TRANSCRIPT – FACULTY SENATE

**Wednesday, September 4, 2024, 3 p.m.**

**Altgeld Hall Auditorium**

**Northern Illinois University**

**DeKalb, Illinois**

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** Akst, Alex, Arado, Atkins, Barrett, Bender, Bohanon, Books, Boswell, Brain, Burton, Campbell, Chan, Chomentowski, Corpuz, Creed, Demir, Duffin, Ehsani, Finch, Fotovat, Glas (for Swedlow), Hartenhoff, Ito, Lampi, Libman, Luo, McGowan, McKee, Mills, Naples, Nesterov, Novak, Nyunt, Palese, Rajabi, Ross, Sabio, Salimi, Sharp, Sibley, Slagstad, Slotsve, Stalcup, Thomas, Thurmaier, Vahabzadeh, Van Wienen, Wang, Whedbee

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Mellon, Ruetsche, Sirotkin, Staikidis, Swedlow, Valentiner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bryan, Elish-Piper, Holtz, Hughes, Kristoff, Puckett, Sumner, Tovar

**OTHERS ABSENT:** Cripe, Garcia, Skuzinski

1. **Call to Order**

**B. Creed:** I am going to call to order the meeting of Faculty Senate on Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024.

1. **Verification of Quorum**

**B. Creed:** Pat, do we have a quorum.

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

**III. Adoption of the Agenda**

**B. Creed:** Our next item up is the adoption of the agenda for today’s meeting. Can I have a motion to approve the agenda? George, first. Second [T. Atkins], thank you. All in favor of adopting the agenda for today’s meeting, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Opposed? All right, great, we’ve got an agenda.

**IV. Approval of the April 24, 2024, minutes – Pages 4-7**

**B. Creed:** Next is approval of the minutes from the April 24, 2024, meeting. I’ve got a motion from Felicia. Can I have a second to approve the minutes? Thank you, Cynthia. Any discussion, deletions, edits? Seeing none, all in favor of approving the April 24, 2024, minutes, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Opposed? Abstain? We have an abstain from Jeff. Our minutes are approved.

**V. Public Comment  
  
B. Creed:** That brings us to public comment. Pat, has anyone submitted a public comment?

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

**VI. Faculty Senate President’s Announcements**

**B. Creed:** That brings us to the Faculty Senate president’s announcements. First, I want to welcome everybody to the first meeting of the Faculty Senate for this academic year. I want to thank each of you for your willingness to serve in this capacity, to serve in shared governance. It really does represent the ideal of how working collaboratively on shared changes, topics and priorities can improve our institution in the short term and also in building that vibrant, inclusive, engaging institution we all want to contribute to in the long run.

I want to say a particular thank you to those who are first-year on Faculty Senate. I welcome you, and I would love to get to know you. So, if I haven’t had a chance to meet you – I know I met some of you – please do reach out, and I look forward to getting to know you better.

Also, I’d like to say thank you to all those returning members. Whether it’s your second or third year or second or third or fourth term on this body, the work that we do here, I do think, moves our university forward.

While we do have a full agenda for today, I did want to cover a few core themes for the upcoming year. And the first thing I want to do is share a brief orientation, if you will, to this body, to the Faculty Senate and the role it plays on campus. Pat’s got some slides up here; I’ll share these out afterward, so don’t feel like taking screenshots unless you really want to.

First, I just want to define these two key terms. You can read them on the screen, but, really to me, shared governance is the idea that a healthy, functioning university is the responsibility of everybody on campus. That’s faculty, administration, staff, students and the Board of Trustees. Each of the groups has defined roles and responsibilities to play. They have areas that are in their direct control. There are areas that they can inform or contribute to. And for a university to function at a high level or in a good manner, there is a need for coordination and collaboration and communication amongst all the groups, all the roles, all the responsibilities, so that decisions and changes are aligned and respect the responsibilities and expertise of the various groups on campus. Essentially, we’re working together through shared definitions of roles and responsibilities.

But this doesn’t meant that all expertise resides within one position or one person or one body. And that’s where the idea of shared leadership comes into play. Across campus, there are pockets of knowledge and expertise and perspectives that need to be brought in. For instance, just because curriculum is an area that this body has direct oversight over, doesn’t mean that only faculty senators ought to be engaged in the conversations and the deliberations and the conversations about what to do with curriculum.

When we look at what the role of Faculty Senate is within shared governance here at NIU, you can read the bylaws if you want to, you can go through these things, they’re on the website. But the way I understand Faculty Senate’s role here on campus is that there are several key duties that are outlined in the constitution and the bylaws that we operate within. To me, the direct authority that is given to Faculty Senate comes from our university constitution, and it places within Faculty Senate the academic core of the institution. We, in this body, oversee a lot of the academic core of the institution.

Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 7 lays out the duties of Faculty Senate. And within that article, there are a few key takeaways with the overarching theme being this idea that Faculty Senate operates within shared governance and within shared leadership model in order to fulfill those duties. And those can be condensed into these policy decisions related to the academic core of the university, such as the faculty personnel system, curriculum and academic policy, to inform other bodies on campus of Faculty Senate’s perspectives and to ensure and contribute to the continued health and direction of the university.

So, how does it do this? It does this work through its body, both the standing committees – they’re outlined in Article 3. I’m not going to go through what all of them do; you can find that; I’ve shared an email as we try to recruit folks into these different committees. And then also through the academic councils and committees outlined in Article 4 of the Faculty Senate Bylaws. And these are the ones that are directly tied to things like curriculum development, instructional programs and so forth.

Visually, what you can see, and it’s important for me – and therefore, I’m going to make it at least for a couple seconds important to you – is to see how everything rolls up into Faculty Senate. So, Faculty Senate is given the ultimate authority through the constitution for the academic core of the institution. It delegates out authority to these standing committees: Personnel Committee, Social Justice Committee, Steering Committee, Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee. And then the academic committees also flow up through Faculty Senate. This includes the Baccalaureate Council, the Graduate Council and so forth. So, this is just to understand that curricular changes – the faculty own that, for lack of a better word. But that flows up through us, whether it’s the graduate level or the undergraduate level. Curricular changes and so forth ultimately gain their authority from the Faculty Senate. And I think that’s an important thing to note.

So, what do we do? This is just another way to share out what I mentioned in the beginning about what the duties and responsibilities boil down to. Generally, the Faculty Senate’s bodies all play similar roles, whether that’s the full body here or the committees or councils that operate underneath the Faculty Senate umbrella. The roles that they play is that they engage with other groups and shared governance bodies on campus, both within the Faculty Senate but also outside the Faculty Senate in University Council, in senior leadership and different advisory groups on campus. They create policies and procedures related to the academic core of the institution, or make recommendations to the Faculty Senate to create those policies and procedures. And ultimately, they all contribute to the continued health and direction of NIU.

Holistically, that’s just a very brief orientation to the role this body plays and its committees play. My hope is that we all see our roles on campus as stewards of the university, as advocates for our role, but also for the health of the university, for our students, for our staff, for our faculty, and for campus as a whole.

The second set of these I want to talk about is related to what I started doing last year in this body. And that is, after every meeting, I will be sharing out a summary of this meeting, the resources, the topics that were covered, so that you can take that back to your constituents, so we can share that information out with campus. Similarly, another thing I started last year and I will continue is surveys of faculty senators. My hope is that you will take the survey, go to your constituent group, learn from that group and then fill our a quick two-to-five-minute survey, depending on the topic that shares that information back with me. That will help me develop our agendas for these meetings, and it will help me advocate in my one-on-one conversations or give charges to different bodies within our jurisdiction to make sure we’re doing good work that’s aligned with campus.

Finally, what you’ll see from me soon – there are a number of working groups and conversations ongoing across campus. Some of these include continuing to look at our tenure and promotion policies and pick back up some of the work that was left to the side for the moment as we made the changes last year to our tenure and promotion system. Engaging in conversations around artificial intelligence and how we can better support faculty’s and students’ use and understanding of the tool, transdisciplinary work and so on. I’ll be sharing ways that faculty senators and other faculty members can get involved in some of these conversations across campus. So, do look for a communication from me, and I do hope that you all see that as part of our identity, part of our responsibilities, part of what we should be doing to live in to our positions as faculty members, as staff and as students on campus. And the hope is that, through all of these efforts, we can continue to contribute and collaboratively work to meet university goals, fulfill our personal and professional goals and create that campus that works well for all Huskies.

In summary, welcome back. I’m really excited to be working with you all this year. I hope your semesters are off to a great start. And please do reach out to me. Look for meeting times with me. I’ve got in my signature, you can find Faculty Senate office hours if you want to speak with me about a topic. But I welcome you all and look forward to the work going forward for this year.

That’s what I have for my announcements.

**VII. Provost’s Announcements**

**B. Creed:** That brings us to our provost’s announcements. I’d like to invite up Provost Elish-Piper.

**L. Elish-Piper:** Good afternoon. I echo Ben’s comments in welcoming everybody back and hope that your fall semester is off to a great start. I want to share a quick update. You may have seen the email that came out last week about our Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation, but I wanted to take a moment in case you didn’t see that email, to let you know that we did receive notification this summer that we were reaccredited for ten years, which is the maximum allowable time. So, that’s great news.

There are five criteria on which we were evaluated. And under them, there were 18 specific competencies or specific core areas. And 17 of the 18 we met fully. One we met with concerns, which was probably not a surprise to anyone. We have to submit interim reporting on our finances to show that we’re implementing the plan that was approved by the Board of Trustees and that we’re making progress in terms of closing our budget deficit. And that needs to be submitted in October of 2026.

But a real cause for celebration. Just want to give you a full stats. We had over 700 pieces of evidence that we submitted with our assurance argument. So, I’m sure many of you contributed pieces of evidence, so thank you for that. And we had over 100 campus and community members who participated in the on-campus meetings that took place in March. Again, many of you in this room probably participated, so thank you for that.

Also, just want to draw your attention to the fact that the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning has some new programs that they’ve added to their offerings that might be of interest. They’re offering one that’s looking at how to handle those hot-button moments in classrooms, some of those politically charged topics that might bubble up or divisive comments that might create an uncomfortable context in the classroom. They’re doing a workshop on that topic. They’re also doing workshops related to supporting first-gen students, and we know with our enrollment that we enroll more and more first-generation students. So, that can be a really helpful workshop to consider. And then also, they’re offering a workshop on what’s new in AI. If you haven’t looked at their website lately, they have a wide array of offerings, but I wanted to highlight those specific three that were newly added to their programming.

That’s all that I have for you today, thank you.

**B. Creed:** Thank you, Laurie.

**VIII. Items for Faculty Senate Consideration**

A. Huskies Vote

Michaela Holtz, Executive Director, Student Affairs Central

**B. Creed:** That then brings us to the items for Faculty Senate consideration. The first presentation we will have is from Michaela Holtz. She’s the executive director of Student Affairs Central, and she’ll be sharing information about Huskies Vote.

**M. Holtz:** Good afternoon, and I appreciate to have an opportunity to share this initiative with you and just some programming we’re planning for this fall along with some resources for faculty that they can utilize in the classroom when they talk about voter engagement with our students.

Huskies Vote is specifically NIU initiative that focuses on voter engagement. We have been doing Huskies Vote initiative probably since 2018. It was part of the [All In Democracy Challenge](https://allinchallenge.org/), which is a national non-partisan organization that provides institutions with benchmarking, an opportunity to be recognized as campuses who are doing this work. And so, we are currently a highly established campus under All In Democracy Challenge. But they also are great partners and supporters of our work. They are providing us with resources that are available to students, to faculty, to staff that are running this initiative, and also those who just want to make sure that students know what to do, and doing it in a non-partisan way.

Also, part of the Huskies Vote and something that NIU has been involved in even prior to All In Democracy Challenge is participating in a national study on learning, voting and engagement, which allows us to actually receive data on voting participation of our students. I’m sharing with you the 2020 report, because that was the presidential election year. On our website – and actually if you want quick access to the website, you can just scan the QR code of the postcards on your tables or you can just go to [go.niu.edu/huskies-vote](https://www.niu.edu/huskies-vote/) – has all of the reports that we have ever published. It allows us to see how many of our eligible students are registered to vote and then also looking at our voting turnout rates.

This is also a report that we use and that’s not a part of being involved with the All In Democracy Challenge. Every year, we actually develop an action plan that a dynamic document for us to utilize to establish some short-term and long-term goals on where we want to be with this initiative, and we set specific expectations: How many students we want to be registered and how many students turn out to vote. One of the things that I think we’re looking at this year is that we have a pretty high registration vote for our students, but when we looked at our 2022 data, we are kind of in line with other institutions or the national data across the country with students not turning out to vote at as high rates. We are at about 30 percent for 2022. The rates in 2020 were, obviously, higher; and I think there is an expectation that students are really engaged and we might see some large numbers of students to actually turnout to vote.

One of the things that, I think, is prohibiting students to do that is if they register to vote, but they don’t know where the polling place is, or how to research the ballot. And that’s where we come in. And I am also reaching out to you, as faculty. I think you see students day in and day out; and I think that that’s a perfect way to share with students the resources that they can utilize to find out the proper information and research the ballot.

What are some of the ways that faculty can do that? And, actually, I don’t know, some of you might have seen the piece in the most recent Provost Newsletter that talked about specific ways that faculty can support this work in the classroom. On our website, under the [Resources tab](https://www.niu.edu/huskies-vote/resources/index.shtml), is a broad faculty resource guide on specific language that could be included in the syllabus or could be shared with students as a slide on Blackboard or shared in the classroom. There is a specific Huskies PowerPoint that has important dates and information that you can just pull up in the classroom and you don’t have to develop anything specific or something new.

Setting aside a time in the classroom for students to maybe take time to register to vote, and explaining what they need. Often it takes just a few minutes for registering to vote online. One of the things that, through conversations with our partners at the DeKalb Clerk’s Office and also non-partisan organization, League of Women Voters, we know that students might say they are registered to vote, but not all of them realize that, if they moved, which the majority of our students move every semester, they need to update their registration. So, when you’re talking to students, we say, don’t just ask, are you registered to vote, but have you moved, even if it’s just down the hall in the residence hall. If you want to vote, you need to update your voter registration. So, it’s sometimes just asking those questions and asking the right questions.

If you are interested in holding a conversation in the classroom, on the resource guide on the website, there are a lot of resources that have already been developed by the experts that are non-partisan and are there for faculty specifically to use in their classrooms, even specific by field and discipline. So, I encourage you to, if you’re interested, peruse through those resources and consider some of them as you are leading those conversations in the classroom.

If you are interested to have someone come and speak to your class, that’s also something that we offer. I am talking to several classes in the next few weeks, and so it’s a quick five-minute information for students to know.

I just wanted to include this. You don’t have to remember all of the dates, but I think it’s just important for everybody to realize that the online registration for voting ends October 20. So, we’re focusing our efforts on voter registration up until that point. October 21 is actually when t he early voting is open in the Holmes Student Center. Early voting in Illinois starts earlier, but the Holmes Student Center will be an early voting site from October 21 until November 1. Either you, yourself, could utilize this as a polling place if you are in DeKalb County. But letting students know that, as they are making decisions and they are in the unique position to make a decision where they want to vote, whether it’s their hometown or at DeKalb, that they have an opportunity to do it early before the election day.

This literally is just a screen shot from the website. If you are interested to bring this information in the classroom, it could be as simple as pulling up the website and letting students know that there are resources. This website has the information about voting in Illinois, but also for students who are out of state and they want to vote in their hometowns, how to go about that.

The calendar on the website is being continuously updated with events that are happening on campus that we’re planning, finalizing, some of them with the confirmation of presidential debate recently.

I just wanted to give you a preview of some of the main programming that we’re planning for fall. There are more smaller events or voter registration drives, but I wanted to highlight that next week we are going to be hosting the presidential debate watch party in Holmes Student Center Huskie Den, just the area on the lower level by the bowling area. We’re going to have a small panel that will discuss just kind of the principles of the debate and maybe suggestions of what to watch for if you are watching a presidential debate maybe for the first time for some of the students.

September 17 is National Voter Registration Day, so we’re going to have tabling and voter registration drives in the central campus, in MLK Commons, but also in some of the buildings and dining halls on campus. I have a call for volunteers for any of you that might be registrars or who just want to volunteer to help out. This would be exactly the type of event where we need some help and volunteers for.

Food Truck Wednesdays – I actually just spent a couple of hours today outside talking to students during the Student Involvement Fair about Huskies Vote. But it’s also today, Food Truck Wednesday, there are three dates for Foot Truck Wednesdays coming up, as you can see, where we will also have the DeKalb Clerk in place and election judges that are spending their time coming to campus and helping our students to register to vote. Our students really only need their phone, their photo ID, and they can show their MyNIU Bursar’s Office to prove the address, and then they can register or update their registration. So, it’s a quick process, and that’s a great and easy-access way for them to do it.

There is a Civic Action Hour Series planned for September 18 and then two in October that will be highlighted with more details, as well, but I just wanted to bring those to your attention. And then the week of October 28, we’re planning a large march to the polls with students in partnership with Athletics, Marching Band, [inaudible] and Student Government Association and some of the cultural centers and ADEI Division. And so that is an event that would allow students just in a celebratory way to come together and be able to talk, encourage each other to vote, find information about what’s on the ballot. And then we’re going to be walking to the early voting place in Holmes Student Center to actually vote early.

I’m happy to take any questions. And if you are interested to volunteer or would like to be informed about programming that we do, feel free to scan the QR code and just provide me with your name and email so you can be on that list-serve. Also, on the table there are stickers, so if you are a sticker person and you want some laptop and water bottle stickers, please feel free to use those, and I have more over here.

**B. Creed:** Thank you, Michaela. Do we have any questions or comments for Michaela? From my listening of it, it sounds like a lot of it is focused on our undergraduate population that are on campus primarily. Are there any efforts for the grad students to be pulled out of this, or for folks who are at Harper College or McHenry College.

**M. Holtz**: One thing that we are specifically focusing on undergrads when we are on campus, right now the information that’s going out is going to some of the general messaging. So, if the students are at Harper College, they might receive it. The events we’re doing on campus in person, that’s a little bit harder for the students, but I think, whether it’s graduate students or undergrads, they are all welcome and invited.

**B. Creed:** Thank you.

B. NIU’s Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Center (TRHTC)

And the Real Talk Conference

Jade Silva Tovar, Assistant Vice President for DEI

Tara Kristoff, Director of Equity and Justice

Michaela Holtz, Executive Director, Student Affairs Central

**B. Creed:** Next up is NIU’s Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Center and the Real Talk Conference. And we’ll have Jade Silva Tovar, Tara Kristoff and Michaela Holtz.

**J. Tovar:** Thank you, good afternoon, everyone, I’m Jade Silva Tovar. I use she/her pronouns. I’m the assistant vice president for diversity, equity and inclusion. Part of our partnership and role is working with our colleagues in Student Affairs to enact the NIU Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Center work. As part of that work, it is a center that we have in partnership is center in our hearts, as my colleagues like to say. It’s not a physical space, but it really is enacting the pillars of the truth, racial hearing and transformation work across the institution. This is a partnership with AACNU that we’ve been an institutional partner over the past couple of years. This past May, several of us attended a national conference to really enact what will be the upcoming goals over the next couple of years for NIU in our Truth, Racial Healing and Transformation Center work. And so, really aligning with the pillars of advancing the framework of narrative change, understanding our lived experiences and how that impacts our everyday life and how we work, act and teach across campus. Racial healing and relationship building and understanding this false narrative about a racial hierarchy and unpacking what that really means and the impacts and affects that that has on every single person within our society. Also, looking at separation law and economy. What have been the policies and procedures that have caused systematic barriers and how we can enact change, not only at NIU, but in the communities that we live and work.

Part of this work, and really for you all is, if you’re interested, we’ll be creating a committee over this next year of individuals to work with us in designing and building what our goals will be over the next couple of years. And my colleagues will later talk in our presentation about the additional action items. One of them is a key effort, which if you attended last year, was our Real Talk Conference. And so, I’ll turn it over to my colleague, Michaela, to talk a little bit more about the conference for this year.

**M. Holtz:** Hello again. I am excited to talk to you about the Real Talk Conference and just share a little bit more of the details. The theme of the second annual conference is Opening Pathways to Embrace our Humanity. And we are actually partnering with Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development Engagement Roundtable group to promote our conference, but also to promote an executive in residence workshop that they are hosting the day before. We’re promoting it as the Real Talk Conference pre-conference workshop. We don’t have it on a slide, so I don’t know if Pat can swing to that flyer.

The workshop title is Designing Engagement for Equity: Building Inclusive Community Engagement with Human-centered Design. If you’re interested to join us for Dr. Jim Woodell’s presentation, it will be all day on Thursday, Oct. 24, in Altgeld Auditorium, and you are welcome to join for a half day or spend the entire day with us.

And then, October 25 is when we are hosting our Real Talk Conference. The important note is that all NIU students, staff and faculty are free to attend. We are charging and inviting non-NIU affiliated students and community members or instructors. The information on the cost, it’s on the website, but it’s $199 for non-NIU faculty and community members, and then $99 for students. We’re also at this time accepting proposals. We have gone through a first review of proposals and selected some for the conference. But if you are just finding out about this and you would really like to be part of our conference, please feel free to submit a proposal. You have until September 17. The registration is open, and something that you can do right now. So, if you would like to secure that date, please feel free to register. It’s a full day of sessions.

And with this next slide, I’ll get to talk about some really exciting keynote speakers we’re bringing on. Our featured speakers include Asheli Mann-Lofthouse, who is t he president and CEO of CORE Collective, that will open our conference with a land acknowledgement ceremony.

We’ll have a morning speaker, Marisa Miakonda Cummings, who is the senior advisor for the Administration for Native Americans. Her keynote will be followed by a series of workshops. And then we’re bringing in for our lunch keynote, the #1 New York Times Best Seller author, Ajeoma Oluo, who you might be familiar with, who has published a book, So You want to Talk About Race? And then just this year, she released a new book called BE A REVOLUTION: How Everyday People are Fighting Oppression and Changing the World – and How You Can, Too. So, we’re excited to have her come to campus. And also, I think she’ll have some books that she’ll be signing, as well.

**T. Kristoff:** Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Tara Kristoff, and as I told everyone in a meeting this morning, today’s my 29th day as an employee of NIU. I’m excited to meet all of you. One of the things that we do at the Social Justice Education unit, is we do something called GIVE circles, which means growing through inclusive vulnerability and empathy. The goal of these GIVE circles; it feeds from the framework that Jade talked about earlier, which is truth, racial healing and transformation. The goal of these GIVE circles is to build connection with one another by telling each other’s lived experiences and also by sharing with each other where we come from, what we do, what we’ve experienced. The goal is to build community, not only in your department, but in your team, with your classroom, with students. So, we are more than willing to come and do GIVE circles with you. Also, we’re looking for GIVE facilitators. If you’re interested in learning, how do I create a more inclusive environment in my classroom, in my department, in my team, in my unit, then become a facilitator, and that will help you do that, as well. Thank you.

**J. Tovar:** And now, if there are any questions for us?

**B. Creed:** I attended the Real Talk Conference last year, and I think it was a wonderful event. I had been a part of the planning committee for that, and I am really looking forward to, hopefully, seeing a number of the faculty senators there, as well as faculty, staff and students from across campus join. I think there is a real opportunity to engage in learning and engage in humanity with each other in these moments. And I think it’s really well done thing, so I do hope folks come. Thank you all for your work.

**J. Tovar:** Thank you. We will also be creating some materials. If you would like to use this as an opportunity for students to engage in the classroom as an assignment, we would have that available to faculty members to embed into your classroom environment.

**C. Sumner:** My name is Carol Sumner, and I’m vice president, chief diversity officer. Can you give an idea of the kinds of topics that might be available through the workshops? Are there some that are specifically tailored toward faculty? I think that might be of particular interest for this group. Or, if there are topics that you’re looking for that might also help in your solicitation. I really appreciate all the work that you all are doing.

**J. Tovar:** Great question, Dr. Sumner. If you all don’t know, that’s my supervisor. Based off of last year’s feedback that we received, we will designate within the conference workshops which sessions would be available for faculty members that would basically an audience – who would be the primary audience. We’ve asked those that are submitting the presentations to indicate that, as well as the level. We had some folks – we’ve all been to conferences, and sometimes the description and the title are not what actually happens and occurs. So, this year, we will have that of who the session audience is and the level of learning and understanding. And so, some of those topics include, and some of the proposals that we’ve received are from community members, of action and arts and being able to share stories through the arts. We’ve received a couple that were on being able to really understand racial healing and empathy and how to do so in a way that is really centered around having a common and shared humanity. Some of the sessions that we are looking for and would be of interest is understanding law, policy, enacting change. I think that’s really important and pivotal of what is my focus in being able to do that and how do I become a change agent as we look at humanizing this work and thinking about this idea, concept, of a racial hierarchy, as we think about polarization and topics related to how do we come in kind of thinking about our common humanity and having conversations to move forward as a society.

**M. Holtz:** I just thought of something else that might be of interest to this group. Grad students are welcome to present as well. And part of this year’s conference that is new and is an addition is also a poster session. So, if you have students who you have worked with that maybe have done work around this topic and maybe specific discipline and they would like to share a poster or present a workshop, it is open to students, as well.

**J. Tovar:** Thank you.

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

**IX. Consent Agenda**

A. Approve Department of Communication Professor Karen Whedbee to serve as the 2024-25 Faculty Senate vice president per FS Bylaws, Article 2.2.

B. Approve Department of Communication Professor Ferald Bryan to serve as the 2024-25 Faculty Senate parliamentarian per FS Bylaws, Article 2.2.

C. Approve the 2024-25 Faculty Senate standing committee membership rosters per FS Bylaws, Article 3

D. Approve the 2024-25 University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees membership roster, confirming Tom Skuzinski for a three-year term, per NIU Bylaws, Article 8.4.1.1

E. Approve the nomination of School of Theatre and Dance Professor Marc Macaranas and Department of Finance Professor Yuan Tian to serve on the Libraries Advisory Committee.

F. Approve Department of Communication Professor Karen Whedbee to serve on the 2024 BOT Professorship Award Selection Committee.

G. Approve College of Law Professor Therese Arado to serve on the University Fee Advisory Committee.

**B. Creed:** Up next is our consent agent. You’ll see items A through G. This is an important part of helping ensure our committees and our councils are staffed up, that we’ve filled roles and responsibilities. You’ll see in the consent agent, there is an approval of Karen Whedbee to serve as the Faculty Senate vice president; Ferald Bryan to serve as the Faculty Senate parliamentarian; the standing committee membership is on page 8 for the various committee membership across those bodies I shared earlier; the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, and that’s confirming Tom Skuzinski to serve for a three-year term; the approval of the nomination of the School of Theatre and Dance Professor Mac Macaranas and Department of Finance Professor Yuan Tian to serve on the Libraries Advisory Committee; to have Karen Whedbee serve on the Board of Trustees Professorship Award Committee; and to approve Therese Arado from the College of Law to serve on the University Fee Advisory Committee. So, again, this is just the package of appointments and seatings that helps us fulfill our duties here. So, if I could have a motion to approve the consent agenda? Thank you, Pete. A second? George, thank you. All in favor of approving the consent agenda, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Opposed? Abstentions? All right, the consent agenda is approved.

**X. New Business**

A. Proposed amendment to FS Bylaws 3.1.1, Composition of Steering Committee

First Reading

**B. Creed:** That brings us to our one item for new business today, which is a proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws 3.1.1, the composition of the Steering Committee. You’ll find this on page 10 of the packet, so, if you can just virtually flip to the last page of the packet, you’ll see what the proposed amendment language is. Since this is a first reading, there is no vote needed, and it’s just information, but we will entertain any discussion afterward. I’ll be doing the first reading.

You’ll see the proposed change is very minimal, but the intent of this change is to ensure the Faculty Senate Steering Committee includes representation from all constituencies without placing unnecessary and unfair burdens on particular faculty senators. The current language says the chairs of all those standing committees are also expected to serve on the Faculty Senate Steering Committee. And this actually places an unnecessary barrier on participation [inaudible]. Through conversation with the Steering Committee last year, it was determined that we add this clause that any chair of a standing committee can ask and has the right to ask to serve on this committee, but it is only if they so choose. This allow for – the hope is for – more people to stand up to chair our standing committees. In the past, this requirement has served as a barrier where folks have not been able to commit to two Wednesdays, or actually three Wednesdays, the Faculty Senate, the Steering Committee and that standing committee body. So, with that, I will entertain any questions, comments, concerns.

**E. McKee:** I don’t know how many we currently have on the Steering Committee. Is there any concern that we would have too few with this amendment? Is there any interest in opening to other faculty senators to fill that gap.

**B. Creed:** This is not reducing the number of seats. The intention by doing this is, if somebody doesn’t want to take that seat, we still staff up so there is representation across all colleges. So, it wouldn’t reduce the number of total seats. It would just allow us flexibility on who serves in those seats, and we ensure all colleges are represented to the best of our ability. Thank you.

As this is a first reading, no other action needs to be taken. If you have any comments, concerns or feedback, please do share them. We will be bringing this back at our next Faculty Senate meeting for a second reading, and that will include a vote of the Faculty Senate body. In order to have that amendment pass, we will need two-thirds of members present, and then out of that, we need two-thirds of those present voting in the affirmative to pass it. We’ll go over those rules next time, but do please try to come so we can hit quorum for that vote.

**XI. Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees**

A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – report

Tiffany Puckett, NIU representative to FAC-IBHE

**B. Creed:** That moves us on to reports from standing committees. The first one up is our Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE. Dr. Puckett has a report for us.

**T. Puckett:** Good afternoon. I’m Tiffany Puckett. I’m an associate professor of law in the College of Law, and I’m the new NIU representative for the Faculty Advisory Council to the Illinois Board of Higher Education. I just wanted to come and introduce myself and tell you about the charge of this committee. This is the position that was previously held by Linda Saborío, and she held it for a while, so I thank her for her service. I will be in this position this year.

Pretty much, the Faculty Advisory Committee to the Illinois Board of Higher Ed serves as an advisory committee. We talk about any issues that are significant and of interest, things that are on the IBHE agenda for that month. We also give position statements to the Illinois Board of Higher Ed when they request them or when it’s a particular issue that we would like to talk about. So, I will be representing Northern Illinois University on this committee.

This is a council that is represented by 36 members: 12 public universities, the 12 community colleges and then 12 private institution. When we meet, it’s typically a full-day meeting, and we break out in different working groups. Those working groups include mental health, prior learning assessment, higher ed funding, technology in higher education, early college and equity. Each college would host a particular meeting. This coming meeting is going to be hosted by the University of Illinois-Chicago on September 20. Also at this meeting, we break up at some point during the day in different caucuses. The public institutions will have a meeting to talk about issues of concerns for public institutions. The private institutions will have a conversation amongst themselves, and the community colleges will have a meeting together, as well.

I will report back monthly to Faculty Senate about what we talked about and things that are important that are going to be in front of the Illinois Board of Higher Ed. If you have any questions, you have access to my email. Thank you.

**B. Creed:** Thank you, Tiffany. Does anybody have any questions for Tiffany? Thank you.

B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report

Felicia Bohanon, Natasha Johnson, Ben Creed

Brad Cripe, Larissa Garcia, Tom Skuzinski

**B. Creed:** Next up is the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. I will kick it off, and then Felicia or others can add on if there’s stuff that I missed. For those who have not heard my schpiel before, I do highly recommend folks join those full Board of Trustee meeting days. You can do that virtually. There really is a lot of information that goes on. There are reports, presentations, discussions and important decisions that are core and fundamental to the health of the university that are discussed and made at those meetings. Even just reading through the reports gives you a sense of the types of topics. I would highly recommend folks take some time to do that.

The Board of Trustees had their committee meeting day on August 22. In that meeting, there were updates on the search for the College of Education. There was also an update that Provost Elish-Piper referenced about the HLC visit and our successful reaccreditation for ten years. The Board of Trustees received reports on state legislation and conditions in the state, including the recently approved state budget and what that means for NIU, how that affects our budget situation. We also got updates on the condition of public university funding and insights on what that might look like in the upcoming legislative year. And we also received information and updates from the federal government on legislation and conversation activities going on in D.C.

We were introduced to our new vice president of RIPS, Dr. Mocarski, who will be meeting with us and coming to us at our next Faculty Senate meeting in October. We received a presentation from faculty members, which is one of the kind of routines of the Board of Trustees, elevating the role faculty play on campus and the high-quality research that is going on across campus, so the Board of Trustees sees what’s going on and what faculty contribute.

At the Facilities, Audit and Compliance and Operations Committee, we heard reports related to NIU’s past audits, about the financial situation of the university, as well as good conversation about what that means for this upcoming year related to efforts on campus.

The Board did approve an initial investment in a campus energy improvement plan, which is expected to be revenue neutral and improve campus energy use. And that’s through a variety of strategies, including increased efficiency, installation of solar generation, water conservation efforts and other efforts related to that. This is an initial investment, and they’ll be considering a broader and bigger investment to campus to continue that work going forward at the full Board of Trustees meeting here in September.

Is there anything to add? They also talked about the value add of faculty emeritus. Tenure and promotion and things like that were also elevated for the Board to consider.

C. Baccalaureate Council – report

Alicia Schatteman, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs

**B. Creed:** The next two reports, we have no report from the Baccalaureate Council,

D. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – no report

Therese Arado, Chair

**B. Creed:** Or from the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee.

E. Social Justice Committee – report

**B. Creed:** I’ll be giving the Social Justice Committee report as that group has not yet met this year. But I’d like to just summarize last year’s efforts. Last year, the Social Justice Committee submitted recommendations related to improving the tenure and promotion bylaws, which were included as part of that package that was passed at Faculty Senate in February of 2024.

The Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee also worked throughout the year to identify priorities for this academic year, as well as going into the future, kind of a reset and a look forward about the work to be done in that group, to be handed off to the new Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee members for this year. As part of that effort, the Social Justice Committee worked with ADEI and the Provost’s Office to take a look at progress related to the initial recommendations from the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee’s draft report back in March of 2021. You’ll be able to find that report available. It gives an overview of the progress toward the eight recommendations plus the five priority recommendations. That will be posted on the Faculty Senate website. The conclusion of that report highlighted that substantive and significant progress has been made across campus; and while sometimes it may not seem that way, it may seem like it’s slow snail progress, there is actual progress that can be pointed to and efforts that have been taken to move campus forward along various vectors. However, there is still much work that remains to be done at NIU related to the recommendations as they were made in 2021, as well as those recommendations of this new work that needs to be done going forward. There is need to continue to address topics that have emerged as priority since that report in 2021, and there is a need to continue NIU’s progress toward being an inclusive innovative community that’s committed to excellence and opportunity for all of NIU.

The Social Justice Committee will begin meeting in two weeks, and we’ll start doing that work of the committee over the course of the academic year.

F. FS-UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – report

Emily McKee, FS/RGE Liaison/Spokesperson

1. Election of 2024-25 Hearing Panel – A Qualtrics ballot will be distributed to FS tenured/tenure-track voting members following the meeting.

**B. Creed:** That brings us to the Faculty Senate-UC Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. And we have a report from Emily McKee.

**E. McKee:** Hi everybody. I’m Emily McKee. I’m serving this year again as the Faculty Senate liaison for the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. There is one item that we’re going to be dealing with today, and that’s elections for the 2024-25 Hearing Panel. The Hearing Panel is used for appeals based on Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 10.3 regarding due process for faculty dismissal issues, and also for review of allegations regarding violation of academic freedom based on Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 14. For this election, we’re going to be using a Qualtrics ballot, which Pat will email out. There will be directions there, as well, but the ballot will contain the names of 34 tenured faculty members selected randomly, and you’ll be asked to vote for no more than 20. That’s it, thanks, everybody.

**B. Creed:** Thank you, Emily.

G. Student Government Association – no report

Ja’kobe Jones, SGA President

Manny Corpuz, Speaker of the Senate

**B. Creed:** We have no report from the Student Government Association.

H. Operating Staff Council – report

Natasha Johnson, President

**B. Creed:** Up next is the Operating Staff Council? Do we have a report? I didn’t see Natasha. I don’t think so. No report from Operating Staff Council.

I. Supportive Professional Staff Council – report

Felicia Bohanon, President

**B. Creed:** And no report from SPS Council either.

**XII. Information Items**

A. [Policy Library](https://www.niu.edu/policies/) – Comment on Proposed Policies

B. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/apc/index.shtml), Academic Planning Council

C. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/athletics/index.shtml), Athletic Board

D. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/bc/index.shtml), Baccalaureate Council

E. [Minutes,](http://www.niu.edu/board/meetings/index.shtml) Board of Trustees

F. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/ciuae/index.shtml), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience

G. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/gec/index.shtml), General Education Committee

H [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/gc/index.shtml), Graduate Council

I. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/hc/index.shtml), Honors Committee

J. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/operating-staff-council/meetings/index.shtml), Operating Staff Council

K. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/spsc/meetings/index.shtml), Supportive Professional Staff Council

L. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/uap/index.shtml), University Assessment Panel

M. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/ubc/index.shtml), University Benefits Committee

N. [Minutes](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/minutes/uciel/index.shtml), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure

O. [Minutes](http://www.facibhe.org/meetings/minutes.php), Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE

P. 2023-24 [Annual Reports](https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/annual-reports/index.shtml)

Q. 2024-25 FS meeting dates:

Sep 4, Oct 2, Oct 30, Nov 20, Jan 22, Feb 19, Mar 26, Apr 23

**B. Creed:** That brings us to informational items. You’ll see items A through O will be on there throughout the whole year. Those won’t change. You’ll see our annual reports are a hyperlink within the electronic packet that was provided to you. And then item Q, you see the Faculty Senate meeting dates. If you haven’t already put them in your calendars, please do so and make sure you attend.

**XIII. Adjournment**

**B. Creed:** And that will conclude our meeting and our agenda for today, which brings us to adjournment. Do I have a motion to adjourn the meeting? Pete. A second? Manny second. All those in favor of adjourning the meeting, please signify by saying aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**B. Creed:** Thank you.

Meeting adjourned at 3:53 p.m.