

TRANSCRIPT

University Council
Wednesday, November 30, 2022, 3 p.m.
Altgeld Hall 315
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Beyer, Bohanon, Costello, Cripe, Douglass, Falkoff, Freeman, Garcia, Geller, Heckmann (for Cofer), Hulseberg, Ingram, Kassel, Majeed, Miguel (for Scheibe), Monteiro, Morgan, Nicholson, Olson, Pitney, Rogers, Srygler, Tatara, Vaughn, Walther

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Pietrowski, Scheibe, Simonson

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, McEvoy, Montana, Reneau, Saborío

I. CALL TO ORDER

L. Freeman: Good afternoon, everybody. You can consider that a call to order.

Meeting called to order at 3 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

L. Freeman: I've already been made aware that we have a quorum on this very, very windy November day. So, thank you all for braving the elements to be here.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

L. Freeman: I'm going to move quickly to Roman numeral III., Adoption of the Agenda. May I have a motion?

B. Pitney: So moved.

L. Freeman: So moved, Pitney. And a second?

W. Vaughn: Second.

L. Freeman: Second, Vaughn. All in favor?

Members: Aye.

L. Freeman: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 2, 2022, MINUTES

L. Freeman: Moving on to Roman numeral IV., looking for approval of the November 2, 2022, minutes, which are found on pages 3 to 5 of the packet. May I have a motion?

B. Ingram: So moved.

L. Freeman: So moved, Ingram.

M. Geller: Second.

L. Freeman: Whoever said second first, okay. No, that's fine; there were multiple hands, and I just couldn't see everybody. As long as we have a motion and a second, we'll move to all those in favor?

Members: Aye.

L. Freeman: Opposed? Abstentions? Okay.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

L. Freeman: Pat, have we had any requests for public comment today?

P. Erickson: No public comment today.

VI. NIU PRESIDENT LISA FREEMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

L. Freeman: Then, we can move to Roman numeral VI., which is the president's announcements. And my announcements are going to be very brief, because I want to move to Roman numeral VII., which is a discussion with UC of the university goals. But I want to say that I hope everyone had a happy Thanksgiving, some time to relax and think of all the things that they're grateful for in this month of gratitude. I know this is a very, very busy time of year, so I hope all of you are practicing self-care as you move through December toward commencement and the holidays. And I hope that I see many of you at the holiday festivities that we have coming up, but for those of you whose paths I might not cross again, I want to wish you a happy new year and a very peaceful and restful holiday season. For everyone who came out to the State of the University address yesterday or tuned in online, I say thank you for your continuing support.

VII. ITEMS FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

- A. University Goals
Lisa Freeman, NIU President

L. Freeman: And with that, agenda item Roman numeral VII., is a presentation of the university goals. They will be introduced at the Board of Trustees meeting next Thursday, Dec. 8, for board consideration and approval. And this year, most of them actually focus pretty much on things that we did last year. We set a lot of goals last year, some of which we accomplished, but most of which had multi-year components. And this year's university goals are really a continuation thereof. Just as we did last year, I want to go through the timeline with you, because we changed it up a little bit

this year; and also, call your attention to some items specifically that I think University Council might be interested in. I want to celebrate a collaborative goal that Ismael and I just finished the language for this morning, that will be added to the draft that was presented to Faculty Senate. And then, obviously, to get feedback from you, because it is not too late to incorporate changes into the university goals before the document goes to the Board of Trustees.

Can everyone see if I just sit here and do this from my seat? Okay, then we'll just go ahead and do it that way. What I'm going to do today is go through the timeline, remind everyone what the core themes for our strategic action planning framework and university goals are, because those are the same. I'm just going to highlight specific goals that I know will be of interest to this group and ask for feedback on those. And we'll go from there.

If I could have the next slide. When we're talking about the university goals, this is something that we've done on an annual basis ever since I became president. In previous years, we did the establishment of the university goals in September-October, and the evaluation of progress on the previous year, which also serves as the evaluation of the president, in November-December. The board and I decided that it didn't, actually, make a lot of sense in terms of sequence. I think that all of you know that you mostly set goals with your supervisors at the same time you're evaluating last year's progress. And it got very confusing for everyone to not do it in that order. So, this year, we changed things so that the evaluation of progress was done – I started working on it in August; it went through September and October and was a public item at the November 10 Board of Trustees meeting. The drafting of the goals is really an ongoing process, because I'm constantly working with members of shared leadership, shared governance and the senior roundtable to talk about the direction the university is taking, but that gets formalized on paper mid-October to November. In terms of sharing the goals with shared governance, we had a very tight timeline this year, but I had a good discussion with Faculty Senate on the 16th of November, and we've added a sub-goal that's going to actually go under three goals as part of that conversation, and we'll be projecting that for you later in this presentation. Yesterday was the State of the University where the goals are referred to a lot. And today, I'm here with University Council to get your additional feedback; and then next Thursday the goals will be considered by the board. So, if I could have the next slide.

When we talk about elements of shared governance, I just want to remind everybody that, under our new shared governance structure, UC is really the venue for faculty, staff and student involvement. It's the major place for student involvement in this level of contemplation in non-academic university policy development and implementation. So, obviously, I meet with the shared governance leaders individually over the course of both semesters. We have the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, which is another place that shared governance has input. But, actually having conversations in UC and Faculty Senate are very useful, as are the Operating Staff Councils, and so I'm very happy to be here to have this conversation today. Next slide.

The six core themes that frame our university goals are the same six core themes that are represented in our strategic action planning framework, and you can see them on this slide. Every year, we form goals under these six core themes. In most years, at least in the last couple of years and in this year too, we have some goals that appear under multiple themes, because they serve multiple themes. And I'll be talking a little bit about that more on the subsequent slides. So, if I could have the next slide, please.

For those of you who tuned in yesterday, you did get to see this diagram. This graphic is something that I'm very proud of, and I see Holly smiling, and she should also be very proud of it. As we try to build capacity across our organization for shared leadership, I felt that we should model shared leadership as we tried to design our programs going forward. So, I asked a group of individuals, largely representing staff, including a couple of chairs. And it was co-led by Holly Nicholson and Rene Cotsones from OERD, our chief engagement officer. I asked them to come up with recommendations to senior leadership for what shared leadership should look like on our campus. What should be the vision we all share around shared leadership, and how do we get there.

This graphic is what they came up with. I went through it in detail yesterday, but I'm just really so proud of the fact that they thought very carefully about what we needed to see more of on this campus, about the roles of individuals and unit leaders and institutional leaders, and what it means to commit time and resources, something to be transparent and accountable, and the key importance of collaboration. We will be supporting this model as our vision on campus for shared leadership and using it in conversations across the university. The recommendations they made for expanding professional development opportunities, specifically looking at preparing teams and individuals to be more effective and creating better supervisor training. And then I just want to say that we have a lot of work in progress that has already formally adopted a shared leadership framework. I think we've all heard Dr. Edghill-Walden talk about our shared equity leadership framework driving our campus-wide efforts to be a force in diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. We've had an ongoing administrative efficiency project; we're actually entering our third year, and you can track the progress of some of those digitization efforts on the DoIT website. The group that worked last year to put forward recommendations for how we move effectively to multi-year budget and planning is being honored this year, and you'll see at the end of this presentation most, if not all, of their recommendations have been baked into the university goals, either for this year or for multi years. And then we have some new projects that will be coming forward and adopting a shared leadership framework. We have our Strategic Enrollment Action Plan 2, that the plan is out there, the accountability matrix is out there, but thinking about how we really effectively distribute ownership and activity on that plan is probably going to take an adoption of a shared leadership approach. And folks are working on that right now. We can move to the next slide.

I want to talk a little bit about the second theme, which is student recruitment success and experience, because every year people wait to see what our enrollment goal is for the next year. We're very transparent about setting a target enrollment range, and about setting that at the intersection of hope and reality, knowing that whatever target range we set, everyone on this campus is committed to doing everything they possibly can to help our students succeed. We want students to choose NIU; we want students to stay at NIU, walk across that commencement stage and be a successful part of our university community forever.

We decided to do our Strategic Enrollment Plan 2.0 a couple years earlier than we had originally intended. We had a five-year enrollment management plan, and we updated it a couple years early in year 3, because we recognized that COVID just shifted the landscape so dramatically that we needed to look under the microscope, take a different magnifier, whatever analogy you want, we just needed to reboot the plan to be consistent with the reality that our institution and our students face. And so the new enrollment plan has an enhanced focus, not just on closing equity gaps and retention rates and graduation rates and post-graduation outcomes, but also on trying to re-enroll the students who opted out or stopped out during COVID, because it's a personal loss to them, it's an economic loss to our state and it's an institutional loss to the Huskie family when students think about coming here, start here and don't finish here.

Now, all of that said, and I think you could see if you looked at the pictures yesterday that Marketing and Communication and Rachel Xidis pulled for the State of the University address, we've had so much fun on campus this fall. Our students have been so active and engaged. And that really has made a difference in how they feel about NIU. But even if we keep every single student who started with us or who was in our classrooms on the ten-day count, our total enrollment is still going to be impacted by the students we lost to COVID, the students who tuned out during that period of time. And so, if you'll flip to the next slide, our annual enrollment target for next year is actually slightly lower than our target range was for this year. Not because we're not ambitious, and not because we're not doing everything possible to attract as many new students and keep students in our classrooms, but even if you model a pretty ambitious increase in persistence, the reality of having two years of COVID impact on retention means there are just not as many students in the pipeline. And so our realistic goal for enrollment next year, the bottom of the range is 15,360, the top of the range is 15,570. And I think the bottom of our target enrollment range for the past year was about 15,600. So, we are being realistic upfront to say that, when we think about planning for capacity, when we think about what we communicate to our community, we're probably going to be down in enrollment a little bit next year as we go back toward stabilizing, and we just have to plan accordingly. Nobody is saying that we don't want to beat this; of course, we absolutely do. But we also don't want to set false expectations in our budget, in our community or across our university and departments.

Any questions before I move on to some of the more complicated goals? Great, and I want to actually give Provost Ingram and her staff in Institutional Research like Greg Barker, a big shout-out for creating a wonderful enrollment forecasting model that has served the university very well over the past couple of years. All right, next slide, please.

Anyone who tuned in yesterday knows that I think the future of this university is very much in supporting transdisciplinary efforts, transdisciplinary efforts in curriculum, transdisciplinary efforts in scholarship and that that is intertwined inexorably with our desire to have faculty who represent diverse communities, who are looking at scholarly questions through different lenses, based on their lived experience. I think it's also important to recruit folks who want to be publicly engaged and inventors. And because we're diminishing the barriers and providing resources to support, transdisciplinary work has so many intersections, there are goals related to that overarching theme articulated under multiple sections of the university goals – under academic excellence and curricular innovation; diversity, equity and inclusion; and research, scholarship, artistry and engagement. And most of the goals that are there are things that came directly out of the efforts of task forces that Provost Ingram, Vice President Blazey and Vice President Edghill-Walden charged with looking at barriers, looking at things that we could do better as an administration to support transdisciplinary work and making recommendations.

And so the recommendations that are there are things like looking at how we do joint appointments; making sure we have very clear and standardized MOUs as a very first step, but also exploring other ways to do those type of appointments; thinking about, for example, models where folks are appointed in entities other than departments; thinking about creating competitive incentive programs like small grants to help faculty have time to look and work together on developing transdisciplinary or cross-college curricula; things like taking the resources that we already have on campus to support transdisciplinary work and uniting them in a single enterprise level office and

also strengthening them and having that office report to the vice president for research and innovation partnerships. Those are the kinds of things that we heard from the task forces directly that we have put into the university goals.

We heard specifically from the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee a couple of things, and also from other groups across campus who really care about diversity, equity and inclusion and faculty representation, that we need to understand what it looks like to do a cluster hire at NIU. And we've said that this will be a multi-year goal, but this year we'll figure out what the model could look like. We'll draw on some of the work that's been done successfully here. We have a very successful accelerated physics cluster hire that's been functional for a few years. Dean Brinkmann is doing a social mobility, a very small-scale cluster hire in his college this year, and we'll have some outcomes there. So, this is the year we really figure out what it looks like, and then we build it into multi-year budgeting and planning so we can actually execute on a planned timeline on what cluster hires in different areas might look like.

But, I feel very strongly, and the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee feels very strongly, and we saw this in the conversation in Faculty Senate, and you heard a little bit in the Q&A yesterday, that you could do all these things, you can make your administrative processes more friendly, you can create resources and invest them on a known and transparent timeline, you can hire a cluster of faculty, a cohort of faculty. But if you don't have the reward systems and the recognition systems in hiring, tenure and promotion that align with the kind of work you're seeking to bring in, everything else you do is not going to be successful, and you're probably going to hurt individuals in the process. So, it's really important that we have a conversation on our campus about what it looks like to try to think of scholarship in a more inclusive fashion, and what it looks like, not just to have that conversation, but to make sure that it's in the policies and practices on our campus. I am just so incredibly proud that we are having this conversation, because it is not an easy one to have. It's where a lot of efforts fall short. Right now, nationally, there is tremendous dialogue about this within the higher ed community. There are publications coming out of places like the [American Council on Higher Education](#), [Association of Public Land-Grant Universities](#), the journal, [Science](#), which for those of us in STEM disciplines, is really, really well respected, has had a couple articles on the need to define scholarship more broadly. And so, we're having this conversation at a good time, but we have to have it in our context, and we have to commit to it. Because of the way tenure and promotion guidelines exist on this campus, most of what is owned at the university level or the unit level is really under the jurisdiction of the faculty, and that's how it should be. But that means that the Faculty Senate and faculty governance groups have to be very, very engaged in all aspects of the change process. Now that doesn't mean those of us in senior leadership get a pass. It means that we have to be able to use our voices to amplify and encourage and elevate. It means we have to be available as resources to share what we know is going on nationally to help find out what's going on at universities.

And so, Pat, if you could bring up that Word document for everyone to see, after conversations that had been going on, on the campus, for almost a year with the provost, with Dr. Edghill-Walden, with Dr. Blazey, with Ismael, with the working group chairs of the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee, followed by the Faculty Senate presentation of the goals, and a little bit of email and wordsmithing back and forth, we have actually developed language that, even as we speak, is being inserted into the working draft of the university goals. And so, I think you can see as you look at this that what we're trying to do is elevate the work that's already been done, using frameworks that were developed appropriately by the Faculty Senate. We want to advance the conversation, advance specific initiatives that are focused on this. And we want to make sure that our evaluation processes

are more reflective of the university's mission, vision, values, more inclusive of diverse and evolving forms of faculty work.

And then we've actually written out what each of us and the people that we represent in shared governance have to do in the coming year. We, as university leadership, will continue to contribute to the development of the emerging framework. We're going to help expand and support the materials that have already been curated by the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee and help make sure that we wind up with a step-wise action plan for moving forward. The Faculty Senate president, the provost, the president, not always all together, because our calendars probably won't allow that, but sometimes all together and sometimes separately or in pairs, will present to shared governance groups, such as the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee and probably colleges and departments about different approaches that can be taken. And then the university leadership will provide support in drafting of responsive language for the university academic personnel process. That's what appears in the Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 8, and we're hoping by the end of the academic year, there will be a conversation in the Faculty Senate Personnel Committee and, hopefully, in Faculty Senate. We think we've set a realistic timeline, and again, I'm just very proud of the collaborative effort that has brought us to have this conversation. All right, back to the slides.

I was celebrating Yom Kippur, or whatever you do on Yom Kippur, it's not really a celebration, but I was observing Yom Kippur when Provost Ingram and Vice President Blazey presented to you on the work of the budget and planning resource group. And I just want to show you by excerpting the bullets from the goals document that will go forward, that we have essentially adopted all of the recommendations of that group. And I want to remind everybody that the recommendations of that group weren't the recommendations of the three individuals – or four individuals – who contributed to the report, but rather the culmination and synthesis of conversations they had all over campus, conversations with people in Budget & Planning and Accounting and Treasury, conversations they had at the level of the Council of Deans, at the level of college councils, with some of the shared governance groups. And we're moving forward, and we've been very specific, or as specific as can be, about what we hope to start but not finish this year, what we think we can actually finish this year, and what's going to take a longer time.

You have the first four bullets on this slide, and these the bullets on this slide have something that's going to happen in this current fiscal year, in terms of starting something or ending something. We're talking here about really moving toward a mindset of strategic budgeting and planning, rather than resource allocation. We're going to make sure we know what is our problem versus what is imposed upon us by the state. And I say that tongue in cheek, but anyone who's worked here long enough knows that sometimes change is resisted by saying that it's a law or a statute or something, and it's not always. Sometimes it's just something we've always done that we have the power to stop doing. We're going to figure that out so we don't step on the wrong side of that. And then, we're going to do a call for innovation proposals again this year, the way we did last year, but that will be a first step in establishing an innovation fund that is an entity that's carried forward.

And then we're going to incentivize revenue generation through some type of gain-sharing pilot this year. Gain-sharing is basically saying that, for funds that are left over at the end of the fiscal year or revenue that is generated, whatever is there is shared through some established formula between the unit that either as a good steward or a generator and the university. And so, we're not going to all automatically sweep things, a practice that encourages irresponsible behavior, but we're also not going to say that everybody gets to keep everything that's left in their budget at the end of the year, because we're not a responsibility-centered management campus. That's a practice that doesn't

incentivize collaboration and caring the way we have to in our culture. So, when the university has the gain-sharing pilot in place, I think you can be sure that what is taken from the units at the end of the year will go either to support further innovation funding or to support institutional aid to students, which is a very large obligation on our campus and one that we all can understand our obligation to.

And then, Pat, if we could have the next slide, these are the pieces of what came out of the task force that aren't really going to be started this year, because they're just multi-year in nature. Advancing the timeline for annual budget development by 12 months is something that's going to take more than a year to really put in place. We're all very excited to have our new permanent CFO, George Middlemist, starting on January 16. I think this is the kind of thing that is a heavy lift that we want him to be involved in from the very beginning of the plan. When George decided to come to NIU, to choose NIU, he had read the budget planning work group report, and we had a lot of discussions, and he's looking forward to all the challenges and opportunities here. And we don't want to form a lot of training and educational materials about the way we do things now if it's not the way we want to do things in the future, so obviously, that's a goal that has to have a little bit of a time lag.

So, I think that's my last slide other than for a question slide. I'll just stop there and let all of you ask any questions or make suggestions about what we might add or not have in the goals.

Unidentified: [inaudible]

L. Freeman: Cluster hiring is a term that's become jargon in higher education. Our trustees didn't know what it meant either. So, I actually wound up defining it at length in the goals document. So, I'm glad you asked, because you're probably not the only person who doesn't know. Cluster hire is when faculty are hired intentionally across different units, across departments within a college or across colleges within a university, with some type of common scholarly interest, but coming at it with an expectation that, as they come in, they'll be expected to teach and do scholarship that involves transdisciplinary or interdisciplinary perspectives. And they come in as a cohort with that expectation, and they're supported by the university basically to have critical mass.

So, you can do cluster hiring for that type of expertise, and that's certainly a place that we've done it. So, in our accelerator physics cluster hire, we've had people come in to the College of Engineering and the Department of Physics and I believe the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry also, but don't quote me on the last one, to support that collaboration with Fermilab. And they brought in resources, and those resources have been reinvested in the cluster and allowed them to hire more graduate students, and it's been able to perpetuate itself. So, specialized expertise hiring for that type of – for a center – is one place that cluster hiring is used.

The other place that cluster hiring has been used very successfully in higher education is to increase faculty of color, increase faculty diversity, because you're almost creating a community of faculty who come in together, and you can offer them support services more effectively. They have an instant community and, again, you're also probably replenishing scholarly viewpoints or bringing in scholarly viewpoints that will at least be reinforcing in terms of the experience. And so, that's been done within a department to increase diversity, as well as across departments within a college or across colleges.

There is literature on this; it's been fairly effective. If you think about the way predominantly white institutions have sometimes brought in students of color in a posse cohort and you've seen the efficacy there, it's kind of based on the same principles of belonging and shared interests. I don't know, Provost Ingram, do you want to add anything to that?

B. Ingram: [inaudible]

M. Geller: Hi, I'm Meredith Geller, College of Law. The one thing that I didn't really see, and it actually kind of ties into what Linda is going to talk about later, is faculty and staff retention. I know Holly talked about this a lot in terms of the staff. I've been here 20 years, and it's not like we've ever been just tripping and falling over extra people, but I think that lately we've all felt like we're doing a lot more. I appreciate all that we're doing for the students; we're all here for the students; we all recognize that. But I think it would be nice to have a little more recognition and focus on the people who make it possible for our students to flourish.

L. Freeman: I absolutely agree with you, and I didn't show you the entire goals document, because we would be here for a long time if I did that. I would say there are things that speak directly to climate and faculty and staff support, professional development, as well as in the multi-year budgeting and planning, planning for appropriate staff support in an intentional way. So, my omission from the PowerPoint was not meant to send a message that we don't care about faculty and staff support. It's in the document in different ways, and you'll see it all on Monday. But, obviously, it's something that's very important. We are all here for the students, but that means we have to be here to be here for the students, and we have to enjoy it here. All of that is absolutely true.

Any other questions on the goals? All right, then that concludes agenda item VII., and I get to hand the gavel over to Ismael.

VIII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

1. Does early college credit impact NIU's general education program (i.e., lost revenue, programs being closed, etc.); and does early college credit impact students (i.e., creating equity, are students conceptually prepared)?
2. Is faculty/staff burnout an issue; and if yes, what impact does it have in the classroom and on faculty/staff retention?

I. Montana: Thank you, President Freeman. We'll go to agenda item VIII., Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees. For agenda item VIII.A., we have the Faculty Advisory Council to the Illinois Board of Higher Education, and I'm please to welcome Linda.

L. Saborío: Thank you very much. I'm going to report today on the October 21 meeting that we had at Benedictine University. Public university representative to the IBHE board, Jennifer Delaney, recently met with our group, the FAC's performance-based funding working group, and she encouraged engagement with the state level funding commission process, and this goes out to all of you. It is better to be part of the process of the proposal's formation rather than objecting at the end. She noted that the Illinois Commission on Equitable Funding meetings are public, and

anyone can attend and give public comment. There is only one meeting left – did they already have it, this may be late –

L. Freeman: [inaudible]

L. Saborío: Yeah – for the adequacy and resources working groups. Their reports feed the conceptual framework, the technical working group will use to model the funding and implementation of policies. And that group will be starting in January, I believe, probably in February. She once again highlighted some concerns for the CES process. The adequacy working group focused on institutional expenditures, and we have 12 different state university budgets and models. She's not sure it's in the state's interest to micromanage the funding of the state's public universities. This is coming from Jennifer, not from me. She also questions whether it is necessary to understand the institutional budgeting process in order to talk about state-level funding. If we just look at past practices, we codify existing inequitable practices. Also, a focus on expenditures may not be the right way to frame a funding formula; it can run counter to the goal of addressing equity gaps and mistakes.

L. Freeman: December 12 at noon is the next meeting of the public funding commission – December 12.

L. Saborío: Okay, thank you. She is also nervous about not being able to talk about the whole share of state funding. For example, if you pull deferred maintenance out of the funding formula to talk about what's in or out of the funding formula, that's a huge equity issue. I have to say that the other day I was walking down – this is just a side note – one of the stairs in DuSable, and the ceiling actually fell onto my head. The worst part is that water dripped into my coffee, and I had to throw it away. There was not discussion of stability in the funding productivity or whether it is possible to maintain quality at all at a lower price point. And there was no talk of affordability. Just talk about students as an income stream.

Also, there was no direct tie to social benefits, no mention of non-market things like research – a lot of concern in our FAC group about research. Higher ed is not just about producing more workers, right? We all know that. Jennifer noted that the research working group had shifted its frame a bit toward shared responsibility, state, federal and the student family. It was still narrowly focused at an institutional rather than state level – and that's all caps – STATE – I don't know why. We also need to question, as a state, whether there will be an intergenerational transfer of wealth to help pay for college. She's not sure we should maintain that assumption. It's a good point, right?

There are also competing time horizons. Universities have a sense of perpetuity with an eye on advancing knowledge, yet the funding process is annual. If we set only an annual funding formula, we need to think about funding that's predictable beyond the freshman year, because the student populations last longer than the annual funding cycle. Interesting notes.

For our guest presentation, we had Dr. Ken Newbold, the provost and chief academic officer at Benedictine University. Just a few items I wanted to share with you from Benedictine. He reflected on the two most remembered Benedictine hallmarks: hospitality and community – in the context of DEI, they're all working on diversity, equity and inclusion. They have 3,100 students on two campuses – not a lot is it? I didn't realize Benedictine was so tiny – in Lisle and Mesa, Arizona. And they have fully online programs in adult degree completion and in some undergraduate programs. A growing diversity in student populations is becoming a bigger part of the

consciousness of everything they do. So, BU is looking to diversify its hiring practices and creating spaces for hard topics like race, gender, sexual identity, attending to retention, equity and inclusion.

Some examples of what they've done: For the past six years, BU has held a one-day teach-in on social justice. And they cancel their classes to deeply engage with external and internal speakers around the topic of the day. And it's been successful. There has also been an academic affairs initiative on the hard topics that celebrate diverse interfaith community on their campus. And it's also an LGBT-friendly campus with ally training and related student organizations. More recently, a demand letter was issued by students in the Black Student Union to the president and administration, and their dialogue led to direct action that responded to these demands and concerns. One, a university-wide task force was created to respond to the letter. Two, they created a minor in African American studies with the history program. And they've hired faculty to lead this. And three, two administrative positions on DEI were added.

Let's see, what else, we had such great conversations. We also met with U.S. Representative Sean Casten. This was one of the best conversations we've had so far on the FAC, with Sean Casten, highly intelligent individual. Rep. Casten described long-time priorities for higher ed. He said, we get so constrained about what's currently available that we forget about what's necessary. How did we get here? At the core, all education is about quality, access and affordability. Not long ago, all education was ala carte, a function of one's ability to pay. A hundred years ago, there was a recognition that public education is a value, so it became universal, K-12. We quickly became the most educated country in the world, and our boom in the 1950s and '60s was from our huge competitive advantage, via universal education. Others copied us, but we no longer have the most educated workforce in the world. So, we still have to do things in the context of assuming the current system cannot change and that we can't make higher education affordable. So, Rep. Casten offered his sense of how we got to this student debt crisis. In the last 30 to 40 years, college tuition has grown faster than the rate of inflation. Most students go to public universities, but tuition costs are growing – this is what he said – because state funding hasn't kept up due to the rising cost of healthcare – interesting. It matters that we increase Medicare, etc., because it frees up state resources. But on the student debt side, there's a bigger problem. If you can't repay your loan, you can't continue to hold this loan on your assets. According to GAAP accounting rules, if you pay it off, it would show up as a windfall loss. But federal accounting rules don't have the same structure. A \$1.7 trillion asset on our federal books equals federal loan payments due. You probably shouldn't treat it as that high, because it won't all be paid. If we forgive student loans, we will increase long-term deficits, but we already know we're not going to get it all back. So, Biden's loan forgiveness is targeted to those who can't repay. It's not going to cost taxpayers \$400 billion; we already owe it. If we can talk about our accounting [inaudible], then we can talk about our politics better. And then there were a lot of questions and answers after our discussion with Rep. Casten; I'm not going to read them all to you, it's a lot.

The working groups, really quickly, we report out. Early College/Online Remote Learning Working Group: Amy reported that, by the November meeting, the members were going to drop their Student Bill of Rights dream list, naming potential benefits and potential costs of early college coursework.

The Equity Working Group: They're going to present at the IBHE Board meeting in March a set of tools and resources, focusing on three main areas from a faculty perspective: hiring (recruiting and cluster hiring); faculty retention and support (mentoring programs); and curriculum and pedagogy resources. Interesting, right?

For Student Debt and Affordability Working Group: We're not quite sure what direction to take at this point. We reached out to Senator Murphy about the Illinois Promise program to see if she has plans to resubmit the bill. We didn't hear back from her, as far as I know. That's too bad, right? We spoke about the question of diversity, but at the last meeting in November, I don't have the report for that yet, it looks like we're going to try to produce maybe just a one-page resource paper that we can hand out in May to different representatives about higher education as an investment, trying to shift that narrative from it's about job placement, into the idea that it offers more as an investment. That's kind of the direction we're taking. Because we didn't hear back from Senator Murphy, we're not quite sure how to move forward with all of our research on student debt and affordability.

For the Private Caucus: Angela reported that they spoke once again about faculty workload. Faculty face a broadening group of responsibilities, including more administrative work. Two schools are making this a priority this year. How does this look different from institution to institution? And she said it's good to get a sense across disciplines and institutions on what counts toward load and what faculty workload looks like.

Public Caucus: Dan reported that in response to our request about dual credit questions, many are finding our institutions don't keep that data or they're not seeing the benefit in collecting it or sharing it. We will go back to ask about early college credit in general and see whether we can get info about how many types of credit are transferring in for first-year students.

We talked about faculty burnout as well. I wanted to read something to you. I did get a response from the question I posed on faculty burnout, but they asked to remain anonymous, of course. I'm just going to read just a few sentences from some of the responses to respect their anonymity.

"Our evaluation systems are sensitive to decreases in performance in a given year, so it feels like very little grace is available to me when I have a bad semester or year. This causes me to wonder about whether this is the career path for me."

Another one said, "Yes, given the impossible circumstances of the material conditions faculty are working and living through, burnout is real since the expectations of faculty success have not shifted to be more thoughtful about such conditions."

And the last one was, "Yes, in the classroom I've seen burnout lead to faculty being less prepared, less engaged with students and having less patience."

The other day I had students in my office, and I had to ask, "Do you have a question about the homework?" If not, can you please leave? They were talking about something else, I don't know what. So, this concludes my report. If anybody has any questions for me, or if you have anything you'd like to share with me about dual credit. I didn't get any responses about dual credit, so [inaudible] not saying it is a big issue on this campus.

L. Freeman: Can I just ask one question?

L. Saborío: Yes.

L. Freeman: Is the Faculty Advisory Council, in their conversation on debt and investment, thinking about expressing an opinion about [AIM HIGH pilot program](#)?

L. Saborío: I have to look into that. That the Illinois – it's a state

L. Freeman: It's a state program that has actually benefited most of the public universities, and it's in its final year of the pilot.

L. Saborío: Would that be something Senator Murphy might know about, because she did not reply. We're going to try again reaching out to her.

L. Freeman: I think all of our legislators would know about it. And [ISAC](#) has published three detailed, non-partisan reports on the outcomes of AIM HIGH, so I would just encourage the FAC to look at those and form their own opinion. But it's a program that has had a lot of benefit for public universities, and it certainly has a ton of benefit for our students.

L. Saborío: Any discussions about whether – so you're not sure if they're going to continue.

L. Freeman: You never know what the legislature is going to do.

L. Saborío: Something we could definitely include in our discussions down in Springfield in May. A few years ago, we did have a white paper – it was a one-page flyer – about investing in higher ed. It was 2019, I think, when we had the budget impasse. But it's always good to remind them that we are here and we're not going away.

L. Freeman: AIM HIGH was created with bipartisan legislation, to try to make up the impasse to us.

L. Saborío: And, have they made up?

L. Freeman: It's helped a lot.

L. Saborío: I saw a hand go up. Did you have a question?

H. Morgan: I actually have a lot of feedback for your first two questions when you sent that out the other day, because I was a student who came here with 30-something credits that I got in high school. There are pros and cons. The pros are really that students have something to fall back on. credit-wise, if they change their major. That was me, I changed my major two years into my time here, and I was really scared that I would have to stay another couple years to finish it out. But thankfully I had a lot of college credit that I could fall back on. Additionally, students have opportunities to further their college education, especially in relation to financial hardships. I know I wouldn't be able to afford to go to any university after four years. So, having that extra credit to fall back on again really helps.

But there are cons, because not every student has the same access to early college opportunities. I was really lucky to go to an awesome school district that had these opportunities, but that's not really equitable across the state. Also, it loses program interest here, because if students have already taken those classes in high school, they have no need to continue taking those same

programs, so that might lose need. And then also, NIU loses revenue from students graduating earlier because of those credits.

I have more for the second question, but I can wait, because that was a lot.

L. Saborío: I'm jotting it down, taking notes. Did you feel after completing those credits as if you were capable?

H. Morgan: Yes, especially because I did language courses. And I felt like coming into college, I had a lot better grip and understanding of the language; and I felt more prepared to tackle the harder material.

L. Saborío: You're talking about Spanish, right?

H. Morgan: And German. I took Spanish and German in high school. For the second one, I kind of had personal experiences, especially with my professors this year. I've really noticed burnout and specifically during the negotiations between the faculty. I had a lot of professors that were a part of that, a part of the potential protest, and I really noticed a lack of motivation to continue showing up to class. I felt like they were very unprepared in the material. And it kind of led to un-updated syllabi. I never really knew what was going to be due, because everything was changing weekly. A lack of grading on time, didn't know my grades, as well, because these professors were unmotivated to continue to grade things in a decent time. And then also, there was a lot of poor communication with students from my faculty that I noticed burnout with, just because, again, I didn't know when things were due, because of the un-updated syllabi.

From a staff perspective, because I also work a lot with staff, I've had a lot of staff say there's a lack of appreciation from both students and the university side. They feel like they're doing a lot of work for nothing and that they're going through a lot of hard experiences just for no thank-you in the end. And that the end of the semester is always going to be tough to finish, but they said that specifically this year it really feels like they're pulling through. Thank you. Do you have any questions?

L. Saborío: No, I just want to say thank you for sharing them. I'm sorry you had that experience, but thank you. I didn't actually kick the students out of my office; they were having a discussion about what they were going to do that weekend, and it had been an hour. They came back the next day, so it was okay.

I. Montana: Any other questions for Linda? Or comments?

L. Saborío: Or comments, that would be great.

I. Montana: Well, you can always email Linda if you have questions.

L. Saborío: I'm glad we had some input.

I. Montana: Absolutely.

L. Saborío: Absolutely. Thank you everyone. Have a great afternoon.

I. Montana: Thank you.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report
Felicia Bohanon, Holly Nicholson, Ismael Montana
Katy Jaekel, Greg Beyer, Brad Cripe

I. Montana: Okay, we'll move to agenda item VIII.B., and this is University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees. And this committee is comprised of Felicia Bohanon, Holly Nicholson, myself, Katy Jaekel, Brad Cripe and Greg Beyer. I will offer just a few updates from the last Board of Trustees meeting that took place on November 10. And then I invite my colleagues if they have anything they would like to add.

The Board of Trustees committees met on November 10, and one of the highlights from the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee was the approval of the university recommendation of Dr. George Middlemist, who has accepted the university's offer, and President Freeman has already mentioned that during her university goals presentation. As many of you know, this acceptance followed the national search that resulted in his hire, and the board had a special session to recommend his hire effective January 16. And he is expected to join NIU as part of our Huskie family, so that's something we all anticipate and are looking forward to welcoming him.

The committee also approved the university recommendation for one faculty tenure and promotion at the rank of associate professor with tenure in the Department of Interdisciplinary Health Professions. As a result of this recommendation and approval of the board, Dr. Andrew Notebaert will serve as the director of the Ph.D. program in the College of Health and Human Sciences.

The two other committees of the Board of Trustees, RILLA or Research, Innovation, Legal and Legislative Affairs Committee and FACFO, Finance, Audit, Compliance, Facilities and Operations Committee featured several university reports, including one from Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey on a partnership exploration agreement between NIU and U.S. Geological Research. There were also reports/presentation from Dr. Courtney Gallaher, NIU's sustainability coordinator, who gave the sustainability report about NIU plans for campus environmental sustainability.

Other agenda items of interest were several reports under review of 14 academic programs and four university centers. There was also an informational report on the use of a search firm concerning the position of vice president for research and innovation partnerships. As many of you know, our current vice president for research and innovation partnerships, Dr. Jerry Blazey, is slated to retire at the end of June.

Before I defer to my UAC colleagues, one thing I would like to add is the board's annual review of President Freeman. The trustees discussed the president's annual review process and unanimously expressed confidence and appreciation in President Freeman's leadership and her continuing efforts in her goals for the university, part of which we have just witnessed. And I want to ask everyone to please join me in thanking President Freeman.

Colleagues? I see Holly, I see Felicia. Greg is here. Brad is here. Anyone who would like to add anything, please feel free to add anything.

G. Beyer: Greg Beyer, representing the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Thank you for your report, Ismael. Just a point of clarification, I double-checked on the website; I don't serve on this committee.

P. Erickson: I'll own that typo.

I. Montana: I realized that, and I tried to

G. Beyer: Well, I will say I miss you all; it was a lot of fun the last few years. And I understand what RILLA and FACFO stand for. But the reason I'm standing at this microphone is because you mentioned the name of Courtney Gallaher, and I remember being really taken with her presentation to us a month ago. And I remember I had a conversation that followed in which, President Freeman, you invited her, or were making the steps to invite her, to have a conversation with the leadership in the city. And I just wanted to ask if there was any follow-up on that or if that had come to pass.

L. Freeman: I know she's had the conversation, but I don't know the outcome of that. We can certainly find out and report back to this body.

G. Beyer: That would be great. Thank you.

I. Montana: Any questions for me or for my colleagues? Great.

C. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – no report

I. Montana: So, we will move to the next agenda item, VIII. C., Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. We have no report.

D. Student Government Association – report
Raaif Majeed, President
Dallas Douglass, Speaker of the Senate

I. Montana: And the next one is agenda item VIII. D., Student Government Association, Raaif Majeed and Dallas Douglass.

R. Majeed: Hello everyone. We have a few quick things to go over. As we come to the end of the semester, the Student Government Association, specifically on the executive side, we are going over some personnel changes that we will be seeing. One big one is that our chief of staff, Corey Batz, is set to graduate, and so we have a new one coming in to take over the role of chief of staff, just preparing our staff to go into next semester, revisit the work that we've done so far this semester and see how we can be more effective in what we do in the semester coming up.

A couple of the larger things that we are working on. One of the big things that we've talked about as a university is engaging our student body and providing some sort of training and development for our students after this long period of COVID that we've gone through. That's a much larger initiative taking place through Student Affairs, and so on the ground what we're working on is reshaping how we provide recognition and elevate our student leaders across campus, and our

student organizations across campus. That is something that's going to help effectively engage our student population and something that helps with enrollment, engagement and retention. And it's very, very important. So, working on reshaping that and providing some sort of structure to that, that we can do effectively year over year is a huge thing.

Another huge thing, the Greek Life Task Force report came out a couple weeks ago, as you all may be aware. And we're incredibly excited about this, the work that was put in by the task force over the year to develop this report with input from many different parties. And so what we're doing now is engaging with Greek leaders on the ground and getting their input on the report and some of the work that's already been started from the recommendations from the report and how that will impact those leaders and those orgs specifically. And that's going to be an ongoing conversation as those changes are implemented to see what we can do to advocate for those changes and what else we need to do in order to engage that group throughout the years to come.

And another big thing we've done is over the last semester, I've had the privilege to meet with city leadership a few times, Mayor Cohen Barnes and City Manager Bill Nicklas. And we've talked a lot about the work they are doing, and the city has already done this semester, specifically in the Annie Glidden North area where our Greek Row is currently located. And they've done some infrastructure changes over the last couple of months to provide more structure and create more of an image of Greek Road and to cut off some of the roads that cut through traffic through Greek Row. And so, they're bringing about infrastructure changes throughout that area, and they're very engaged with the student body that resides in that area, getting input regularly. And so we're incredibly excited to see the changes that they've brought around and the input that they've taken in from us and the relationship that we've developed with them, it's been phenomenal.

Lastly, we talked about us engaging in shared governance a lot. Earlier this month, I had the privilege to be able to present to the Board of Trustees. I presented to them for a few minutes, and we engaged in very lengthy dialogue afterwards about the support that the student government can provide and I think that they have a renewed appreciation of the impact that their decisions have on the student body on the ground. That relationship that we've built, I'm really looking forward to keeping it up over the next years and see what we can do in order to provide them with support and stay engaged in the dialogue, which is a very, very important part of this whole process and how we move forward as a university.

That's all I have, thank you. Speaker Dallas Douglass.

D. Douglass: Thank you. Just a few more things to add. Our treasurer, Honor Morgan, is in the audience. You heard from her a second ago. To give an update on the SGA's financial situation, we had a meeting with the fee manager for our division. The three of us are all on the fee advisory group, so we were in a lot of discussions over the last few weeks about the student activity fee and how that's distributed. In meeting with our fee manager, we realized that we have – Dr. Freeman was just talking about this – we have some rollover funds from last year, a large chunk of which was unspent SGA funding that we learned we have access to. So, we are going to be proposing some kind of expenditure spreadsheets for how we might use that funding and kind of push it through the senate this Friday, hopefully, so that we can get the ball rolling on some bigger initiatives. We're looking at funding the Huskie Food Pantry. We're looking at maybe a leadership conference to encourage growth and development within our own ranks. Ways to spend that funding that are equitable and responsible and benefit the student body.

On a similar vein, on my side of things, I'm graduating in May, so I'm thinking about my legacy in SGA. It's been a long four years, and I want to make sure that this organization stays as strong as it can for as long as it can and serves the student body in the best and most fair way. So, to that end, I'm working on a lot of internal changes. There are going to be some structural changes to how the two branches work together, rather than oppose each other. The first step is going to be a policy that comes up this Friday to the senate the introduces, essentially, an accountability policy. It's HR. SGA's been around for 50 years, and the only accountability procedures that we have are us pointing our fingers at each other and saying you're not doing your job, which I've noticed has been very ineffective, shockingly, I know. So, we're putting myself and a few of my best leaders in the senate are putting a lot of thought and effort into kind of reimagining how we do things to ensure sustainability within SGA.

And those are the major updates from my end. Any questions for either of us?

M. Falkoff: I'll just mention that we have some students in the law school, who are thinking about accountability kind of measures along the lines you're talking about, and introducing alternative dispute kinds of approaches to dealing with issues. So, they're talking about similar issues to what you're talking about. So, if you're interested, I can put you in touch with them.

D. Douglass: Yes, that would be great. Thank you.

P. Kassel: Paul Kassel, Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts. I'm wondering if some of the discussion about a funding distribution involves the Campus Activities Board. I think it would be very important to coordinate – I've been working very hard with VP Clint-Michael Reneau and with the Campus Activities Board to make sure that we're working together in planning programming. I've been in conversation about bringing a couple comedians here from Saturday Night Live in February. So, I want to make sure that that I'm in that loop, please, somehow so that we're working together about bringing the best and brightest talent we can here to campus.

D. Douglass: Yes, thank you. That's exciting to hear about the comedians. I hope that those plans are achievable. That sounds really cool.

P. Kassel: [inaudible]

D. Douglass: Awesome. Hey, hot ticket entertainers really mean a lot for students, I can tell you that. The first thing that we did after this meeting is we went to the CAB office and said, we can give you funding. So, rest assured, we are working with CAB. That's actually something that I'm interested in is making sure that we're not reinventing the wheel every year with both of us doing the same thing, trying to integrate our offices a little bit more, being in the same place helps. But, yes, we are definitely working with CAB and with Dr. Reneau, of course, as well.

Any further questions from anyone? Okay, thank you.

I. Montana: Thank you.

E. Operating Staff Council – Holly Nicholson, President – report

I. Montana: Okay, we'll move on to agenda item VII. E., Operating Staff Council. Holly, any report?

H. Nicholson: I actually don't have a report.

I. Montana: All right, thank you.

F. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Felicia Bohanon, President – report

I. Montana: And then, our next agenda item is VIII. F., Supportive Professional Staff Council, Felicia Bohanon.

F. Bohanon: We do not have a report.

I. Montana: Okay.

IX. 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 2022-23 dates: Nov 30, Feb 1, Mar 1, Apr 5, May 3

I. Montana: So, with that, we come to informational items, and there is reference to minutes that you can access at your leisure. The only thing of note is that today is the last meeting of this body for this semester. And next semester, spring semester, the first meeting for University Council will be February 1, 2023.

X. ADJOURNMENT

I. Montana: And with that, I will entertain a motion to adjourn today's meeting. But before I do that, I also want to join President Freeman and wish everyone a wonderful holiday season ahead, and let's not forget to take time and do any and every self-care. We heard from Linda's pre-circulated question, one of those questions had to do with burnout. There are so many reasons that cause those burnouts, and there are so many ways we can minimize that burnout.

P. Kassel: I've got one. This Sunday at 3 o'clock [inaudible] the jazz and the choir are bringing in the holidays [inaudible] Steam it or come live. I highly recommend it. It's quite a [inaudible].

I. Montana: Thank you, Dean Kassel. So, with that, I will entertain a motion to adjourn the meeting. We have Morgan. Second?

D. Douglass: Second.

I. Montana: Great, thank you very much. Meeting is adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.