on the other page applying to this statement, or just brand new things?

J. Flynn: Either or, it doesn't matter.

E. McKee: All right. I would just wholeheartedly second or third or fourth the recommendation, that NIU commitment portion of it, for grounds institutional racism and not make it seem that assumptions and stereotypes are sort of the bulk of racism.

J. Flynn: Okay. So, make sure that language about institutional and/or systemic racism is front and center.

E. McKee: Is in that "NIU is committed," yes.

J. Flynn: Okay, thank you.

S. Sharp: Shane Sharp, Sociology. The clause, "especially historically marginalized groups," that's going to include way more than just racial groups, correct? Is that on purpose?

J. Flynn: I don't know if on purpose is necessarily the way I would frame it, but we definitely wanted to be inclusive. And we did want to ward off that possibility of any particular person on behalf of a group or taking it up on themselves to represent the voice of an entire group, come and bash the statement. So, I think trying to be as all-encompassing as possible is probably the best way to go.

Also of note, in relation to, I don't even know if I should say this out loud, but I'm going to anyway. We were also in the process of preparing an anti-Blackness statement, as well. So, this anti-racist statement up front is intended to capture the broad ways in which we think about race, while the anti-Blackness statement is specifically about how we're representing or talking about or engaging African Americans, specifically.

S. Shane: What came to mind when I was thinking of it is like LGBT groups.

J. Flynn: Yes. Thank you for pointing that out, and that was purposeful. I don't want to say anything controversial here, and I hope I'm not. But oftentimes when we talk about race, there's a tendency to turn that into a conversation about intersectionality. And we wanted to keep the focus specifically on anti-racism. If the development of an anti-LGBT bias statement is necessary, then that's fine too, and we can do that, and we can have those conversations, as well. I think we can walk and chew gum at the same time when it comes to DEI initiatives and ideals. We wanted to make sure that the community is clearly understanding that this is about how we think about and approach issues related to race at NIU.

E. Nesterov: Evgueni Nestor of Chemistry. I think the statement is really good and concise, which is very good, actually, because [inaudible] statements usually are hard to read, they are watered down a lot of them. But I think related to the previous question, does it mean that having anti-racist statement only, without adding to it anti-whatever, as you said, LGBT, anti-gender statement, whatever, because there are other historically oppressed groups which suffer from being oppressed, and they are not included in this statement. Does it mean that NIU is not going to develop any kind of other statements, or maybe it would be nice to have a complete statement, including both anti-racist statement, but also including other oppressed groups.

J. Flynn: Yes, again, I'm of the opinion that it's important for any institution to be clear and up front in how it's defining a particular phenomenon and practices. But again, I think we're just going to come back to the point that, when this initiative began, it was specifically in response to what was happening with race in the United States in 2020 and before and, of course, after. Just because Derek Chauvin went to prison, doesn't necessarily mean that racial issues are done, so to speak. So, we want to make sure that we are very clear and up front about how the university feels about, engages and operationalizes anti-racism, specifically. And I'm glad we're having this conversation, because I think that we all ought to be careful within our institutional practice and, I would even argue, in our daily lives, of making these initiatives into these identity battles, because they're not. We're speaking about a specific phenomenon. So, if another phenomenon arises, we can deal with that one, too.

A. Keddie: I just wondered if you meant to include ethnicity with this. For instances, Mexican-American?

J. Flynn: We thought about it and, as I remember that conversation – the problem is – how do I say this artfully? The problem with including ethnicity in an anti-racist statement is that you can run the risk or the tendency of essentially including western European ethnic groups. But the problem with western European ethnic groups is that, once they begin to be assimilated in the United States, that Europeanness gets replaced with whiteness. And so, we still find ourselves back to this conversation

about racism in and of itself and not necessarily ethnocentrism. So, we're trying to be very clear and explicit that this is about this historic problem of how race is manipulated in the United States. And that manipulation specifically is a story about the ways in which a particular racial group that identified itself, i.e., whiteness, has been in conflict with another group that they constructed, i.e., Blackness. So, I think it's important to very clear about that and not cloud that conversation in any way. That's where we landed, right?

T. Boston: That's where we landed. And if I may add, when you start to add the one or a few particular ethnic groups, then the statement becomes that one-pager. And we wanted to try to keep it as concise as possible.

S. Richter: Stephanie Richter from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. I wanted to commend, while I think it might be able to go further to be actionable, I do like the second statement that specifically mentions actions and working against forms of racism. I think that's what sets us apart from our equity statement as something that is more action oriented.

J. Flynn: Thank you, Stephanie. I appreciate that. We didn't want to start defining specific action for obvious reasons, because once we start including different examples, for example, the next thing you know, the document is three pages long. And more importantly, I think that can have the unintended consequence of making people think that it's supposed to be used in specific ways as opposed to being a general guide for whatever it is that you're endeavoring to do. So, just trying to keep it a little bit more broad, while also at the same time, being very focused on the concept of race.

We good? Sounds good. Well, thank you for all of your time and attention. We do greatly appreciate it. Please feel free to continue to leave your thoughts and reflections. You can go to the website [<http://go.niu.edu/antiracism>] to do that. And we're looking forward to sharing the finished product with the entire campus. Thank you all.

T. Boston: Thank you.

B. Strategic Enrollment Management 2.0
Beth Ingram, Executive Vice President and Provost

P. Chomentowski: Okay, we'll move on to B, which is the Strategic Enrollment Management 2.0. And Provost Ingram, the microphone is yours.

B. Ingram: Thanks for giving me a few minutes today. I'm going to go without slides. I'm just going to talk at you for a few minutes. Thank you for letting me give you an introduction to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan 2.0. You can find the full plan on our website. If you go to the website and just search [SEM 2.0](#), you'll find the complete plan and some supporting documents.

Next week, Vice President Sol Jensen and I are going to go to University Council, and we're going to go into the plan in some detail there. We have about a 15-minute presentation, and I don't want to do that twice in a row, because many of you will see that. But today I just want to give you a brief introduction to the plan, how we got here, and highlight one of the goals of the plan that is really pertinent for Faculty Senate.

Under the first SEM plan, SEM 1.0, I guess, NIU really focused on enrollment. We stabilized enrollment. In fact, prior to COVID, enrollment was actually turning around and growing a little bit. We had increases in our first-year students. We had increases in the performance of our first-year students, their average GPA was higher. And we also had made progress on first-year retention rates, so how many students come back in the fall of their sophomore year. And we had reduced some equity gaps, both in the success of our students, but also in their classes.

Over the past five years, graduation rates at NIU had increased pretty substantially. The four-year graduation rate went up by nearly nine percent. And the six-year graduation rate increased by more than six percent. That's pretty amazing progress, really. It's hard to move a graduate rate. And I just wanted to say to everybody in this room, thank you, because to move the graduation rate by that large amount really took a lot of work on the part of staff and faculty to make sure students were getting into classes and succeeding and moving through the programs.

Under the first SEM plan, we also developed a lot of programs and strategies designed to make an NIU degree more affordable and more accessible. The Huskie Pledge program was started under SEM 1. The Rockford Promise, so a lot of scholarship programs that aim to make this education affordable for the students that come here, especially many first-generation students and students from lower socio-economic families.

We also pursued initiatives aimed at retention, graduation and career success. We implemented Navigate. We paired Navigate, which is a technology solution, with high-touch solutions through the work of the faculty and advisors. We also created a Center for Student Assistance for non-academic support of students, and the Huskie Academic Support Center in the Founders Library to provide academic support. And we increased capacity in academic advising. We created a financial advising function. So, our continued commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion supports the success of all of our learners, and that was an integral part of SEM 1.0.

Now, as we all know, and as we all experienced, the pandemic created new, and it exacerbated a lot of challenges for our students and barriers for our students, especially those who were first generation or from underserved communities. These challenges had a huge impact on our campus and on our students, their financial status, their mental health, the social engagement. And this was true at universities across the country. We were not alone in seeing these changes in our students. And it caused disruption in students' ability to stay in school, to finish their classes and to persist and to graduate.

I also know that changes in learning modalities and technology deficiencies, time management problems for our students, made it challenging, especially for our first-time students, our freshman students. But I also know that rapid shifts in learning modalities disrupted teaching for you, as well. Switches to online modalities were particularly challenging in courses more conducive to in-person

learning. And I am just a huge admirer of everybody who, in two weeks' time, two years ago, pivoted their classes to online learning and has adapted to the ever-changing face of COVID over the last two years to make sure that you were responding to your students' needs. I can't say enough about how much I admire all the faculty and staff that did that.

In response to COVID, we accelerated our approach to the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan, and we created so-called SEM 2.0 to respond to what we saw as challenges due to COVID. It really builds on past successes and strengths of the original plan, while also responding to our new realities of increased mental health needs for our students, financial stresses and so on.

The goals of the plan are really threefold, and they look like the goals from the old plan with a few minor differences. There's a focus on brand identity, which sounds really market-y to me, but what it really means is telling our story. How do we tell our story to students so that they understand the unique opportunities that we offer to them at NIU, and we attract great students to this university.

Enrollment access and affordability – how do we make sure that our students can afford to be here, that they don't leave us with large amounts of debt and that we provide the access that we know is important to our region.

And then the third goal is student success, persistence and graduation. And I really want to draw your attention to that third point. Under this theme, we envision three things. We envision programs that lead to successful transitions into the Huskie experience. So, how do we start messaging this to students from the point at which we admit them, to the point they confirm, through summer orientation, through their first year, about what it takes to be a good Huskie student, how to transition, what they should expect, what we expect of them, and how we're going to mutually work together to make that transition successful.

We want to deliver on our value proposition to students as an institution that emphasizes social mobility, academic success and leadership development in an environment that celebrates diverse perspectives and lived experiences, ensuring that all students have the support they need to be successful and engaged. And I would add one thing that has been added to this plan that wasn't in the other plan, is a recognition of our status as an R2 university, that one of the unique features of being in an R2 is that we, actually, offer opportunities to our undergraduate students to engage in our research mission. And that is prominent in this plan.

And finally, we support, develop and assess programs that are responsive to the evolving mental and emotional health needs of our students, their wellness and physical needs and the safety of our students.

I'm not going to go into more detail on the plan. I urge you to go online and take a look at it. There's a lot there, a lot of tactics. But it's a living plan. It's going to develop and evolve as our environment evolves. And it's going to take input, leadership and commitment from every one of us, every person in this room, every person on campus, to bring this plan to fruition. But I personally believe it's a moral imperative that we deliver on this plan, because the success of our students, the success of our region, the success of our university depends on it.

If you're interested in the full presentation with a lot of details, you can listen to the University Council presentation next week. The plan is online, and I'd certainly love to hear your feedback on the plan once you have a chance to look at specific tactics. But I'll stop there for today and see if you have any questions at this stage, any thoughts? Well, if not, you know where to reach me, so you can email me or email Chad [McEvoy] or email Omar [Ghrayeb] or any of the people in our office once you have a chance to look at the specific tactics. Thanks for the time, I appreciate it.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA

X. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Nominations for 2022-23 Faculty Senate president
Ben Creed, RGE/FS Liaison/Spokesperson

- Nominations for the office of Faculty Senate president will be taken from the Faculty Senate floor during the March 30 Faculty Senate meeting.
- Letters of acceptance of nomination are due by Friday, April 15, and can be emailed to Pat Erickson at pje@niu.edu.
- Letters of acceptance of nomination will be provided to Faculty Senate members via email by Wednesday, April 20, and also will be included in the April 27 Faculty Senate agenda packets.
- Election of the 2022-23 Faculty Senate president will be held during the April 27 Faculty Senate meeting.

P. Chomentowski: We will move on to unfinished business. And, Ben, it's your turn.

B. Creed: Good afternoon. At this time, I'd like to open up the floor for nominations for the position of Faculty Senate president for the upcoming 2022-2023 academic year. Pat's put on the screen the list of Faculty Senate members who are eligible to be nominated. It's also in your agenda packet. If you'd like to nominate someone, please go to a microphone to do that.

G. Slotsve: George Slotsve, Economics. I'd like to nominate Ismael Montana.

B. Creed: Do we have a second for that nomination?

D. Collins: Second.

B. Creed: Thank you. We'll pause for any other nominations. Hearing no more nominations, I now close the nominations. Letters of acceptance, including information on your qualifications and desire to serve, are due by Friday, April 15, and can be emailed to Pat Erickson. Those letters will then be provided to Faculty Senate members via email by Wednesday, April 20, and then will be

included in the April 27 agenda Faculty Senate agenda packets. And at that meeting on April 27, we'll hold the election during that meeting. Thank you.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you, Ben.

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to FS Bylaws, Article 2, Officers of the Faculty Senate
FIRST READING
Peter Chomentowski, Faculty Senate president

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to new business. This is a first reading for a proposed amendment to the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 2, Officers of the Faculty Senate, which is on page 9 of your packet. If you look at page 9, this was kind of addressed before. The proposal is intended to require that candidates for Faculty Senate president be tenured. Prior to the Reimagining Shared Governance passed in spring 2020, the Faculty Senate president was elected from among the University Council faculty members, all of whom were tenured. Approval of the proposed amendment will restore the requirement that the Faculty Senate president be tenured. Right now, it reads as you can be untenured. So, as a first reading, I'm opening this up for any discussion.

M. Stange: Meredith Stange, College of Law. I have one concern and my concern is that I know that, for very often the tenure process requires approval that typically happens in June. And so, I would just hate for the body to lose a potentially strong Faculty Senate candidate who is not yet tenured as of the meeting, but will be tenured two months after the initial nomination process.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

V. Collins: Vicki Collins, College of Education. When I read that, I was actually really surprised that it initially had untenured and was wondering if that was an oversight. So, I am in support of this. I understand what was just shared and maybe we could draft some language or something, but we had a time when we allowed untenured faculty for a brief period of time to serve on DCP, and we realized that it was not appropriate. I know college council you have to be tenured. So, to be president of Faculty Senate, to me it doesn't make sense that the person serving in that role would be untenured, so that's just my opinion. Thank you.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you. Anymore comments. Well, this is a first reading, so we will see this at the next meeting.

XII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – report
Linda Saborío, NIU representative to FAC-IBHE

P. Chomentowski: Moving on, we will start with reports from councils, boards and standing committees. Is Linda here? I don't think I saw her today. All right, so we don't have anyone from the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE.

[**L. Saborío** arrived later in the meeting and gave the following report.]

L. Saborío: How is everyone doing? I have to admit, I came last week, I thought Faculty Senate was last week. It's been really busy. It was pouring rain, I walked in, there was some really nice food set up out there. I said, no, this is not Faculty Senate. I didn't even ask, I just walked out.

First, I want to provide you with a brief update to the HB5506 dual credit act. I don't know if any of you are concerned about this or not. It's been amended after negotiations between ICCB [Illinois Community College Board], IFT [Illinois Federation of Teachers] and our group, as well. And it addresses some of the concerns that faculty raised, although, not as much as we might have preferred. But that's how negotiations go. But we were heard, and that's good.

The partnership agreements must include, and it says: The expectations for maintaining the rigor of dual credit courses that are taught at the high school and including students not deemed ready for college level coursework, according to the standards of the community college, the professional development plans for teachers lacking HLC qualifications to teach transfer courses must be approved by January 1, 2025.

The bill had moved the date to 2026, from 2023, and we pushed them back. So, no, let's make that 2025. The plan must be completed within three years – that matches the current requirement. And after January 1, 2023, an instructor must have at least a master's degree and nine graduate hours in the discipline in which they expect to teach. So, that [inaudible] currently allow bachelor's and 18 credit hours degree, so we didn't win there. And it adds to the requirement that within 15 days after entering into or renewing a partnership agreement, the institution, the community college or university, shall notify its faculty of the agreement, including access to copies of the agreement requested. And this to ensure faculty at the higher education institution are aware of such agreement. I don't know if you've had any conversations in your respective programs about dual credit, but this is what's happening. So, that's the update to the dual credit act.

At our last FAC meeting, actually, I didn't attend the one in March, because I was in Puerto Rico at a conference. I was going to, but it was like 80 degrees out, I mean, seriously, sit on Zoom all day, I don't know. But they did provide me with summaries of our work. The working group I'm in is the college debt and affordability working group. And I have their summary and I have the public caucus summary. And I thought I would just read – not the whole thing – just portions of it.

The college affordability, we've been examining various issues involved in both student debt and the overall affordability of a college education for would-be college students. And our initial steps in this direction have been through information and data gathering, like I've been telling you. But, as we began gathering data, our focus changed from a purely national perspective to mostly a state one. And starting with this idea of free tuition, we quickly identified over 15 states with some claim to offering free tuition. And what we found is that those claims were based on widely varying criteria, definitions and stipulations, often pinpointing very specific demographic groups, such as senior citizens. So, we decided to pare down our states to what we considered were the strongest models of pursuing this, either on a national or state-by-state level. And we identified California, Delaware, Hawaii, Nevada, New York and Tennessee. So, we're going to start focusing on those states. They have specific programs, which might serve as potential models for Illinois. For example, the Tennessee Promise – Tennessee has a really nice program, actually – Nevada Promise. The Delaware Seed Scholarship is also another one we need to look at, very promising. Eventually, we identified our criteria that was worthy for examination. The definition of free tuition needs to be looked at. Student graduation rates, limited restrictions to a program, how is the program funded, is it merit or need-based, and is it a last dollar scholarship with no income limitations.

And then other questions we're going to be looking at and unpacking eventually: how MAP grants are funded and distributed, so we're going to look at our state and then compare it to these other states. The notion of expanding the not for profit, in terms of debt cancellation. Look at students in forbearance. We're going to examine teacher loan forgiveness programs that tend to focus on underrepresented and at-risk districts only. And unusual or creative programs that are used locally, such as Waubensee. The community college has this scholarship for two years with a subsequent transfer scholarship to WIU. Nice agreement they have there. And we're just going to take a deeper look at student debt. I know it's a lot for our group.

As we look ahead, we see the next task as a deeper dive into the data collected on the identified states and to collect even more if possible. We found it's rather challenging, actually, to find some of this data. It's not widely available. And there's more to mine from the state of California, we think, which for many years has been a leader in providing reduced tuition rates. I'll keep you updated as we progress with that group.

The caucus group, we focused on the effects of COVID-19 pandemic on our institutions and how we, as faculty, conduct our business. In particular, we discussed the teaching conditions under COVID-19 and research, the effects of the pandemic on our ability to conduct our academic investigations. It looks like all the public institutions made some adjustments to tenure timelines to accommodate the various disruptions to one's research, teaching and service. Our service was also affected. Meetings held over Zoom, as we all know, doing the one here, seem more limited in productivity. Don't you feel like you're distracted too? Like, I think I'll go throw in a load of laundry. And so many visual clues to individual feelings about topics are simply suppressed, you don't catch that. We discussed the effects of the pandemic on enrollment at each institution. Some institutions were hit harder than others. And then shared governance. Were administrations using the pandemic as an excuse to exclude faculty involvement in decision making, was one of our questions. And again, we found a variety of opinions and examples provided on this matter. With

spring semester, we discussed again any adjustments being made due to the Omicron variant and the level of anxiety among faculty regarding the start of the spring semester. When the semester began, a lot of misinformation was out there.

Finally, with our nation becoming increasingly politically polarized, we discussed the intersection of academics and politics on campus. We all thought that campuses and classrooms should be safe zones where difficult discussions could be held and with differing opinions being aired without fear of expressing one's opinion. We did talk quite a bit about that in our group.

And finally, we are discussing the weight that student evaluations should or should not have in faculty retention, promotion, tenure and raises.

That concludes my report. Does anybody have any questions for me? I'm going to be back next year. I have to apologize about that. We'll miss you next year, though. But, I'll be back. I'm finishing up my work – I keep saying this, though, don't I – working groups. Well what happened with the other working group is we had to put that on hiatus, because the pandemic hit, and the information was outdated. Now I'm with the student debt group.

If anybody is interested in knowing more about this position, please contact me. I'm not going to do this forever, trust me. Once we start traveling again in the fall, I'll probably realize I think I'm good. So, let me know. Any questions, let me know. Thank you. I apologize for being late.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees - report
Felicia Bohanon, Holly Nicholson, Peter Chomentowski
Katy Jaekel, Karen Whedbee, Greg Beyer

P. Chomentowski: University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, anyone? I can report. I attended the Board of Trustees meeting last week. It was a full board meeting. Some of the highlights: Of course, there were presentations on the SEM by the provost and Sol Jensen, and also a presentation by Dean Elish-Piper from the College of Education. Some of the other approvals were: sabbaticals were approved for 2022-23. There was approval of replacing artificial turf fields for the soccer and baseball fields for the upcoming season, and they spoke about how funding was required for it, but also how a good majority of the funding was also appropriated through the teams, through fundraising and donations. And so, they're going to replace both the soccer fields and baseball fields. There was a conversation, of course, about Sarah Chinniah leaving NIU. They approved to appoint a new interim VPAF/CFO for now and also to start the search for that position. That was pretty much the highlights I had from the meeting.

- C. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – no report

P. Chomentowski: There is no Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee [report].

- D. FS/UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – report
Ben Creed, RGE/FS Liaison/Spokesperson

- 1. Cyberbullying Resources Project Update

P. Chomentowski: So, we move back to Ben again, with the FS/UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee.

B. Creed: Thanks. It's just a brief report related to the work on cyberbullying. Thank you, Holly, for providing this to me. The group is still on track to finish the website and recommendations by May. Shane Sharp conducted a survey of faculty and staff regarding their experiences with cyberbullying, and those results were very similar to what was experienced by the students, which was that most did not experience cyberbullying; and half of those who did, knew the person who had bullied them.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

- E. Social Justice Committee – report
Ismael Montana, Chair

P. Chomentowski: Ismael, Social Justice Committee.

I. Montana: Thank you, Peter. What I wanted to report on today centers mostly on the progress the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee has made over the course of this semester, with respect to one of the main goals the committee has set out to accomplish for this academic year. As you will recall, when the then ad hoc social justice committee submitted draft report to this body, at the top of the eight key recommendations contained in that report was a call for the Faculty Senate to create a standing social justice committee that is what we're working on today. And there was an acknowledgement that the demanding and transformational work resulting from the charge of that committee, as it is obvious to the dedicated members of this committee, may not be sustainable without the university support.

Today I want to report that, of the series of meetings and working with the Office of the Provost, Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Provost Ingram has committed a provisional support to help this committee work in the form of appointment four faculty fellows and with the support of four graduate assistantships. The faculty fellows to be drawn from the three committee's working groups will each be allocated a graduate student over the course of this spring to help move the work forward and ahead. Calls for the GA positions for this support were widely advertised before the spring break with a March 23 deadline. We received 28 applications from students from a wide spectrum of experiences in DEI issues and from mostly across all the colleges from the university. We're almost done with the review and selection process, and we will soon, hopefully by tomorrow, be forwarding the final list to the provost, who is going to administer the actual hiring.

Discussion to procure the administration's support to help with implementation of the committees are the deliverables, including anti-racism training, is ongoing; and we hope to continue that discussion with administration.

Apart from this, I would also like to report that the three working groups are seriously working on the prioritized recommendations, whose implementation they are delegated to oversee. And in this regard, academic affairs working group chaired by Ben Creed, for instances, has embarked on a campus-wide outreach and conversation with college councils across the university to present our work plan and solicit your input in order to inform the work to make the Faculty Senate Bylaws on tenure and promotion more equitable and in alignment with our broader institutional DEI mission. So far, this working group has had fruitful conversations with the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, the College of Education, College of Visual and Performing Arts and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. And additional meetings are scheduled with the College of Law, the College of Business and the College of Health and Human Sciences. So, we are looking forward to continuing that. Conversations with other stakeholders, including the personnel committee of this Faculty Senate body, has not only been engaged in offering input to the work of the Academic Affairs working group, but has also played an instrumental role in working with us when it comes to the outreach with college councils across the university that is currently underway that is currently underway.

Diversity, equity and inclusion working group was tasked with the recommendation to work with the administration to increase hiring BIPOC faculty in alignment with faculty and student diversity is also in the midst of conversation and information gathering exercise to better inform their work in this regard. And they have met with the office of the chief diversity officer, the provost and other stakeholders, as well.

Our institutional racism working group has identified a couple of deliverables, including working on three to five-year anti-racism training that they are working to institute. And, of course, depending on resources and supports availability. This working group is also developing a podcast series in partnership with Beth Wilkens, coordinator of graduate career and professional development. So, there are other works this institutional racism working group is working on.

With this, I would say this is all I have for today. And thank you. If there are questions, I'd be happy to take any questions anyone may have. Thank you.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you, Ismael.

- F. Student Government Association – report
Devlin Collins, President
Dallas Douglass, Speaker of the Senate

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to SGA.

D. Collins: Good afternoon, everyone. The main thing coming from SGA right now is, this is now the second and final day of our student government elections on campus, actually. So, our physical polls have been open since about 9 a.m. They will be closing at 6 p.m. today, all over campus. And

our virtual polls will close at midnight. And by the end of the week, we'll have the results for the new student body president on campus. It is a very contested election right now, so it's very hard to say who the next person will be taking this role. But I'm just going to go ahead and welcome him with open arms. And I'm just going to say this is probably one of the last times I will see you all together, functioning as a body. So, I just want to say thank you for the opportunity to sit with you all. It's been great making a network and being a part of the conversation this year, coming back from COVID. It's really meant a lot to see the determination that all of you have in making the campus work the way we used to before COVID. Again, just thank you all for having me in the discussion this entire year, and I look forward to where we're going to be next year.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you, sir.

- G. Operating Staff Council – report
Natasha Johnson, Representative
Zac Birch, Representative

P. Chomentowski: Operating Staff Council.

N. Johnson: No report.

P. Chomentowski: No report.

- H. Supportive Professional Staff Council – report
Felicia Bohanon, President
Stephanie Richter, Representative

P. Chomentowski: How about Supportive Professional Staff Council?

F. Bohanon: After several months of working on electing an SPS personnel advisor, we did elect Joseph Lovelace from Student Legal Assistance. So, he is our new personnel advisor. We're looking forward to having him work with us over the next few years. We're also in the process of finalizing our SPS awards. We had SPS nominations, we're in the process of elections. And then we're still looking at the analysis of the SPS campus survey. And so we anticipate that we'll have the results of that for next month. Thank you.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you.

XIII. 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. FS meets monthly on Wednesdays, 3 p.m.
Spring 2022 meeting dates: Jan 26, Feb 23, Mar 30, Apr 27.

P. Chomentowski: Information items. The last meeting for Faculty Senate will be April 27.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

P. Chomentowski: And with that, can I have someone make a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting today.

M. Stange: So moved.

D. Collins: Second.

P. Chomentowski: All those in favor, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, say no. Any abstentions? All right, the meeting is adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.