

**TRANSCRIPT**

**FACULTY SENATE**

**Wednesday, January 24, 2024, 3 p.m.  
Altgeld Hall Auditorium, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** Akst, Arado, Atkins, Barrett, Bohanon, Books, Boswell, Brain, Campbell, Creed, Davis (for Monteiro), Demir, Duffin, English, Fotovat, Guzman, Hartenhoff, Ishaq (for Chomentowski), Ito, Johnson, Jong, Kim, Kupelian, Larkin, Liberty, Luo, Marsh, McGowan, McKee, Mellon, Mills, Naples, Nesterov, Nyunt, Palese, Porter, Qin, Rajabi, Ross, Rossetti, Salimi, Sharp, Sirotkin, Slotsve, Staikidis, Swedlow, Vahabzadeh, Valentiner, VanWienen, Wang, Whedbee

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Chomentowski, Finch, Harris, Kreitzer, Lampi, Martinez, Ruetsche, Scanlon, Xie

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bryan, Elish-Piper, Falkoff, Garner, Hughes, Pitney, Richter, Streb, Sumner

**OTHERS ABSENT:** Cripe, Ferguson, Garcia, Saborío, Swingley

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. Creed:** I would like to call to order today's Faculty Senate meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 24, 2024, the first meeting of the new year, at 3 p.m.

**II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM**

**B. Creed:** Pat, can you please verify that we do have a quorum.

**P. Erickson:** We have a quorum.

**B. Creed:** Great.

**III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**B. Creed:** Can I have a motion to adopt the agenda for today's meeting.

**T. Arado:** So moved.

**B. Creed:** We can go first-Arado, second Bohanon. All in favor, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Opposed? Abstentions? All right, we have an agenda.

#### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 29, 2023, MINUTES**

**B. Creed:** Next up is the approval of the November 29, 2023, minutes. Can I have a motion to approve the minutes for that meeting? Arado, first. A second?

**C. Campbell:** Second.

**B. Creed:** Thank you. Any discussion, changes or edits? Hearing none, all in favor of approving the November 29, 2023, minutes, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Opposed? Abstentions? All right, the minutes are approved.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**B. Creed:** Pat, do we have any public comment?

**P. Erickson:** No public comment today.

#### **VI. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**B. Creed:** So, that brings us to item VI, which are Faculty Senate President's Announcements. I've got just a few. First, I wanted to follow up from the last survey that I had asked everybody to go and return related to professional development or mentorship or gathering of information to be learned from faculty senators. Later this afternoon, not too long from now, we will have Stephanie Richter joining us to begin part of the conversation related to AI, which is one of those topics that was identified in the survey for further supports. Later in the semester, I believe the March meeting, Janice Hamlet will be joining us to talk about a new mentorship program coming out of her office. And that will launch next year, so she'll preview it and share opportunities to become involved in that. I'm also engaged in ongoing conversations related to various professional development and orientation opportunities, including things related to the budget. CFO Middlemist will be joining us at our next meeting in February, as well in April, to share updates on the budget, updates on some of the orientation or overview documents that he's collaboratively putting together, and to share other information about our progress toward university goals related to the budget.

And then finally, I've been working to develop orientation-type documents that include things like: What is shared governance here on NIU's campus? How does Faculty Senate fit into that? What the various processes that flow through Faculty Senate are, including curriculum, tenure and promotion, to make those more transparent and accessible to folks. And to understand how service on this body, university bodies, as well as department and college bodies, all connect in the shared governance of the university. So, I will be continuing to work on that to bring to this body to share out across campus as a stable resource for folks.

And related to that last point, and this is my last announcement before moving on, is please be aware that the recruitment campaign for university committee service will soon begin. So, please look in the NIU Announcements; there will be a blurb in there calling for opportunities to serve on university-wide committees that are not part of Faculty Senate directly. And then this information will also be shared with deans and their administrative assistants on February 1. So, please be aware of that and encourage folks that are in your networks to join and serve in those capacities to help move our campus forward and engage in the shared governance responsibilities that we all have.

So, those are my announcements.

## VII. PROVOST'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

**B. Creed:** That brings us to item VII, which are Provost's Announcements. So, if you'd like to come and share any? Thank you.

**L. Elish-Piper:** Good afternoon. I have three announcements. The first one comes from Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Bárbara González. She wanted me to let you know that she has formed an anti-bullying working group. This working group is developing an anti-bullying policy, which includes experts on the subject from the ranks of our faculty. The idea is to develop a policy and procedures to protect the rights of students, faculty and the university community. The group will be putting together a draft. The plan is to have something finalized by the end of spring that could then be brought to this group by the start of the fall semester for review. If you're interested in being involved in that group, please reach out to Bárbara González, and she would be happy to get you involved in that group. Or, if you have questions about the process, she's also happy to answer those questions.

My next two announcements come from Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Alicia Schatteman. The first one is related to general education. The General Education Committee has created a task force to look at a variety of aspects of general education. This task force, which is comprised of faculty, staff and students, has been starting to gather input about the philosophy and guiding principles for our general education program. And there is a survey that has gone live. There's one for faculty, and it went out in the Academic Affairs newsletter. If you need the link for that, it will also be posted on the Provost's Office website. And there's also a similar survey that's been sent out to students. That will be live for the next several weeks.

In addition to that, they're going to be doing some focus groups later this semester. The idea is to get all of that feedback to then use it in order to form a plan to develop that philosophy and those guiding principles, which will then inform the development of an assessment plan. So, if you're interested in that information, you can look back at the Academic Affairs newsletter that came out, I believe, on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January, or the Provost's Office website.

And then also wanted to let you know about Curriculog. If you're not aware, we are going to be getting an online platform to manage our curriculum processes. Those of you who have served on curricular bodies at the department, college or university level, know that those have been manual paper processes in the past or email attachments, and it's been kind of tricky in the past. And so,

Curriculog will allow us to do that in a much more streamlined fashion. This semester, we're building out the system, so if you're in any of those groups, there will be opportunities for training; there will be opportunities to test the system. To get training, to be able to see how it works, to be able to work through the process and understand what the steps are, the hope is that we will be able then to launch that process and use that tool starting in the fall. More information will be coming out about trainings so that curriculum committees at department, college and university levels will have access to test the system, to see it and to go through the training. So, keep your eyes open for those opportunities.

Those are the only announcements that I have for this afternoon.

**B. Creed:** Thank you so much for sharing.

### **VIII. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION**

- A. Executive Vice President and Provost Search Update  
Matt Streb, Chief Strategy Officer/Liaison for the Board of Trustees  
Ben Creed, Faculty Senate President

**B. Creed:** That brings us to item VIII. A., which is an update on the executive vice president and provost search. I'll share the overview, and Matt, please feel free to add on as you see fit.

The executive vice president and provost search is holding the first round of virtual interviews this week, with the committee preparing to select the finalists by the end of the week. The goal is for finalist interviews to occur prior to spring break. Right now, we have four dates that are held for those finalist interviews, which will be on campus. Those are: February 11-13, February 19-22, February 21-23. And then we have February 26-28 as an alternate date or back-up date. We're preparing to bring three finalists to campus and then holding that final date in case there is weather or other issues. There is going to be an open forum specifically for faculty and one specifically for staff. Both will be offered in person and virtually for those who are not able to be on campus. There will also be an in-person open session for students and shared leadership. These open forum times will be shared out across campus by email and then also posted on President Freeman's website under Searches. We are asking groups to try to attend their designated sessions based on their role. But if it happens you can't make the staff one, and you're a staff member, you're welcome to the faculty one, and vice versa. We would rather have you come and participate. Only the faculty and staff open forums are going to be hybrid. Everything else is going to be done in person. Part of that is that it's really important to the candidates for this role to see us showing up, to see what campus looks like, to engage, as this will oftentimes be their first time on campus, and so they can have those meaningful interactions on campus and get a sense of what NIU is and what they're hoping to be a part of. So, please do consider joining in person as your schedule allows. Anybody who participates in any of these forums or settings will have the opportunity to fill out an electronic survey afterward, if you're in person or joining via Zoom. That way, you can ensure your feedback is shared with the search committee. Matt, do you have anything to add?

**M. Streb:** I think the only thing I'd say is that we've had really strong interest in the position. I think we ended up with 76 applications. It's a very strong pool. And 76 applications is roughly double the amount of applications we've had [inaudible]. We'll have a good group of candidates.

**B. Creed:** Great, thank you. Are there any questions about the status of that? Seeing nobody moving toward the microphone, if you do, please don't hesitate to reach out. We look forward to this process unfolding. Thank you.

B. Title IX, Addressing Sexual Harassment at NIU  
Sarah Garner, NIU Ethics and Compliance Officer

**B. Creed:** That brings us to item B., which is Title IX, Addressing Sexual Harassment at NIU, a presentation by Sarah Garner, who is our NIU ethics and compliance officer. Thank you, the mic's yours.

**S. Garner:** Thank you, Ben, and thank you, everyone. My name is Sarah Garner. I'm our university's Title IX coordinator. I'm also our ethics and compliance officer. I want to thank you so much for being here today, and I'm going to talk a little bit about how we address sexual harassment on the front end, which is a lot of behind-the-scenes work that you may not be aware of. I also want to acknowledge that there is a lot of people involved in this process. I am one person as Title IX coordinator. We have confidential advisors on campus. We have advocates. We have training staff. We have decision-makers. We have appeal agents. We have people that support our students in a variety of capacities. So, I do want to acknowledge that it really takes a village to provide services to our students, faculty and staff as it relates to sexual harassment and sexual misconduct.

I do want to provide a general overview, because policy is not made in a bubble. So, what happens? Title IX is, I think, like 37 words. We don't discriminate on the basis of sex. Because we receive federal financial assistance, we cannot discriminate on the basis of sex. That's really all that Title IX says. However, there are some regulations around Title IX, quite lengthy, specific regulations about how the university addresses these types of things. So, really, we're looking at when Title IX language, regulations. How is the university going to develop a policy around this to make sure that we're compliant with the regulations and letter of the law? So, we look at all of those things.

To note, the regulations are currently up for revision. They were supposed to be released a few months ago, and then they were supposed to be released this month, and now they're supposed to be released in a few months. So, the process maybe changing in the near-ish future, but right now we're working with regulations under the 2020 administration.

So, what we do is develop a policy. But we don't just look at the regs and Title IX. We look at – okay, what does our state law say about this? For example, our state law requires the designation of a confidential advisor, advisor for survivors of sexual violence. What does that look like procedurally? What does it look like resource-wise? We look at best practices. For example, it's a best practice not to have hearings in person for a variety of reasons, mainly for trauma. So, we conduct hearings on Zoom. Also, what are some university interests in the process? Again, let's take into account what we, as a university, want to do to provide support for our students, faculty,

staff. One of these examples is that, when we want to remove a student from an education program or activity, who wants to be involved in that conversation and who should be involved in that conversation. So, there are a lot of things at play, forces at play, when we develop our policies and procedures around addressing sexual misconduct on campus.

So, what does it look like when there is some sort of incident of sexual harassment, stalking, sexual assault, [inaudible] sexual violence or stalking? An initial disclosure is made. Then the report is submitted, and rights and options provided. And all of that has a training/education component around that. And so, a lot of times you think that the Title IX process is just this investigation and adversarial process that we would be involved with our investigative staff. But really, it's so much more front-end work, providing support for our victims and survivors of sexual violence, on the front-end disclosure process once made. For example, when a disclosure is made, how do we want to provide training and education to our first responders, whether that be our police department, our faculty, our staff, our academic advisors, on how to provide an empathetic response. How can we ensure that our students feel supported, both our accused students, as well as our victim survivors of sexual violence. So, really, the training and education around that initial disclosure phase. Training and education around the report submission process. How can we make sure we're connecting the individual with the appropriate resources, and how can I fulfill my legal obligation to submit that report? There is a training/education piece around that, as well. And finally, the rights and options. What are my rights and options related to what I've experienced, and how can I be well-informed about that process or resources?

So, rights and options. When an individual indicates some sort of experience of sexual misconduct, they have a variety of rights and options. And we provide all of this information on the front end when we're aware of an incident. So, what does that look like? They are informed of ways to provide a formal report, whether that's through the police, whether that's through my office through the university proceedings or whether that is anonymously or confidentially. We want to make sure that they're aware that we're here to help you, here are some resources to formally move along with reporting procedures.

We also provide information on supportive measures. You may have gotten an email from me in the past that's telling coordinators – hey everyone, I'm working with student so-and-so, and they've experienced something. I'm here to assist them. They've requested supportive measures; they're available on a confidential basis; they're really there to support them as they're going through the experience. How can we help student X provide some assistance in their classes, whether it be excused absences because of attending court, whether it be excused absences because, frankly, they can't get out of bed that day because of the trauma they've experienced. So, really, providing support to our students because of the experience that they had.

They are very similar to DRC accommodations. In fact, we use a very similar framework where we're making sure we're not going to fundamentally alter the requirements of the course and they're not cost prohibitive. So, again, thinking creatively about how we can support our victim survivors of sexual misconduct in light of the experience that they had.

We also educate about privacy and confidentiality. We tell them we're not going to tell anyone about what happened unless there's a need-to-know basis. Does your roommate need to know? No. Do your parents need to know? No. Who needs to know? Me, as Title IX coordinator, needs to know what happened so I can provide you the right information. I'm not going to share that unless there is usually a legal need-to-know given my position. So, when a disclosure is made, think about it. Who needs to know this? Do other faculty members in other departments need to know this? Probably not. Do individuals in even your own department need to know this? No. Let's [inaudible] the student to make sure that they're providing those support services. I know that right now you're able to put notes in Navigate related to student information. Do not put stuff related to sexual misconduct in Navigate. We don't want that information, that type of record. We want to be able to provide them as much privacy as we can related to the experience that they had.

We also provide them information on campus and community resources, such as, here's the list of our confidential advisors; here's information on advisors, support persons. A lot of students don't even know they can get free legal assistance if they're a victim survivor through one of our local legal clinics. So, we provide a lot of information to our victim survivors when that initial report is submitted.

So, what are your responsibilities as a faculty member and employee of the university? It is understanding privacy and confidentiality. Again, who needs to know this information and how can I ensure that we're providing the privacy that this situation affords. So, thinking about, again, who needs to know this information. And this may sound cliché, but just participate in training. I know that everyone gets that annual training notification and it's like, great, when do I have time to do this. It's really serious information because, again, we want to support our students in the best possible way that we can.

And I picture two different situations. Disclosure is made. The same situation happens. Same disclosure is made, even to the same faculty member. One response is, you know what, I'm sorry you experienced that; however, these are requirements of the course and it is what it is. That's one response. No report is submitted, that's the response. And the student is like, well I can't get out of bed in the morning, because I'm depressed, I'm anxious. I physically can't get out of bed. So, now I can't go to class, so I might as well withdraw. Or, maybe I'm just going to stop going to class and now I'm probably going to fail out of my course. That's one way to respond. That's not the right way.

Really, the way is: Disclosure happens. Thank you for sharing this information. I want you to know that I have to report this to our [inaudible] coordinator. This information is private, but I really want you to know about rights and actions available to you. Again, the information is private and you're really going to guide, and it's your decision in how to move forward. Let me connect you with that information. The report is submitted. Rights and options are provided to that individual. Now they are provided that support help, where, oh, I can get supportive measures. I don't have to withdraw from classes. I feel mentally better because I'm connected with counseling. So, again, same disclosure, different responses and really understanding how this works in the grand scheme of things when these disclosures are made really helps support our students when they've been faced with an incidence of sexual misconduct.

Supportive measures - if you get an email from me related to supportive measures, I really want to work together and be creative on how we can provide the support services to our students to make sure they can be successful in the university, despite what they may have experienced.

And that's everything in a really, really tiny nutshell. I'm happy to entertain any questions or concerns or any sort of feedback related to either sexual harassment, our process or anything of the like.

**D. Valentiner:** Hi, I'm David Valentiner from Psychology. I imagine the work you do is very difficult and complicated. You have to balance the rights of the accused, and you also have to protect people who have been harassed. I wanted to ask, in the Title IX investigations, what is the standard of proof that's used?

**S. Garner:** The standard of proof is preponderance of the evidence, which is more likely than not. They typically describe it as 50 percent plus a feather. This is a standard of evidence that was provided by the federal regs back in 2020.

**D. Valentiner:** Thank you.

**S. Garner:** That's the same standard of evidence that we use across disciplinary processes at the institution, as well.

**D. Valentiner:** One of the frustrations that I've heard is that the information is kept confidential or private, as it were, and that there are some people, particularly people who have filed complaints and the people around them, who may not be feeling safe. And there is no access to information, or there's no information provided to them, apparently, to protect the rights of the accused. But it can have a somewhat demoralizing or daunting effect on people in the environment who have heard about some of these issues, but don't even know the outcomes, don't even know about the investigation or any of the advocacy that's taking place. I don't know what to do about that, but I'm just bringing that up. I don't know if you've thought about that or have suggestions for mitigating.

**S. Garner:** Yes, that's a great question. We have thought a lot about that, because when you have a situation, it doesn't just affect those two people in the complaint process. It does have a campus community effect. We are limited, though, by state law, federal law, related to privacy, particularly personnel information. I can't disclose personnel information for someone who is not that specific faculty member. So, it's very challenging to provide that outreach to heal the community in relation to a situation, without breaking confidentiality related to confidential personnel matters. I do encourage people to reach out to me if they have concerns related to a situation that they are – like a bystander to – that has an effect on them and that can explain the process. I am fairly limited, though, in the information that I can share related to the specifics of what's going on.

**D. Valentiner:** So, if somebody is not happy with the outcome of the process or doesn't have information and is in the dark about what has happened, I wonder if there is any recourse or any check on the system short of going into the legal system. Is there any internal mechanism for review or re-evaluation?



**S. Garner:** I do report to Dr. Elish-Piper related to Title IX matters. If there's a concern related to confidentiality, how we respond, it can go to the Provost's Office for review or discussion. You did mention legal route. The Office for Civil Rights in the Department of Education also fields complaints related to how we handle sexual misconduct issues on campus.

**L. Elish-Piper:** There is an appeal process, as well. If an individual wants to appeal the outcome of an investigation, there is an official appeal process that they can pursue.

**S. Garner:** Great questions, thank you.

**B. Creed:** I have two questions. One, I know a lot of what you presented on was student focused. Does a very similar process play out for faculty to faculty or staff and faculty.

**S. Garner:** Same exact process. The Title IX regulations apply to anyone on our campus, whether you're an 18-year old student or a seasoned faculty member. Same process.

**B. Creed:** Thank you. The other question is, I know we've had conversations and you've come to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee to talk there about ways that faculty might be able to inform or shape or provide information to those places where we're making decisions on campus, to how to implement training or do other aspects of operationalizing here. I don't know if you'd be willing to share a space or two where faculty members might be interested.

**S. Garner:** Absolutely. I mentioned that there are regs coming out. Thank you for that, actually, because I forgot to add something. The regulations are coming out in a few months, probably with an effective implementation of August 2024, so our fall 2024 semester. It will be posted in the library for 30 days, so I do encourage people to look at the policy and provide feedback. I would appreciate robust feedback related to our policy. It's going to be a big lift in re-write, because the regulations are completely changing again. And so, we are looking at what are some ways that we can provide support to our victim survivors and balance the rights of the accused, and also protect the university community. So, I do encourage there to be feedback related to our policy.

Dr. Sumner's area also oversees our training and education related to sexual violence and sexual misconduct, including our annual training. So, I'm sure that she and her staff would welcome feedback related to content and the training, what may be beneficial to you as faculty members.

**B. Creed:** Thank you.

**S. Vahabzadeh:** Hi, My name is Sahar Vahabzadeh, from the Mechanical Engineering Department. Thank you so much for your presentation. I have one question. Do you provide the same training as what we have for the faculty and staff for the students?

**S. Garner:** The faculty and staff receive different training than our students. The student training is fairly student-focused with student resources. We also have a grant from the Office of Violence Against Women with the Department of Education that has information that we should include in our student training, so they do look a little bit different.

**S. Vahabzadeh:** And is that mandatory for them?

**S. Garner:** For students?

**S. Vahabzadeh:** Yes.

**S. Garner:** We highly encourage it for our students. A condition of our grant is also student completion of training. So, in order to continue receiving the funding for our grant, we need as many students to take this training as possible.

**S. Vahabzadeh:** Thank you so much.

**B. Creed:** All right, I think that's the last question. Thank you very much.

C. Blackboard AI Design Assistant  
Stephanie Richter, Director of Teaching Excellence and Support  
Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning

**B. Creed:** Next up, we have Blackboard AI Design Assistant, and Stephanie Richter, the director of teaching excellence and support from CITL will be joining us.

**S. Richter:** Hello everyone. I am Stephanie Richter, and I want to talk a little bit about artificial intelligence support in general and, specifically, about a tool that is currently being piloted in Blackboard for faculty to use.

A couple of announcements first: We have just released a new toolkit for faculty on artificial intelligence in higher education, particularly focused on teaching, although there are some resources related to research and other uses of AI. The QR code there, or the URL underneath it, will take you directly to the toolkit; so feel free to check that out. It's also linked on the front page of our website at [niu.edu/citl](http://niu.edu/citl). And we'll be including this in our next monthly newsletter, as well, to highlight the toolkit as a resource for you. It includes information about generative mostly. Obviously, AI is not strictly generative AI, although that, I think, is where most of our attention as a community has been focused. And it will continue to evolve; we welcome feedback, as well. This toolkit also specifically includes a resource we made available, I believe, about a year ago, almost a year ago now, related to policy for AI use that you might include in your syllabus. We don't have a prescriptive policy, but we do offer a resource that has numerous examples of policies that have been used in syllabi at NIU and at other institutions. So, it's a great resource for you to find example language that fits for your discipline, your course, your teaching style. So, I do encourage that you visit the toolkit, find what you can there. If you have other resources you're looking for or other information you're looking for, please do let us know.

We're also in partnership with the teaching and learning centers at other MAC institutions in order to continue to evolve that resource and to provide professional development opportunities from any of our institutions. So, within the toolkit, there is a page related to workshops and professional development where we have both recorded sessions. We held two panels here at NIU with our NIU

faculty and staff as experts, as well as some recorded sessions from other institutions. And we'll continue to keep that page updated as new opportunities become available.

And then the final opportunity that I wanted to announce that we are in the final stages of securing, is another opportunity through the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE). You may be familiar with we've been offering a year-long course on effective teaching practices and a shorter eight-week micro-credential on inclusive teaching. They have launched a similar style course that is fully self-paced related to artificial intelligence. It is, as with all of their products, an expensive offering, so we're flexing how we offer other ACUE products in order to make room in our existing budget for this, basically; and there will be a limited number of faculty who we have seats available for. But we'll have announcements about that, hopefully, in the next few weeks so that there's still time to complete that course. It's about four hours; it's much shorter engagement. But that course covers things like how to generate prompts, how to make use of it effectively, how to facilitate dialogue critically about use of AI with your students, as well.

So, more to come on the support that CITL can offer for all of you, and we encourage dialogue and feedback about it, as well. If you'd like to consult with one of our staff around how you might incorporate artificial intelligence in your courses, we'd be happy to have some conversations around that, as well.

But the other reason I'm here is to talk specifically about the Blackboard AI Design Assistant. This is a feature that Blackboard introduced last summer, and we have been, I would say, slowly over time investigating, researching. Before we simply enabled it for everyone to use, we wanted to be thoughtful about how we made it available. The AI Design Assistant is built on Anthology, which by the way, Anthology is the parent company that owns Blackboard. Anthology's trusty AI framework where they have six, seven key principles around how they incorporate AI into their tools. I want to highlight a few of those, specifically the humans in control. When I talk a little bit more about the capabilities of the AI Design Assistant, it isn't doing anything without your review and approval. So, it isn't changing your course, it isn't changing anything with your students without presenting it to you for your review.

They also value the privacy, security and safety. In your potential use of the Blackboard AI Design Assistant, none of the data that you provide to the AI assistant is used to train the AI. It is not shared with other institutions. It is not shared even really with Blackboard. It is passed through to the AI in order to give you results and not stored or shared.

And the other piece here that I would say is really strong that I'll talk about a little bit too is fairness. In trying to ensure that we don't cause harm to you, to the students, to the institution, through incorporating AI.

You can find in the slides here at the bottom, which I know we'll share after today, a link to the full trustworthy AI framework if you'd like to read it more, and I encourage you to peruse that as you have time.

The Blackboard AI Design Assistant is built on Microsoft's OpenAI, which builds on a number of AI technologies that you've probably heard of, like GPT-3.5 or GPT-4, which powered ChatGPT, as well as DALL-E3, which is an engine that generates images. But the Microsoft OpenAI creates a more walled garden that, again, creates a little more privacy and security in how you engage with artificial intelligence. It has been tuned, as well, specific to a higher education academic use case, as opposed to a really general, broad pool of data.

It does incorporate additional information from your course in trying to refine results to give you. You can refine it further using some built-in tools. But it's supposed to go into ChatGPT to request something like test questions to be written. This uses the context directly in your course in order to generate those and, again, doesn't store that information in their own system.

It also doesn't require you to be able to engineer a prompt to get what you're looking for. That is all sort of baked into the back end of how the AI Design Assistant works.

As I said, everything must be reviewed and accepted by you before it's incorporated into your course, at which point it becomes transparent. It looks no different from any other content that's in your course, because you have created it now, you have accepted it and brought it into your course. And, as I said, nothing that you create, nothing that's in your course, ever goes back to train the AI models, which again, if you're using something like ChatGPT, would be going back into and feeding their AI models and their large language model as they work through that.

There are some core capabilities to the AI Design Assistant that are available now. There are more that are planned for future release. But right now, there are two related to images. There is an Unsplash library now that's baked into Blackboard, where you can search for images to include in your course. The AI Design Assistant can generate some key words, makes it a little bit easier to find images without having to decide what to search for yourself, although you can also put in your own search terms. But the AI Design Assistant will also create images for you, completely constructed from scratch, not something that exists, not something that's stock imagery, but something created based on the content of your course to accompany it.

You can also ask the AI Design Assistant to propose test questions for you based on the content that you've put into a document in your Ultra course or just based on the broader context of your course. It can generate a variety of types of test questions, which again, you can then review and decide whether you want to use or not use, and which you can modify and customize even after you've decided that you do want to use it.

It can also create prompts for other types of assessments. Right now, it will offer authentic assessment prompts, things that are more focused on real-world application or creation synthesis, think higher levels of the Bloom's taxonomy for assignments, for journals or for discussion boards. You can determine which level of Bloom's taxonomy you'd like the prompt to be at, and the Design Assistant will give you some options. Again, things that you can customize after the fact. And what amuses me about those is they're also specifically designed to discourage students from using AI to create them. So, they'll create prompts, things like: create an infographic, something that is harder or impossible for an AI tool to create on behalf of students. So, you can use AI to try to create

assignments that your students can't use AI to answer, I guess. You can also have it generate a rubric. So, if you have an assignment prompt already, you can ask AI to generate a rubric to assess that assignment prompt.

And the final one is, if you're starting from an empty course, if you have maybe your learning objectives, you can have the AI Design Assistant generate potential modules for your course. And by modules, I really just mean the structure. It will create a topic, a description and an image, and put those into a learning module for each of those. Again, all of these, once they've been created, are fully up to you to determine whether or not you would want to accept and add to your course or not. It's also then completely editable by you after the fact. So, if you get it and you like it, but you want to tweak something, you can edit, customize that, delete it. The idea here is to supercharge your design efforts, help you take your course from where it is to a step ahead by adding in some additional assessment tools, for example, or by helping you get started, particularly if you're teaching something that's a new course prep for you. Some of the feature capabilities include things like being able to specify specific content. So, if you wanted to have a test bank that's based on a specific piece of content in your course, you can define that as the context to get even more specialized results.

These tools are currently only available via a pilot, because we do want to ensure that this is a tool that fits our needs and that serves a purpose for us before we enable it and make it available just to everyone. So, if you would like to be a part of the pilot, this QR code or URL will take you to sign up for the pilot. We've had about 50 or so people, I think, sign up from the fall semester already, and we can continue to add folks all through the spring semester. So, it's never too late to sign up. We'll be collecting feedback from the pilot to see whether the results were useful to you, whether you found this to be harmful or disruptive in some way, in order to inform further decision-making about whether this is something that becomes generally available. It is open to anyone on campus. So, for staff, potentially, who aren't teaching, we're happy to get you set up with a space where you could test it out yourself in a course in Blackboard. And it's primarily intended for faculty of all ranks and classifications, but we've also had some graduate teaching assistants who were interested. We do ask for faculty permission for whoever is supervising them before we just give a GA access to use this in a course. So, we do have some safeguards in there too.

The one thing that Blackboard is not pursuing in terms of AI, is – and I want to be clear – is checking whether students have used AI in submitting their work. There are a number of reasons for that, but the primary one is that the AI detection tools are just simply not accurate, and there is far too much risk of causing harm to students by identifying work as having been generated by AI that wasn't, as well as, there is a lot of bias inherent in those checkers that tend to identify students from our minoritized populations as being more likely to have used AI inappropriately. And so, to avoid that harm, Blackboard has taken a stance that that is not something they are pursuing at this time, because the tools just don't back that up. I assumed that was probably going to be a question that was going to come up, so I thought I would address that here. I'm also willing to stay for as much time as we have to take a few more questions.

**C. Hughes:** Hi, I'm Courtney Hughes from Public Health, and I have a quick question. There are tools like this for the instructor. Do you know, does Anthology have any tools they are developing using AI for the students, something that might help you organize for the course or something like that?

**S. Richter:** Right now, there aren't. They wanted to start with where they felt, quite frankly, was the lowest risk. And offering support tools for faculty seemed fairly low risk to them, because this was something that you could then use in a well-informed fashion. And so, something like offering tools to students is something they're interested in, but they want to be really cautious about doing that, and I think that will be longer term down the road. If anyone has specific ideas like that for what you think would be supportive for students, I'd love to hear them and pass them along.

**T. Atkins:** Hi, Taylor Atkins, History. I was wondering, one of the problems with ChatGPT, although it's to our benefit as instructors, is that it's not good at citing sources or anything, and it only knows material up to 2020, or something like that, and can't always apply specific things. Is one of the benefits of this particular kind that it can suggest reading materials that we might miss otherwise, because I would think that would be one of the better applications for it.

**S. Richter:** That is not one of the current capabilities, but that is a great suggestion that I'll pass on. Right now the Design Assistant is trying to stop short of generating or suggesting content. It's really taking your content and helping to transform that into assessments and other things, so that you retain that access and control. But that's a great suggestion.

**T. Atkins:** Well, I don't know if we could have one without the other. If it cites sources for us, it will for students, so. Thank you.

**S. Richter:** Thank you.

**B. Creed:** A question I know I shared beforehand, who owns the intellectual property of those assessments or that content?

**S. Richter:** That is a fascinating question that has, I think, much bigger implications than just the Design Assistant. The AI Design Assistant, once you have reviewed the content and accepted it, it's indistinguishable from something you created natively. So, as far as who owns it, the institution certainly doesn't own it. Blackboard doesn't own it. The question is, I think, ultimately, whether you own it – and I see our College of Law in the background too. I know there are lots of fascinating things going on right now in the legal realm related to intellectual property and artificial intelligence. The most recent ruling that I'm familiar with said that, if it's generated by AI, no one owns it, because no one created it. I'm interested to see how that continues to play out in the courts. I think for now, it's safe enough to assume that no one is going to claim that they own it, other than you, if that helps. Whether or not you could then make a claim that you own it would be up for the courts to decide, I think at this point. But certainly, in terms of broader intellectual property, the university does not own it, Blackboard does not own it. And once you've accepted it, particularly once you've revised it, I would say, then that becomes your intellectual property in ways it isn't anyone else's at least.

**S. Sharp:** Hi, Shane Sharp, Sociology. I'm ethically troubled by this, and I wonder what it means for academic integrity that we as faculty use AI to basically come up with course content, but a lot of us faculty in here would punish students, grade-wise, whatever, if we found them using AI to turn in their assignments. But you're asking us, or at least to pilot, something which we're doing, and it seems sort of hypocritical. I just wanted to respond to that.

**S. Richter:** Absolutely, another great question, and I think one that we're continuing to grapple with within academia and outside of academia, is when is it appropriate to use AI for our work and when isn't it. With this particular tool, we're trying to explore the potential for it, more than advocating for it or suggesting that you should use it. It's more about making it available so that we can explore those spaces and determine what really is appropriate or not. And the same is happening for us with our students, of course. In some spaces, it is appropriate for students to use it, and in others, it might not be. And I think, as we continue to wrestle with that, we'll see a lot of change in the way we think about our use of it, our students' use of it or, more broadly, the place of AI, and generative AI in particular, in our lives. But, I agree, there is certainly some tension there between saying that it's okay for us to use but not students. But we, in our roles, are also very different from our students and their place in knowledge creation or knowledge gaining as they're learning versus our role as the faculty in front of the classroom. So, I don't know that it's specifically in conflict so much as there is a debate to be had that informs our practice.

**F. Bryan:** Stephanie, I mean this as a serious question, though it may sound humorous. But, given some of the implications of what you said, do you want us to pilot in a program that might ultimately replace us?

**S. Richter:** I fully understand it being a serious question that also at the same time sounds humorous. The intention from Blackboard and Anthology is to put tools in the hands of faculty as the critical point in the process. The AI, and particularly if you pilot and you try it, it is not going to replace you, the tools that are here, certainly right now, are not going to replace you. They are not even close to that level. But, that obviously does beg the question further down as the tools evolve, what happens. And I think that's up to us as an institution, us as academia, to navigate that direction. We saw just recently a lot of conflict in the world of entertainment with the Screenwriters Guild and the Screen Actors Guild related to the role of AI in their fields. And I think this is part of just the beginning of that debate and where we go. I also think, though, if we're not exploring the tools, if we aren't piloting and trying them out, that can't inform our decision-making and our policies down the road either.

**B. Creed:** Not seeing anybody else standing up, if there are, please do feel free. I think that's a great segue – oh, we do, we have our student rep, Chris English.

**C. English:** Chris English, SGA. I know this might be a bit far for a pilot program question, but what if repeatedly we have students saying that the questions that are given to them appear to be AI-based and not necessarily good. I don't know that this would necessarily happen, but I could see it where a professor or a GA routinely uses AI-generated ones and they're not as best-suited for learning, and you hear that response. What do we do with that professor, GA or whatever.

**S. Richter:** This is where the tool specifically puts the human in control. So, if the questions in the course appear to be of low quality or to be coming from the AI, ultimately, that responsibility is on the individual who accepted them and put them in the course. So, I think that follows some of the same procedures that we have and the same practices we would follow if students were finding exam questions, in general, that were of low quality or ill-suited or struggling with a faculty member's policies or procedures. I don't think this tool changes that really, because the tool, itself, isn't creating the materials. The tool is offering suggestions that the faculty ultimately choose. And that's the purpose of having that human in control. I don't know if there is something that anyone else wants to add from a different perspective, but that's my perspective at least on that.

**B. Creed:** Thank you, Stephanie, for coming and sharing. And I just want to convey to faculty senators here that we're engaged in a conversation, myself with Stephanie and Jason Rhode, about this topic more broadly beyond just the tools in Blackboard. So, if there is anyone in this room who is interested in being involved in those conversations, that would like to be not just learning about the tools and learning about how to use them in your courses, but shaping policy, shaping our guidance and our philosophy of use on campus, both for faculty, for students, for staff, in all the different ways, please don't hesitate to reach out to myself, to Stephanie or Jason, as we bring that together. And this is one of those things we heard from the surveys that we want to understand best practice, better practice, good guidance and policy for our students, for our faculty, for our campus as we engage in this, because it has that disruptive technology moment, and we want to make sure we're being thoughtful piloting things, thinking things through and being informed, not just by Blackboard's perspective, but by faculty's perspective, by our campus' perspective. Thank you again for coming, Stephanie.

**S. Richter:** Thank you.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Bob Lane Award – Call for nominations  
Submit written letters of nomination to Faculty Senate President Ben Creed no later than noon, Wednesday, Feb. 14.

**B. Creed:** That brings us to item IX, which is New Business. You'll see item A is the Bob Lane Award call for nominations. You can look at page 7 in the packet. The Bob Lane Faculty Award recognizes an NIU faculty member for special service to the faculty. Written letters of nomination should be submitted to me no later than noon Wednesday, Feb. 14. And there's a list of the past recipients on page 7, as well.

- B. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws  
Article 4.8.1.6, University Assessment Panel – Administration Representation  
FIRST READING  
Amy Buhrow, Assistant Vice Provost for Assessment and Accreditation

**B. Creed:** That brings us to B, the proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, which is on page 8. And this is related to Article 4.8.1.6, University Assessment Panel administration



representation, and this is a first reading. I think Amy Buhrow was going to join us for that, but I'm not sure I saw her, so I'll be happy to introduce it in her stead.

This proposal is to add a nonvoting representative of the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning to the University Assessment Panel membership. The University Assessment Panel reviews and offers consultative feedback on assessment plans and mid-cycle status reports. This work enables members to see patterns indicating lack of assessment related knowledge and skill, patterns that could be addressed through campus-wide Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning programming. By incorporating a CITL representative within the University Assessment Panel, we anticipate improved communication and understanding of assessment-related professional development needs, more timely interventions, as well as a more proactive approach to optimizing assessment practice on campus. In addition, the proposal includes a grammatical or clerical update to the article in question, part B, removing the term, *ex officio*. If there are any questions or other information related to this, please feel free to voice them.

- C. Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws
    - Article 3, Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate
    - Article 8, The Academic Personnel Process
    - Article 9, General Academic Personnel Procedures
- FIRST READING  
Ben Creed, Faculty Senate President

**B. Creed:** Hearing no discussion, that brings us to item C, which is the proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, which you'll see on pages 9 through 30. That includes changes to Article 3, Standing Committees of the Faculty Senate, Article 8, The Academic Personnel Process, Article 9, General Academic Personnel Procedures.

This is a first reading that I'll give some context on before discussion. I've put together a few slides that kind of mirrors what's on page 9 in the comment box, but gives a little bit more context for this. I want to make sure that we went over the goals, as well as the process that this comprehensive proposal went through to get to this stage.

The goals of the work: We have these three that are on the screen. There was an effort across all the different moving pieces that wanted to move our tenure and promotion system to be more equitable, to be one that works for all of our faculty members and recognizes the various contributions of faculty on campus. The second one was this idea of local control being an important facet to tenure and promotion. We wanted to make sure that that was central to all these efforts. And an overarching alignment with the tenure and promotion system with university goals, mission, vision and values. One of the goals that is not up on the screen, a principle that was guiding this work, was that whatever was developed across the efforts was reflective of NIU and applicable to NIU; it wasn't just something taken off the shelf and placed here. I think that these goals plus that additional principle is evident through the approach taken to these various parts of the work.

The first set of changes or proposals that came through came out of the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee's work. They've worked on this over the past two years. There was engagement with literature, best and better practice from other universities. There was an effort to develop

proposals, and then those proposals were taken across campus in various ways to make sure they were vetted and informed by college councils, by faculty members, by senior administration and also not listed here, but the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee, as well. And then in this past December, the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee voted on a package of changes to Article 8, and those have been forwarded on to the Faculty Senate president.

Another effort that was key to the package of changes you see included in front of you is that of the clinical and research faculty working group. It was identified that there were no guidelines for promotion for our clinical or research faculty in our Faculty Senate Bylaws. And this was a sin of omission, and it was something that ought to be corrected. So, this working group was convened with Interim Dean Bill Pitney as the chair last academic year. They put forward recommendations, and part of those recommendations were a set of proposed changes to the Faculty Senate Bylaws in Articles 3, 8 and 9. This was then taken up by the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee this past fall and was voted upon and passed and forwarded on to the Faculty Senate.

The third source of proposed changes came through ongoing conversations, through various shared leadership spaces, as well as shared governance conversations and in alignment with university goals, but fundamentally focused on work and conversations that were trying to systematically, and at an institutional level, provide support and infrastructure for transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary, multi-disciplinary work, as well as community engaged work. And these recommendations have come from conversations with shared leadership groups, from faculty experts, through conversations with senior administration and others on campus.

These three sets of changes came together and became this comprehensive proposal in front of you today. The proposal under consideration brought them together. It's brought together this way and not seen as separate items for efficiency as there was overlap among these three different proposals where the same paragraph or article was going to be changed multiple times. And so, in order to align those and make it a one-time proposal, that effort was decided to be done together. But I think the more compelling reason is that they all started from a similar point of view, which is the goal of this inclusive, aligned and equitable changes to our tenure and promotion system, that they all work toward those three items that were listed in the comment box there in an effort to modernize our tenure and promotion system. It is to ensure alignment with the mission, vision and values and university goals between our tenure and promotion system and those, and then to make sure there was an equitable and inclusive system that sees as valid, valued and valuable, the broad range of high-quality work our faculty members engage in.

With that, I'll open it up to comments, questions and thoughts on the proposal that we're having the first reading on.

**E. Nesterov:** Evgueni Nesterov, Chemistry. I see that many of the changes are not that significant, mostly improve what already is here. But I am surprised that the item 8.3.4, Time in Rank for Promotion, was completely removed without any replacement, which pretty much means that, if it goes forward, then a person may request promotion, let's say to associate professor, one year, then next year, promotion to full professor. Is there a reason for that or was it just omission?

**B. Creed:** Thank you for the question. I'll do my best to respond to it, and if other folks have perspective on the conversation that went behind it, please do feel free to share. This is something that has been flagged by others, as well as a point of question, so I've been doing a little homework to figure out where this change came from. I was on sabbatical last year so was not present during this change. What I understand for it is that the situation that you're suggesting is unlikely to happen where year after year somebody is able to go up. But the idea of it is that tenure and promotion bylaws and guidelines and policies at the local level, at the department or college level, would likely never allow a faculty member to go up in that kind of sequential order. And this is seen as an unnecessary barrier that says, if somebody meets all of the criteria locally after their fourth year, what is it that requires them to sit for another two years in that position and just wait if they've already met the requirements of the local decision-making processes and policies, besides just time in seat. And that was seen as a less than compelling reason for it. And then the inclusion of the word, extraordinary, enters in this idea that there is various interpretations of what extraordinary is, and how do you define extraordinary. While colleges and departments can define it in a concrete way, it's a point of tension that can occur of how does extraordinary get operationalized. So, that was the rationale for it being removed. That's the main gist of it, that local policy would still be able to set the requirements for tenure in alignment with their field to earn that, the timeline component being less important than the quality of the candidate as they put themselves up for promotion.

**E. Nesterov:** Yea, I think I see this point, and I think I agree with it. But the problem is the local unit's bylaws have to conform to these bylaws, because that's what really defines basically pretty much all the local unit's bylaws will have to be modified in order to reflect this major bylaw in Faculty Senate. And since this Faculty Senate Bylaw does not include any term, basically, time in rank option, basically the requirement would mean that the local units would have to remove it, as well, in order to match what the Faculty Senate Bylaw says.

**B. Creed:** I'm not sure if the removal of this would mandate departments having to remove any. You can always be stricter than these bylaws. That's my understanding, but I would want to firm that up and vet that, that I'm correct on that. That's just my perspective. But I think one of things that I've been thinking about is that this piece has come up here; it also came up at the Steering Committee meeting as a flag and a question. And it seems like a relatively large change that maybe we could think through a process of putting this back in for now with the expectation that we would have an informed conversation about how to deal with time in rank as a potential solution and saying, if there is sufficient concern around this, and the rest of the changes there is not, removing this change and focusing on it in a working group type manner.

**E. Nesterov:** Yea, I think this would be a good way forward. Yes, [inaudible] this crossed out paragraph would be brought back the way it was so that the document that we're going to vote on eventually includes this paragraph, because otherwise, it would be a huge change, which pretty much comes out of nowhere. Of course, it was discussed at the committees, but for Faculty Senate members, most of them have not seen this, it has not been discussed with any units or anywhere. So, I think this is a major change and I think it should be retained for now and probably as a committee have longer serious discussion has to be done in order to decide whether it has to be removed.

**B. Creed:** I appreciate the thoughts, and I welcome other perspectives on 8.3.4 or other items as they pertain to this.

**M. Falkoff:** Hi, Marc Falkoff, Law. I just wanted to understand a little bit of this work. The criteria for arriving at personnel decisions. I think I was looking at 8.2.1.7, which talks about effectiveness in teaching or librarianship, and then there are some changes to teaching: command of subject matter, skill in presenting materials and so forth. And then if you jump down to what's currently, for example k. So, k, I believe is added, the co-development and co-delivery of courses outside of faculty's home academic unit and/or discipline; l, collaboration with other faculty members from different disciplines to improve the academic offerings and experiences of students. I guess my question is just that those seem worthy goals to promote. I'm not sure where it's in with respect to – are these requirements moving forward in order to demonstrate effective teaching? In other words, must we become necessarily interdisciplinarians, even though we may want that. Is that now a requirement?

**B. Creed:** Just for folks following along at home, it's on pages 15 and 16 on the teaching part. The answer is no, there is nothing in here that says you must become an interdisciplinary teacher or scholar. The way it's intended to read – and if it doesn't read that way, we can look at the language – is that these are criteria, 8.2.1.7 are criteria that personnel changes could be appropriately based on, can include these. And so, if there is clearer language, the intention is to say, if somebody does this co-development or development across traditional disciplines and does interdisciplinary work, that that is a valid and valued type of teaching or of community engaged teaching. Those are spaces that are now named as valid and valued, but it doesn't require to do anything. These are just ways that people can demonstrate effective teaching.

**M. Falkoff:** That's what I suspected. I think maybe the language can be a little clearer, but I'd have to look at it carefully. I think right now it's a little ambiguous.

**B. Creed:** If it's a little vague, I'm happy to revisit that to make sure that would be clearer and tighter to convey exactly what it's supposed to convey, because it's not supposed to say, you must be a transdisciplinary teacher now. It's meant to say, if you are, great. If you're interested in it, great, because it will be valid. So, thank you.

**T. Arado:** Therese Arado, Law, as well, had to follow Marc. I just wanted to go back to the time in rank and say that that conversation came up within our college as well, on why this was removed. And it was expressed that it would better if it were put back in for now and language needed to be tweaked. But I just wanted to add that it came up unprompted in our conversation, as well.

**B. Creed:** Great, thank you for sharing. What I'm hearing around 8.3.4 is that there is a desire for that to be placed back in unstruck through with the intention that that would be something that would be taken back up in a more intentional manner to make sure it aligns with the will of the faculty to make sure that policy is well thought out. Are there any other comments or questions or points of clarification related to this first reading?

**B. Swedlow:** Brendon Swedlow, Political Science. 8.2.1.7 (C) 5 on the bottom of page 17, where it says that annual – oh, I see, annual merit evaluations, okay. I think that solves it. I thought it was saying something about considering service workloads when evaluating other areas of annual review process. Okay, I just misread this. I thought this was like the tenure review, but it's annual merit.

**B. Creed:** Thank you. We'll make those adjustments in the clarification of the language around what is seen as ways to determine evidence of high-quality teaching; and then the consideration to put back in 8.3.4 and have a further directed conversation on that item specifically so that we make sure that it gets the appropriate vetting that it deserves.

## **X. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – no report  
Linda Saborío, NIU representative to FAC-IBHE  
Ben Creed, NIU representative alternate to FAC-IBHE

**B. Creed:** That takes us on to our next agenda item, which is X, which is Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees. We have no report from the FAC to the IBHE this month.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report  
Felicia Bohanon, Natasha Johnson, Ben Creed  
Larissa Garcia, Karen Whedbee, Brad Cripe

**B. Creed:** Next up is the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. We do have a very brief report here that I'll give. Please feel free to add if you'd like for those who were there. The main thing that I wanted to share is that at that Board of Trustees meeting in December, President Freeman shared the updated university goals for 2024, and the board had questions on those, but accepted them. And they were approved as the university goals for the upcoming year. I welcome folks to look at the minutes and reports that are posted on the website for any other information, but that's the main new piece of information that came out of that information to share.

- C. Baccalaureate Council – no report  
Amanda Ferguson, Chair  
Alicia Schatteman, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

**B. Creed:** That brings us to item C, the Baccalaureate Council, which I believe we have no report for.

- D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – no report

**B. Creed:** Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee and Social Justice Committee, neither one of those have reports as they have not met since the last time we met.

- E. Social Justice Committee – no report
- F. FS-UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – no report  
Emily McKee, FS/RGE Liaison/Spokesperson

**B. Creed:** There's also no report from the Faculty Senate-UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee.

- G. Student Government Association – report  
Olivia Newman, SGA President  
Cole Hensley, Speaker of the Senate

**B. Creed:** Student Government Association, I believe we have a report from Chris English.

**C. English:** With election season, both the national, state and local level, as well our university's for student government is ramping up, we are starting to get ready for that. So, be on the lookout and start telling your students to possibly consider running and to be aware of elections.

We have also sent out a form to a lot of the student organizations to prep for annual funding. If you are a faculty advisor for a student organization, please reach out to your officers to make sure that they have filled out that form. That way, the process for annual funding can go much easier.

Also, there are still plenty of seats open on senate for the current session, for the Student Senate. If you have students that you think would be good fits or just students in general, please direct them my way or to SGA as a whole. And same thing for student justices for our student supreme court. We're also still looking for student justices for those. If you have students that you think would fit well for those, please send them our way.

**L. Larkin:** I'm Landon Larkin, student body treasurer. Just one thing we're working on on the executive side is to coming up with SGA Connect events. Those are going to be aimed at toward developing further relationships between student government and students, as we serve as their liaison. Please reach out if you have any ideas with how SGA can better connect with the students. Thank you.

**B. Creed:** Thank you both for the report.

- H. Operating Staff Council – no report  
Natasha Johnson, President  
Mandy Kreitzer, OSC Representative

**B. Creed:** Next up is our Operating Staff Council, I believe there is no report.

- I. Supportive Professional Staff Council – no report  
Felicia Bohanon, President

**B. Creed:** And then Supportive Professional Staff Council, and there's no report.

## **XI. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. [Policy Library](#) – Comment on Proposed Policies
- B. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- C. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- D. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- E. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- F. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- G. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- H. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- I. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- J. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- K. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- M. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- N. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- O. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- P. 2023-24 FS schedule: Sep 6, Oct 4, Nov 1, Nov 29, Jan 24, Feb 21, Mar 27, Apr 24

**B. Creed:** That brings us to our informational items. A through O are the standard ones. You can find minutes and the Policy Library there. Item P is our upcoming Faculty Senate schedule. Our next meeting will be held on February 21 in this room at 3 p.m.

## **XII. ADJOURNMENT**

**B. Creed:** Which brings us to adjournment. Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting. Valentiner, first. Do I have a second. Arado, second. All in favor.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Thank you all.

Meeting adjourned at 4:18 p.m.