

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, October 27, 2021, 3 p.m.
Altgeld Hall Auditorium, 2nd Floor
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Akst, Bardolph, Bennett, Birch, Books, Carpenter, Cheyney, Chomentowski, D. Collins, V. Collins, Creed, Duffin, Fredericks, Gorman, Halverson, Hu, Ito, N. Johnson, John, Keddie, Kim, Knoll, Lampi, Liberty, Lulinski (for Berke), Maki, Marsh, McConkie, McGowan, Montana, Montgomery, Moraga (for Chen), Nesterov, O’Grady (for Bohanon), Palese, Penkrot, Petges, Qin, Richter, Rigert, Salimi (for Duffrin), Serowka, Sharp, Slotsve, M. Smith, Sullivan, Vaezi, Vahabzadeh, Valentiner, Whedbee

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Allori, Bohanon, Bujarski, Chen, Clark, Douglass, Duffrin, Grund, Hunter, Sirotken, Staikidis

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Ellington, Griffin, Groza, Ingram, McEvoy, Paquette, Saborío, B. Smith

OTHERS ABSENT: Beyer, Falkoff, Ferguson, Jaekel

I. CALL TO ORDER

P. Chomentowski: I am going to call the Faculty Senate meeting to order today, Wednesday, October 27, 2021.

Meeting called to order at 4:03 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

P. Chomentowski: Pat, do we have a verification of quorum?

P. Erickson: We do have a quorum, and I also want to remind you to fill out your attendance sheet that’s at your place. And then just leave it there, and it will be collected after the meeting. Thanks.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

P. Chomentowski: We’ll move on to Section III, Adoption of the Agenda. Can I have someone make a motion and a second to approve today’s agenda?

D. Halverson: So moved.

P. Chomentowski: All right, second?

Unidentified: Second.

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

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, please say no. Any abstentions? All right, the motion is passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE SEPTEMBER 29, 2021 MINUTES – Pages 4-7

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to Section IV, Approval of the September 29, 2021 Minutes. Again, can I have a motion and a second to approve the minutes from September 29, please?

D. Halverson: So moved.

P. Chomentowski: And second?

B. Creed: Second.

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

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, please say no. Any abstentions? All right, the motion is passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

P. Chomentowski: Section V, Public Comment. Pat, do we have any public comment?

P. Erickson: We do not.

P. Chomentowski: All right.

VI. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

P. Chomentowski: moving on to the next section, Faculty Senate President's Announcements, once again, I'm just going to announce that if you have questions or comments during any discussion, please stand up and move to a microphone and state your name so we can have you on the record. So you'll see the microphones are one, two and three. I don't think there's one in the back today. We have three set up across the middle of the room.

VII. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. Student, Faculty and Staff Wellbeing and Resources
 Timothy Paquette, Director, Counseling and Consultation Services
 Brian Smith, Director, Employee Assistance Program

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to items for Faculty Senate to consider. I'd like to welcome a presentation today. We have Tim Paquette, who is the director of Counseling and Consultation Services, and Brian Smith, who is the director of the Employee Assistance Program. And they are going to provide us with a presentation on services for faculty and students and staff at NIU.

T. Paquette: Good afternoon, and thanks very much for having Brian and myself join you this afternoon. Peter, we also specifically appreciate the invitation that I know you initially coordinated with us at the beginning of the semester, but due to logistics, we're here today. But, Brian and I feel that there is never a bad time to talk about wellness and mental health support for students, faculty and staff. And that's what we're here to do today. So, we're glad to be able to do that. Our natural style is to move. Is that okay to do that?

My name is Tim Paquette. I'm the director of Counseling and Consultation Services. For those who don't know, we are the designated student counseling center here at NIU under the Division of Student Affairs. Our staff is comprised of licensed mental health professionals and some graduate-level trainees that we provide training and supervision for. But we are the comprehensive mental health center for students here on campus.

B. Smith: And I'm Brian Smith, the director of the Employee Assistance Program. The Employee Assistance Program is a kind of unique, cool program that we're grateful to be a part of the university. We're in the Holmes Student Center, and we exist to provide free and confidential counseling, coaching, training for all faculty, staff and your family members. We're on the seventh floor in the Holmes Student Center, and we can talk more about some of our services. Tim and I have been going around. At the beginning of the semester, we went to the different colleges and have continued to go around to talk about the availability of resources and services for students, faculty and staff on the campus. I didn't want the moment to pass, first of all, if it says anything about my personality, I wanted to yell out no during the minutes voting just for fun, but I also wanted to thank Pat. I think Pat's a good example of what happens during COVID time. She'd asked several weeks ago for a presentation in advance. I got it to Tim about 16 hours ago, and Pat was still able to upload it for us, so I'm grateful for her partnership. And I think that's in part what we want to talk about today – is how we all partner together to take care of each other and the students. And with that, I'll turn it back to Tim.

T. Paquette: So, we're going to, hopefully, go through our slides relatively quickly so that we can open it up for questions and discussion. This was our somewhat comprehensive list as we're trying to identify what we know students are facing right now. I think it would be fair to say that students have faced these issues for a long time. And now we can, of course, put the layer of the pandemic over the top of it, and we also see the intersection of many of these stressors that have been highlighted by inequities and challenges that have come out of the pandemic, that have continued to happen.

So, we hear a lot from faculty and staff that students seem very overwhelmed. They seem anxious and stressed. And without being flippant, Brian and I say, yeah, right, that seems reasonable. Take a look at this list again. Does any of this look familiar to you? Can you relate to any of these items in your own lives? Are you feeling overwhelmed at times? It would certainly seem reasonable. And we know that, through the pandemic, what Brian and I have seen, what mental health is seeing in general is that people with existing mental health concerns, this time has magnified those concerns. People who maybe didn't have too many previous mental health concerns, they might now, for very valid and important reasons. So, the more that we're able to understand that we're all feeling this and that these are trends that we've actually seen for quite some time, that can help put things in context with the ways that we can provide support to students and each other as we move forward.

B. Smith: Real quick without [inaudible] through the slides, some of what we say is going to seem pretty simple in some respects, but when you think about fear and powerlessness and uncertainty, which are some of the main conditions that underly anxiety, those are dynamics that we all share. So, when we talk about what we can do for students and one another, we also want to say just a couple things. We know that you're not mental health counselors. We also know that students are most connected with you and will often most often cross your path first and foremost. And one of the things that you always look for are just these subtle changes. So, a lot of people will ask, what do I look for to know if a student is struggling? You'll always be the first to notice, because they're subtle changes often in their presentation or maybe lack of presence or the work that they're doing. And you are often the frontline people. These are all things that you know, but it's also tremendous pressure and responsibility. We often talk about the people that can struggle most at NIU are the people with the greatest integrity, because it matters to you, and so this weighs on you, as well.

T. Paquette: Just a quick comment, because I think many in this room would be able to relate to it. Sometimes there are those subtle changes, and you might be able to see signs of concerns before others, based on your relationship with any particular student; or, also with your colleagues and co-workers, as well. Sometimes there are more significant changes, and I think that's also what we know faculty and staff are experiencing right now. This is what you're experiencing. There are certain students who are really struggling, and it's quite obvious. And it's hard to know exactly how to provide support. Or, are there the supports in place that can really help them. But taking a step-by-step approach to provide that both immediate and ongoing support becomes critical.

These expectations, again, I think are clear, because Brian said, in your roles, you're not mental health professionals. And even if you had been trained as a mental health professional, your role as the faculty and staff person is not to be, usually, a mental health professional. And so it's also about knowing how to provide that initial support to students and reaching out for help proactively when you need it. I think we'd have a lot of examples. Brian and I could retire early if we had a nickel for every time someone said, I should have called your office a little sooner. I shouldn't have waited as long. I should have probably reached out a few weeks ago. Good reminder to say, if you are concerned and you're not quite sure about what to do next, contact Counseling and Consultation Services to consult. Contact EAP to see what other supports might be in place to help you. These resources are here to help students and you. Brian already said it. We're talking about students, really is the focus, but the more that we can get the message out that we're on this together and that you're supporting each other at a very challenging and difficult time, that's an important message as

well. Be aware of your colleagues. Be aware of your co-workers. Anything that we're saying about student applies to your interactions with each other, as well.

B. Smith: So, what can you do to begin with. Again, these are things you do every day, that we want to be able to do for you, is, when somebody's in an elevated spot, they're anxious, they're worried, they're sending you emails or saying things to you about how overwhelmed they feel, the best thing that we can first do is just, obviously, watch and recognize, but just listen and affirm. It's the greatest power that you have, because most fear and powerlessness and anxiety can be reduced when we all just feel as if we're validated in terms of what we're feeling. Also, then just simply asking. Most of us know, we're our own experts on our anxiety and our own behaviors. So, if we can help people reduce their fear by feeling heard, they will naturally know their own path to solving their own problems. So, we just simply ask, what are you doing to take care of yourself? What do you think you need? Who do you think you need to help you with that? And so some of those questions help guide them, students and ourselves, to know where our power is. If they're feeling powerless outside of that, that's when you can help link them to services like Counseling and Consultation or the Employee Assistance Program if it's for a colleague or yourself. So, it's that formula, being affirming, connecting, and then going back to them and asking how things were and if there's something else that they need, is your greatest power in the vast majority of the situations that you might encounter.

Again, we're on the 7th floor, Employeeassistance@niu.edu, or 753-9191. Or again, email me, Brian Smith, with any questions or needs that you have. We have your back, just like you have the students' backs. If you have concern about a colleague [inaudible] of your own, or something that maybe we can come and do a presentation to the department or an area about anxiety, about fear, about self-care. Lastly, the most important thing that you could do for your students is always practice your own self-care and setting those boundaries for yourself and making sure you set aside time to take care of yourself and your own general well-being.

T. Paquette: And, of course, our website [[Counseling and Consultation Services](#) and [Employee Assistance Program](#)] is the primary place where you're going to find information about our services, but also next steps. The screen shot here is from the Counseling and Consultation Services website. Again, for those who don't know, we have an entire section on how faculty can look for signs, respond, provide support and identify, based on the situation that's in front of me, this student right now who I'm trying to support and help, what do I need to do next. And based on level of concern, level of significance, it helps you know what to do next.

Now I realize that in an emergency situation, you might not have time to go to our website and take a look at this, so that's why we encourage you to take a look at it in advance. I will say this, because it's important, is that, if at any time you feel that you are in immediate danger, the student's in immediate danger or others are in immediate danger, that's the situation to call the police. But let me be clear, calling the police is usually not the first step. It most often is the last. The important part that you should hear is that at any time if you are feeling unsafe, if you think the student is unsafe, if you think others are unsafe, that is absolutely call the police and let them use their training and expertise to figure out what needs to happen next. But usually, and most times, the good news is student concerns are not at that level, and it is more of what we're talking about today.

B. Smith: We've already talked a little bit about EAP, but I wanted a quick shout out for the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning. They have a lot of excellent resources around classroom advisement or management. Also throughout COVID, put together some really great information, with the help of colleagues, around trauma-informed approach, to understanding students, which also applies for ourselves, as well. And so, often there are some great resources across the campus. So, part of our messaging has just been trying to pull that together to build a package so that you know where to go in the event you have a question or a need.

I think with that, we want to just turn it over. If you have any questions for us or about services?

S. Richter: I'm going to take the opportunity to build Brian on your already shameless plug for the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, because we are having a workshop held, not by us, but by fantastic graduate students in the counseling education program in the College of Education, on trauma-informed teaching, coming up November 17. The invites went out yesterday with our other workshops. We'll be sending it out again to all faculty and all graduate assistants. But I wanted to let everyone know, to put that plug out there, to keep an eye out and attend.

D. Bardolph: I'm wondering if CCS, in particular, has any connections with [Navigate](#) in terms of academic advisors that often [inaudible] of students. I know that there's been some concerns about the effectiveness [inaudible] so we've got these examples of students who come to us and they [inaudible]. Then there are also the ones who drop off and often sort of fade away and sometimes can't be reached. And I'm just wondering if Navigate is sometimes the recommended point of contact for those sorts of situations, that if there's any cross-connections that might better facilitate how to help those students.

T. Paquette: I will say that, when it comes to Navigate, that the staff in the Center for Student Assistance, that is also for those who don't know, another really valuable resource that was initiated just before the impact of the pandemic, is another central place where, if there are concerns about students, or initial concerns about students, they have access to Navigate. For those who don't know, the student of concern process is also another excellent way that, if you're seeing more major red flags or that you're starting to have more significant concerns about a student, anyone can complete a student of concern report. Brian and I sit on that committee with others, and that is another way that we're gathering information all the time – Navigate as well – to be able to identify students of concern as quickly as possible and, hopefully, ideally, have early intervention. If early intervention is missed, then we are coordinating what are the next steps that need to happen. How are we partnering with a faculty member, a staff member, a department, another department on campus, to coordinate our resources and our efforts to provide follow-up support to students and faculty and staff, who are often impacted and concerned, of course, about what's going to happen to a student. So, continue to use Navigate. Continue to use student of concern reports; that's very helpful. And the more information that we have, the better. I will also say again that the best thing that you can do proactively is consult. You said that we might not be available sometimes. That's true, but we're always responding to things within the same day with phone calls that are coming in, especially things that have a more urgent nature. So, please never hesitate to consult early and often.

E. Nesterov: Thank you for the service you are doing. I think it's really great for our students. My question is not about maybe directly this area. I'm not sure how it's related, but a question about tutoring services on campus, because I think the lack of tutoring services often causes mental health issues for the students, especially more challenging [inaudible] classes like organic chemistry, which I am teaching right now, big class. There is no peer tutor and no assigned tutoring for this class available to students, and many of them are really struggling. And I think I can see that that causes a lot of issues you are talking about, how that is kind of handled on campus.

T. Paquette: It's certain connected, because you can't separate out our students' mental health concerns without also focusing on their academic concerns or their financial concerns, all those kinds of layers that impact how we feel and what our challenges are. But there are certainly academic support services in place. Maybe your question is about how is that also maybe expanded or utilized to best help students who have more of those specific academic concerns.

E. Nesterov: My question is – I know that there are academic tutoring available for some classes, but not for all classes. Organic chemistry is one of the most challenging classes for many students, and there is no tutoring service available for this class, no like peer maybe assigned tutor or whatever, there are always different mechanisms. And this [inaudible] simply does not provide 90 students in my class, I think half of them would benefit from having this service. Because they don't have it, they struggle really, and that causes a lot of mental health issues, I think.

T. Paquette: Absolutely. Appreciate you bringing that up. That sounds like a bigger picture discussion maybe about how academic support services are expanded, especially for certain classes that are most challenging. Personally, I found organic chemistry a breeze, but I still decided to become a social scientist [laughter]. That's a joke.

B. Smith: Wow, just to add, I don't know if it's particularly helpful with what you were asking about, I think for students, but also yourselves, is accepting that you're not going to be the best version of yourself some days is part of being able to normalize your experience. The university has talked throughout this about giving grace, about giving patience and understanding, because we often don't know. The experience of anxiety is often something you can't see on the outside. It'll manifest in those different things like what you're talking about in the classroom. So, sometimes the simple connection of just normalizing that for each of us helps to reduce sometimes that anxiety that allows people to be their best version of themselves. Because what anxiety tells us is that we're losing it or not capable or we won't return to who we once were. And I think sometimes that's a helpful message just on one level, to just say to each other, look, you got this, it'll be okay. I took organic chemistry too, and I'm just a simple social worker, so...

Other questions anybody might have? Complaints? We're grateful for your time, grateful for the information. Any final thoughts?

T. Paquette: Just one final thought. I thought I might get this question, because I usually do, as the director of Counseling and Consultation Services. It is true that every semester we do get to a wait list point where we're trying to do our best to provide ongoing support to students even though we don't have as much counselor availability. But everyday we're working to see what availability counselors have that also match up with student availability. And I think everyone here can relate to

that challenging task sometimes. But it's important for you to know that I appreciate you taking this and spreading it around to your colleagues, as well, for those who don't already know. Even if a student is on a wait list, they are still able to get support from us. We still follow up with them. We still check in. We still ask about other options or resources that might be able to meet their needs if that's an option for that particular student. But I think there can be this miscommunication sometimes that, once we're on a wait list, that's it. And it's not true. And so I think it's important for you to know that support from CCS is always available 24/7, during office hours, have the student call, have them come in. After hours, people can call the same office number and have the option to speak with an on-call counselor. It's important for you to know that, because the truth is we do the best with the resource we have, and that there's a reality that mental health demand will probably always outpace the available resources, especially for those who might not have as much access or availability to those resources for different reasons. You need to know that CCS support is available even if students are waiting for ongoing services. And it's important for you to hear that today. Thanks very much and good luck for the rest of the semester. [applause]

P. Chomentowski: Thank you very much, Tim and Brian, for coming out today.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Per FS Bylaws, Article 3, approve updates to 2021-22 Faculty Senate standing committee membership rosters – Pages 8-9

P. Chomentowski: We will continue on and move to the consent agenda. Per the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 3, approve updates to the 2021-22 Faculty Senate standing committee membership rosters, which is located on pages 8 and 9, you can take a look at that. Can I have a motion and a second to approve the consent agenda for today's meeting, please?

D. Valentiner: So moved.

P. Chomentowski: Second?

Unidentified: Second.

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

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, say no. Any abstentions? The Faculty Senate standing committee membership rosters are approved.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to FS Bylaws:
 Article 2, Officers of the Faculty Senate
 Article 8, Personnel Review Responsibilities
 Article 14, Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor
 Pages 10-14
 SECOND READING/VOTE
 Peter Chomentowski, FS President

P. Chomentowski: We'll move to the second reading under Unfinished Business. The proposed amendment to the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 2, Officers of the Faculty Senate, Article 8, Personnel Review Responsibilities, Article 14, Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor, which is located on pages 10 to 14 of your packet.

We had some comments last time, and I want to just quickly go over the comments and questions that were addressed last time and go over some of the answers that I went through. David Valentiner had a question last time about if the union [ized faculty] had no rights to the faculty personnel advisor, would that be an overburden on the grievance process? I reached out and talked with Kerry Ferris [United Faculty Alliance president] and Robert Tatara [UFA grievance committee chair] about the questions that we had. One of the things that came up was that there was only one grievance filed in the last two years.

But after speaking with Kerry and Bob, if you look at the responsibilities under Article 14, we have now changed the wording. A couple things to note in this is that, of course, now it was determined that from speaking with several different people that the faculty personnel advisor should still be available to all faculty, because there are some issues and concerns that would not be covered by the union. An example would be freedom of speech, which would be a resolution that would need to be completed through NIU. So, we changed the wording to represent that all faculty would still have the representation of the faculty personnel advisor on issues and concerns that are not covered by a collective bargaining agreement. The word, non-unionized, was taken out. And it was re-worded to include all faculty, from our conversations that we had before. And this is after my conversations with individuals such as Chad McEvoy [vice provost for faculty affairs], Kerry Ferris and Bob Tatara.

And I'd like to open this up for any discussion on the new wording.

D. Valentiner: Are any of those people here to speak to this? I mean, there – so, you spoke with them? And did you share this? Did they sign off on this language, or?

P. Chomentowski: Well, they reviewed it.

D. Valentiner: So, they had input before the changes? Did they review the changes afterwards, as well?

P. Chomentowski: Yes.

D. Valentiner: So, they basically thought that this was going to work for them?

P. Chomentowski: Yes, this was, actually, their suggestion.

D. Valentiner: I'm just aware that, you know, several years ago, the faculty advisor position was resourced far more substantially than that individual is resourced now. And it's kind of a formidable job, because [inaudible] to master so many policies and procedures from across the entire university. And I know that previously, they were resourced by having three semesters, or equivalent, of salary. And now the amount is down to \$8,000. And with this change, it's going to change again. I don't know, it doesn't specify a dollar amount that it will change to. But it leaves me wondering whether they're resourced in a way that's equal to the potentially formidable past. So, I'm wondering if you have any comments about that. Can you say what the stipend is at this point, rather than three months to \$8,000. What is it after that?

P. Erickson: I think you're thinking about the few years ago when the faculty and SPS personnel advisor was a combined position. And at that time, it was paid at the rate of whatever the average monthly salary was of faculty, it was that number times three. I believe it came out to about \$25,000 a year. Right now, through a memorandum – what do they call that – a memorandum of understanding, I believe each of the – now there are three personnel advisors – are being paid, I believe, \$8,000 a year.

D. Valentiner: And in here it refers to changing it to the amount of a stipend equal to, and it doesn't have a specific dollar amount.

P. Erickson: Not in the bylaw.

D. Valentiner: If you scroll down a little bit, I think that there's a section here where the proposed language is to change it from

P. Erickson: 14.2.1.

D. Valentiner: Yes, that's the one.

P. Chomentowski: Yes, so a stipend that's consistent with the operating staff and supportive professional staff personnel advisor.

D. Valentiner: Yes, so it's referring to a stipend. I'm not sure, I can't read it from here, but it's referring – I'm just wondering what that stipend is.

P. Chomentowski: It's currently \$8,000. We just took the wording of the number out. That's currently the stipend.

D. Valentiner: Can you explain that? Are you doing that so that you only have to change it in one place in the future. Or, how is that stipend determined?

P. Chomentowski: I think it was negotiated. I don't know the answer to that.

D. Valentiner: Yes. So, when you say that there was a memorandum of understanding, I guess I don't understand the process, I wasn't here for all of that. My understanding is that when the union negotiated a contract, that during that time, there was no reference to changing the advisor position. And the creation of the grievance process through the union was made, essentially, contingent upon the existing infrastructure that was here. So, then to negotiate that and to change the infrastructure, it just isn't clear to me that everything has been evaluated – that everything that was bargained with an understanding of what was to come.

Those are just some of the reservations I have about this. I'm heartened to hear that you did go to the union, and I take you at your word that they've approved that. And so I certainly won't stand in the way of that, but it just raises those concerns that one hand doesn't really know what the other hand is doing. So, I would just encourage that, if we're going to make these sorts of changes, that we have good, clear communication with the other hands that are involved with this.

P. Chomentowski: I understand, yes. I did speak with Kerry about this.

N. Johnson: I wanted to make a point too. For the Operating Staff Council, there was a back and forth, so to speak, about the \$8,000 and the discrepancy between the faculty getting significantly more when the work is equal across the board. There's no one person who is not helping so many people. So, from my understanding, it was going to be like straight across the board so it was equal. So, one person that was getting \$8,000 didn't feel, well why am I only getting \$8,000 and I'm taking so many hours up of my time and someone else is getting \$24,000-\$25,000. So, from my understanding, for the Operating Staff Council, that was one of the arguments of why is there this disparity among SPS, operating staff and then the faculty.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you very much, Natasha. Any other discussion?

E. Nesterov: Just a question, maybe you may explain why it was changed from two years to three years and became renewable rather than non-renewable as it was initially, originally, in the original language.

P. Erickson: Why is it now a renewable term, is that the question?

E. Nesterov: 14.2.3, the original – 14.2.4, what used to be .3 I think, which is .3 now. So the advisor shall receive a three-year appointment [inaudible]. It used to be two-year appointment and that person would be ineligible for a successive term. And now, basically, it's a three-year appointment, and there is nothing about [inaudible] eligibility, which means that the person can hold this position for forever, as long as they are elected for that. There's a reason really for change in this language from the original one to this new one.

P. Erickson: They could only hold the position forever if this body elects them, reelects them. So, originally, the person who held the position had a two-year term with an option for a one-year added on. And we found, over the past few years, how awkward that was to implement. So, the decision was made to propose here that they just have a straight three-year term. Then, currently the proposal or the advice is to allow that person to run again. If you're speaking against that, then that's certainly legitimate if you want to do that. But that's what the proposal is that people would

be allowed to run again. They wouldn't just automatically be elected, though. This body would have to approve a reelection, just like you would approve the reelection of the president of Faculty Senate.

P. Chomentowski: Any other questions? Yes.

S. Marsh: I think he raises a very good point, and I think, generally, it is good practice. You want people with experience, but you do not want people to get entrenched in these positions. So, I don't know if I can offer a friendly amendment to say that there can be one additional consecutive term to that part. And then it seems to me that that's a compromise. Somebody would have experience if they wanted to continue, but they wouldn't get potentially entrenched in the position.

P. Erickson: So, just for my own notes to be clear, you're proposing a friendly amendment to change the language to indicate that one can serve no more than two consecutive terms?

S. Marsh: Correct, thank you, Pat.

P. Erickson: We have a little glitch here, because we enthusiastically got into conversation before we took a motion and second. Ordinarily, we would now ask the motion maker if they accept that friendly amendment. So, Ferald, what should we do?

F. Bryan: [inaudible]

P. Chomentowski: David?

D. Valentiner: Pat, you said that a decision was made here and then you went on. I'm curious about who makes those decisions? Where does this? Somebody must have sat down and written this and formulated it and had a rationale for it? And I would have expected like if it was coming from a standing committee or somebody, they would have proposed it. I just don't know where this is coming from. It seems as though you guys are carrying it forward on behalf of I don't know who. So, I'm just wondering if you can clarify a little bit about the process by which these decisions, this proposal, was formulated. Who knows the reasoning? Who can defend the reasoning behind this, because they were actually involved in the writing and the formulating?

P. Chomentowski: It started with shared governance. Natasha?

N. Johnson: I hate to beat a dead horse, but – so, I was a part of some of the conversations. And for the personnel advisor, John Hulseberg, he did agree if they didn't want to do renewals and all that, he was going to be okay, but the issues that arose were sometimes when they're helping faculty, whoever, staff, is taking six, seven, eight months before people get solutions. So, what he said, in case they had already voted that he wouldn't be able to do it again, that he was just going to take time out of his life for free to finish up with the people, because he didn't want to pass them off to someone else new to have consistency. So, I think that was one of the reasons, because it's not like people contact you and you're done in one [inaudible]. Sometimes it's taken five or six months. So, for consistency purposes, he was willing if this body had decided not to cast this this way, that he

was going to do it without compensation, because that's how much he cares about the issues and getting the help that the people need. So, I just wanted to put that on the record.

V. Collins: Given that there are concerns still raised, I mean do we have to call it to a vote this time, or do we just need to have more discussion before doing that?

P. Chomentowski: That's what I was going to ask Ferald. Can we actually take this under advisement and bring it to a second reading?

F. Bryan: I would suggest a motion to postpone until the next meeting. Since we've already had a first reading, we just need to postpone it to the next meeting. That would require a motion and a second and a vote to postpone.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you. Can I have a motion to postpone the second reading to the next month.

P. Erickson: Natasha Johnson moved.

P. Chomentowski: And Vicki [Collins] seconded. Okay, all those in favor of postponing, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

P. Chomentowski: All those opposed, please say no. Any abstentions? All right, we will postpone it until next meeting.

D. Valentiner: Peter, I just wanted to weigh in on that.

P. Chomentowski: Yes.

D. Valentiner: I think it would be a good idea if there's a way to get the person who knows that proposal best to be here to be able to answer questions to help us to understand the rationale, because it seems as though we don't understand everything about the proposal, and there's probably a lot of complexity and nuance that a lot of us don't have, because it has to be weighed against the union contract, against the other advisors, against what happens with the ombudsperson, and so on. Somebody has clearly thought about this at a level that we're not discussing. And I think our discussion should be at that same level.

P. Chomentowski: Okay.

V. Collins: And now that we have the proposal that we're ultimately going to vote on, if we have concerns, should we send them to you in the interim? Should we send them to you via email? Would that work?

P. Chomentowski: Yes.

V. Collins: Okay, great.

X. NEW BUSINESS

P. Chomentowski: We'll move on to new business. We have no new business today.

XI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

P. Chomentowski: We'll move to reports from councils, boards and standing committees. The Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE, Linda?

L. Saborío: Good afternoon. Before I give my report, I just want to say that regarding this last discussion item, it was a conversation that started back when I was Faculty Senate president, but we were not able at that time to move forward with any proposed changes or amendments to the bylaw because we were still bargaining with the union. So, I don't know how far back you're going to go to look for someone to come in and discuss, because I was not a part of, obviously, the final wording in the bylaw. But it was something that came up at that time, so there's a little bit of history there, too. Maybe even Kendall, who is retired, so maybe you can contact him in Florida or wherever he is and find out.

Regarding the FAC, back to my report, we had a very productive meeting on October 15. The interim chancellor of UIS, along with several of her colleagues, presented what they called, The Good, the Bad and the Impossible. Love the title. It was basically a recap of changes in policies and procedures since March 2020 when their faculty and staff had to pivot, as we all did, to remote learning and teaching. If you're interested in hearing more about that, just let me know.

Caucus meeting, we had a rigorous discussion about academic freedom, diversity on campus and in the classroom, shared governments complications on some universities with virtual – they're actually meeting virtually – and student vaccinations. There has been a lack of clarity on some policies and procedures at public universities.

And then finally, my working group. I'm on the student debt and college affordability and, boy, it's a rather loaded topic, isn't it. And so we started focusing on free college tuition programs in states other than Illinois and quickly became somewhat suspect of the use of the term, free, when we noticed that the state of Indiana popped up on our Google search as offering free tuition. So, we decided to look into it, and it turns out that the word, free, is being used rather liberally at some institutions. So, for example, at Indiana, their free college tuition program is for retirees. And in other states, it refers to merit-based scholarships with household income caps and other stipulations. So, we're going to take a step back and dive a little deeper into this and see what else we can find about these free college tuition programs. And then I think you'll find the [inaudible] FAC with a more comprehensive report once we have more research done. So, if you're interested, I would be more than happy to share our findings with this group at a meeting maybe sometime next semester.

And that concludes my report for today. We're still in the planning, organizing and collecting data stage, so not a lot to report at this point. And it looks like, Pat, the next Faculty Senate meeting, we don't meet until that Friday, but I'll have a report for the next one. Any questions for me?

P. Chomentowski: Thank you, Linda.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Felicia Bohanon, Holly Nicholson, Peter Chomentowski
Katy Jaekel, Karen Whedbee, Greg Beyer

P. Chomentowski: The University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, I have no report today.

- C. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – no report
Nancy Petges, Chair

P. Chomentowski: Faculty Rights and Responsible Committee, Nancy, we do not have a report.

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

- E. Social Justice Committee – no report
Ismael Montana, Chair

P. Chomentowski: For the Social Justice Committee, Ismael, we do not have a report.

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

P. Chomentowski: For the Student Government Association, we do have a report. Devlin will give us a little bit on the NIU Safe app?

D. Collins: Yes, thank you. Actually, for this report, I would also like to invite up NIU Commander Ellington, as well.

P. Chomentowski: If you want, you can come up to the front. That's fine; come on up here if you have somebody with you.

D. Collins: I wanted to come to you with Commander Ellington to bring up the new [NIU Safe app](#) mainly because NIU PD has announced a phased approach to remove the standing blue lights on campus. Basically, the point of this is decommissioning old technology and replacing it with newer technology that can help students and faculty on campus. The old standing blue boxes around campus right now only four are bagged and decommissioned around campus, right, Commander Ellington? And they'll be starting with the blue boxes located in the parking deck garage area right now since those are not in use. The call boxes originally they are in a standing location. If you need

assistance and you're in an emergency, you have to press a button and stand there to wait for assistance. Decommissioning this completely eliminates that. And instead the PD has invested in the NIU Safe app. So, on this Safe app, the main function is the fact that there is a mobile blue light attached to this app right here. So, this mobile blue light, instead of you waiting at one of the 50-plus blue light locations around campus that – who off-hand knows where these blue light boxes are. Instead, you can actually go on the app and you can, from there, request emergency assistance. And PD also has the ability to track the route that you are taking at any given time during this call. So, this helps with locating whoever's in trouble more easily. If you are on the move, you can't stay in one place. PD has that ability to send officers wherever you are, not just on campus, but this also extends out to the Annie Glidden North neighborhood. This also extends out to other areas where we have students living off campus. And I know right now that's very important with the fact that we have the Annie Glidden North Revitalization Task Force going on. We have the Greek Life Revitalization Task Force going on. And a lot of other things happening in the Annie Glidden North neighborhood that we want students to be able to use this technology in case of emergencies going on.

Right now the app is functioning where there will be a record of your route that you did that night. It will be kept on permanent file. However, these routes are not tailored back to your identity, itself. It will keep an AID on file, but it will not point out what your identity is, and this really gives credibility to the fact that you can do anonymous tipping and other anonymous functions. I know people have issues with exposing themselves to a system like that.

In the event of any accidental blue lights, it is still treated as a 911 call, so PD will come out to just make sure that you're okay anyway in the event that you do accidentally press the blue light function. However, once you turn off the app, PD no longer has the ability to track your location as soon as you turn off the app.

These are a lot of good things that show that PD is not – they're introducing this new technology to replace a lot of the old things that we have on campus, but it's not in place to have this big brother system that is watching students. They really want students to trust the new process and actually trust PD this time around, and I really want this to really get out to them as well.

A few other features that they do have as well. They have the walk with a friend feature and the virtual walk. Both of these also help PD. It's a little offhand for PD. They don't need officers there directly. Instead you do have the option to have PD monitor you while you're walking with a friend or walking with another associate or walking by yourself. But really this app is being introduced to offer other ways of PD getting involved in emergency calls. And if you do need an alternative way of standing at a blue light and you are in that emergency, you can reach out through the different services on this app.

Other services that this app offers is consultation and counseling services. They also offer a full report of crime tip line where you can anonymously report any crime in DeKalb through a chat service, phone call service, or you can report it directly through the app, itself. They also have maps, directions, the parking maps and also an in-app bus tracker. A lot of these features I want to highlight toward students, especially students that have late-night classes or those that want to do weekend classes, as well, mainly because we've seen an issue with the pop-up parties around

Dekalb. We've seen the issue with just safety, in general, around the campus. And with the blue lights going out of commission, it is better that we have a tool to help support the PD.

So, right now we are marketing this app toward students, so I think the current downloads is about 4500 on this campus right now. Considering that the student population is about 15,000, that's about 25 percent-ish. We do want to see those numbers go up in the next couple of weeks. They have gone up by about 200 downloads in the last three weeks, because we've been promoting it. But we are having trouble locking down other students that could be in need of this app. So, again, right now we want to market this NIU Safe App toward grad students, students that have late-night classes, faculty that teach late-night classes or do late-night research projects. But this is just another tool for you to have that safety option with PD on campus. We don't want you to feel like the blue lights going away, we understand that that message was more or less missed by a lot of people. There was an email that went out about a month and a half ago that notified the campus that the blue lights were being decommissioned. But after bringing this up to the Faculty Senate Steering Committee, it does seem like the message was washed away in a lot of your other emails. So, I just wanted to bring back up that these blue lights are going away, but in replace, we do have this NIU Safe app that's coming up, and we do hope that we can start promoting these functions a lot more to help NIU PD have more of an influence around campus and for students to really trust this department.

That's all on that. Commander Ellington, do you have some other things you want to add about the app?

L. Ellington: Does anyone have any questions about it? Questions? If I could just ask, has everyone heard of Safe app? Not heard of Safe app?

P. Chomentowski: I didn't until Devlin brought it up a couple weeks ago. I didn't know anything about it. I missed the email.

L. Ellington: This is something that, as you can see, the different categories that are up here on the phone. It's very interesting, very unique. The mobile blue light – yes the call boxes are being decommissioned – we're talking about technology from the eighties and nineties. So, the call boxes that we've had on campus are certainly from the nineties. And it's one of those things where, technologically at the time, yes, that had to be done. There was no other outlet, no other resource for doing this, so at least this was a phone line that went somewhere.

With the way things have changed, with cell phones and things of that nature, we've got way better options. Everyone's seen a blue light. Everyone's seen the call box. Depending on where you go around the campus at any given point in time, do you already know where the nearest one is. You probably don't necessarily pay attention to that. Of course, you recognize them when you see them, but you don't know where all of them are. So, what we're trying to get away from is, instead of having those 45 stationary blue lights that you'd have to find in the event of an emergency, technologically, it just makes sense to just switch it over to your cell phones. It's a mobile blue light. That blue light exists no matter where you are. You don't have to go find a box and hit the button and wait, because if you're truly in jeopardy, you really might not have the option of hitting the button and waiting, because if somebody is trying to harm you, you don't want to just stand and

hang on to the blue light. This allows you to keep on moving. It rings into our dispatch, and then you see a little ball bounce of exactly where you are within about ten feet. So, anywhere that you go, hit that mobile blue light, keep on moving, we will come find you, and its accurate with the location up to about ten feet. That's just the blue light app.

The virtual walk – if you want to walk with us home. Say I'm leaving Psych-Math and I don't feel comfortable walking back to where I have to walk to. You can do a virtual walk with us. It rings into the PD and the PD tracks you, watches your dot move. And then once you get to your destination, you've finished that walk, and we leave you alone. If something happens, we can call you and say, hey, you didn't make it to Lot X, where are you now? We can help find you in that manner.

But there's also the walk with a friend, which we have that information that we can log into and see what your route was. But that never alerts us. So you could decide to walk with a friend and just say, hey, I'm walking to Lot X and you can talk to them on the phone the entire time. The whole time, there's a little ball bouncing, tracking wherever you are. If something goes wrong, you can call the police department. Your friend can call the police department, and then we can pull up your route and see where you are and, again, within about ten feet, get exactly to where you are.

There are plenty of other features. They're reporting a crime tip. There are ways to do it anonymously, ways to not do it anonymously. Directories and services, we've got a bunch of information on how to get information on sexual misconduct, how to get information for EAP. If Tim and Brian were here, maybe get some accolades from them, but they left. But it's got a lot of information on EAP, student resources, student counseling, again, sexual misconduct. Not only does it provide you with resources right there, it provides you links to the website or you can make the phone call right there.

So, there are a lot of interesting features that are up on this site that you can kind of see there. The maps, the parking map directories. And then for people who don't really want any of those services, maybe they're interested in the fact that it's got the bus tracker. There's a map that you can see exactly where your bus is on campus and track where it's going. All these features, we're expanding it from where campus is, and we're putting it out to where our students are, because it's not just campus anymore. So, the blue lights were just campus. We've extended. So, the mobile blue light, the virtual walk, the walk with a friend, the report the tip, the directories, the maps, all that stuff is available for our students who live off campus. So, of course, this extends up to Annie Glidden North.

I accidentally hit the mobile blue light from the post office area, and it tracked me around. I was just looking at it today and I was like, who is this person who is all over. And I'm like, oh no, my name was on it during testing. But it's extended to the greater area of where our students are.

So, a lot of different features. If you're not familiar with it, please just go on and take a look. And if it's not for you, don't download. If you do download, go ahead and remove it. But if you find any feature that's on there – because it's very robust, there are a lot of features on there – if there is anything that you like, anything that appeals to you, then great, it's an excellent resource for you. Use it as you see fit. And then understand, as Devlin pointed out, it's not a feature designed to track

you. When you hit the mobile blue light as a 911, of course, we're tracking you. When you say I want to do a virtual walk with the PD, of course, we're tracking you. If you decide, I just want to walk with my friend, we have a record of that by AID, but it doesn't alert us, it doesn't notify us, we're not interested in that information. As soon as you unplug, we unplug from you. So, it is not designed to be big brother.

With that, are there any questions? Thank you very much. Take a look at it if you get a chance. Appreciate it.

P. Chomentowski: Thank you very much. Thank you too, Devin.

- G. Operating Staff Council – no report
Natasha Johnson, Representative
Zac Birch, Representative

P. Chomentowski: We will move on to Operating Staff Council. No report from Operating Staff Council.

- H. Supportive Professional Staff Council – no report
Felicia Bohanon, President
Stephanie Richter, Representative

P. Chomentowski: And then for Supportive Professional Staff Council, we have no report either.

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. FS meets monthly on Wednesdays, 3 p.m. in the Barsema Alumni & Visitors Center, 231 N. Annie Glidden Road, DeKalb.

2021-22 dates: Sep 1, Sep 29, Oct 27 (Altgeld Auditorium, 2nd floor), Nov 17, Jan 26, Feb 23, Mar 30, Apr 27.

P. Chomentowski: A few information items. The one I'll bring up is that we were here today. Next meeting we will be back in Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center, where we were for the first two. That's where we'll be for the rest of the semester, hopefully, without any changes.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

P. Chomentowski: With that, we're at adjournment. Can I have someone make a motion to adjourn the meeting today, and a second?

D. Halverson: So moved.

I. Montana: Second.

P. Chomentowski: Moved, seconded. All those in favor to adjourn the meeting today, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

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

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.