

# TRANSCRIPT

**University Council  
Wednesday, February 24, 2021, 3 p.m.  
Microsoft Teams Meeting  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, Illinois**

*All University Council members will receive an Outlook invitation to this Teams meeting. Others wishing to join the meeting, please send your request to Pat Erickson at [pje@niu.edu](mailto:pje@niu.edu).*

**VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:** Arado, B. Beyer, G. Beyer, Borg, Boughton, Brinkmann, Burton (for Cripe), Chinniah, Collins, Conderman, Costello, Doederlein, Douglass, Freeman, Garcia, Ingram, A. Johnson, N. Johnson, Martin, Monteiro, Nicholson, Olson, Royce, Scheibe, Stange, Teso-Warner, Vaughn, Weffer

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Cripe, Narayanan

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Barnhart, Blazey, Boston, Bryan, Edghill-Walden, Elish-Piper, Falkoff, Gregory, Heckmann, Hendricks, Henry, Hulseberg, Hunt, Jensen, Klaper, McEvoy, Meyer, Miner, Moyer, Oxenard, Rhode, Saborío, Thu, Wesener Michael, Williams, Wright, Yates

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

**B. Ingram:** Well, I have 3 o'clock on my computer, Kendall. Shall we get started?

**K. Thu:** Yes, let's do.

**B. Ingram:** President Freeman is occupied with another meeting, at least for the first part. So, I am going to call us to order, and President Freeman will be joining us later.

## **II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM**

**B. Ingram:** Pat, can you verify that we have a quorum?

**P. Erickson:** Hi there. Yes, I can verify that we have a quorum. And before we move on, I think I'll just take a moment to remind everyone how we're voting today. For our less controversial votes, such as adopting the agenda or approving the minutes, remember that we are no longer typing yes, yes, yes into the chat box. Instead, we are going to wait for Jeffrey, our chat monitor, to type three phrases into the chat box. For example, he might type agenda-yes, agenda-no, agenda-abstain. And once you see those three separate statements in the chat box, then we're asking you to hover your cursor over the statement that matches your vote and click your thumbs up icon. That will allow

Jeffry to much more easily count up the yeses, and we'll go from there. During the meeting, if we have more significant votes where we want to do anonymous voting, we will use a polling system, and we'll go into that if we need it later on. Thanks a lot.

**B. Ingram:** Thank you, Pat.

### **III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**B. Ingram:** Do we have a motion to adopt the agenda?

**L. Garcia:** So moved.

**B. Ingram:** And a second.

**T. Arado:** Second.

**B. Ingram:** Second, Arado. We're going to wait for Jeffry to do his thing. So, I saw 20 yeses; now I see 19. I believe that that would be a majority, is that correct, Pat?

**P. Erickson:** That's plenty, yes, thank you.

**B. Ingram:** All right, so we have adopted our agenda.

### **IV. APPROVAL OF THE JANUARY 27, 2021 MINUTES – Pages 3-5**

**B. Ingram:** We'll move to item IV, the approval of the January minutes. Do we have a motion?

**T. Arado:** So moved.

**C. Doederlein:** Second.

**B. Ingram:** Okay, I heard second, Doederlein. I'm not sure I heard first.

**P. Erickson:** I think the first was Therese Arado.

**B. Ingram:** Okay, terrific, thank you. Are there any corrections or discussion of the minutes? All right, well feel free to vote.

**J. Royce:** Pat, I'm sorry if I was out of turn there. But I think we vote and then we'd have discussion on any changes, is that right, or was I wrong?

**B. Ingram:** Well, we usually discuss any changes and then we would vote.

**P. Erickson:** That's correct.

**B. Ingram:** I didn't hear anyone raising their hand for any corrections or changes. But if there are, please type it into the chat box. So, we have approved the minutes of 17 aye, 1 nay and 1 abstain.

**P. Erickson:** Yes, I see that too. Looks good.

**B. Ingram:** All right.

## V. PUBLIC COMMENT

**B. Ingram:** Pat, have there been any timely requests for public comment?

**P. Erickson:** We have one request from Rod Moyer today.

**B. Ingram:** Great, Rod you have about five minutes to address the council.

**R. Moyer:** Greetings to this body. Thank you all for the amazing work that you do. In each of your industries, you are leaders, and you work to infuse knowledge and excellence into NIU students like myself. So much respect for many of you, such as Dr. Professor Karen Whedbee. I always talk about Dr. Professor Whedbee, because, to me, she is the epitome of being professorial. For those of you that may not know, I'm the dean's list Honors Program student that was accused of being an active campus shooter at NIU this past year in a racist, retaliatory attack emanating from the College of Education. To learn more and to view the pages that I'm going to show you today, you can visit [www.niukaren.com](http://www.niukaren.com). Now Dr. Professor Whedbee teaches the constitution, freedom of speech. And today I'm going to exemplify this ideal as I offer a response to College of Education Department of Curriculum and Instruction associate teacher, Corrine Wickens.

First, Wickens labeled me as crap, and then she questioned my ability to talk about social justice. But that's going to be another discussion for another day. Teacher Corrine stood before you at last month's University Council meeting and defamed my name. Now, all my deans and departmental leadership out there, let's start with this. One of your employees makes public comment and starts by introducing themselves by their title, their position, your college and your department. They are representing you. Now, let's review her comments. Again, she made these comments at the January 2021 University Council meeting. She surmised that they can't be racist, because they have Black friends or because they teach Black students. She said they teach developmental courses, which are 90 percent Black. She said that Michele Duffy was not attacking me because I'm a Black man. She painted a picture that Michele Duffy was protecting her classroom of 90 percent Black students from the dangerous threat, which was me. This is what Wickens told you. She said that Michele was protecting Black students and that two of these Black students actually wrote letters, fake letters, to support Michele Duffy.

Let's take a look at the evidence. I'm no mathematician. I do know that 90 percent is nine out of 10. I'm going to show you this video. This is a short snippet of the actual classroom that was recorded. And I don't know if anyone else sees nine out of 10. How about somebody find me one Black student in here? How about that? A thousand dollars to the charity of your choice. Show me one. She painted a picture of a classroom of 90 percent Black students was being protected by me, and two of those Black students actually wrote letters of support for her. And it's going to swing around

here. There's not one Black student in this classroom. Now, this is a snippet. I've got the whole video. Ninety percent Black, and two Black students wrote a letter. It's not true. And either Corrine Wickens knows that it's not true. Either she knows that it's not true, and she's willing to lie. Or she has no idea that it's not true, and she's still willing to assert and lend her credibility to something that is not true.

Why is that problematic? Because systems have historical credibility that many students will now. When a teacher or a professor says something, the assumption is [lost audio] not enter with that level playing field. Then when you have other professors that are willing to cooperate, it puts students in a disadvantageous situation. And let me show you why. Her actions, though shocking, actually speak to the heart of the issue. She said something that is not true, and there's no system in place to defend the student. The assumption is the professor is telling the truth, which empowers those that are willing to lie. And in most cases, the assumption is that the professor would not lie. But when they do, what recourse does a student have. What kind of investigating should be occurring? In her attempt to protect a colleague, she made up information, which further illustrates the danger. The danger is when you have another colleague that goes right for the defense of the system. And even more dangerous is when a body like this lets teacher Corrine off of the hook. This group think culture of let me not ask any questions or let me not say anything, you not asking questions allows ignorance and nonsense to reside within your house. And when Corrine spoke to you, she figured that you were not smart enough to see what's really going on, or you don't care enough to ask questions.

Now on a final note, one of the administrators of this very meeting advised Corrine that a public comment registrant, which is myself, would be speaking about her at the January 2021 meeting. And that's why she registered to speak and gave the comments that defamed my name. The integrity of any process is critically important, and I would ask, is this good policy. Is it good policy to look at public comment registrants and contact people that might be on the other side of their issue to inform them so that they can show up to speak? Is that good policy? Only the administrators of this process have access to that information. And its integrity should be maintained. I mean, should future public comment registrants expect that people will disagree with them and contact others to show up? Because that's what happened here. That's why teacher Corrine showed up, and that's not right.

So, I leave you today with three challenges. Number one, I challenge our leadership to ensure and protect the integrity of this process. Number two, I challenge this body not to be silent when someone lies to your face and attacks a student. And number three, I challenge teacher Corrine to come back to this body. You spoke loud and proud last month. From my experience, NIU College of Education and associate teacher Corrine will not have the integrity, fortitude or personal leadership to come back and address this body again. Until next time, remember, silence is complicit, and thank you for your service to Huskie nation.

**B. Ingram:** Thank you, Mr. Moyer.

**B. Ingram:** We'll move on to item VI, Items for University Council Consideration. And I think, at this point, I turn the gavel to you, is that correct?

**K. Thu:** Yes, thank you, Beth. Appreciate your filling in for Lisa. I'm sure she appreciates it too. Just a couple quick comments before we move on with the agenda. First of all, that anybody that signs up for public comment, there is no implicit or explicit expectation that their identity is going to be confidential or anonymous or whatever word you want to use. So, it's part of the public record, and anybody has access to it. I will also say that the application for public comment that we had for today's comment contained what I consider to be incendiary and offensive language. I don't want to take up the UC's time today with it, but the request for public comment is a part of the public record. And so, if anybody here would like to get a copy of it and read it and judge it for yourself, you're welcome to do so. So, contact either myself or Pat, and we're happy to share that with you.

**R. Moyer** [via chat]: <http://www.eydnfp.com/judge-judy.html>. Judge Judy. Congratulations on your new career! Today, you will present to be the ... [www.eydnfp.com](http://www.eydnfp.com)

Topic: To whomever advised NIU teacher Corrine Wickens of my public comment status for last month's UC meeting, go ahead and do it again, and let her know, that she will not have the Cahoones to come address this body again. Thank you for being the impetus for causing her to perjur herself and deliver defamatory comments about me. If you, whoever you are, had not lacked the integrity to maintain the private, confidential information that you are privvy to based on your work with this public body, if you had not done that, Wickens would not have done what she did, and I will tell you, you will learn how what she did was very helpful to me. Thank you for showing your priorities and commitments. Whoever you are, please inform her again, and let her know to check out the Judge Judy Game, where her defamatory comments can be viewed by the world!

<http://www.eydnfp.com/judge-judy.html> Judge Judy. Congratulations on your new career! Today, you will pretend to be the honorable Judge Judy. STORY NIU College of Education literacy & writing instructor Michele ...

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This is what I put on my comments to register to speak today, that Kendall Thu labeled incendiary. I stand by my comments. I find it incendiary to accuse a Black student of being an active campus shooter and the attack that I have faced. Protest is not always comfortable. Cahonees might be what Kendall Thu is referring to. I stand by my comments. Corrine stood before you and lied last month.

**K. Thu** [via chat]: Correct.

**R. Moyer** [via chat]: And let's see if she comes back to address the lies and attack that she delivered against myself. I was speaking to whomever advised Corrine that I was speaking. No one contacted me to say that she was speaking. I am calling that out, and I stand by that call out.

**B. Ingram** [via chat]: The chat is not an appropriate forum for extending public comment.

**R. Moyer** [via chat]: Beth Ingram, I was responding to Dr. Thu, and his comments about me, which was after the completion of my public comment. I have completed my response.

**B. Ingram** [via chat]: Thank you.

## **VI. ITEMS FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION**

- A. Campus Planning in Support of University Priorities  
John Heckmann  
Associate Vice President Facilities Management and Campus Services

**K. Thu:** So, with that, I want to go ahead and move on to Item VI in the agenda. We have with us today a guest, a return guest, actually, John Heckmann, who is the associate vice president for facilities management and campus services. And John gave a presentation before the Board of Trustees last Thursday that leadership and myself thought was very enlightening, and certainly something that the University Council should hear about. And in particular, it's important for University Council, because one of the functions of the University Council is as follows. "The University Council is to participate and advise the president in determining basic policies with respect to campus planning and building construction and utilization." As you can tell that comes right out of the bylaws. So, University Council has a responsibility to advise the president about campus buildings and utilization. And so, it's in that context that it's important to have John with us today. So, John, with that, I'm going to go ahead and turn the virtual podium over to you. And, again, welcome.

**J. Heckmann:** Thank you very much. If you don't mind, I'm going to bring up some slides here so you can follow along with my discussion. Give me a moment while I get my screen organized. Hopefully, you should see my slides now and see my mouse moving around here. I'm going to try to advance the slides on my own as I talk through these, but try to give virtually the same brief I gave to the board last Thursday.

So, good afternoon, and again, thank you for the opportunity, Kendall and everyone, for giving me this opportunity to pitch this topic to you. I think it is very important that you have an understanding of how we're trying to think through our campus planning and how it integrates with the university priorities overall. So, let me show you the agenda that I'm going to try to walk through this afternoon. And I'm going to start with a refresh, which should be a refresh for all of you, on what are all our strategic objectives are and specifically how it ties in with campus planning. Then I'm also going to touch on three major facility indicators, and this is something that the board had been a little bit more familiar with, because I annually present to the board a report on the overall campus health and conditions. So, this was an outtake of that. Some of you may not be as intimately familiar with that report, but, hopefully, you'll follow along with the major indicators that I'm showing here. And then stemming from that, I'm going to touch on three strategies that we could consider moving forward. How do we address the challenges that these facility indicators are indicating? And then I'll wrap up with some final thoughts on the last slide.

The strategic objectives, obviously, come from the university's 2020 strategic action planning framework and, specifically, the FY21 university goals. In both cases, I'm focusing here specifically on the resource development and fiscal sustainability category. As a subsection titles implied, these objectives talk about the need for the university to be both innovative and data informed in our quest for becoming more financially sustainable in the future.

**K. Thu:** John, I'm sorry to interrupt. Is there any way you can fill the screen with your slides. Right now, it's sort of minimized.

**J. Heckmann:** Is that right? Let me do better then. Does that help?

**K. Thu:** Yep, thank you.

**J. Heckmann:** Okay, sorry, let me see where I left off with my train of thought here. Specifically, if I repeat here, give me a little latitude. In both cases, I'm trying to focus on the subset, which is the resource development and fiscal sustainability subcategories or topics here. And in these areas, it talks about the university needing to be innovative and data informed in our quest for becoming financially sustainable. And specifically, the FY21 goals call out the need for being multi-year focused in planning, which is essential for facilities, as well as addressing our need for space in the overall fiscal footprint of the campus. And then also it targeted how we can become a little bit more integrative with the foundation in targeting fundraising for donations. So, this is really the overall basis for our discussion today and had been for last week with the board, since it defines the priority for the fiscal sustainability issues and our need to operate in a data-informed manner as we support the mission, vision and values of NIU.

So, with this thought of being data informed, let me transition to information that was compiled from the annual report on facility and infrastructure investment activities. And these are the major indications that the data would tell us about the overall condition of the campus. In this first indicator, this represents the balance between PMs and CRs, PMs representing preventive maintenance and CRs being corrective repairs. And if you're not familiar with these terms, I call out an example that PMs are like changing the oil in your car on a regular basis; whereas, corrective repairs might be repairs you might make to the engine, transmission or your brakes. Both contribute to how long your vehicle remains functional operational, but when repairs are required, they typically take priority over a PM for the car to be functional. The balance of this effort between these two types of activities for facilities indicates the over health of our facilities.

In a well-maintained environment and represented on the right side of this chart here, we can spend a predominant amount of our time on PMs to ensure a building can last for its intended life. In our resource constrained environment, represented on the left, you can see the actual years and the actual results of how we spend our time. We have to spend an inordinate amount of time on corrective repairs just to keep a building functioning. And this is, typically, due to the fact that we have a lack of major repair investments in the past, which typically overhaul building systems at the end of the component's life. As an example, a roof might have an expected life of 20 to 25 years, but we may find ourselves continuing to spot repair a 30- or 40-year-old roof.

The next major indicator of facility health is the level of sustainment investment made. And in this case, I'm defining the term, sustainment, as the combination of maintenance and repair made in a facility to address deterioration. For this situation, I used an investment model, which approximates the investment required to keep pace with deterioration. And that's estimated at two percent of the plant replacement value. That's represented by the term, PRV, on the slide here. NIU, like a lot of other universities in the state, has experienced decades of underinvesting by only being able to

achieve about 25 percent of this investment model. And the shortfall actually contributes to the deferred maintenance that we cannot address.

On the next indicator, the third major indicator here is age, building age. The campus has reached a point where a majority of the buildings are greater than 50 years of age. And, unless buildings have been significantly renovated, buildings of this age will typically be lacking in modernization improvements, which affect the style, the configuration and the over all efficiency of building systems. Additionally, older buildings are typically going to experience a higher rate of deterioration, so this represents a dual investment challenge for both modernization and repairs.

The combination of these three indicators clearly point to a vulnerability with our campus assets. To address these challenges, three strategies might come to mind. The first is to address a level of investment or an increased level of investment. And this can be more easily said than done, given the history of our investments over the past couple of decades that I've shown. The second possible strategy would be to change the demand. In other words, how can we make the campus more affordable. And then lastly is to consider an approach, which integrates the first two by, when we have investment opportunities, how can we focus that investment to create an opportunity to reshape the campus to make it more affordable.

Let me talk through these three different strategies in a little bit more detail. This strategy to increase investment levels is by no means new. NIU has been explaining this underinvestment challenge for years and advocating this need to the state political leadership. Fortunately, through the Rebuild Illinois initiative, there is a commitment for additional funding in both capital and capital renewal programs. And that magnitude of this current commitment will stop the growth in deferred deficiencies and start to put the campus back on track for improved overall health. The uncertainty that comes with this is the risk that continues to be when the funds will be realized from the tax revenues and what the consistency of this investment will be well past this initial commitment. So, it cannot be a strategy that we can totally bank on.

The next strategy, as I mentioned earlier, would be to change the demand. And put in other words, if you think about the activity and the population on campus, it's changed over the decades. Does the current collection of facilities meet the needs of the university? In some cases, it does not. And this is already playing out with the identification of some surplus properties that have been identified, and we're pursuing the possible sale of these properties. In other cases, how do we start to re-envision how the space is used and how might this systematically change the footprint of the campus to not only be more useful, but also be more affordable by eliminating the maintenance demands for spaces that are no longer important to the university. This would allow for more resources to go toward other priorities, of course. If there's one good thing that has come from the pandemic, I would say it would be how we've learned how not to be dependent on our campus. We have learned that there are more options available, and we do not have to be constrained by our existing spaces. So, how might we systematically start to reshape our need for classrooms, labs, student spaces, office spaces, etc., given the lessons from this past year?

This third strategy is the realization that integrating the first two options may be necessary and useful to create opportunities for reshaping the campus footprint to better serve the university mission. Every capital investment should be viewed as an opportunity to create spaces the

university needs now and for the future. And this includes being financially sustainable in the future by creating a more affordable campus. An example of this integrated approach will be playing out with the Health IT Center project. This project is intended to be positioned at the former residential hall site, the Lincoln site. And this project will co-locate all the health programs from across the campus. In essence, this one project has the potential to reshape the campus footprint through a demolition of surplus structures and backfilling other buildings, which could lead to the opportunity to further consolidate the campus.

I would argue that all three of the strategy approaches I mentioned need to be part of our plan moving forward, since we can't fully depend on any one of these strategies to fully address our challenge. We need to commit to strive for increased investment in our physical assets. We also need to change our demand on how we think about our physical spaces. And specifically, how do we start to target investments to create opportunities to reshape the campus.

So, let me wrap up on this last slide and leave you with a few thoughts that may help shape our thinking moving forward. First, we need to recognize this challenge. Simply put, we've got to view that our spaces are not free. They are costly, not only to build, but to also to sustain for the long term. Unfortunately, due to underinvesting in the past, we're starting at a disadvantage, and we have a growing demand for repairs and modernization in our future. To maximize those future investments that are necessary, we need to change our mindsets and paradigms for how we think about space. I think everyone in this group would agree that we want to be sustainable. And this can mean being financially sustainable, remaining affordable in the future, as well as being environmentally sustainable. Environmental sustainability might drive thoughts of recycling and energy conservation, but it also could mean just using less. There's even a slogan in the sustainability world proclaiming that we need to use less and share more, which I think applies very well when you think about spaces. As we reevaluate our need for space, we should be thinking along the terms of using less, which will translate into having less to build and having less to maintain and to heat and to cool. Then for the spaces that we actually need to keep, how might we share them more so that we can maximize our investments in those spaces? This might mean maximizing how we use our classrooms and labs, and considering how we might diminish use of spaces used for lower priorities, such as storage.

And finally, this issue requires a long-term perspective, where we can systematically develop stabilized regular investments for responsibly sustaining the spaces that we need. And then target investments, which can create opportunities to incrementally reshape our campus for the future. This is how we can, not only better maintain the spaces we need, but also make the overall campus more affordable in the long run.

So, I hope this discussion has taken what, undoubtedly, is for many people a very complicated issue and made it a bit more understandable. I'll stop with that and see if there's any questions or comments from this group. Thank you very much.

**K. Thu:** Thank you, John. I appreciate it. This is the second time I've heard it, and I've learned something both times. With that, I'll open it up for questions. Go ahead, James.

**J. Burton:** Yes, thanks for the presentation. I'm not normally a part of the University Council. I'm just sitting in for a colleague today, but I'm glad I got to see your presentation. My question is this: Are you and the other people responsible for this also looking at ways that we can turn our campus into having more green spaces with all this going on as well? Or does that not fall within your jurisdiction? Thank you.

**J. Heckmann:** Good question. And green space is, again, one of those sustainability aspects that every campus needs to consider how does that fold in to make for an overall better campus. My brief here today was more about buildings and the cost that comes with that. And this [no audio].

**K. Thu:** You lost your sound, John.

**J. Heckmann:** Sorry, I didn't realize I was on mute there. I had some brilliant comments there that were totally lost to the world. Good question and good comment. And I think what I wanted to say there was, yes, what you're highlighting is another sustainability issue that needs to be integrated into an overall campus planning effort. What I'm addressing here today is more about the building footprint and the assets more so than the green space. But it goes hand in hand, because if you reshape the campus to be more affordable in the future, you're probably diminishing or reducing the amount of building space that you have. And it will create an opportunity for more green space. So, yes, I think they go hand in hand. And it will have to be an integrated approach going forward. I hope that made some sense.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, John. We have a question in the chat box first, and then, Greg, we'll turn it over to you. Janet Olson is asking: Can you give a timeline for the Health IT building?

**J. Heckmann:** Sorry. That's a pretty specific question, and it's always something we have to take with a grain of salt. Why? Because we're dealing with state funding, and we know what the state is going through with its challenges with the pandemic and everything else. So, we have to be understanding of that situation. Right now, we have funding from the state that's being orchestrated by the Capital Development Board for the planning of the project. So, that's going to help us figure out what do we want this project to be and start to get into the design aspects of the project. When the funds will come for the actual construction, we'll have to see how that plays out with the revenue sources that are always a challenge with state funding.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, John. We have a question from Greg Beyer and then Tamara. And then I think we're going to wrap things up. And then I have sort of a wrap up question for you, as well. So, Greg?

**K. Thu** [via chat]: Sorry, Terry, thought you were Tamara. We'll turn to your question next.

**D. Douglass** [via chat]: I can say, as a student and a student representative, that Lincoln standing vacant is something that students are aware of and concerned about – this is great news!

**K. Thu** [via chat]: Thanks, Dallas, very important to know.

**G. Beyer:** Thanks, Kendall. Thank you, John, for your presentation. I'm serving on the campus-wide committee that's actually brainstorming ideas for possible utilizations and community impact for the Health IT building. One thing we haven't talked about is, actually, some of the more practical considerations around the building, itself. And you mentioned in today's presentation the Lincoln complex site that we'll be demolishing some buildings there and reutilizing that space. That's exciting news to me, and I appreciate you mentioning that. A quick Google search of NIU Lincoln complex doesn't reveal much to me, so I was just hoping you might be able to give us a little more detail. What does that mean to you? Or, what does that mean to the university? Where is the Lincoln complex site.

**J. Heckmann:** Oh, okay, yes. I guess I took that for granted that people understood where the former Lincoln residential hall was. It's just opposite, to the north of, the Rec Center. And so former residential hall site, shut down a number of years ago, its sister complex, the Douglas residential hall got demolished a number of years ago and allowed for the opportunity for Lucinda to go all the way straight through the campus there. So, this was one complex that there was not a need for residential student housing, and it was probably the oldest complex to take offline. And so, it provides a good location, I think, for this current project, which, hopefully, your planning group will verify as we go through the rest of the process. Hopefully, that described it.

**G. Beyer:** Thank you.

**K. Thu:** I remember being housed in the Stevens Building as a department and watching the Lincoln building go down. It was kind of fun. So, we have a final question from our colleague, Terry Borg. He's asking: What size student population are you assuming in your campus footprint?

**J. Heckmann:** Well, I make very few assumptions, because I know that's a moving target. We have to consider something, and knowing that our student population is going to be around that 17,000 is what I have in my head figure, that's our current mark. Now, will it grow? Will it shrink? I think that's something we have to be open to. And how do we adjust going into the future? So, it's not currently, the 25,000 mark of what we may have hoped for before. It's being framed around the Strategic Enrollment Plan, and that's the framework that we're also trying to integrate with.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, John. Just sort of one final question: What would be most beneficial to you from this group that might help you in your planning process and the planning of others? What would you like to hear from us in particular?

**J. Heckmann:** That's a very good question and thank you for that. This is going to be a learning process for us. I think the whole advent of the pandemic has caused a lot of universities to start to rethink their entire idea of what space is and how space should be used and what you need for space. And I think that's something I need everyone to start to embrace. What has the pandemic brought to our realization of how we use space, how we need to operate and how might we be able to use less going forward. If there's anything my brief should have indicated to you, it would be – I didn't blatantly say this but – we're struggling to afford the campus that we have. So, how do we start to reshape a campus for the future that will be affordable, and how does that fit in with how we're learning about things from the pandemic? So, there's where I'd like you to think about: How does this affect how you're operating now, how you have been? And for the future, what's that

future student, what's that future faculty member? This is going to be something that's going to take decades to play out. It's not going to change overnight. It's not going to change by next year. But systematically, we have to start reshaping the campus to be more affordable in the future and also meet our mission, whatever that looks like. So, hopefully, that gives you something to chew on. It's a challenge that we all need to embrace.

**N. Johnson** [via chat]: Yes, like looking at what positions can stay remote.

**K. Thu:** Yes, it's helpful. Thank you very much, John. I appreciate your time and attention and wish you the very best of luck. And certainly, we will provide you with whatever feedback we can from University Council going forward.

**J. Heckmann:** Very good. Thank you all. Thanks for the time.

**K. Thu:** Thank you.

**M. Stange** [via chat]: Thank you.

**N. Johnson** [via chat]: Thanks.

**T. Boston** [via chat]: Thank you.

## **VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

**K. Thu:** With that, we're going to move on in the agenda. As you can tell, those of you who are seasoned UC members, you can tell that the agenda doesn't look like it normally does. So, we're going to go to the consent agenda. And, Pat, we have no consent agenda, correct?

**P. Erickson:** That's correct.

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

### **A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – Linda Saborío – report**

**K. Thu:** Let's move on to Roman numeral VIII, Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees, which is usually toward the end. And the reason we switched things up is to accommodate President Freeman's schedule. And hopefully, she will be able to join us shortly. So, first we'll start off with the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE. Linda, are you with us? And do you want to give us a report?

**L. Saborío:** Yes, I am here. Good afternoon, everyone. I've asked Pat to prepare three documents that she's going to share with you today. The first one – and there it is – is a draft as of January 31, the IBHE Strategic Plan. This document is not available on the [Faculty Senate FAC-IBHE website](#). I asked Pat not to upload it there, because it is a working draft. But it is available for you to view on the IBHE website. And again, it's [ibhe.org](#). So that's the first document I wanted to share with you and let you know that the draft is available.

The second document – there we go – this is a summary of the FAC recommendations for the strategic plan. This document is really a culmination of items that we on the FAC have been working on over the past few years. And it includes key critical issues that we believe need to be addressed in the plan. It may not necessarily be in the plan right now. So, this document has been posted to the [Faculty Senate FAC-IBHE web page](#), and please feel free to take a look at it and send me your suggestions and comments. I'd be more than happy to get some suggestions and comments from my fellow colleagues.

And then we have the final item. It's hot off the press, there it is. This third item was actually drafted by the FAC Public University Caucus Group, of which I'm a member. It includes one member from each of the 12 public universities. And in this document, we highlight specific recommendations for supporting scholarship and research in the strategic plan. This document is also available on the [Faculty Senate FAC-IBHE web page](#). Feel free to send me your suggestions, comments, concerns. Or you can email them directly to the strategic plan. They have an email. It's [strategicplan@ibhe.org](mailto:strategicplan@ibhe.org).

And that was a very brief report today from me. But if you do have a moment to view these documents and provide me with feedback, I would greatly appreciate it. Thank you.

**K. Thu:** Thank you, Linda. And I would add that the Faculty Senate, at its last meeting, voted to re-up Linda's term as our representative for the FAC to the IBHE. We're very pleased that she is willing to continue. And not only do we recognize her good work, but the committee that she works with at the IBHE also recognizes it, as well. So, thanks, Linda, for your outstanding work.

**L. Saborío:** Thank you very much. Yes, you are stuck with me for a few more years, aren't you, Kendall.

**K. Thu:** And again, as I said to you before, we look forward to more stories from the road.

**L. Saborío:** The wonderful state of Illinois – it's a lot larger than you think.

**K. Thu:** Thank you.

**L. Saborío:** Thank you.

**J. Olson** [via chat]: Thank you, Linda.

B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report  
Natasha Johnson, Catherine Doederlein, Kendall Thu  
Katy Jaekel, Sarah Marsh, Greg Beyer

**K. Thu:** Next we have the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees report. I have to admit that I don't have a particular report from the Board of Trustees meeting, which took place last Thursday. A couple of items from my memory is that the budget prospect, I guess, how to describe it: It's not as bad as it could be. I know that's not entirely heartening. So, things are

looking a little better. Some of you probably have heard that the governor's proposal for higher education is flat. But, of course, what the governor proposes and what the legislature passes are two different things. Also, the governor's proposal for MAP funding was increased. I can't remember the exact amount. Maybe, Beth, if you remember. And so that's good news.

**N. Johnson** [via chat]: Right, overall, it is better than expected.

**K. Thu:** A flat budget for NIU I take as good news. And, of course, we're still waiting on President Biden's COVID relief bill in the federal government, which, as it currently stands, would provide some assistance to state and local government, as well as universities. But, as we all know, counting on federal relief is a sort of an exercise in finding our way out of a labyrinth. But I think there's some reason for optimism that something will come out of that.

I don't have any other items from the board meeting to share, but I would invite my colleagues on the University Advisory Committee to shore up my weak memory about what went on. Or maybe, Beth, if you'd like to add to it.

**B. Ingram:** I guess the only thing that I would add is that this was the meeting in which we do the sabbatical report.

**K. Thu:** Oh, that's right, I'm sorry.

**B. Ingram:** We approve sabbaticals for next year, which I think are critical to the research and artistic mission of NIU. And the board is very supportive of the work that the faculty do in that regard. And we had an absolutely spectacular presentation from Orna Arania. If you have a chance to listen to the recording, I would highly suggest going back. It's beautiful.

Professor Arania is an opera singer. And as a highlight of the Board of Trustees meeting, and I'm glad you reminded me of it, she sang for us. Obviously, it wasn't as memorable as it should have been for me, but it was actually quite memorable. And if you have a chance to go back and go through the board minutes with an eye toward her singing, it's well worth it. It was just spectacular. Any of the other University Advisory Committee members want to report anything out from the Board of Trustees meeting. Okay, again, as always, you can go back to the Board of Trustees record on their website to get more details. And it was a packed meeting last week.

C. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – no report  
Therese Arado, Chair

**K. Thu:** All right, let's move on. Therese Arado has no report from the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee.

- D. Student Government Association – report  
Antonio Johnson, President  
Bradley Beyer, Speaker of the Senate

**K. Thu:** So, we'll move to the Student Government Association report. Antonio and Brad. Antonio, do you want to go first.

**A. Johnson:** Sure, thank you, Kendall. Excuse my camera, everyone. I'm having a few difficulties. But I have a short report today. Our elections are moving very fast, and we're still looking for candidates. So, if anyone knows anyone who is interested in running for any SGA position, senate or the SGA executive branch, please tell them to reach out to myself or our election commissioner, Cassandra Kamp. I will drop our emails in the chat. And I'll turn it over to Brad Beyer. Thank you.

**A. Johnson** [via chat]: [AJohnson51@niu.edu](mailto:AJohnson51@niu.edu). Election commissioner [Ckamp1@niu.edu](mailto:Ckamp1@niu.edu).

**B. Beyer:** Thanks, Antonio. Pat, did you want to share your screen.

**P. Erickson:** Sure, I'm going to do that right now.

**B. Beyer:** Okay, cool, thank you. It's good to see everyone again. I'm not going to go into a whole lot of detail on this, because as you all know, I spent last University Council meeting really walking council members through the proposed revision to the Student Senate. And so, after a lot of collaboration and deliberation and going back and forth with the key people around the university, I'm happy to say that this did officially pass at the end of January. I was featured in a really nice NIU Today article about it. And so, we're all pretty excited about this being the new model for the Student Senate going forward. And so, again, ever since I joined UC, coming up on almost a year in University Council, and I was sort of here for the end of all the shared governance reforms that happened last spring. And so seeing this all through, the higher shared governance reforms and then the reforms within the Student Senate, so I'm very excited to say that this is something that we'll be going forward with. And, like Antonio mentioned, we're really working through elections and trying to get the word out about SGA and the involvement opportunities to really participate in the shared governance process of the university. I also asked Pat to distribute, and when she sends the follow-up email, she'll attach the flyer. If you are in frequent contact with students and want to help us get the word out, that would be appreciated.

Aside from elections and shared governance reform, we're slowly doing typical SGA stuff of trying to get the budget ready for next year and working with student organizations and all that sort. So, a pretty brief report from me today, but I did want to say that this is pretty good news. And I, for one, am pretty excited about it. So, I want to say a big thank you to everyone that helped me with this process. I think that's it for me.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, Brad. And I have to say, when you say, "aside from changing the governance structure of SGA and elections," it sounds as though they are trivial tasks. They're not. You and Antonio deserve a lot of credit for the changes that you've made and the elections. Changing the structure of any governance structure is never easy. So, as I said at the FS meeting, you deserve a lot of credit for what you've done. And I appreciate the fact that you've used a graphic from our

shared governance structure changes in Faculty Senate and University Council. That's called recycling, and it's good for the sustainability of the campus. Good work.

**B. Beyer:** Thank you. And I will say, with permission, I borrowed, with permission.

**K. Thu:** Yes, you absolutely did, absolutely. Thank you, Brad. Thank you, Antonio.

E. Operating Staff Council – Natasha Johnson, President – report

**K. Thu:** Natasha just sent a message in the chat box that she has no report from Operating Staff Council.

F. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Catherine Doederlein, President – report

**K. Thu:** So, we'll move on to Supportive Professional Staff Council. Cathy, do you have a report for us?

**C. Doederlein:** Sure, just a brief update from our world. We have completed our award selection process, so we're going to be getting in touch with President Freeman to notify her of who has been selected and then, hopefully, work to surprise the recipients. So, I won't share any details now, but we're excited to be able to honor our colleagues for their hard work.

**L. Freeman** [via chat]: I can't wait to surprise the award winners!

**C. Doederlein:** I also want to just share that we'll begin our election process soon. And with more and more people shifting from SPS to Civil Service, which will continue over time, it becomes harder to find good representation of our body of constituents. So, just really encourage, if you have Supportive Professional Staff colleagues that you think might want to get involved in shared governance, please encourage them to self-nominate or nominate them as you see fit, just so we can have representation of the Supportive Professional Staff on campus. It's a really great way to get engaged and serve. I appreciate your help in spreading the word as that election process will be starting soon. Thank you.

**K. Thu:** Thank you, Cathy. Appreciate it, as always.

## **IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**K. Thu:** Let's move on to Roman numeral IX, Unfinished Business. Pat, I understand we have no unfinished business.

**P. Erickson:** That's correct.

## **X. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Proposed amendment to NIU Constitution, Article 6.1.1,  
Definition of University Faculty – Pages 6-7

## FIRST READING

**K. Thu:** Roman numeral X, and again, this is a different order than we usually proceed through, so bear with us. We have two items under new business. The first one is a proposed amendment to the NIU Constitution, Article 6.1.1. It's a first reading of the definition of university faculty. And so by way of background, starting last fall, I charged the Faculty Senate [Faculty] Rights and Responsibilities Committee to help make consistent our use of the term in our faculty in our bylaws and in our constitution. And so, the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee, chaired by Peter Chomentowski, came up with a draft based upon vetting it with a number of stakeholder groups on campus, as well as looking at some benchmarks at other institutions.

In January, we presented a draft to the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate said to myself and Peter Chomentowski, "You have some more homework to do. Go back and do some more homework." And so, we did that. We vetted it with additional stakeholder groups on campus, including instructors, including Jerry Blazey's office, including help and input from Beth Ingram, our provost. And so, we came to a point where Faculty Senate was reasonably satisfied with what we'd come up with. We have five categories of faculty. And if you want to scroll up, Pat. So, the definition of faculty falls into five categories. We have tenure track faculty. We have instructional faculty. We have clinical faculty. And then the fourth category is research faculty. And then we have sort of a catch-all. And I want to thank Beth for helping articulate this last category, limited-term faculty. As Ferald Bryan would say about a first reading, this is simply to let you know that this is in the works.

**F. Bryan** [via chat]: Thanks, Kendall. The Robert's language is "previous notice" that a big change is coming.

**K. Thu:** The Faculty Senate passed this policy as a proposal to University Council, because the Faculty Senate does not have the power to propose changes in the constitution. But rather, they're sending a message to University Council that Faculty Senate is in favor of moving ahead with this. So, I wanted to bring this to your attention as a first reading, and it does not involve a vote. And so, if you have any comments or questions about this between now and the March meeting, is when we'd like to hear from you. We've tried as best we can to make sure that the categories are tight and accurate and as inclusive as possible. And in many respects, it's absolutely impossible to create a perfect set of definitions. We did go back and take a look at some categories of faculty that we thought was not included, things like an applied artist in the School of Music. Turns out that's captured in the instructors' faculty category. And there was one other that I can't remember that I checked with Laurie Elish-Piper in the College of Education. It turns out that that category was also captured.

So, please take time to take a look at this. Defining who faculty are is important for all of us, and we want to make sure that we have done the right job. Also I will mention that I've been in touch with the Board of Trustees. They are in the process of revising their own regulations and bylaws, and I want to make sure that whatever we come up with in terms of our definition of faculty is consistent with the definition of faculty in the Board of Trustees. So, with that, are there any questions based upon what you've seen thus far. I don't want to read through each of the definitions, because it just takes too much time, and it's hard to wordsmith by a large committee like this. But I want to make sure that you have enough time between now and March in the second reading to get back to

myself. Any questions about the content or the process? Let me just say one more word about the process. If the University Council approves this at a second meeting in March, then, because it's a constitutional amendment, then it will go before the faculty as a referendum. And then, if the faculty approve the referendum, then it goes before the Board of Trustees for final approval, because it is a change to the constitution. So, with that, and since I'm out of breath, any questions or comments about what you see here, or the process? Somebody has a comment in the chat box. Jeffry, can you help me out?

**J. Royce:** Kendall, that was a comment by Linda. She asks: Should the first line under "Tenure Track Faculty" be: The tenure track faculty of the university includes (for consistency with other definitions).

**K. Thu:** Ah, good point, because that's the way we lead off each of the other sections. Yes, thank you. I'm not taking notes, but I'm going to count on Pat to help me keep track.

**J. Royce:** The chat box has a long memory, Kendall.

**K. Thu:** Yes, it does, I oftentimes go back and look at it. Thank you.

**P. Erickson:** Yes, sorry, Kendall, I was having trouble unmuting. But yes, we've got the note on that.

**K. Thu:** Okay, thank you. Other on-the-spot comments or questions? Okay, if not, then please feel free to contact me. If I can't answer your question, then I will consult with Peter Chomentowski, who is sort of the co-conspirator in this effort. Thank you very much.

B. Approval of the Chief Human Resource Officer Search Committee structure –  
Page 8

**K. Thu:** With that, we have another new business item, which is the approval of the Chief Human Resource Officer Search Committee structure. This is under the purview of UC. Obviously, we are embarking on a process to hire a new human resource officer, and here is the list of committee members. If you scroll down, you'll see that we have a Faculty Senate representative here somewhere.

**L. Freeman:** It's at the top, Kendall.

**K. Thu:** I can't see it.

**L. Freeman:** It says faculty member selected by Faculty Senate as the second line at the top.

**K. Thu:** Oh, right, got it. We don't have names here, though.

**L. Freeman:** The way we've done this in the past for administrative committees – the general counsel, I think, was the most recent one – is the way the university's governing documents read is that the University Council approves the structure of the committee, but doesn't approve,

necessarily, the individuals on the committee. So, we're putting forward here the structure. I did not write on this that Provost Ingram would actually be chairing this committee on my behalf, but she will be. And there is reference to a planning committee. In this particular case, Provost Ingram convened a small group of individuals to talk about when we wanted to launch the CHRO search, given the COVID condition and the fact that this is the type of position that can generally be hired on a non-academic time scale more quickly. And so, we're starting right now, but we know that it may not be completely resolved by the end of the year. But that committee also helped look at a first draft of the position description, which will then be passed on to the search committee for more feedback. And they also made recommendations regarding the structure of the search committee, looking back on previous search committees. And just so everybody knows, that planning committee that Provost Ingram convened included Lisa Miner from Institutional Communications, Brian Smith from the Employee Assistance Program, Bill Pitney from the College of Education, Natasha Johnson from Rec, Athletics, also from the Operating Staff Council. So, those are the folks who made recommendations for the structure of the committee and, in some cases, made suggestions to me regarding individuals who they thought would be good additions.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, Lisa. And welcome to the UC. I'll entertain a motion to approve.

**T. Arado:** So moved.

**K. Thu:** Do we have a second?

**L. Garcia:** Second.

**K. Thu:** Any discussion.

**D. Douglass** [via chat]: Dr. Freeman, will you still be making these selections even if you aren't chairing the committee?

**K. Thu:** All right, seeing none, we do need to have a vote tally on this one, Pat, I think, so we have a record of it. So, if you will set up the polling. While we're doing that, I had something else in my head that I was going to share, but it's completely alluded me now.

**L. Freeman:** Dallas asked a question. Dallas, I will be making those selections, because I am the hiring official. But I will take heavily into account the recommendations of the planning committee.

**D. Douglass:** Thank you.

**K. Thu:** Okay, it looks like Pat has the voting system in the chat box.

**P. Erickson:** Yes, and maybe just a quick rundown here, a refresher. You can access – if you are a voting member, we had that slide up at the beginning of the meeting – you can access the link. And 1 = yes, 2 = no, 3 = abstain. And you can ignore the other numbers. And there's no need to click a submit button, as I see a lot of you, obviously, know as those votes are coming in. You just click your answer and it comes right into the poll. I think everybody can see that, right?

**K. Thu:** Yes. I think this system works much better than Qualtrics. I'm glad we've turned to it. You seem to be able to get it up quite quickly. The results are almost instantaneous. And it's anonymous. So, I'm kind of pleased with this approach.

**P. Erickson:** We have more than enough to pass this. It's a simple majority. We have 29 members in University Council, so more than enough there to pass this.

**K. Thu:** Okay, thanks everyone, and thanks, Pat.

Yes – 22

No – 0

Abstain – 0

## **XI. NIU PRESIDENT LISA FREEMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**K. Thu:** So, with that, we have what is an unusual last item on the UC agenda, which is NIU President Lisa Freeman's announcements, which as you know, are usually up front. But because of her earlier meeting, she was only able to join us later in the UC meeting. But with that, Lisa, I'm going to turn it over to you.

**L. Freeman:** Thanks, Kendall. And I really appreciate that. I don't have a lot of announcements. You all probably saw that a budget message went out to the university community earlier this week, and I'd be happy to take questions about that. I think everyone knows that we're busy planning for the fall, that we're very, very much planning for next fall to look more like fall of '19 than fall of '20. And we're all excited about that.

I think I will just share one really nice thing that I got to do this week. And that is, I got to make zoom calls to the 14 individuals who were offered presidential scholarships by the university. Anne Hardy did a little bit of tricksterism with them and said the university had some follow-up questions. And then we got on zoom, and she quickly turned it over to me. And I introduced myself as president, said I was very impressed with their credentials, and I wasn't the only one who was impressed, and on behalf of the committee, I was making the offer. Giving awards and recognizing people and saying thank you is one of the great joys of my job. And I do love doing our faculty and staff award announcements. But this might have been the best thing I've done ever since being president, just giving students that information that will change their lives and watching their reactions. So, I think we have a ton to be proud of. The new presidential scholarship selection process resulted in an incredible pool of young people, and I think they're all going to be great Huskies.

So with that, Kendall, I'm just going to ask if there are any questions regarding the budget message. And otherwise, we can wrap our business.

**K. Thu:** Any questions for President Freeman? I've seen that the prospects for fall enrollment are encouraging. Is that accurate?

**L. Freeman:** I'm going to channel Vice President Sol Jensen here for a minute and say, we're

always very cautious about where we get excited in an enrollment cycle, because there's a whole lot that still has to happen between now and when we do the 10-day count in the fall. But with that said, we are up in both applications and admits. And it's better to be up than down. And now everybody in Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communication is working very hard to make sure we yield the students that we've accepted, that they see NIU as a great place for them to come and get an education, that we're addressing any questions and concerns that students have about what next fall will look like, making sure they have the appropriate information regarding financial aid. And we continue to feel really good. I think you've probably seen the press that we have an incredible number of students who are looking at us through the Rockford Promise relationship. And overall right now, we're as optimistic as we ever get, knowing that that's a cautious optimism, and there's still a lot of work for us to do to make sure that we bring in a terrific class of Huskies in the fall at the numbers that we'd like to target.

**K. Thu:** Well, spring is around the corner, so hope springs eternal, so you can be cautiously optimistic. I'll be even more optimistic. I look forward to seeing things shake out in the spring, including more awards going out, warmer weather, sunshine. And as I've told several people, I've deluded myself into thinking we'll get no more snow, but that's probably not likely. Thank you, President Freeman. Any other questions for President Freeman?

## **XII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. [Policy Library](#) – Comment on Proposed Policies (right-hand column on web page)
- B. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- C. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- D. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- E. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- F. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- G. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- H. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- J. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- Q. UC 2020-21 dates: Sep 9, Oct 7, Nov 4, Dec 2, Jan 27, Feb 24, Mar 31, Apr 28  
All 2020-21 UC meetings will be held via Microsoft Teams. The Teams meeting link and the agendas will typically be sent via email on the Friday preceding the UC meeting.

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

**K. Thu:** If not, I will entertain a motion to adjourn.

**T. Arado:** So moved.

**K. Thu:** Thanks, Therese. Do we have a second.

**B. Beyer:** Second.

**K. Thu:** Then we're going to vote in the chat box with Jeffry's help. And while he's doing that, I want to thank everybody for your attendance and a reminder that only have two more UC meetings left, one in March and one in April. And if you do have agenda items, please bring those to our attention. We do expect to have a budget presentation in March, but the details are forthcoming. It looks like we have plenty of ayes to adjourn, two nays. Apparently, they want to stay online; that's fine. Thank you, everybody. Have a great day and great rest of the week.

Meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.