

TRANSCRIPT

FACULTY SENATE

Wednesday, November 1, 2023, 3 p.m.

Altgeld Hall Auditorium, 2nd Floor

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Atkins, Barrett, Bohanon, Books, Boswell, Brain, Campbell, Creed, Duffin, Finch, Fotovat, Guzman, Ito, Johnson, Jong, Kim, Kreitzer, Lampi, Luo, Marsh, McGowan, McKee, Mellon, Naples, Nesterov, Nyunt, Porter, Qin, Salimi, Scanlon, Sharp, Sirotkin, Swedlow, Vahabzadeh, Vahedian, Valentiner, Van Wienen, Wang, Whedbee, Xie

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Chomentowski, Demir, Graves, Harris, Hartenhoff, Liberty, Martinez, Rajabi, Ross, Rossetti, Ruetsche, Slotsve, Staikidis, Vaezi

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Buhrow, Elish-Piper, Falkoff, Fiala, Freeman, Hughes, Middlemist, Streb, Sumner, Swingley

OTHERS ABSENT: Cripe, Ferguson, Jaekel, Saborío

I. CALL TO ORDER

B. Creed: I'm going to call the November 1, 2023, Faculty Senate meeting to order at 3:02. Welcome, everybody. We've got a packed day for us today; so, we're going to, hopefully, move through the front part of things and my part of things pretty quickly.

Meeting called to order at 3:02 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

B. Creed: Pat, I'd like to verify, do we have a quorum?

P. Erickson: We do have a quorum. And thanks again for remembering to fill out your attendance slip and leave that at your place. And also, thank you for remembering to use the microphones at the sides whenever you want to make a comment or ask a question.

B. Creed: And I'll also note, if you haven't picked up a clicker, please do, we'll be using them later.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

B. Creed: Can I have a motion to adopt the agenda for today's meeting? First from Valentiner. Second? Second from Campbell. All in favor?

Members: Aye.

B. Creed: Opposed? All right, that was a hardy adoption.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE OCTOBER 4, 2023, MINUTES

B. Creed: Up next is the approval of our minutes for October 4, 2023. Can I have a motion to approve the minutes? First from Arado, second from Valentiner. Any discussion or comments or corrections? Hearing none, all in favor of approving the October 4, 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.

B. Creed: All right, thanks.

VI. FACULTY SENATE PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

B. Creed: Item VI are Faculty Senate President's Announcements. First of all, I hope everyone who participated yesterday in Halloween had an enjoyable, if snowy, day. I was able to get out there twice with my kiddos, as well as get into their classrooms. So, that was a good day for me.

In the spirit of dia de los Muertos, I hope that folks who are celebrating the holiday, and those that are not, are able to spend time remembering and honoring their ancestors and loved ones, today, tomorrow and throughout the year.

For my announcements, I have four things I'd like to share today. First, it was great to see several members of Faculty Senate and other individuals here, at the Real Talk conference last Friday. It was a great turnout. There were excellent keynote sessions and really informative break-out conversations. And, I think it speaks volumes to the work that's going on on campus to see the turnout and see the engaged conversation that occurred.

I wanted to mention the current survey that you all were asked to fill out related to professional development for faculty members. So far, we have 11 responses as of 2 o'clock today. The QR code was up on the screen – that was not a test for your informational security that you were taking – to see if you would just blindly take a QR code. But that was linking to the survey. If you haven't yet filled it out, can you please take the time to do so on behalf of your constituencies.

Some themes that are emerging from it that I'll be taking forward in my conversations is a want to better understand budgets and budgeting, which, hopefully, after today we'll have a slightly better understanding, and we'll continue that conversation going forward. There is also asks for more information and learning around curricular processes. And it looks like two areas – research, scholarship and artistry, as well as service – are both flagged as areas of improved professional development opportunities with some meaningful suggestions coming out of that. It seemed like the teaching and librarianship question had fewer responses, and those that were there mainly lauded the efforts of places like CITL or FACCE and other efforts to provide training related to improving teaching. So, I'll be taking those answers forward with me in my shared governance conversations and in other places.

Next, I want to let everyone know that we're working on pulling together a consistent process to inform the Faculty Senate, and faculty more broadly, about any proposed program eliminations. And this is per Article 15 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws. Nothing is going to change about the review process or the decision-making process; but Article 15 has in it an obligation to bring any proposed program eliminations at the undergraduate or graduate level to Faculty Senate in a timely manner so that faculty have a chance to be aware of any programs that are being eliminated. So, we're working with the Baccalaureate and Graduate Councils to bring that information in a timely manner to this body so that faculty can be aware of these possible program eliminations.

In that vein, I'd like to bring to your attention that we do have one graduate program that's been recommended by faculty to be eliminated at the graduate level, and that is the Master's in Education in educational psychology. The Graduate Council will be taking that up at their next meeting, I believe, and you are welcome to attend that meeting to weigh in if you have strong opinions about it. But again, this is faculty initiated by those faculty in that program.

The last thing I wanted to elevate during my time is an ask from a conversation with CITL about artificial intelligence and how it can be used as a tool for faculty. They are conducting focus groups with faculty around whether or not to use Blackboard's AI Design Assistant. They're engaged in wanting to learn from faculty, and one of the ways they're doing that is through focus groups. The first was today. The next two are next week on Tuesday, Nov. 7, from 1 to 2 p.m. and Thursday, Nov. 9, from 10 to 11 a.m. I'll share this information in my summary email afterward. It's an opportunity to learn a little bit about how AI might be used through Blackboard to support your course content, and then an opportunity to share feedback as they decide whether or not to move forward with that tool. As I said, I'll share this in my summary after this meeting.

That is all I have for my announcements.

VII. PROVOST'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

B. Creed: The next item up will be Provost's Announcements, so I'd like to invite Executive Vice President and Provost Elish-Piper up to the mic to share her announcements. Thank you.

L. Elish-Piper: Thank you. Good afternoon, everybody. I have three quick announcements. The first one is to remind you that registration opens for students on Monday, the sixth of November. Please encourage your students and your colleagues to remind folks to get re-enrolled for the spring semester.

I also want to let you know that the Refer a Huskie online form – if you have a student who you would like to recommend or suggest that NIU reach out to as a perspective student – if you just go to the NIU website and Google Refer a Huskie, it will take you directly to a form that you can fill out electronically and submit. And we hope you'll do that if you or others know folks who you think might be good students for NIU.

Also want to remind you about adopting course materials for the spring semester. You can do that directly through Blackboard, or you can reach out to Follett directly. Remember, it is important that those texts get adopted early so that we can ensure that we have them for students before their classes begin.

So, those are my announcements. I'll stay up here, because I think I'm next too.

B. Creed: You are – it's like you read the agenda.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Proposal to amend Guidelines and Principles for Establishment of the Academic Calendar
Laurie Elish-Piper, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost

B. Creed: Next up is item VIII, New Business. We have two items under that, which Provost Elish-Piper will help lead us through.

L. Elish-Piper: The first one focuses on a proposal to amend the Guidelines and Principles for Establishment of the Academic Calendar. Clarification of SB2123 from the Illinois State Senate staff has revealed that the holiday language relative to the Illinois General Election does not apply to colleges and universities. As a result, reference to this leave day in item 5, Student-Faculty Vacation Periods and Holidays, is proposed to be removed in order to align with Illinois state law.

B. Creed: Thank you. Before we engage in any discussion around this, can I please have a motion to approve the proposal to amend the Guidelines and Principles for Establishment of the Academic Calendar. All right, first by Arado; second by Marsh. Is there any discussion or questions on this proposal?

A. Vahedian: Amin Vahedian, College of Business. Will we still have the election day as a holiday, or am I confused?

B. Creed: This is removing it from our Guidelines and Principles for the moment, to return to a place where we can have a conversation about that for the academic calendar. For the university [holiday] calendar, it's been removed from the university [holiday] calendar to align with the law. Does that answer the question?

A. Vahedian: Yes, thank you.

B. Creed: With no other questions or comments, it looks like, I will turn it over to Pat to lead us through the clicker voting.

P. Erickson: The first step in that process, as you know, is to make sure that everybody who is a voting member has a clicker. So, if you see your name on this list or you're here for someone today whose name is on this list, we invite you to go to the back of the room and pick up a clicker. And I guess I don't quite have that all on the screen – there we go – and put your binoculars on and you can probably see that. While you're getting the clickers, I remind you that you don't need to turn the clicker on or off, it does that automatically. And when the times comes, we'll ask you to vote 1 or A if you want to vote yes that you agree with the motion, 2 or no [B] if you disagree with the motion, and 3 or C for abstain. Now, give me a second to open that up. Okay, so you can go now, 1, 2, 3 – A, B or C. One or A means that you want to vote yes for the motion, 2 or B is no, 3 or C is abstain. And this requires a simple majority. Another few seconds. And that clearly passes.

28 – yes

8 – no

2 - abstain

B. Proposal to amend 2023-24 academic calendar
Laurie Elish-Piper, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost

B. Creed: Next up is item B, a proposal to amend the 2023-24 academic calendar.

L. Elish-Piper: For this proposal, the NIU 2024 holiday schedule includes the Independence Day holiday on Thursday, July 4, 2024, and an administrative closure day on Friday, July 5, 2024. In order to align with the NIU 2024 holiday schedule, it is proposed to add the administrative closure day of Friday, July 5, 2024, to the 2023-24 academic calendar. While most summer session classes do not typically meet on Friday, there are some, particularly cohort programs, that do meet on Friday. As a result, the advice is to amend the 2023-24 academic calendar to avoid potential confusion.

B. Creed: Thank you. Can I have a motion to approve the proposal to amend the selected academic calendar.

T. Atkins: So moved.

B. Creed: And second, Lampi. Any discussion or questions about this proposal?

C. Campbell: Cynthia Campbell, College of Education. My question is, is that just for 2024, because it applies to that Friday? Or, is it going to be always that way if it lands somewhere on a different day of the week.

L. Elish-Piper: Just for that year, because of the way the Friday falls. So, it's just for the 2023-24 calendar.

C. Campbell: Okay, thank you.

B. Creed: Not seeing anyone else moving toward the microphone, I will close discussion and turn it over to Pat to lead us through the clicker voting one more time.

P. Erickson: Okay, so, we'll do that again. Just like before, there's no need to erase your previous vote. So, the motion is to approve the proposal, and let me just reopen it. Okay, 1 or A is yes, you agree with the motion; 2 or B is no; 3 or C is abstain. Another few seconds. And that passes.

37 – yes

0 – no

1 – abstain

B. Creed: Great, so that ends our new business for today.

IX. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

A. HLC accreditation

Amy Buhrow, Assistant Vice Provost of Assessment and Accreditation

B. Creed: Our next item is item IX, Items for Faculty Senate Consideration. We have three items for Faculty Senate consideration today. The first will be a presentation on [NIU's HLC accreditation](#) by Amy Buhrow, assistant vice provost of assessment and accreditation. Thank you for coming up.

A. Buhrow: Thank you, Chair Creed; and thanks to you all for giving me a couple minutes to talk about the Higher Learning Commission. NIU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission. We have been since 1915. They are one of seven regional accreditors. We have to have accreditation in order to unlock federal funding. It's also kind of like the Good Housekeeping stamp of approval. It assures the public of our legitimacy.

Our last comprehensive evaluation happened in 2014. If you've been here for a while, you were likely involved in it. Since, we've had several intermediary steps. We had an assurance review in 2018, and then we had the larger scale equity gap quality initiative project that happened more recently.

We are preparing for the 2024 visit right now. For the past year, Chris McCord and Jason Rhode have been taking steps to set the structure and write our assurance argument. I joined the team in August and have been out and about getting faculty feedback and wrapping up that assurance argument.

There are four parts to that comprehensive evaluation. The assurance argument is a 35,000-word narrative that is supported by evidence. So, think a lot of websites, a lot of memos, a lot of minutes from groups like this. That narrative focuses on five criteria: mission; integrity; quality [of teaching and learning]; continuous improvement of teaching and learning; and institutional effectiveness.

In about three-four weeks, we're going to start releasing that argument to the campus community one section at a time. And that brings me to why I'm here today. We need you, as campus leaders, to read the argument and substantiate the argument that we are making in support of these criteria. Did we hit the big ideas? Did we get anything wrong? And is there more evidence that can help build the stronger argument for what we're saying to these accreditors and how we meet those five criteria. As some of our more engaged campus leaders, we also need you to encourage your faculty colleagues to do the same. There's been a small team working to write the assurance argument; and, although these folks have broad perspectives of the organization, you all have broader perspectives of what's going on in your individual colleges and units. So, we really need your feedback and the feedback of your colleagues to make sure we are painting the best possible picture of the wonderful things that happen here on campus.

The other part that I want you to be aware of is our federal compliance review. We have to give the HLC evidence that we are meeting federal policy. And two of those are particularly faculty related. One is the faculty qualifications policy that ensures that faculty and courses have the right credentials to be teaching at the right level.

The second one is our definition of credit hour. We follow the federal and state and the HLC definition that says that, for every one credit hour a course has, that means the student is in class, has direct instruction for one hour, and two hours of indirect instruction outside of class. Again, for those of you who have been here for a while, you might be thinking about the CAD system. We're not bringing that back. Our policy says we have to align to this policy and we do a periodic check. So the accreditation assessment and evaluation off this pulled a sample of about 200 syllabi from fall, and we are going through those and looking for that evidence that says we meet that definition. As you can imagine, faculty have unique ways of doing syllabi, and sometimes it's hard to see if that policy is being followed. So, we may be reaching out, and I wanted you all to be aware in case you're questioned by your colleagues. That's why we're doing it – we need to make sure we're aligned with federal policy, and we want to minimize broad faculty involvement in this, because we understand how intense that CAD program was.

So, if you have questions about the Higher Learning Commission, about the assurance argument or about any of the federal compliance activities, please feel free to email me, come visit us in Swen Parson 316. And thank you again for this opportunity.

B. Creed: Thank you so much for coming and for leading our efforts on that. And, hopefully, this body will be able to live up to our side of the bargain in sharing our perspective on the documents that you all are pulling together. Thank you.

- B. Multiyear budgeting: an overview of the process and faculty and staff engagement in the planning and implementation

Laurie Elish-Piper
Interim Executive Vice President and Provost

George Middlemist
Vice President for Administration and Finance and Chief Financial Officer

B. Creed: Up next is a joint presentation from Interim Provost Elish-Piper and CFO George Middlemist on multi-year budgeting. If you'd like to come on up.

G. Middlemist: Thank you for having me again. I think it's been since – I want to say – April, was the time I got to come out and meet with Faculty Senate. I want to just talk to you a little bit about the NIU budget, answer questions. I think we've gotten a few questions in advance so we'll try and address those, as well, either through the presentation or at the end of the presentation. So, with that, we'll just jump right into it.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the work that had happened prior to my arrival with the Budget Planning Resource Group. And they came back with a couple of recommendations that we've really brought forward in terms of how we deal with budget at Northern Illinois University. The first recommendation was just really about education, educating the broader community about the different fiscal challenges that we have, the revenue challenges, the expenditure challenges, making the budget a lot more transparent in terms of what we show. And so, I'm hopeful that today, as a beginning for that process.

Now the other thing that the BPRG came back with was to create a multi-year budgeting process that is also inclusive of NIU's needs and then beginning to address some of our multi-year goals. And so, really becoming more strategic with our budgeting process. A couple of quotes that came from the report that I think are really pertinent here. First one is, "Managing change will require a great deal of everyone involved in the campus..." Because a lot of things that we have known are going to change. And so, that takes a lot; this is going to be a pretty big lift as we begin to address the challenges that we have. And then the other thing, "the university must change in order to survive." I think we have a slide that really kind of illustrates that. This is going to require a lot of change – something that I think we were all ready for, and this just really illustrated.

So, with that, this is our challenge. This is what I've been sharing at monthly leadership meeting. Our budget deficit currently is \$32 million, so that's a number that's pretty big. But we'll talk about what that means and how we get there. The other thing I think is really important is, if we don't do

anything, if we don't change, the budget deficit will just grow; so it will grow to \$40, and that's not sustainable. And so, we're here to talk a little bit about how we're going about dealing with reducing that deficit. So, the goal here is to reduce the deficit by half, so by \$16 million for fiscal year 25.

L. Elish-Piper: This triangle diagram represents decisions that we have to make. George, oftentimes, talks about when you go to a restaurant, they can do two of three things, but they can't do all three things. The food could be good; the food could be fast; the food could be cheap. But, generally speaking, you can only have two of those things. And the same seems to be true as we think about budget. As we look at the top of the diagram, focusing in on our strategic priorities, that needs to be the driving factor in the work we do related to budget and decision making. So, we want to make sure that we're really focusing in on what those priorities are. As we look at the other figures in the diagram, a sustainable budget – many of us who have been here a long time have had these conversations multiple times. And we really have not been able to get past things like the budget impasse and the pandemic to get to the sustainable budget. Now is the time for us to get there so that we can make decisions, we can make changes, but we can put the university on a very solid, stable footing in terms of having a sustainable budget.

The other piece that's up there talks about the status quo, doing things that we've always done in the way we've always done them – sticking with our same budget model, not making any changes to the base budget. While that may be appealing in terms of things that are comfortable or familiar and feel safe, in this case, we really need to move away from that, and we really need to focus on the other two priorities, focusing on the strategic priorities and building the sustainable budget, which means that, through this process, we will be looking at doing things differently or stopping doing things or looking at the way that budgets are constructed, because those pieces are really important for us to be able to focus in on those strategic priorities that always need to be the center of our focus.

G. Middlemist: I want to talk a little bit about what makes up our budget. The first thing that makes up our budget is revenues. What are the revenues that come into NIU that help support our operations. And we really have four main buckets, and when you think about it, three of them are the revenue sources of the university.

I'll talk about the state of Illinois last. Sales and services – those are things like housing, dining, the Holmes Student Center. Those generate about 20 percent, a little over 20 percent of the revenues that come into the university, and so they are really critical. I think that it's really important about most of these buckets is that they also require students, so students are a big part of that equation. They stay in the residential halls; they have dining packages. And so, a lot of revenues come from people being on campus in sales and services.

Tuition and student fees are 41 percent of our budget at this point in time. And so, again, the thing to note here is that it is also driven by students. And there are constraints that are tied with the tuition and fees. We have the truth-in-tuition with the state of Illinois where we are not allowed to increase tuition for anybody other than the incoming cohort. So, everybody maintains their tuition

until they graduate or at least some point in time if they haven't graduated, I think it's after four years or six years, you can increase the tuition. So, there are some constraints there. There are also some challenges that we know coming in terms of the fact that high school enrollments are going down, so how do we overcome some of those things.

And then we have other sources of funding, things like indirect cost recoveries, miscellaneous revenues, interest income.

And then the state of Illinois is about 25 percent of the university budget, and so, a pretty important part of it. Not directly tied to students, but also not a funding source that we can control very well.

The total budget of the university is \$401 million. I would point out that this excludes grants and contracts, sponsored programs. We don't include them in the revenues or in the expenses, because they aren't really part of the operations of the university. They are an important component of what we do, but not really part of the operations, so it skews the numbers a little bit. So, we have about \$400 million in revenues.

And then, when we think about expenses, we have \$433 million in expenses, so there's that \$32 million gap. And you can see that the lion's share of our expenses, 54 percent of our expenses, are in personnel – faculty, staff, SPS, all of that is in there. And another really important component of our budget is scholarships, which is also people, it's how we help support our students, maintain affordability.

The challenges with expenses is that expenses don't go down, they tend to go up. As we try and maintain affordability for our students, we want to invest in scholarships. As we all experience inflation, we want to be able to recognize that and increase salaries for faculty and staff to at least try and keep up with the inflation that they're experiencing. And so, a lot of this is pressure up in terms of our expenses, and there's not a ton of flexibility in terms of reducing when we talk about how we might do that.

I want to stop here for a second and talk about the impact state funding has had on this institution, on higher education as a whole. If you look at the appropriation NIU received in 2015, we received \$91.1 million. If you fast-forward to 2023, our fiscal year 2023, our state budget was \$91.2-ish million. So, it hadn't changed much, it had actually gone down and then slowly come back up to this amount. If you were to adjust for inflation from 2015 to 2024, we would have \$121 million from the state if the state had only increased our state support by inflation. And I'm a math guy, an accountant, and numbers have meaning. That's about \$30 million. It's not exactly why we have a budget deficit, but it's certainly a driving component. There has been a lot of pressure in terms of state support being down and then also a lot of pressure for us to hold tuition rates, make it affordable for our students.

Let's talk about things we're doing with the state to try and increase their contribution to the university. The other thing I thought was important to share is all the work that's actually happened over the years. I think that we've had a lot of conversations about needing to reduce budgets and address things, and here's kind of the reason why. If you look at the state appropriation, if we adjusted for inflation, we have the \$22 million – it's just a little different because we're comparing

that to the amount of money that we got since 2015. But if you look at the decline in tuition and fee revenue, if you adjust for inflation and adjust for enrollment, that's about \$94 million. And then we have committed more money to scholarships to get students into NIU. So, when you look at all that, that's \$124.5 million of costs that we've either lost in revenues or increased in expenses that we've had to manage somehow. The fact that we only have a \$32 million deficit means that there's been a ton of good work at this institution to address the fiscal challenges, and we just have a little bit more to go. I'm "the glass is half full" kind of speaker.

That gets us back to: What's our goal? Our goal is to reduce the budget this year, or reduce the deficit this year, by about \$16 million. And we'll talk about some of the things we're doing, or plan to do, and some of the things that we are, actually, doing. Our deficit mitigation plan – it's really about increasing revenues and decreasing expenses – that's how you're going to do it. To increase revenues, we're identifying where we can generate new sources of revenue; we'll talk about some specific programs. We also can reallocate revenues to grow revenues, so we can reallocate some sources to grow revenues and programs. And a big part of the equation – Laurie can talk about this too – is increased student retention. Student retention is the easiest way to increase revenues. If we can keep our students here, that increases the revenues that are coming into the university. So, really focusing in on programs that will help our students stay on campus.

And then in terms of reducing expenses, it's really about that third triangle in that diagram, which is stop doing things that we don't need to be doing anymore. What are things that we do in all areas of the university that we just don't need to do anymore, we're just doing them because that's what we've always done. I was having a conversation with a friend just earlier, and we were talking about the response that we get sometimes from our teammates, "Why do we do it this way?" "Because we've always done it this way." And we need to have a different conversation about why do we do it this way, and should we maybe do it a different way? And then reallocating resources to decrease costs, as well.

This is where we get into the specificity of things that we're doing. I'll partner with Laurie on this. Laurie and I and the president and Matt Streb have been meeting with legislators to help them understand the important role the state has with NIU and our finances. We've been meeting with legislators. We just had a meeting with the IBHE to explain to them what we need from the state to help us begin to address the budget deficit, and we will present that to the Board [of Trustees] next Thursday, what our request is. It's aggressive, but it's also realistic to get help from the state.

L. Elish-Piper: In addition, we have our state relations person, Katie Davison, who is down in Springfield meeting with legislators and talking about NIU's needs, as well as the great things that are happening here that show that we're a great investment for the state to increase funding. And Matt Streb has also recently spent time down there, as well. So, we are working as much as we can to try and really encourage the state to increase the appropriation that they provide to NIU.

G. Middlemist: The other thing that we've been doing over the summer, actually starting last spring, is working with our auxiliaries to help them understand the role that they have in the financial health of the university, how we can incentivize them to generate more revenues that goes then to help support the university. That work is ongoing and has been really positive; I've been

happy with the collaboration that we've involved them in the decision making, and it has been pretty solid. We should have final recommendations for the president, hopefully, before December, on what we want to do with the auxiliaries.

L. Elish-Piper: So, let me read my faculty colleagues' minds and ask you a question. Can you tell the group what auxiliaries are and give a more specific example? Because they may not be familiar with that terminology, because the colleges' academic programs don't really work in auxiliaries.

G. Middlemist: So, accountant – I do acronyms and those kinds of things just on a rote basis. Auxiliaries are things like housing, dining, Holmes Student Center, the hotel that we have in Holmes; these are specific examples of auxiliaries. And they can generate a lot of revenue for the university if we use them wisely and efficiently, and target them to opportunities. We've been working with housing capacity. Some of the challenges we had this year were in not having maybe quite enough housing for our students. So, figuring out how we can have adequate housing that's also affordable for our students to be able to come to campus.

I wanted to talk a minute, because I think there's a lot of interest with Academic Affairs on the 41s. 41s are a revenue source, such as fees for service, indirect cost recoveries. That's a place where we can work together to have gain sharing so that the revenues that are generated from those activities can stay with those funds and be used over time to support those activities. I wanted to talk for a second about indirect cost recoveries, because this came up at the chairs meeting that we had last week. How do we view indirect cost recoveries? I view indirect cost recoveries a little different than the 41s, although they're in that funding group, Indirect cost recoveries are essentially overhead that we've charged from grants to do the administrative support of grants. There's an allocation that goes out to the PIs and to the deans and to different areas, and so, we're working to figure out how we can isolate those out so that we can hold those separate so people can see them and be able to access them a little bit more readily. We're not quite there yet; the 41 work has just begun. But we're working to see how we can increase that revenue source and incentivize through gain sharing with the 41s.

We've been working with OERD, the Office of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development, to figure out what our opportunities, in terms of new revenue generation from them. They are a very innovative group, and so how do we do that. They met yesterday to talk about things that they can be doing to help with the university on revenues, and we'll talk in a second on how they are looking at maybe helping with reducing some expenses as well.

L. Elish-Piper: As we know, the number of high school students in the state of Illinois and across the country is decreasing. That's just a demographic shift or it's often referred to as a cliff. NIU is looking at ways that we can better serve, better recruit, adult learners. A couple of the strategies that we're looking at to increase enrollment focus in on ReUp. You may have heard ReUp mentioned in other settings. It's a partner that we're working with that reaches out to what they call stop-out students, so students who started at NIU but have been gone for more than a year and did not complete their degree before they left. They have some pretty high-level algorithms to be able to identify these people and connect with them and work with them to try and see if we can remove the barriers to them reenrolling so they can come back to NIU and complete their degree. It's a win-win on so many levels. It helps students who wanted to complete a degree, but needed to leave. Some of

them may have left in the pandemic; they may have left for other reasons. But, the hope is that by reaching out to them, we can bring more of those students back, and we can help them finish their degrees here at NIU. We just started working with ReUp and, as of last week, which was the first week that they were reaching out to students, they had already contacted over 2,000 students, and I believe they had over 70 of them who indicated they were interested in coming back soon. So, it seems like it could be a very promising partnership to help us reach out and bring back those Huskies to finish their degrees.

Cybersecurity – we currently have a certificate in cybersecurity, but through market research with our partner, EAB, and also with communications with individuals out in business and industry, as well as the president’s advisory committee, we’ve been hearing from all those sources that cybersecurity is an important area to create a degree-completion program. And so, we are looking into that process right now as another way to serve adults, who have some college but don’t have a baccalaureate degree, to come back and get that high-value, high-demand major completed, so that they can go into that sector of the workforce.

We are piloting a J-Term, so J-for-January-term. Some institutions offer these intercession programs between the end of the fall semester – in December into January – or an intercession program that goes from the end of the spring semester and before the start of summer classes. When you think about how revenue comes into the university, those two months, that late December to early January and that May to early June, we’re not bringing revenue into the university. So, a number of institutions offer courses in that timeframe to help students either retake courses, to lighten their courseload during the fall or spring, to give them a jump start, to allow them to pick up an additional course. We’re piloting about seven courses in J-Term to get a sense of whether this will be a revenue driver that will serve our students, but potentially serve other students, as well. The courses that we’re going to be offering will be available fully online, and they will be courses that lots of students need to take, but they don’t require a lot of support. So, they’re not like math classes or English classes that might require tutoring or the Writing Center or supplemental instructor. But they are other general education and entry-level courses that we think will be of interest to students. And hopefully, we’ll get good enrollment there, and we can, through that pilot, get a sense of whether we can build a more robust offering for J-Term, but also for that sort of May, Maymester, often times it’s called at other institutions. That pilot will be the first step to give us that data on how effective that particular strategy is.

G. Middlemist: I’m working with Athletics and the other areas of the university to talk about what our opportunities are, what are things that we can do or what are the things that we can stop doing. For Athletics, I put them up here, because I’m meeting with them tomorrow to go over their plans. I know they’re negotiating new media rights. They’re looking at other ways to increase revenues, and they’re looking at some ways to reduce expenses. And we’re doing that in all areas of the universities. I’ve been working with a number of the divisions, and we’ll talk about a couple of the other ones here after course sizes.

L. Elish-Piper: One of the things that we in Academic Affairs can do to address the budget deficit is to lean in to academic efficiency. I’m going to talk about a couple of strategies that we’ve already started implementing, so these may sound familiar to you. The first one is optimizing course size. When I came into this position on July 1, we found that we had a large number of courses with

very, very low enrollment. So, 100- and 200-level courses with fewer than five students. So, we wanted to look and make sure that we were using our instructional expenditures and the expertise and the time of our faculty to teach courses in such a way that lots of students would be able to benefit from those courses. By optimizing course sizes, we've been looking at trying to reduce the number of low-enrollment courses. Through that process, we were able to reduce over 25 percent of the low-enrollment courses for the fall. We're trying to be very careful that we were also aligning that with student need. We want to make sure that we're offering classes that students need to make progress in their degree paths, to be able to get the prerequisites they need in order to graduate. But, we know that, as we work through this strategy for the spring and then ultimately next year, we'll get better and better at this, because we'll be able to make sure that advisors know what courses will be offered when; we'll be able to have a better sense through using predictive tools in academic performance solutions, which is an online system that's available to chairs and deans to look at course enrollments and things like that. So, through closing the number of sections, if we do that with great intensity and we actually reduce the number of low-enrollment sections even more significantly, our partners at EAB have estimated that it could save us as much as \$3.4 million. And so, that's an important one. We want to be careful that we're thinking about the integrity of courses, and we know that some of you may teach courses that are like practicum courses, or seminar courses where the enrollment is lower for a pedagogical purpose. But, when we were looking at this, many of the courses that had the low enrollment did not have pedagogical reasons to offer an undergraduate class with such a low enrollment. So, we're trying to be much more strategic and intentional to make sure that we're offering courses students need, but we're using those resources much more efficiently.

Strategic and coordinated use of scholarships – Earlier, George pointed out some of the different amounts related to institutional aid. And as we think about institutional aid and we think about many of our students come to us with Pell grants and MAP grants; many students get scholarships from us from the NIU Foundation; we also distribute tuition waivers; we need to be much more coordinated in the awarding. We sometimes over-award students where they actually get a refund, because they've been given more aid than is necessary to cover the cost of their attendance at NIU. So, we need to be much more strategic and intentional, making sure we're providing the support that students need, but we're not over awarding. In addition to that, we've also uncovered that many of the Foundation scholarships have not been fully awarded, and so we have funds sitting there that donors have given us that need to be awarded. And so, that's an area of improvement, as well. And then also just thinking contextually that many of the awards that we used to give were one year. Now, we're committed for undergraduates to providing four-year awards, which means that many of our students are getting increased institutional aid and support from us across their whole degree program, as well as the fact that Pell grants have increased significantly and MAP grants have doubled. And so, we really need to look much more strategically and intentionally about how we are awarding scholarships, funding to students to make sure that we're using those funds in the most planful kind of way.

Reducing expenses – curricular complexity. Basically, what's happening with curricular complexity is we're asking folks to look at their degree programs and make sure that we are not requiring more credit hours than necessary; making sure that we're not offering so many pathways or specializations that then force us to deliver courses for three or four students in a particular area. But to think really carefully about that, as well as things like prerequisites. And so, in that process,

making sure that we're having students complete the courses that make sense, but that we're going back and we're looking to make sure that the courses that are currently in our programs and the way that they're currently structured and delivered does make sense.

G. Middlemist: Just a few other things. Like I said, we've been working with the other areas, the other divisions. OERD met yesterday to talk about their programs, things that they were doing that maybe they could stop doing to reduce expenses, and also some things where they could maybe do differently to reduce the expenses. So, we're working across the example Laurie just gave on scholarship – we're actually working with EMMC [Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications], the Foundation and Academic Affairs to talk about all the ways we can use scholarships better. We're trying to work across the university to make these decisions and involve as many voices as we can.

The conversion to Teams Voice, we got rid of all the desktop telephones. And that's an example of things that we can stop doing. Coming out of the pandemic, I stopped answering my phone. My phone actually stopped working, and I didn't even pay attention to it, because I could just answer the phone on the computer. And so, that saved us a little less than half a million dollars, not a ton of money, but every bit helps. We always thought we needed a phone, and we actually don't.

And then I put the sale of the Nursing building and the sale of Hoffman Estates on here as expense reductions. It does two things: It does actually bring a little bit of one-time revenues into the university, which really helps support us financially. But it also gets off the books a lot of expenses, things like utilities, insurance, the everyday maintenance of the spaces. And so, thinking about our footprint on the campus and how we can use our resources more efficiently is something that we're doing.

I think that the last little part is what we're going to be doing here going forward. We're continuing to identify revenue and expense opportunities. We're working with the different areas. We'll do that through November. And then beginning in December, we'll begin to gather up that information, find out what it is, all the things that we can do and stop doing for the university. And then we intend to bring that back to the university in February to present the results – here's what we have learned, here's what we're doing and here's what it means in terms of the budget.

And I think that is the end. We had a few question you sent. I didn't bring them with me on a piece of paper, but I have a phone right here, and so I'll just bring it up.

L. Elish-Piper: While you're doing that, can I just jump in and share. I was just thinking that, as we go through this process, we're hopeful that you're thinking of ideas of things that you might be able to do to reduce expenses or to help generate revenue. Also, things that you can do to support student retention, because those are really important levers for us. Ways that you think you might be able to contribute to recruitment into your degree programs. And so, we really want you to speak to the leaders of your units and to speak to your chairs and speak to your deans, because they're going to be gathering all these ideas and putting those together, and then bringing those forth to the Division of Academic Affairs. Same thing will be happening in all the other divisions. And so, as you're

thinking of ideas, please do make sure that you share them, because I always say, we never know where good ideas will come from, and if you don't share them, we'll never know that you had good ideas. So, please do share your ideas with your leaders so that we can make sure that those are considered as part of the plan.

G. Middlemist: The first question is: How are you planning to address the deficit? I hope that we've addressed that a little bit in this presentation. How do budget allocations align with our institutional values? I think the process that we have doesn't do that 100 percent; it does it pretty well. But that's why we want to do the multi-year budgeting, is to really make the budget more strategic, to make sure it aligns with the university's priorities, the university's mission, our values. All of that has to be built in to doing a multi-year budget. And you do that by being iterative, setting priorities, working with the different areas to identify what the needs are, how they align with the goals, and then building that back up through your budget.

L. Elish-Piper: I'm going to quote George here. George often says that a budget is really your value document. It shows that you value. And so, I think through this effort in multi-year budgeting, we'll be able to get closer to that, really focus in on what we value, what our key priorities are. And within that process, I think that'll also go hand in glove thinking about multi-year hiring plans, and so, thinking about what our needs are, but thinking about, as we're building programs or as new areas are developing, coming up with a multi-year plan, thinking about what our hiring will need to be, as well. I think that will allow us to be much more focused on those priorities than we've been able to when we're just doing this on an annual basis.

G. Middlemist: One of the things that we've implemented is, as we make major decisions, so decisions that have – like ReUp – ReUp is a great example. When we were having the ReUp conversations, we documented the pros and cons. It's called the Memo to Advise the President. Whoever is bringing forward the idea addresses in that document a proforma, so what are the benefits of this. And sometimes a proforma is not about dollars, and don't let anybody tell you that the CFO said that. But it's not always about dollars. Sometimes it aligns with the university mission. But, how does this move things forward? What are the goals? What are the objectives? How does it align with the values? And then it has a recommendation in the memo. The senior round table takes that back to vet it with their teams to understand the ramifications, and then they make a recommendation to the president on what they think would be the best option forward. And ultimately, the president makes the decision. And so, we've used that to align our decision making and to make it more data driven and make it a little bit more disciplined.

B. Creed: I think a lot of the core questions that I saw from the survey were addressed in the presentation, but I also want to give space to questions that have come in. I've got some too, but I can either do it offline or I can fill the silence, if necessary.

B. Swedlow: Brendon Swedlow from Political Science. Thanks for all that presentation and all the work that's gone into it [inaudible] challenges. I had some things I put into the question survey, and I had some additional things that came out of a faculty meeting that we had this morning. And so, I just had a few things. Organized the way you had it, revenue and expense, presentation – on the revenue side, is there any effort to recruit international students at the undergraduate level. I'm remembering a big initiative that was supposed to happen [inaudible] China from specifically

Nankai University, and our department was supposed to get 70 students in a pilot program. And that was going to happen next year [inaudible]. And then the ministry of education basically nixed it for the social sciences, but they let it go forward for the natural sciences. I don't know if that happened here, but that seemed promising. The university was looking to it as a nice revenue enhancement. So, that was one question.

L. Elish-Piper: We absolutely are looking at recruiting international students. Much of our effort recently has been looking at graduate students, because that tends to be where we've had capacity in terms of programs that would appeal to international students. But, we absolutely are interested in opportunities to recruit undergraduate students. And Dean Wilks, who also serves as the associate vice president for international affairs, has been having conversations with deans and with different leaders on campus to begin to identify where opportunities might exist. So, if you have ideas or know – oftentimes relationships with individual institutions are very local in departments – and so, if you have such a relationship that you think might lend itself to recruiting students, for whom we believe we offer programs that would be appropriate for, we would absolutely be interested in that, because that certainly be a growth area for us in terms of recruitment.

B. Swedlow: Thanks a lot. The other question is, it seems like you had getting money from the indirects, the external grants, and that revenue source; and I thought if there could be more seed money of some kind, internal money for grants that make faculty more competitive for external money. If that could be increased, I think that would be an investment that the university could leverage to get external money.

L. Elish-Piper: Absolutely, and that's one of the goals of the Summer Research and Artistry – that's not the right name, I know it's slightly changed from that, but the Summer Research and Artistry grant – and so the challenge becomes finding ways to increase the investment that we're able to do there. But that is definitely an area where donor funds could be leveraged to expand that, because we know that investing in the faculty development and preparation of grants certainly can produce more awards in that area.

G. Middlemist: We also have an innovation fund that was created a little over a year ago to give departments and individuals opportunities to compete for funding at the university to grow a program, whether it was a grant program or a fee for service program. And so we do try and allocate resources to be able to do that, because sometimes you have to spend a little money to make a little money.

B. Swedlow: Definitely. Thank you. I have just two more things on the expense side. One is, I wonder if you've thought about doing a regulatory budget. This is something that exists out there, I'm sure you're familiar with it, but I think this is relevant for NIU. This is basically about imposing costs that don't show up in this budget. Particularly this week, this came up to me [inaudible] that this is a massive allocation of university time for these trainings. And this also relates to another subject we're supposed to be talking about today, which is faculty development. But this goes more broadly than faculty; it's everyone, basically, who has to do these trainings. And as somebody who

studies regulation, I know that, yes, we're under certain laws and we have to do training, there are rules. But there's always discretion in implementing regulations, and it seems if we could get away from annual trainings that seem redundant, and if there were some other way, there could be a massive savings there in people time.

L. Freeman: Can I just address that briefly since you have the advantage of having me here today. First of all, let me say I feel your pain; I did my three hours of annual training last night.

B. Swedlow: I'm sorry.

L. Freeman: And I know most of the answers to those questions. But I think the concept, and I'll come back to the training specifically in a minute; but that concept of our time being a resource. The level of compliance documentation that's required being a resource, I think that's something that really does need to be looked at. And it needs to be looked at with a lens – and this was also in the budget planning work group's recommendations. What are we doing to ourselves? What are rules that we created that now are costing us unnecessary time and money? And what is being done to us? And who is doing it to us if it's not us? And what is the relief? And so, I can tell you that the annual training that we do for ethics, which was a post-Blagojevich law in the state of Illinois, is actually as annoying as it is to do, and redundant as it is to do, is actually fairly affordable, because the University of Illinois creates it for all 12 public universities, and it's cost-shared at a very low level. They try to make it interesting, they say, but I'm not sure they actually get there.

But more exciting than that – might not be the right word for audit commission – but last year, the universities had a very strong reaction in Springfield to the inefficiencies that are imposed upon us by some of the statutes that we then get audit findings for not making. A good example of that one was, there was an audit requirement that every credit card receipt from the university be shipped to some place in Springfield within 30 days of that receipt being generated, and we were unable to find out that anything was ever done with those receipts. I think, George, you could give some other examples. There were rules that didn't make sense. If they ever made sense, no one remembered why, certainly with automation. And we were actually able to get legislative relief from some of these things so that we don't have to do them anymore.

We talked a lot today about inflation. We have reporting requirements that we do to ourselves at the university level. We have to report as an information item to the Board of Trustees every expenditure over \$100,000. With inflation, that list has gone from what used to be five or ten items to 25 or 30 items every time we have a trustees meeting. It's staff time to put that together in the right format. Our trustees are very open to talking about changing the reporting requirements so we can recover more time. So, we are looking at things like this. We know the things that expand the leadership time, the procurement folks' time. We don't know everything that expands your time, your administrative assistants' time. And the thing we really don't know as much about as we'd like to know is, it's easy to see something that sits within your own world, your own department, your own college. Some of the processes that are the most inefficient for us really span the university. And those are the ones that it's going to be the hardest to fix, but we're going to get the most return from fixing. And this is the time to fixing those. And so, I really hope we hear more ideas from you about things we can do to relieve those. And I like your training example. We were able to get some things in the audit reform that used to have to be reported on every year to be reported on every

other year. And we are in the advocacy phase with our legislature right now, and we will continue to say: Do we really need to do this training every year? Could we do it every other year? Is there another way to do it? And so, I think you're right on target with your idea, and we want to hear more ideas about how we can find things to stop doing or to do less frequently or to do more affordably.

B. Swedlow: President Freeman, I really appreciate your answer and being here to answer that. I have one more question.

B. Creed: Could we reserve time for the other folks.

B. Swedlow: Yes.

B. Creed: Thank you. And if you do have a question, please make your way to the mic so we can see that you have that question, thank you.

A. Finch: Hi, I'm Alicia Finch from the Philosophy Department, and I'll tell you what my question is, and then I'll tell you where it's coming from. The question is something like: If we're going to be worried about retention, which I agree we should be, is there synergy working with the budgeting office and DEI and people who are very informed about, for instance, measures that help first generation college students stay in school and that sort of thing? I assume the answer is yes, but I just want to say, wow, I think it's really important, because I often get the feeling that my students in my intro classes, for instance, I'm just not convinced they know how to do college. And I sometimes think, well, maybe we need a coordinated effort to teach them. And so, I was thinking, oh, I wonder if that's getting looked into or anything like that. Thanks.

L. Elish-Piper: I'll start with retention, that we are working across the divisions, so Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. We have a group called the SET team (Student Experience Team), and we get together a couple times a month to go through data and look at where we have issues or concerns or problems, and also to look at Navigate data and also for first-year students to look at the Huskie First survey, which is completed by students in their first few weeks where they identify areas where they would like additional support or access to resources. And so, we're trying to use that data to inform us on ways that we can reach out to and support students. For example, if we have alerts that have been put into Navigate that indicate a particular student has not been to class for several class sessions, our partners in Student Affairs, if that student is living in one of the residence halls, they will have someone from Student Affairs actually go and knock on the student's door and say, hey, we're concerned about you, it looks like you haven't been to class. What's going on? What can I do to help you? So, it's a much more coordinated effort than we've had in the past.

We also do something called campaigns, where when we see certain indicators that students are struggling or that particular alerts have been entered or that students may have taken lots of classes but haven't declared a major, we do these campaigns where we send really targeted messages to students to encourage them to reach out or to take the next step. We do that in collaboration with advisors, and that's been quite effective in terms of helping students when they get stuck in those kinds of places.

Our Center for Student Assistance also has become really a one-stop shop. If we have a student who's struggling with something and you might not know where to send them. That can be a great place for them to go to sort of get triage support so they get connected with the right things that they might need.

We've also recently, I think a couple of years ago, added financial advisors so that they can help students figure out how to navigate the finances of going to college, which oftentimes tends to be a barrier for students.

We've also ramped up our Week of Welcome for students to have much more academic content. And so it focuses on a couple of core goals. One is to help them see that they belong as Huskies, but also to help them see that they belong as scholars. That work tries to set them up for success.

We do have some sections of UNIV101 that are particularly targeted for certain populations. And there is an effort to look at those courses and see if there might be ways that those course could be targeted to particular populations or particular content added to those courses to support the students that we serve.

So, we're very tuned in to looking at students who might be struggling and working collaboratively across divisions to try and provide support. Also, the support that happens in your classes when you're interacting with students and advisors offices, in the residence halls, other places on campus where folks reach out and connect with students and encourage them. Those things matter immensely, as well. It's really a multi-tiered effort, but I've shared a few of the university-wide strategies that we've been implementing that seem to be indicating success and that we plan to continue doing through the SET team, trying to be much more strategic at what else we can do, and so continuing to build our toolkit, if you will, of strategies to support student retention.

A. Finch: I know that you guys do a lot, thank you.

C. Sumner: Can I share something? I'm Carol Sumner, vice president of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. I want to share something. I'm not pointing the finger at you. We just had a conversation yesterday at looking at how we're student-centered and what are we doing for student success. I'm going to read a quote. It's not this. It says, using an asset-based approach to student success requires more than the institution simply identifying that the students are having challenges, but explores the ways to which structural and systemic issues impair and derail student success. It does not position the issues or challenges being due to deficits within the individual students. When research is framed through a deficit lens, minoritized students are blamed for their own educational failures, while policies are enacted to fix students, rather than addressing the socio-historic nature of oppression within educational systems. As a value, as a result of this deficit framing, pathologizing practices, policies and pedagogies are used to reinforce colonialism, subjugation and the inferiority of minoritized students. Although a number of scholars have debunked deficit framing in recent times, contemporary scholarship continues to reify the notion that minoritized students are deficient. In order to disrupt this, scholars must actively frame their research from an assets-based view starting with the design of the study and the research question.

So, I'm going to reposition what you just asked, and ask: How are we as institutions identifying the challenges and structures that we put in place where students are not successful; instead of positioning it that students can't do college, because that's not the issue. The issue is: How do they understand the resources and services that are available to them? And as a student-centered institution, we recognize we have failed to find ways to make sure they understand where they can get help, what are the timelines and expectations for these students, and not positioning that they can't do college. So, I want to put that out there, because I don't want to put out there that our students can't do college, because when you have a high minoritized student population, unfortunately, that becomes the framing – that they are the problem – and that's not it.

So, I want us to own that we are trying to explore how we are supporting our students so they meet the success they're intending. That is framing that comes from being a Hispanic serving institution and understanding what serving-ness looks like, along with our equity-minded practice. So, I just want to put that out there.

A. Finch: I really appreciate that, and I didn't phrase my question as well as I could have. What I was thinking was, when I said, oh, they don't know how to do college, I didn't mean that they lack the skills or the capacity to do it; I meant that they might simply not know what's expected of them and might not know certain things that we can teach them. I actually had in my mind, oh, we should be teaching them this.

C. Sumner: This is what the dialog requires, because we clarify what could have been left in the air is, yea, they don't know how to do college, they can't write a paper, they don't know the things. I want to make sure that we're all operating – and one of the things that you'll learn from me as a practice is that language is critical, because intention is not perception.

A. Finch: Yes.

C. Sumner: And so, the way I perceived it was that it was somehow a question of the intellect of our students rather than the perception around the institutional practices to ensure students know how to use the resources that are available, because we put a lot of resource together for students to be able to know we're tutoring. And I know, and I'm going to last say this: I asked for my directors four questions from the centers. The first question I've asked them to present in all staff meetings: How are you using data to inform your practice and understand the needs of students. We just had Greg Barker come in to do a workshop. We understand that there is a particular correlation to a COMM 100 class and how students succeed in college. My question to the directors were: What do you know about the data of the students that are coming in to the center that are taking that class? And how are you then encouraging them to go to writing? I would ask you all the exact same question. If we know there's a correlation for students in particular classes, how are we encouraging them and normalizing that Writing Center help, tutoring, all of these things are what students do to strengthen and be successful. The second question is: How are we engaging students in problem solving, not as recipients and somehow on the tail end of an experience, but really saying to them, you're here and can help us solve a problem, help me figure that out. The third is: How are you partnering with academic units, not during Week of Welcome and not during a heritage month, that correlates or aligns with the population that is served by your center. And the fourth is: What is a successful program that you have used and found you could share with your partners? We are doing

that across all staff meetings with the centers, because it's not only minoritized students. And again, in our areas, first gen students – I'm looking at the president; I know she knows this data – 60 percent? Fifty-seven percent of our students are first gen.

A. Finch: Exactly.

C. Sumner: We've got to do something to support them, and that's not just through our centers, so.

A. Finch: Actually, this is illustrating why I started out asking, hey, is there synergy with DEI and working at retention. So, thank you, thank you very much.

B. Creed: We can take just those that are standing up now.

S. Vahabzadeh: Sahar Vahabzadeh from the Department of Mechanical Engineering. I appreciate your comment. This year I'm taking a few courses that would be very valuable for the faculty to address the students' concerns. To address the provost and the comment that you had about revenues, as a member of the department in the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, I have a couple of comments. One of them is the summer courses. Summer courses can be a very good source for the revenue, however, we have some issues. One is the faculty salary and lack of support for the faculty. There is no grader, there is no assistant when it comes to the summer courses. So, the faculty are being paid for a 600, \$6,065, no matter what is the number of students in the class. If the class is earning \$40,000 from the students, the salary for the faculty is not changing, and the faculty doesn't have any support. So, that is a barrier for the faculty to accept this offer. While this course can help the student a lot, to move one semester or to have a better plan for ensuring their future. Another thing is the summer exchange programs that I haven't seen that much of that at NIU. The last point that I have is programs for high schoolers that they can come, they can stay here for a week or ten days. We had the same thing at Northwestern during the summer students were paying, I think, \$4,000, \$5,000 just for the medical programs. I think we have different colleges and programs at NIU that they have the capacity, and that's a good source for the revenue. Thank you.

L. Elish-Piper: I might need help if I miss some pieces. I'll start with the first piece about summer. The salary is set by the collective bargaining agreement, and so, that's how those faculty salaries are set. The way that summer is funded, the money that students pay for tuition, those dollars don't flow directly back to the department to use to increase the salary of faculty. It's really more the budget model, the way that that works. Your point about needing graders or additional support, that's something I would encourage you to talk about with your department chair and/or your dean, because as they look at planning summer courses and think about what they have funding to offer and thinking about what supports students might need, those are all decisions that can be made at the local level. And so, if that's an important component for student success in those courses, I encourage you to have those conversations at the local level. In terms of bringing high school students to campus, we do some summer camps, mostly through Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development. A number of those have been funded through grants that have made it accessible for students from lower income backgrounds to come and complete these camps on our campus. In addition to that, a number of us were just at the HACU Conference, that's the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities. And one of the things that we heard a lot about there is

the importance of summer bridge programs. And we do have summer bridge programs in areas like TRIO and Upward Bound, but one of the things that I brought back from that conference is that we need to sit down and think about other ways that we can build summer bridge programs to enhance enrollment, but also to enhance the preparedness of students to come into programs and make sure that they're set up to be successful. If you have ideas about what those programs might look like or partners we might be able to work with to scale some of those programs, we would absolutely be interested, that's definitely something that we hope to do more of.

S. Vahabzadeh: Sure, so I'm going to send you an email. About the summer courses that you mentioned, UFA has dictated the minimum, and when we have that minimum, there are many components I would say, okay, that is the minimum that UFA, that is the faculty representatives have agreed upon. They are not going to change that. It's not specific to one department. I have talked to different faculty from different colleges. And also about the assistance, the same thing. There is a budget deficit, they will not offer that, so the faculty are not going to accept to have the course in the summer. So, I think this is work that needs to be done according to what you mentioned different years. So, with better support, there will be more courses, there will be more revenues. Thank you.

M. Falkoff: Marc Falkoff, College of Law, but I'm here as a representative of the Academic Planning Council. Thanks for the presentation, a lot of interesting ideas. It just occurred to me that the Academic Planning Council, itself, might be a great place to do some brainstorming, talk through issues. Also, mostly I just want to kibbitz about all this stuff, and that would be a great venue for me to do it.

L. Elish-Piper: We'll put that on the agenda.

M. Falkoff: Good. Alternatively, we can get rid of the Academic Planning Council if that would save a few bucks. Thanks. [laughter]

V. Naples: I'm Virginia Naples from Biological Sciences. First, I want to say thank you for the financial details that you presented. People in my department and other places are aware that I'm a member of Faculty Senate, and they are often asking me for that kind of information. And any kind of detailed information you can give me, I can pass on; it's a huge benefit. The main point I wanted to make today, however, is that I find your proposal for doing short-term courses in January and at the end of the spring semester a wonderful breath of fresh air. I've had students that have said they would like to take extra courses to get ahead in their programs or to do things that would not necessarily be possible during the regular academic year. And one of the proposals I'd like to make is something that has been done for many decades, because I did it as a graduate student back in the Pleistocene, was that, when those courses were offered, either in the summer or in the short-term periods, they were using students who had already passed their Ph.D. candidacy exams as the instructors for those classes. Now, if you go to many of our community colleges, a Master's degree is the appropriate terminal degree to teach a variety of first- and second-year classes, particularly. And I see no reason that NIU could not do that. I suspect that many of our graduate students would welcome such an opportunity, and it would be something that would be a win-win all the way around. I see it as a really good way to support students and to help them with their preparation to move forward in the rest of their careers, and I'd really like to see that happen.

The other thing that I was thinking in terms of assistance for students, especially with challenging courses, is that, again, back when I was a graduate student and I was taking things such as math and chemistry and physics and those kinds of classes, in addition to having a regular lecture and/or lab combination, we had an extra hour scheduled each week that was called a quiz section. These were taught by the graduate students. Yes, many of the times there would actually be a quiz, which would take up 10 or 15 minutes of that 45- or 50-minute time period. But the rest of the time was a scheduled time where students could ask questions and work through homework and things like that. And a lot of those sessions were the kinds of things that helped me tremendously. And I'm sure that would still apply to our students in the present.

I had talked about many of these ideas, including the concept of bridge courses, many years even before COVID, with Sol Jensen and Omar Ghrayeb, and I may still have that document that I provided them. But, I'm just delighted to see this new initiative, because we have to pay for the physical plant, the buildings, the lights, the plumbing, everything else. And if we're not using those buildings to enhance the educational opportunities of our students, we're losing, and they're losing. So, I really encourage that thinking to go forward with expanding those programs and building on them. So, I say, thank you very much for that.

L. Elish-Piper: Thank you for that, and I would love to see the document if you can find it.

V. Naples: I can find it.

L. Elish-Piper: Thank you.

G. Middlemist: Thank you, everybody.

B. Creed: All right, thank you so much for joining us and for answering the questions.

C. Executive vice president and provost position description –
feedback from Faculty Senate

Lisa Freeman, NIU President

Matt Streb, Chief Strategy Officer/Liaison for the Board of Trustees

Ben Creed, Faculty Senate President

B. Creed: Our next item up for consideration is an update on the provost search, particularly focused on getting Faculty Senate's feedback on the provost position description that you all were provided with. I'd like to invite President Freeman and Chief Strategy Officer Matt Streb up to collaborate on that.

L. Freeman: Thank you, everybody. I think probably most people on Faculty Senate know that the search process for executive vice president and provost is outlined in a fair amount of detail in Article 10 of the university bylaws. And one of the provisions in there is that the Faculty Senate or

Steering Committee of the Faculty Senate shall have the opportunity to review the selection criteria prior to the advertisement of the position. Article 10 also outlines the composition of the search committee.

I want to start by saying just where we are in the search process right now. We are using Parker Executive Search to support the search. We have a committee that's comprised of 21 members that's consistent with Article 10, but also adds a couple of additions that weren't in our governing documents, like a representative from Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, because that division didn't exist when the governance documents were put together.

The executive vice president and provost search profile is in draft form, and you had an opportunity to receive that from Pat. Today, we'd like to get feedback from you. When I was talking about the search committee, and I just said, "we," I forgot to mention that the co-chairs of the search committee are Ben Creed, the Faculty Senate president. Our governance documents stipulate that the Faculty Senate president will be on the search committee, but it has been the tradition to have the Faculty Senate president co-chair the search committee, along with a presidential designee. And I designated Dr. Streb to do that, because I felt it was important to have someone from the senior leadership team who also had academic experience and academic credentials. So, Ben and Matt are co-chairing. And the three of us are really here to answer any questions that you have about any aspect of the search process, but also to get your specific feedback on that document, because what we'd like to do is have that profile ready to go for a final editorial clean-up as soon as possible, so that it can be posted by the end of next week to allow us to follow the prescribed search timeline. And, Matt, maybe you want to say something about the search timeline. And then we'll just throw it open to questions and feedback. And I'll say up front that anyone who doesn't get to have something come out today, or if you think about something afterward, we can accept, any of us, feedback up until Friday.

M. Streb: Thanks, President Freeman. I think you hit most of the high points. Just to let the Faculty Senate know, obviously, the goal is to have a non-acting, non-interim provost in place by July 1 of next year. Parker will start recruiting heavily once the position is posted through our normal HR processes. As the president said, we hope to have that posted by the end of next week. We'll do recruitment through the rest of November, through December and through mid-January. The search committee will then meet to talk about the candidate pool. We'll do initial interviews, and we hope to bring candidates to campus in mid- to late-February. Faculty will have an opportunity to meet, obviously, with all of the candidates that we bring to campus. We hope to have an announcement shortly after that, and as I said, have the person start in the non-interim role on July 1. Ben, I don't know if there's anything else that you want to add that I have left out.

B. Creed: Nothing to add at this moment, other than we do welcome the feedback of this body. And as we move forward, any questions you have, as President Freeman mentioned, we're happy to address or answer in this forum or in other forums, as well. So, if anybody has any questions, please feel free to use the mics.

L. Freeman: I guess the other thing I add is that we will have a section on the President's Office home page dedicated to the provost search, with a list of the committee members, the dates for interviews as they come in and updates to the campus on the status of the search.

S. Marsh: Hi, I'm Sarah Marsh; I'm in the Department of Management. I think my question is more about the process than the position ad; and that is to say the ad wants someone who walks on water, that's what we all want. But the decision by the search committee has to reflect specific challenges that this university is facing in the next five to ten years. So, I guess I would just want some reassurance that the committee will be clear-eyed about someone who may look like they walk on water, but they walked in water in a different climate than the one we're in. I'm sorry about the bad metaphor, but I think you know what I'm talking about, I hope.

M. Streb: I think we do.

B. Creed: I would just say thank you for that comment, and we want to have those conversations, the frank conversations and clear expectations amongst the full search committee about that fact, that it's not the person that walks on water, it's a real person that can contribute to our mission, vision and values and to the needs of our campus.

Not seeing anybody else coming up to the mics, I just want to once again reiterate, if you have any direct comments – I know at Faculty Senate Steering Committee there were some copy editing comments that I'll be passing along. But otherwise, please feel free to reach out to either Matt or myself with any feedback you have about the position or inquiries you have about the description.

L. Freeman: Thank you for your time, and I will also thank you in advance for taking the time to show up in person when we have the candidate finalists on campus for the final interviews. I can't tell you what a difference it makes to a candidate to be talking to real people instead of Hollywood Squares. We're probably not going to get a candidate who walks on water, because that's a pretty rare skill in the human race, but I can tell you that the people who apply for these positions are, generally, fairly accomplished and qualified. And at the stage that a finalist comes to the campus, it's about assessing the fit. It's also about marketing our campus and our university and our students and our potential to the candidate, as much as the candidate selling themselves to us. And when no one shows up for their interview seminar, it doesn't really send the message that we're a welcoming and exciting place. So, I look forward to seeing you at those interviews.

B. Creed: Thank you so much for your time today, President Freeman and Matt Streb.

X. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

B. Creed: Moving on to item X, which is Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees, from the FAC to the IBHE, Linda is under the weather and will not be able to join us today. If anybody wants to hear her report, she will be making it at UC next week, and that will be live streamed, so you can hear what she has to say there.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Felicia Bohanon, Natasha Johnson, Ben Creed
Larissa Garcia (Katy Jaekel fall 2023 alternate), Karen Whedbee, Brad Cripe
- C. Baccalaureate Council – report
Amanda Ferguson, Chair
Alicia Schatteman, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
- D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – no report
- E. Social Justice Committee – report
- F. FS-UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – no report
Emily McKee, FS/RGE Liaison/Spokesperson
- G. Student Government Association – report
Olivia Newman, SGA President
Cole Hensley, Speaker of the Senate

B. Creed: There are no reports for B through F. For the Student Government Association, is there a report? Not seeing one.

- H. Operating Staff Council – report
Natasha Johnson, President

B. Creed: Natasha, do you have a report. She’s shaking her head no, so no report from Operating Staff Council.

- I. Supportive Professional Staff Council – report
Felicia Bohanon, President

B. Creed: And Felicia, do you have a report? And no report from Supportive Professional Staff Council.

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
- Q. [Fall 2023 Commencement](#)
 Graduate Commencement – Saturday, Dec. 16, 2023
 Undergraduate Commencement – Sunday, Dec. 17, 2023

B. Creed: That brings us to item XI, which is Informational Items. A through O are the standard ones. Item P, once again, is the Faculty Senate schedule. Our next meeting is November 29.

Item Q is the fall commencement information, and I wanted to mention particularly the efforts that have been communicated by the Provost’s Office to help recruit and attract faculty to our commencement activities, particularly the undergraduate commencement. Accommodations have been made: One, we’ll be explicitly acknowledged and celebrated for the role that we play in student success, so we’ll get a nice pat on the back in a public way. There are no longer tickets for faculty to enter. If you show up in regalia, they’ll assume that you belong, so you’re allowed to join without needing to remember that ticket. There is going to be a reserved parking lot as this has been a challenge in the past where faculty have had to find parking or have been ticketed for trying to come to commencement. So, they’re working to have a designated place for us to park our cars. And then, they’re also going to be providing snacks in the robing room. Again, the small things to, hopefully, align with the value of having faculty there, to show up for our students. We’ve been with them along the way, and this is a really important moment in their journey that we can honor and celebrate the sacrifices, the efforts, the work they’ve put in, that their families and loved ones have put in. So, if we can do our part in showing up, particularly for undergraduate commencement. Graduate commencement is usually better attended due to the smaller groups of students graduating and the closer relationships that are often found in those places. And that concludes the informational items for today.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

B. Creed: Now, adjournment. Do I have a motion to adjourn? First by Marsh, second by Arado. All in favor?

Members: Aye.

B. Creed: Thank you all.

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.