

TRANSCRIPT

**University Council
Wednesday, December 2, 2020, 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.

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

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: A. Johnson

OTHERS PRESENT: Barnhart, Blazey, Boston, Bryan, Douglass, Edghill-Walden, Falkoff, Frazier, Hendricks, Klaper, McCord, McEvoy, Miner, Rhode, Saborío, Skarbinski, Thu, Wesener Michael

I. CALL TO ORDER

L. Freeman: I'm going to call us to order.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

L. Freeman: And I'm going to immediately ask Pat to verify quorum and perhaps give us some updated instructions on how we express our votes on certain matters. Pat?

P. Erickson: Thank you, President Freeman. We do have a quorum, and I do want to talk just briefly about some new approaches we're going to take with voting this afternoon. For our adopting the agenda and our approving the minutes, we found that, as you've probably seen also, it becomes a little bit cumbersome to count all the yesses that come into the chat box. So, we decided to try a voting method that, actually, several of you have suggested in the past. When it comes time to adopt the agenda, please don't start typing yes into the chat box. Instead, wait patiently for Jeffry, our chat monitor to type three stand-alone phrases into the chat box. Jeffry's going to type Agenda-yes, Agenda-no and Agenda-abstain. Once you see those three separate statements in the chat box, then hover your cursor over the statement that matches your vote and click the thumbs-up icon. That will help Jeffry so that he doesn't have to go down and count like 30 yesses in the chat feature. Instead, we will all see the number displayed and increase as people cast their ballots by just clicking on the thumbs-up on the yes, no or abstain that Jeffry has already typed. We'll do the same for the minutes.

And then the only other vote that we have scheduled today is at IX.A. on the agenda, where we will be voting on a proposed amendment to the bylaws. When it comes time for that, we do want a little more specific numbers, and we also want the ability for anonymity, so I'll give you a link in the chat to go to a Poll Everywhere poll where you can select 1 for yes, 2 for no or 3 for abstain. We'll give you more direction when we get to that. And that's all I have.

L. Freeman: All right, and if anybody accidentally types a heart, or they just really love the agenda and they want to be more passionate about it, we'll count that as a yes, right, Pat?

P. Erickson: I think so!

L. Freeman: Okay.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

L. Freeman: In that case, can I have a motion to adopt the agenda.

C. Doederlein: So moved.

T. Arado: Second.

L. Freeman: All right, here we go with our new voting method.

P. Erickson: We're waiting for Jeffrey to put those three statements in, and then we will hover the statements that he has typed in, to give our thumbs-up or our heart. And we have 28 voting members, so, Jeffrey, if that gives you a clue when we have a simple majority. We need 15.

J. Royce: My screen at the moment shows 19, but I think there's a bit of a lag. But either way, we're there.

L. Freeman: All right.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 4, 2020 MINUTES

L. Freeman: All right we'll get to try this again. So, now I'm going to ask for a motion to approve the November 4, 2020 minutes.

T. Arado: So moved.

L. Garcia: So moved.

B. Beyer: Second.

L. Freeman: Okay, we'll take that as a motion and a second. And we're already voting, look at that. And Jeffrey, I accidentally voted twice, because I hit the nay first, so you can disregard that.

J. Royce: Very good. We are, once again, passed the requirement.

L. Freeman: All right, this is kind of fun; and I think it did go faster and, certainly, easier than counting up all those individual chat boxes.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

L. Freeman: We're at the point in the agenda where I ask if anyone has public comment.

P. Erickson: And I think Marc Falkoff has a question he'd like to bring.

L. Freeman: Absolutely. Marc, are you on? [pause] Marc, are you on mute? Can you guys all hear me?

P. Erickson: I can hear you, President Freeman. It looks like maybe Marc had an Internet glitch, but I think he's back now. Marc, are you back?

M. Falkoff: Yes, I'm sorry – that worked out wonderfully, didn't it?

L. Freeman: It's Monday on Wednesday. The tech goblins are out. No problem, Marc.

M. Falkoff: Sorry about that. I'm Marc Falkoff from the law school faculty. Last December, there was an announcement about a voluntary retirement incentive program, and I just thought it would be good to hear whether the program had been deemed successful, and I'm sorry if that's been aired at length before; I probably missed it. Also, I was curious whether there's any thought to offering something similar for faculty or staff this year. And I don't know whether the pandemic has influenced the administration's thoughts one way or the other. And, for the record, I have no immediate intention to retire.

L. Freeman: Well, that's a great question. And I'll give a very brief answer. For those who want more detail, if you go to the Board of Trustees agenda item 8.B. for the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee on August 20, there's tabular data and a thorough report. But just to remind everybody, in the fall of 2019, NIU offered to tenured and tenure-track faculty the option of a voluntary early retirement program. And then in spring of 2020, a similar program was offered to non-faculty employees. And I want to make the distinction that this was a voluntary retirement incentive. So, an incentive was offered to those who were eligible to retire. It was not an early retirement.

K. Thu [via chat box]: 21 faculty and 75 staff took advantage of it last spring.

L. Freeman: And I can see Kendall's already ahead of me. There were 21 faculty who retired under the program, and 76 staff who retired under the program. And the net for the university was in excess of \$4 million, and we considered that a success. When we announced those programs, we said repeatedly that this was something we were not planning to repeat, that it was one-time. And at this point in time, we have absolutely no plans to repeat. You raised, would COVID influence our

thoughts, and frankly, the COVID impact on our cash flow would make it much harder to reauthorize a program like this. So, at this point in time, we have no plans to repeat the program.

M. Falkoff: Thank you.

L. Freeman: Okay. Any other public comment?

VI. NIU PRESIDENT LISA FREEMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

L. Freeman: It's now time for me to move to my announcements or comments. And I have a couple things I want to comment on. I want to start, as always, with some type of thank you or point of Huskie pride. For everyone who was involved with Thousands Strong, our virtual donor celebration and appeal that took place, we exceeded all expectations. Thousands Strong resulted in \$2 million of donations, of philanthropy, to our institution. And just to put that in perspective, the first time we did something like this virtual appeal, we just surpassed \$700,000. But to give it even more perspective, we beat Notre Dame. Their similar event, on which we modeled ours, resulted in \$1.8 million in philanthropy toward Notre Dame, while we saw \$2 million for us. And so, I think that's pretty terrific and pretty awesome, echoing what I'm seeing in the chat. And what it means for the programs that were supported, for the students who will benefit, for the faculty research, I just thought it was beautifully executed. The Foundation, the colleges, everybody came together. The student who was the MC was a Visual and Performing Arts acting student, Kate, who was absolutely phenomenal. And I thought it was a great way to highlight the university. So, this was really incredible news. And I think it speaks to how much people care about this university within our community and our larger community. So, for all of you who took part in any way, shape, as a donor, as someone behind the scenes, thank you, thank you, thank you.

I also want to talk just a little bit about advocacy at the federal level. I was on a phone call yesterday with the presidents of public land grant universities across the nation and the APLU's government affairs staff. They told us that they are working closely with President-elect Biden's transition team advocating for APLU member institutions in three main categories. The first is expanding higher education access, affordability and student success. The second is fostering scientific discovery. And the third is welcoming the contributions of immigrants to our nation. And these are areas that certainly align with our federal agenda, and I'm very encouraged by the dialog that's going on.

For APLU, for us and for all of our sister universities across the country, the number one priority is federal COVID relief. It was very exciting, because while we were on the phone call yesterday, a series of bills was introduced refuted by two bipartisan coalitions, the speaker of the house and the senate. But the fact that there is new dialog and momentum is, in itself, encouraging. And universities are treated fairly well in all the versions of the bill, so stay tuned, but I think there's a good sense of optimism in Washington, DC right now. And I think that's probably true for the first time in a while from the standpoint of those who advocate on behalf of higher education at the federal level.

And then the last thing I wanted to do is just an update on the Illinois Board of Higher Education Strategic Plan. And I'm going to ask Pat to show us a pdf file that I received. I want to tell everybody that I have been selected to represent public universities as the lead public university

president on the advisory committee. The advisory committee is going to be composed of stakeholders from education, business, philanthropy, civil rights, community-based and advocacy organizations. We're going to meet five times between December and March. And we will really be charged with developing and providing the IBHE with a draft plan that honors the strategic direction that's been developed. And I want to ask Pat first to scroll to the Strategic Direction section, just those bullets between Strategic Direction and Vision Statement. And I just want to point out to you that the bullets that are the context-setting pillars for the IBHE Strategic Plan are, in fact, the same things NIU is thinking about in our university goals and framework, acknowledging that COVID-19 is reshaping our thinking about education, stating clearly that racial injustice can no longer be ignored, understanding that the nature of work is changing and those changes have been accelerated as the result of COVID-19, that there are disrupters growing and that we have budget challenges, which have been exacerbated.

The working vision statement is that Illinois has an equitable, accessible, innovative, nimble and aligned higher education system that ensures individuals, families and communities across the state thrive.

And then, Pat, if you could just scroll to the Higher Education Core Principles. And make sure that everyone can see the second-to-last one. The core principles that will be guiding the IBHE Strategic Plan should be no surprise. It's about students being the priority, equity driving the system, having a system that's varied and aligned, the fact that higher ed reinforces P-20. But, if you look at that second-to-last bullet, this is the bullet where your voices were heard. I know that Kendall and I and Linda Saborío have spoken about the importance of making sure that student experience and faculty research and leadership development were recognized. And this bullet now reads: Higher education is a public good that enriches life. We depend on higher education to preserve, expand and transmit knowledge, offer solutions to society's challenges, serve as a civic partner and enrich life. Research at our institutions expands understanding and drives innovation and economic development. Learning is enhanced when students participate in research and hands-on experiences. Liberal arts ensure we support the whole student. Institutions are vibrant anchors of communities.

So, there's a whole lot of our mission and our concerns packed into that bullet. And I can assure you that it was voices from faculty, in particular, at our institution and others that really informed this important change in the core principles driving the IBHE Strategic Plan. So, I just wanted to thank those of you who provided input to the IBHE, and to let you know that your voices were heard.

And I think that's really all I want to say. I hope that everyone had a happy Thanksgiving in this weird and unusual COVID environment. And since I won't see everyone here probably again before the holidays, wish you very happy holiday season; and hope that you rest, relax and find peace with those you love, even if it's virtually.

And this is the point where I turn the meeting over to Kendall. And I know that we're going to have Ferald say a few words.

K. Thu: Thank you, Lisa, and congratulations on your appointment. I know higher education will be well-represented.

L. Freeman: Thank you.

K. Thu: As Lisa mentioned, I want to recognize Ferald Bryan. Ferald is going to share some sad news with us about the passing of a colleague this past week.

F. Bryan: Thank you, Kendall. It is with a heavy heart that I announced that Charles Urban Larson died on Friday, Nov. 27, 2020. Professor Larson taught at NIU for 30 years in the Department of Communication, beginning in 1968. He was awarded the College of Liberal Arts Excellence in Teaching Award four times – 1984, 1986, 1990 and 1991. Charlie was one of three awarded NIU's Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching honors in 1991.

Charlie was appointed parliamentarian of NIU's University Council in 1979 by President Bill Monat. At the time of his appointment, Charlie was only the second parliamentarian in the history of the UC. Charlie later became the first ever parliamentarian to the Faculty Senate when that body was created in 1990. Charlie was elected president of the Faculty Senate and executive secretary of the University Council in 1995. When Charlie finally stepped down from the UC and Faculty Senate leadership, he claimed his three years' service was the longest ever because his term included a leap year!

These are just a few highlights of Professor Charles Larson's academic career at NIU. For a more complete list of his many accomplishments, please see the [extensive obituaries](#) published in the Chicago Tribune and the [Daily Chronicle](#) on December 1. As a disclaimer, that even Charlie would appreciate, if you read one of these very lengthy obituaries, be very wary of tall tales!

Charlie's virtual memorial service will be live streamed on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 2 p.m. on the [Facebook page of the Westminster Presbyterian Church](#) in DeKalb.

Charlie was an outstanding teacher, a gifted scholar and, quite frankly, a very colorful character. His collection of funny stories, often shared during WNIU's radio fundraising drives, are legendary.

As one parliamentarian to another – and from someone who was his friend and colleague – it is my honor to present here these remarks about Charlie Larson, knowing that he will be remembered at yet one more University Council meeting at Northern Illinois University.

Thank you, Kendall. And thank you, President Freeman, for letting me make these comments.

K. Thu: Thank you, Ferald. And my condolences for your loss, to his family and to the Huskie family, as well. It's always important to remember that we build our traditions upon the past, and he certainly played a pivotal role in encouraging and uplifting shared governance.

L. Freeman: Here, here. Thank you, Ferald.

VII. ITEMS FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

- A. Advancing Administrative Efficiency
Chris McCord, Senior Advisor to the Vice President, Administration and Finance

K. Thu: With that, we'll move on to item VII in the agenda. We have a guest with us today, Chris McCord, who many of you know, is currently the senior advisory to the vice president for administration and finance. Chris and I met several weeks ago, and he gave me an update on the work that he's doing to advance administrative efficiency. And at the time, I thought it would be a good idea for him to come and speak to both shared governance bodies. So, he's already spoken to Faculty Senate. And now I invite him to do a similar presentation to the University Council. So, Chris, it's over to you.

C. McCord: Thank you, Kendall. As Kendall noted, I've made this presentation, not only to Faculty Senate, but to a number of other groups in the past month or so. Quite a few of you I recognize from one of those previous presentations. So, your patience and indulgence if you are hearing this for the second or third time. I hope you'll find it worthwhile. Bear with me as I attempt to share content.

This is a project that's been underway for a little while now, and will be ongoing for a while. And I wanted to provide you some updates on it. In February, which seems like a very long time ago now, President Freeman called on working groups to consider different opportunities to streamline the university. Sarah Chinniah and Bryan Perry were tasked with examining administrative processes with the charge: What are the administrative practices, policies and procedures that need to be transformed, simplified or eliminated?

This is a charge that was really responsive to many conversations and requests from faculty and staff across the institution. For example, in conversations with Provost Ingram and Vice President Chinniah with academic programs, there was a consistent call to look for ways to automate and streamline programs and processes. So, in response to that, we began to look at what were the opportunities. That charge was issued in February.

In March, the pandemic reached DeKalb, and we became familiar with phrases like remote teaching and work from home. This put a focus on moving paper-based processes to digital, and moving manual processes to be automated. The distinction is, you can have a digital process that still can be very time-consuming, hand manipulated. We're looking at ways to streamline processes by moving them into more electronic formats. Some examples: We've seen a number of places where we're looking at the opportunity to eliminate paper by moving to digital forms and electronic signatures. We're looking to automate processes, where instead of me passing a document to you so that you can sign it, so you can pass it on to the next person so they can sign it, the workflow can be streamlined and automated with approvals moving from one person to another in an automated way, perhaps with as little as the click of a button to signal approval and move it on.

We're also looking at opportunities to integrate data systems. A lot of our processes involve transferring a piece of information from a form to an electronic system, or from one data set to another. Those are laborious, time-consuming, error prone. Opportunities to integrate those will enhance our efficiency.

These opportunities have been drawn out of multiple conversations with process owners and process users looking at a number of existing reports and recommendations, drawing on a variety of surveys that have been conducted across campus. And they've generated a wide array of opportunities. As we've looked at those opportunities, we've felt it important that our take on them, our response to them really needs to be guided by some foundational principles. As President Freeman stressed in her state of the university presentation, it's important that all of our efforts are grounded in the university's mission, vision and values. Even when we're engaged in the somewhat tactical exercise, such as looking at an opportunity to automate an approval chain on an HR transaction, we find it beneficial to keep our guiding principles in mind. And given the moment we're in, the focus on digitization and automation as the first area of effort, has been a natural consequence of those priorities and those guiding principles.

Now, a focus on digitization and automation means a focus on IT solutions. A focus on IT solutions puts a premium on the programmers, the developers, the project managers in DoIT and their partners and units, such as the Registrar's Office, Human Resource Services, Administration and Finance. There are some projects that are very local in nature where a team within a unit is proceeding on their own. But many of the high-impact transformations involve central resources and DoIT, particularly on our PeopleSoft Enterprise system and our OnBase document management system. We've identified 40-plus projects that could benefit from digitization or automation. Even when we focus on those that have high impact and involve central resources, there are still 20-plus worthy projects. So, that points to a need to prioritize and to do so at a university level. We're working toward a leadership process that will set university priorities for action on these opportunities. That prioritization will be driven by criteria that flow naturally from the guiding principles, those that you see on the screen. Once the projects have been prioritized and implemented, we aim to track the impact of those projects on our operations.

As we move forward, there are a number of key points that I would like to note. First, the need to prioritize. There are many desirable changes we could seek. Prioritizing among those projects means that some will be deferred, others may not be executed, some will be given a green light and fast-tracked. By prioritizing at the university level, we can align mission, impact and resources. There's been steady progress on this already with a lot of effort to align resources against goals. We're looking for more prioritization. We're looking for a leadership process that will unfold early in the coming year to set priorities and guide our implementation. This won't happen overnight, and there will be projects that will have to wait in the queue. So, one of the consequences of prioritization is we ask your patience and support as we move through the prioritization process to implement those that have the best impact.

One of the limiting factors that will pace implementation is the extent to which processes need to be individualized or customized. So, streamlining or standardization becomes a real issue. Essentially, if every unit requires a customization of an approval process for a form to suit the specific workflow of that unit, that becomes prohibitively difficult for implementation. And also have a long-term

impact that the more we customize, the more we limit our ability to move forward as processes change and as personnel change. So, we understand it's going to be hard to change practices, especially in times of stress and uncertainty. There's an understandable tension between streamlining and rigidity on the one hand, between standardization and autonomy. But we're hoping to find intelligent compromise that let's us balance individual needs against a common framework that can be readily implemented and readily adapted. This will give us flexibility over time. It will let us move forward effectively.

So, as we look at moving forward, you may find yourself in a conversation, you may find yourself in a moment, where you're being asked to look at how can your units' particular take on completing a benefit form or a travel voucher or any number of any other forms – how can your units' take on this be fit into a framework that works for you, but that's streamlined and efficient for everybody. We hope that intelligent compromise will allow us to do that in an effective way.

That also requires us to do our best to keep the campus informed as we proceed and continue to seek feedback, both on how well solutions are working and what new needs and opportunities are emerging. As projects move to the go-live stage, we know that information, training and feedback are key. And we'll be developing communications to continually inform you of those. Many of you may have seen a message from Vice President Chinniah and General Counsel Bryan Perry about this. I've talked with many of you. There's a survey currently that's gathering impact statements from across campus. So, we want to stay in communication.

And finally, sustainability. Sustainability is something, of course, we talk about a lot. There's sustainability in the sense of consuming less paper, of consuming natural resources. But there's also sustainability in the sense of financial sustainability on campus. But in this context, the kind of sustainability we're really thinking about is the sustainability of the work environment for our faculty and staff. We're aware of the many stresses that are on the staff. We're aware of the among of time that is spent on work effort that might seem repetitive and unnecessary. If we can implement some of these automation changes and digitization changes, we're not doing this to eliminate jobs, we're doing this to make the staff that we have better able to do their jobs and, most importantly, better able to focus on higher-level issues and not be spending so much of their time in the day-to-day routine.

So, with that, let me invite any questions, discussion you might have. Thank you.

K. Thu: Thank you, Chris. Intelligent compromise. That is a breath of fresh air these days. Are there any questions or comments for Chris? I also think one of the reasons for Chris presenting to both shared governance bodies is that you may have ideas to share with him that are maybe ways for you to help Chris with his work. So, I certainly think that, especially in this day and age when we're all working, not all but many of us, are working remotely, the processes that Chris is working on are even more important. I just have a quick question that I neglected to ask last time. Are any of the things that you're doing related to teaching in the classroom?

C. McCord: Not directly, because my focus has been on administrative processes. Indirectly, Academic Affairs has been looking at moving a number of registrar transactions that students engage in, moving those into a paperless environment. So that's not directly in the classroom, but it

certainly impacts student life and the academic life. And there's been some really good work that Vice Provost Omar Ghayeb has been leading, working with the curricular deans and the advising directors, to reach consensus on how those processes can be streamlined and then digitized. So, that work has been moving forward, and it's been really excellent efforts that they've been leading.

V. Edghill-Walden [via chat box]: Many of the automation in HR will support faculty and staff employment services, hiring and onboarding.

K. Thu: Greg, I saw your hand up. Do you still have a question?

G. Beyer: Thank you, Kendall. Hi Chris. My name is Greg Beyer. I'm the representative for the College of Visual and Performing Arts, and I really, really appreciate you taking the time to come and speak with us and tell us about what you're involved with to make the university run more efficiently. Actually, as you were talking specifically about things like benefits forms and such, ideas are certainly going off in my head. And I would imagine that, if other faculty members were privy to your presentation, that likely there are other light bulbs going off as well. Is there a platform through which you would appreciate receiving feedback or brainstorming ideas? Or, is there a way for us as faculty and staff to contribute to your cause?

C. McCord: Thank you for the question. Thank you for the offer. This has been largely transacted in the somewhat old-fashioned way of talking to people. And I've had a number of conversations with a variety of groups. I would welcome outreach. Again, Vice President Chinniah and General Counsel Bryan Perry put out a message inviting feedback on this. And, certainly, if anything comes to them, I fully expect them to route it to me. Beyond that, there is a survey that's currently targeting, not everybody, but is targeting the people most involved in these sorts of administrative processes. And I've been inviting feedback there, as well. Beyond that, I would simply say that I'm more than happy to talk with you or any of your colleagues if you have suggestions to offer. It's been interesting to hear the new ideas that have come forward that we haven't heard before. It's been interesting to hear the affirmation of ideas that are already in the queue, to hear other people confirm that, yes, this is of value to them. So, even if all the ideas brought forward are simply confirmation of projects already underway, we're glad to hear about them, I'm glad to talk with you about them.

G. Beyer: Thank you very much.

K. Thu: Other questions or comments? If not, thank you again, Chris, for joining us and providing an update. It will be interesting to see down the road some of the developments that emerge out of your work and the work of others that are working on this front. So, thank you again.

C. McCord: My pleasure.

L. Freeman: Thank you, Chris. This is an incredible amount of work, and we really appreciate you taking the lead and being so inclusive.

C. McCord: I'm glad to do it, and I would really like to congratulate all the people in DoIT, in Human Resource Services, in Administration and Finance, in the Registrar's Office across campus, who have been the people really leading this effort forward. I would be nowhere without all of their efforts, so thank you to all of them. Thanks for the opportunity to talk to you this afternoon.

K. Thu: Thank you, Chris.

VIII. CONSENT AGENDA

K. Thu: Item VIII is Consent Agenda. We have no items for the Consent Agenda.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, Article 2.2 University Council Personnel Committee
SECOND READING/VOTE

K. Thu: So, we'll move on to item IX, Unfinished Business. We have the second reading of a proposed amendment to the NIU Bylaws, Article 2.2, the University Council Personnel Committee. This is pretty simple. As mentioned last time, there was a little bit of a glitch. In updating the language for this committee as we changed shared governance last year, the position was inadvertently left off the committee membership roster. And this proposal adds that position back in. So, the position is vice provost for faculty affairs, who shall serve ex officio as chair and who shall not vote. So, I will entertain a motion to approve.

L. Garcia: So moved.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

N. Johnson: Second.

K. Thu: Discussion? And just to give, by way of back drop, the previous University Council Personnel Committee has now become the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee. But we retained the old University Council Personnel Committee to discharge a different kind of duty. Okay, I'll give Pat a moment to set up the voting mechanism in the chat box if there are no questions. And then, Pat, you just give us a signal that you're ready.

P. Erickson: Okay, I think everybody should see that link now. Maybe I'm going to go to the next page to remind everyone who should be voting. And you can click on that link. It will take you to a ballot that has numbers 1 through 10. This sort of harkens back to our in-person clicker days when we would say 1 is yes, 2 is no, 3 is abstain, and then you can just ignore the other numbers that are on that ballot. All you have to do is click on the number that corresponds with your vote. You don't have to click submit. There is no submit button. And I will bring that report over so that you can see that voting that's taking place. If you change your mind on your vote, there should be a tab at the

bottom of your screen that says something like clear answer or erase answer. You can do that if you want and then change your vote. And to pass an amendment, we need whichever is higher, either 15 yes votes of two-thirds of those voting, whichever ends up being higher.

K. Thu: So, we'll give you all a minute here to vote. Pat, we had how many in attendance.

P. Erickson: I think we've got 27 here today.

K. Thu: That's a very good turnout.

P. Erickson: Yes, it is. So, I don't know if anybody else is doing math, but my math says that two-thirds of 25 people voting is 17 votes. Feel free to double-check me on that, whoever wants to.

K. Thu: These are real-time numbers that we're seeing on the screen, is that right?

P. Erickson: Yes, they are.

K. Thu: There might be one more person yet to vote, but it's clearly passed.

P. Erickson: Yes, it has.

Yes – 16

No – 1

Abstain – 0

K. Thu: So, thank you, Pat, and thank all of you for voting.

X. NEW BUSINESS

K. Thu: We have no new business.

XI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

K. Thu: Item XI, Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees. I'm going to turn first to Linda Saborío. Linda, do you have a report for us, something you want to share.

L. Saborío: I am here, thank you. The FAC did meet last Friday, so I have a quick report for you. But first of all, I would like to say again, congrats to President Freeman for being selected to serve on the advisory committee. I think public universities and NIU are going to be well-represented in the strategic plan process. And again, like I said in Faculty Senate, thank you to all of my colleagues who, in one form or another, provided feedback and input to the process. As you can see from the document that President Freeman shared with us, the IBHE did look at our comments, and they incorporated our ideas into the strategic plan process. That made many of my colleagues on the FAC very pleased, let me tell you. The FAC will continue to be a close partner in the process. We

have a new chair this year on the FAC, and he is working closely with Ginger Ostro to ensure that faculty voices continue to be heard as this strategic plan develops more.

Another thing I wanted to ask, and really this is more for Kendall. The P-20 Council has put in their request for faculty input regarding something that they've termed COVID Loss. And they're looking for three key areas: academics as in policies and practices during these times; student and faculty support – mental, emotional and financial support; and also looking for some anecdotes. But I spoke with my colleagues and I understand that it's the end of the semester and asking faculty for feedback on anything other than let's say what day and time do you want to meet for virtual happy hour is not good at this time. If they're still looking for input in January, maybe I could meet with one of the subcommittees, Academic Affairs, perhaps. I don't know – I'll let you decide which subcommittee would be best – and discuss with them some of the questions that we've been asked to answer.

K. Thu: So, they're not at this point asking for representation?

L. Saborío: Well, we're going to produce a paper, but I can't imagine that the FAC is going to be able to produce any paper by January, not with everyone going on break, and with final exams coming up next week. Let's wait, because I would prefer to have some substantial feedback rather than something that's

K. Thu: Why don't you and I stay in touch, and we'll figure out which committee serves this purpose the best.

L. Saborío: Yes, let's come back to this in January and then see if we can have something for the February meeting, if they're still looking for it. I'm pretty sure they'll be still looking for input by then.

K. Thu: That sounds good. Thanks for bringing that to our attention, appreciate it.

L. Saborío: All right, I'll bring that back around then in January or February. We do have a dual credit paper that was presented at the last FAC meeting. It got approved by the council. The paper's been shared with Ginger Ostro at IBHE, so the next step is to decide how to best distribute this paper publicly. And once it is ready to go public, then I can share that with the group.

For those of you who've been listening to my reports over the past couple of years, you know that I am deeply involved with the P-20 working group. It has been a struggle and a monster. We collected data on faculty-led P-20 initiatives across the state of Illinois at two-year and four-year public, private, proprietary institutions. It was a lot of data that we collected. And we are now in the process of trying to design this interactive map. And we found somebody, a student, poor thing. And he's not been jaded yet, so he's still working with us. And he has started to upload data to this map. So, I am very excited to see that this project is moving forward, determined to see it through to the end. So, I'm going to hang in there. And what we're hoping to accomplish, for those of you who are new and have not heard me repeat this several times, is to really showcase faculty involvement in our communities, not just around the regions where the universities serve, but even beyond that. But we're just going to start with the state of Illinois. And the impact that research has on our

communities and our students, because some of these initiatives are student-led research initiatives. So, that's our goal with this project, and we are moving forward with it. It's a good thing, right?

And I think that is all that I have for now. Oh, we did have a presentation on internships, if anyone is interested. It was an internship study on programs and their impact on student success, in particular with the HBCUs and HSIs. And I believe that full report is available on the [CCWT website](#). Boy, that is a lot of acronyms, isn't it? The CCWT is the Center for Research on College-Workforce Transitions. So, I think the report is available there if anyone is interested in viewing it. And that's all I have then.

K. Thu: That's not all, that's a lot.

L. Saborío: I have a lot going.

K. Thu: Thank you, Linda. I remember when I filled in for you at an FAC meeting that was at DePaul. And they were talking about that map. And it's really exciting to see it come to fruition, because all the engagement activities at NIU is involved in, that's really in our wheelhouse. So, I'm excited to see it come out, and I'll be excited to see the actual final product. Well, it won't be a final product, it will be ever changing.

L. Saborío: Right, it's going to be a moving target, I think, for several years. But for the moment, yes.

K. Thu: All right, thank you, Linda, appreciate it.

L. Freeman: Thanks, Linda.

L. Saborío: You're welcome.

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

K. Thu: Okay, next is University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. The full board met on November 12. It was not a long meeting. The board and the subcommittees actually stayed on time, which is a minor miracle unto itself. Just a couple of items from that meeting that I want to share. First, President Freeman's goals were included in the meeting packet of the BOT. If you have not yet read the goals that she developed with a lot of input from stakeholders, they are on the president's website. And also we got an update on a couple of road projects that are largely funded by federal funding, upgrades to the west turnaround area near the Holmes Student Center, and an upgrade to the roadway near DuSable. Beyond that, not a whole lot was occurring at the board meeting. I believe, Lisa, the board meets again in December or not?

L. Freeman: Yes, they meet next week. And I think you have a University Advisory Committee meeting maybe Friday.

K. Thu: Yes, early Friday, that's right.

S. Chinniah [via chat box]: Minor point of clarification – the grant funds referenced in support of the ADA and roadway initiative are provided by the Department of Transportation. NIU must use the funds or will lose them.

L. Freeman: I just want to say one thing about the two road improvements. They're to address disability issues, ADA requirements, things that we've heard about. And it's money from Build America bonds that is at the use-it-or-lose-it stage. There is a very small university match required; but, in the overall picture of fixing things that make it difficult for some of our students and faculty to navigate the campus and doing it in a way that's very affordable for us, we thought it was the right thing to do at this time, and the board agreed.

K. Thu: Great. Wonderful. Do any of the other advisory committee members want to comment?

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

K. Thu: If not, let's move on to – there's no report from Rules, Governance and Elections Committee.

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

K. Thu: That brings us to Student Government Association. Antonio and Brad, are either or both of you here?

B. Beyer: Is Antonio with us?

K. Thu: Let me look at the participant list.

P. Erickson: He was here, but I don't see him now.

D. Collins: Brad, you're filling in for Antonio today.

B. Beyer: Okay, no worries. We had our last Student Senate meeting not this past Sunday, but Sunday, Nov. 22. And we will be in recess until January 17. I, for one, have been enjoying a little bit of a break. I don't get quite a break until I'm done with finals, but, because I had some extra time on my hands, not having to run senate meetings, I was able to write a little bit more of a formal report on what the senate did this semester. So, I'll just read that now and then go more broadly in SGA as a whole, and Devlin can comment where I don't fill in the gaps.

This semester, despite the challenges that we were faced with moving our organization virtually, the senate did still manage to bring on five new student senators, three of which are freshmen currently residing in residence halls, which is exciting for us. It's been nice to hear from incoming students

and having heard their experiences in this weird world that we're living in. But this currently brings us to a total of 18 student senators. That's a lot less than in previous years, but I would blame that mostly on the pandemic. So, that is something that we're aware of, and we're trying to work toward trying to get more students engaged. But, again, despite that, we've given approval to numerous new student organizations. So, they now have access to Student Affairs and other university resources to help support them and their missions. Some new student organizations range from an inclusive bird watching club to a couple student organizations committed to social mobility and personal growth for students.

And, like I said, we're on break until January 17; and so, over the winter break, we'll be looking forward and planning for elections. So, that will happen in March. And then at that point, Antonio and I will have successors, and we'll spend the rest of our terms transitioning them in so that they can, hopefully, have a little bit less of a bumpy transition than when Antonio and I took over in April/May when all of this happened, and when we went virtually.

So, other than that, I'm looking forward to having a little bit of a break. I'll let Devin, if you want to comment a little bit more on some of what the executive side's been doing. But again, the point I would make is that, despite the challenges that we had trying to transition and work in this new environment, I think we still were successful in getting students supported where we could. Devin, did you want to comment?

D. Collins: Hello everyone. My name is Devlin Collins, and I am the chief of staff for the Student Government Association. Unfortunately, President Antonio Johnson could not make it to today's meeting, but he would like to wish everyone a happy holiday and good health during winter break. The SGA executive branch is currently hard at work planning for our spring programs. A few of the big things that we're planning right now – we're currently working on plans to begin our annual transition period, slightly earlier than in previous years. This is really due to the COVID pandemic slowing us down for the fall semester. And we would like to make sure that everything is on track for the spring even earlier. And planning is going smoothly for the fall semester for 2021. That's really the main thing that we're doing here. And we're aiming to have the executive staff in order and transitioned in before spring semester lets out. Hopefully, we're done and they're all in by the end of March or toward the beginning of April. But that's really where we're shooting with that.

And we're also working with the current DeKalb mayoral candidates to create a debate or candidate forum for students and the wider DeKalb community to meet with the candidates and discuss their policies for the position. This is going to be ahead of the local elections come April 2021 in DeKalb. Our main purpose with this is to further increase voter turnout among students on NIU's campus. We did see an increase in student turnout in this election from previous elections. And that has encouraged us to keep working on that.

Finally, I really just want to end my thoughts today by thanking all of you who have worked alongside student leaders this semester to address the concerns of the students. One of my main focuses this semester came after the Center for Black Studies incident in September. And the effort that I've seen from the university faculty to implement initiatives to bridge the gaps between communities have been very welcoming to us as students. As for my mission statement, as president of the NAACP at NIU, it is my duty to advocate for social justice and to ensure that our campus is

welcoming and supports all students of any color or background. So, we understand that it has been a difficult and unprecedented semester with COVID restrictions in place, but we do acknowledge and do support NIU's efforts toward social change. Thank you all.

K. Thu: Thank you, Devlin. And thank you, Brad. Really appreciate your leadership and your words of wisdom and your passion for the issues that you're advocating for. I want to wish you both, and all of the students, the very best in the next several days with the final stretch of the semester and final exams. I know you're looking forward to at least a little breathing room toward the end of it. So, thank you all again.

L. Freeman: Thank you; we're very proud of you.

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

K. Thu: Natasha, are you with us to provide an Operating Staff Council report?

N. Johnson: Yes, I am. The Operating Staff Council will actually meet tomorrow, and so the last report I gave, you got it already. But one thing I was going to bring up was the professional development. Staff feel that professional development may be more important now than ever before, being that people are having to use technology in a way that they never thought that they would. And because we're trying to be strategic as a university with using our finances, we were hoping that we would be able to use our current resources, which would consist of faculty or any experts in specific areas. And maybe they could do some professional development, some trainings, whether it would be on change management; or for supervisors, maybe leading in a time of change; or IT, just being able to help people navigate how to use Teams or applications, different systems, OneDrive; and maybe even counseling, as well, maybe they can do something on how to take care of yourself behind the screen, because people have a lot going on right now in the midst of this pandemic. So, while we know there's not many funds available for professional development, we're hoping that we can look out in different areas, think outside the box, and utilize the resources that we currently have here. And so, hopefully, we'll be able to maybe move forward with some things that we get some faculty members that would be able to help out.

V. Edghill-Walden [via chat box]: I would be happy to work with you on this. HR is looking into developing these programs for professional development.

N. Johnson: Oh, I see there's a comment. Vernese would be happy to work with us on this. Thank you so much, Vernese. And that's what I have for Operating Staff Council.

K. Thu: Thank you, Natasha. And thanks for all your work in the first half of the year as president of OSC.

L. Freeman: Absolutely. And thank you, Natasha, for always looking for ways that Huskies can help Huskies. It's really much appreciated.

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

K. Thu: With that, we turn to Cathy Doederlein for a report from SPS Council. Cathy, are you with us?

C. Doederlein: Yes, I'm here. I echo Natasha's sentiments as far as professional development and just making that as accessible as possible. Our committee that looks at just general professional development needs and opportunities connected with Brian Smith in a recent meeting and really talking about leveraging what EAP has to offer. And also, we want to serve as sort of guinea pigs, if you will, when it comes to supervisor training. Many of the people who happen to be on SPS Council happen to be supervisors, themselves. And oftentimes when people are made a supervisor – and Kendall and I have talked about this before – I never mean to pick on it, but the example I will often use is a chair, somebody who's serving in the capacity of the chair, has only, up until that point, been on the academic side in terms of research and teaching, but not the administrative, supervisory side. So, making sure that we've got those tools in place to train supervisors is definitely a goal. And we're, like I said, willing to serve as guinea pigs.

Related to that, we're also looking at trying to help ensure that the next round of reviews of SPS are done with a common format. Right now the only thing that's common amongst SPS evaluations is the signature form that you sign to prove that you were evaluated. But I know that there's been a lot of work put in behind the scenes to create a document that can be a universally used document. And again, our subcommittee for professional development is going to aim to kind of help champion that along.

And then, as always, this time of year, I do a plug for awards. We do have our call for nominations out for [our various awards](#), including our four presidential awards. And we just really appreciate people taking the time to nominate colleagues for these opportunities.

Thanks very much.

K. Thu: Thank you, Cathy. And thanks, as always, for your leadership of SPS.

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: Before we turn to adjourning the meeting, this is our final shared governance meeting of the year. It's been a challenging year, to say the least. But when I listen to the voices of everyone in this virtual room, it gives me great hope for a better 2021 than 2020. So, before I let Lisa have the last word, I just want to wish everybody a wonderful holiday break. And I hope you have some time with family and friends to celebrate. So, Lisa, do you have any final words?

L. Freeman: Kendall, I just really want everyone to take the time at the break and get offline, tune out from your jobs, enjoy the beauty of the world outside, enjoy the beauty of your loved ones in whatever format that you can. And there's light at the end of the tunnel. We know vaccines are coming. We're planning for a fall that looks normal. But there are going to be some tough times before that, and we all want to come back ready for 2021, ready for the new semester and our students. And so, enjoy the holidays, and please take care of yourselves.

K. Thu: Thank you, Lisa. And with that, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

L. Garcia: So moved.

K. Thu: Do we have a second?

D. Collins: Second.

K. Thu: And we'll let Jeffry put the appropriate icons in the chat box.

P. Erickson: Thanks, Kendall. I'm glad that we're going to do that one more time, because we could use a little more practice on that.

K. Thu: I think you're right.

P. Erickson: So, please avoid putting your own chat answer into the chat box. Hover the ones that Jeffry has already provided and give us that thumbs-up or heart. Thanks.

J. Royce: And it looks like we've passed the majority.

P. Erickson: Good work on that.

K. Thu: Thanks, everybody. Take care and have a good holiday break. Bye bye.

L. Freeman: Bye everybody.

Meeting adjourned at 4:02 p.m.