

TRANSCRIPT

University Council
Wednesday, January 31, 2024, 3 p.m.
Altgeld Hall 315
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Beyer, Birch, Bohanon, Elish-Piper, English, Falkoff, Hartman, Howell, Johnson, Larkin, Martin, Middlemist, Monteiro, Morris, Myung, Njue, O’Grady, Phares, Pitney, Reneau (for Freeman), Richter, Stoker, Vaughn, Walther, Ziarati

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Freeman, Hensley, Sutcliffe

OTHERS PRESENT: Arado, Bryan, Creed, González, Heckmann, Kettering, Kruse, Sumner

I. CALL TO ORDER

B. Creed: I would like to call to order today’s University Council meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2024.

Meeting called to order at 3 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

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

P. Erickson: We do have a quorum.

B. Creed: Great.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

B. Creed: If I could have a motion to adopt the agenda for today’s meeting. First, Birch. Second Taylor. All in favor, please say aye?

Members: Aye.

B. Creed: All opposed. Great, we have an agenda.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2023, MINUTES

B. Creed: Item IV is the approval of the December 6, 2023 minutes. Do I have a motion to approve the minutes? Pitney. A second? Taylor. Can we have discussion about the minutes, any edits, comments, corrections? Hearing none, all those in favor of approving the December 6, 2023 minutes, please signify by saying aye.

Members: Opposed. Abstentions.

Unidentified: Abstain.

B. Creed: Thank you. Sorry, I should have given space for that. Looks like our minutes are approved.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

B. Creed: Pat, do we have any requests for public comment?

P. Erickson: No public comment today.

B. Creed: Great, thank you.

VI. NIU PRESIDENT LISA FREEMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Budget and Planning Update

B. Creed: And that will bring us to item VI, which is President Freeman's announcements. And with us today for that is Provost Elish-Piper.

L. Elish-Piper: Thank you. I just have a couple quick announcements. The first one is that the State of the University address has been moved because of the remote day for weather. So, I want to let you know that's going to be Tuesday, Feb. 8, at 2 p.m. in Altgeld auditorium. President Freeman and Faculty Senate President Ben Creed will be having a conversation about the state of the university and the 2024 university goals. So, we're hopeful that you'll be able to attend that State of the University session.

Also, want to let you know that our spring enrollment 10-day count came in. Overall, we're down about one percent in enrollment compared to where we were last spring. Our undergraduate enrollment is up, we're very excited about that. Our graduate enrollment is down a bit. But we're very excited about the undergraduate enrollment. We're up a total of seven students from where we were last year. But as we all know, every student counts. So, thank you to all of you for all you've done to support student success and student re-enrollment.

And also hope that everyone's spring semester is off to a great start. It doesn't feel like spring, but I suspect by the end of the semester, it will. Thank you.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

B. Creed: That brings us to item VII, which is New Business, which we have none listed.

VIII. ITEMS FOR UNIVERSITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION

A. Normal Road Closure

George Middlemist
Vice President of Administration and Finance/Financial Officer

John Heckmann
Associate Vice President, Facilities Management and Campus Services

B. Creed: So, that brings us to item VIII, which is a conversation about Normal Road closure. We've invited CFO George Middlemist and Associate Vice President John Heckmann to present and then entertain questions from the group.

G. Middlemist: I want to thank everybody for inviting us to talk about the Normal Road closure. I'm going to hand it off to John to kind of work through the mechanics, because he really understands that a little bit better. And then we only have like three slides, so we want to really save time for questions, comments, concerns, so we can have a conversation about the process for closing Normal Road, and then to address any other questions or concerns that you all have. So, with that, I'm going to hand it over to John to walk through what transpired over the summer with the City, and we'll go from there.

J. Heckmann: Good afternoon, everyone. Just to refresh everyone's memory that, yes, this is about Normal Road closure and specifically the concerns and comments that we've gotten about Swen Parson in particular, because that's one of the prominent buildings that was most impacted by the closure of the road, of course.

Let me just go over a few points. The City approached us last spring sometimes – I don't have a specific date in mind right now – and floated the idea of closing Normal. And it was tied in combination with their approach to re-envision how the intersection of Lucinda and Normal would look. They were looking to make some improvements on that intersection and thought about putting in a roundabout. And then their further thoughts evolved to, well, what about Normal? Wouldn't it be nice to have the campus more consolidated, not having a major thoroughfare go through the middle of campus. So, they brought that idea forward, discussed it with us a little bit and after some internal discussions, we said, yea, that sounds like a good idea. So, we continued vetting the idea, both internally and with the City. The City brought the issue in front of their City Council in late June, had initially proposed the idea in a general manner, no specific timelines. And then after that meeting, they got into more discussions about, well what if we actually temporarily closed the road that summer, which would have been last summer, of course, and tried out this closure period for a good year before they could anticipate actually making the renovations on the intersection of Normal, Lucinda or even attempting to more permanently close the road a little farther down the timeline. And that's what transpired at the next City Council meeting. They proposed actually closing Normal Road before the semester would start in August, and a date was summarily chosen

that would be most convenient for the campus and for the city to make that happen. And again, before the students came back to campus so they could find this – if I can say it this way – the new Normal for the middle of campus with the road being closed that way.

And so that was the rough timeline that was anticipated. It gave the campus an opportunity to start re-envisioning what the center of campus could be, what the MLK Commons could be, how we could use that space for event purposes and other reasons besides just being a thoroughfare down the middle of the campus. It gave an opportunity for the campus to actually put a focus on pedestrians more so than on vehicles and enhance that overall center of campus feel.

We knew there were going to be some impacts. We knew there were impacts to the bus routes, and we had to talk to the City in determining how impacted bus routes would be rethought, reconfigured and worked on in a different manner. We knew there would be just different commuting patterns, different access to buildings and things like that. And that's why, as we went through the summer, and the City Council made their decisions, we followed up with announcements to campus. And those announcements did generate some questions that came forward, and we worked through the concerns that various groups had and started making some accommodations. We knew very well that we weren't going to think of all the consequences at the time, and there very well would be some afterthoughts that we would have afterward.

Actually, with the opportunity to have a board meeting in August, we shared with the board what transpired over the summer and explained to them this opportunity with the City of rethinking the center of campus. Our Board of Trustees found that to be a wonderful idea and continued to support the idea going forward. And we tried to give them a vision of, this isn't just a put a barrier on one end of the street and a barrier on the other end. We wanted to eventually transform the space so it looked and felt like it fit in with the overall sense of the campus.

So, we tried a couple of visuals on the bottom of the screen there of what it might eventually look like. Bring in some more green space, but still make it an event space that could be accommodated. And speaking of event space, there were efforts throughout the summer and through the fall as the weather cooperated to bring in food trucks. And I think that was a very nice opportunity to have engagement by students and faculty and staff with those food truck congregations that came. I think we tried to have those weekly throughout the fall.

So, that was the timetable, and where do we go from here then? There are some design considerations of what do we have the space actually look like in the long term. How do we transform it so it doesn't just look like a temporarily closed street? And I know that's what it looks like right now, I can fully appreciate that. This is something that we're going to have to continue to work with the City to transform. I should have made a point earlier that, if you weren't aware, this is a city street. So, it's not something that NIU can just unilaterally dictate what we want to do here. So, it was something that we worked in partnership with the City. And as they have money available for the transformation of the intersection at Lucinda or the transformation of the closed section of Normal, we'll have to work within their timelines and available funding, of course.

It is going to stem from that roundabout at Lucinda. We're looking for an opportunity to, instead of having a four-way intersection, having it just three-way and then, how do you blend in the rest of the campus to start from that intersection and not have it look like just a closed street, like I said. We talked about having access for emergency vehicles. How do you make sure that, when

necessary, should the worst thing happen and we need to bring a firetruck up that street or up that alleyway, how do we accommodate that. So, that needs to be one of those considerations as we work through final design features.

And how do we enhance sustainability? Being an obvious focus for the university, how do we turn that green space into something that is going to be more sustainable in the future, and it's not just more pavement upon pavement? And then lastly, as I mentioned before, the food trucks. How do we turn it into a space that can be used for events and engagements like that. This has not been ironed out. Nothing's been set in stone as how that future vision's going to be. But now's the time we're going to start to get serious with the City on how do we start to transform that street now that we've had a few months, at least last fall, to try to experiment a little bit, to say, how do we use this space and what should it look like moving forward.

So, let me pause there and see what questions that we can help answer at this point.

M. Falkoff: Hi, Marc Falkoff, law school, located in Swen Parson. I guess just a few things. I personally am agnostic about whether this is a good idea. I have no idea. It sounds like it might be great. It does seem as if it came out of nowhere. One day we were just informed that this was closed off with no consultation whatsoever and maybe by virtue of the announcement, it was inviting consultation? But even then, I don't feel like there's really been any significant input. So, I don't love the process, personally.

And then, some concerns that I don't think you articulated, but I know there are persons with disabilities who have had difficulty in our building with accessing rides, because of the closure of the street, which seems quite serious. I know that there is a Brinks truck that has to go to the Bursar's Office that ends up parking in bizarre kinds of places. I know that's kind of an issue. I would just mention those. I know my colleague, Therese Clarke is not here, but I think she has more issues. But I'll just toss those out, thanks.

T. Arado: I'm here, Marc.

G. Middlemist: I appreciate that feedback. If I can just react to a couple of those of things. First, as John and I visited before the meeting, I don't normally do this, but I felt like I really needed to be prepared for today, so we walked through questions we probably might get. And as I started thinking about the issues that were really seemingly to me here – there were two that jumped out at me. One was communication, how we communicated, how we received information. I think we have learned a lot on how we can do better next time. Unfortunately, hindsight's always 20/20. I think that we fell into a situation where – I like to use analogies – when my kids were little and they wanted to do something, if I didn't think it was a particularly good idea, my answer was usually, you know, I would love for you to go to your friend's house, but Mom says no. And if they went to Mom, she usually did, you know I would love for you to go to your friend's house, but Dad says no. And so, I think we ran into that a little bit here. The City came to us and they asked us, do we want to close Normal Road. And I think that we weren't as active or participatory, because we were letting them be Mom or Dad. And I think if you go to the City, they would say the same thing about us, so, we were just trying to accommodate NIU. I think we could have done a much better job communicating at the beginning about what we were thinking about doing with the City. And we're beholding to the City's process, so the City had hearings to talk about this – to have announced when those hearings were so people could get feedback to maybe even have worked with the city to

bring them on to campus. I think the timing also fell at a really bad communications timing. It came in the summer when faculty aren't here and students aren't here. And so, could we have worked with the City to say, hey, we love the thoughts that you're bringing to us, but the timing's not

perfect. Can we think about how we do this? So, those are all lessons learned. It doesn't address the Normal Road issue, because we didn't communicate as well as I think I could have communicated to campus. And so, there's that.

The other issue is accessibility. That's something that I don't think that we want to – we can't make light of that. Accessibility to our buildings is really, really important, and I'm learning that accessibility at NIU's campus has some challenges, because the buildings are old. For Swen Parson, really the accessible spaces are right off of Normal Road; and so how do we either open up some more or address that. And one of the things that came to me as I was thinking about all this is also that you're really encouraging people when you have accommodation needs, to work with HR to put those forward so we can really document those, to think about what are the right strategies that we can employ. One of my teammates shared with me that we used to have a thing called the pup ride, which I think some of the people who have been here a while know about. It was to help people get from buildings. And it wasn't a phenomenal success. But as we get more information about needs that our community members have, we can begin to make some informed decisions. Do we open up another door to be accessible in Swen Parson? We never let cost be a reason why we don't do something, but we have to figure out what's the right place, how do we do that. Having only two really accessible places, do we need to have a third or a fourth that makes it a little easier for people. We worked through some of the parking challenges with the parking lot at Davis. And so, how can we maybe leverage that. I don't know that we have all the answers for that right now. But it's something that we are trying to work through. And having people, not just in Swen Parson, but anywhere that had challenges that have accommodation needs, to fill out those requests to HR so we can begin to make the campus a little bit more accessible for everybody.

T. Hartman: I'm happy that we've already started talking about this, because I'm part of the Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities here on campus, and we've had a few comments that there are barriers on campus. And we've had requests to deal with those. We've gotten those requests to handle the barriers, and we've been listening to what people are saying, and it's more like, oh well, I'm sorry, but right now this is the new normal, and we have to follow these new procedures. And I'm thinking about, and it doesn't feel very accommodating to people with disabilities. So, those of you who are in Swen Parson Hall, you know that they've been doing renovations at the building there. In the front, the door on Normal Road, that's where the renovations have started, right in the front, and it's closed. And so that means the accessibility for people in the building has been impacted. And so, I've been wondering about that. How are we going to handle that?

I've also been wondering about the community itself, because we need to have a transportation access study done, an accessibility study done, to see how people can better access these buildings as something that we really need before we make permanent changes and see what happens.

G. Middlemist: I appreciate that, thank you.

N. Johnson: Natasha Johnson, president of the Operating Staff Council. I think it's important for me to stand up too, because we've had several discussions at the Operating Staff Council where many people were also feeling like you just came out of where – where was this happening. And I

would say, if this is something that we are definitely moving forward with, maybe there could be some kind of buy-in on what kind of space goes in between, because people also talked about the accessibility to the library. I just wanted to at least let other people know that multiple people – we had to cut discussions because they weren't moving forward – but multiple people said they sent things to President Freeman, into also, I believe you, as well, that they didn't know this was happening and they were very concerned about it. Thank you.

G. Middlemist: Thank you.

T. Arado: I am Therese Arado. I am also a resident of Swen Parson, and I think everyone here, at least up here, knows my name. I appreciate, John, you said there was communication going on, but on August 8, we received the email that the road was closing on August 11. Thank you, we needed more communication before that, because I read the Chronicle, I saw that a roundabout was in consideration. My thoughts on roundabouts – different story. We got nothing. There was nothing campus-wide to anybody I asked or spoke to afterward about knowing this was happening, to the point where multiple people were like, yea, that's not going to happen. And then Friday came, and boom, there were these barriers.

I gave that two months and thought, we're going to see how this works. Food trucks, fabulous idea, fabulous. Shut the road down and have food truck once a week, fabulous idea. I then sent a message, and this is where the issue with me comes from in transparency. I sent a message to multiple people laying out, not my irritations – because there are a lot of things about it that irritated me – but not my irritations, but the accessibility issues, the suddenness with this. I don't know how many people in the room park in the parking garage. It has become dangerous trying to leave the parking garage because of the way the traffic pattern has been sent. The sidewalks that are crumbling because the trucks are going over them, creating more accessibility issues. And I sent this, and I got no response. And that's really where a level of frustration has come from, except from Ben Creed, who has been fabulous. Thank you, Ben, for responding and providing information.

This is a major change to campus. It has lots of good benefits to it, but it also has a lot of things that have to be worked through. And to ask the people who are directly impacted, who go down that road every day. And we've seen new adventures in the past three weeks between ice skating rinks and ski slopes and all of that. And to talk to us; I mean, we are in the building, Swen Parson, unfortunately, that is most directly impacted, because we have no accessible entrance to get to without going over an icy sidewalk. I've watched firetrucks come down the road because, unfortunately, or fortunately, my window faces it. And the fireperson had to get out of the truck, move the barrier, to keep going. And you've mentioned that, I know. But these are serious issues to those of us who spend our days in the buildings that are right there, and we see it every day.

And to have gotten no response or as was indicated here, well, let's see, it's the new Normal, let's see what happens – very frustrating. And when we're in an era of where we're trying to be more transparent and we're trying to share information, that is absolutely necessary. And to take what people here are saying and show that it's heard and put something in to help alleviate these pain points. It's not going to make the road reopen, I'm very well aware of that. But, can we all work together to make it something we can all enjoy and live with. I appreciate that.

G. Middlemist: Thank you, Therese.

W. Vaughn: Hello, I'm Wendy Vaughn. I'm also from Swen Parson, College of Law, and I have the best spot. I have this great reserved spot. This affects me not at all. I get right in and I have a bad knee and I don't have to walk very far. But the other day, I saw this woman, who works in Swen Parson, with a walker. And she was an elderly woman, employee, public servant. Not only did she have to walk all the way from the parking garage down Normal Road to the far end where she works in Swen Parson, but she also had this icy path. The one sidewalk there just really had a lot of icy patches, and she was struggling quite a bit, and I asked her if I could help her. We were going to sort of a similar place, which is an elevator that's in Swen Parson, and as the two of us made our way there, by the time we got to the elevator, we discovered that the elevator was broken. She then had to walk all the way through Swen Parson to the other elevator down by the College of Law faculty suite to go up to the second floor to then traverse the entire distance of Swen Parson back to where she worked. I think this is probably an example of someone who is struggling every day just to get to her job. I really like the idea of what you alluded to the pup mobile. And I'm thinking about whenever I go to one of these craft fairs or big arenas, there are these volunteers running around in little golf carts ferrying people to and from. We've got to do better. It's still winter.

We have staff and people trying to get to their studies. I had a student email me the other morning. She said that she was walking to class, she slipped on the ice, she hit her head on the sidewalk, she tore her pants, she had to go home and change and then try to do it all over again. It's not okay. I think we have to think about public safety and what we're doing in response to these wintery, icy conditions and try to think of ways to help people get to where they need to go, because we have staff, we have students, we faculty.

And guess what else we have – visitors. People are coming to check us out thinking about whether they should send their kids here or do they, themselves, want to come here. We're also trying to recruit all kinds of people to work here because, for some reason, people keep leaving and we can't replace them fast enough. They also have to get from the visitor parking place to wherever it is they need to go. So, I really like the idea of thinking about some kind of design that allows these little mobiles to drive around and get people to where they need to go. And I think we need to do something in the short term while we're thinking this through so that the woman who works in Swen Parson and has a walker can get to where she needs to go.

D. Phares: Hello, I'm DeeAnna Phares from the University Libraries. A sort of issue about accessibility because of the closure, now our patrons can't actually access the book drops. They would have to walk to them. So, people who are returning a lot of books – and lots of people do have a lot of books on our campus – it now means going all the way to the front of the library, and that's pretty cumbersome.

One of the concerns that I personally have is about safety concerns, in general. I think not having a north/south thoroughfare is potentially complicated in terms of police and other emergency vehicles being able to get to other places around campus, and so having to do a little bit of a jog around. Also, some concerns about the roundabout. Since a lot of people struggle with the rules of a roundabout, having lived abroad and seeing how people use them, people struggle with those. And so, if we're concerned about safety of pedestrians, safety of people in vehicles, there are some concerns there. The other issue, too, is, because we have this closure, it is now forcing people down First Street and Annie Glidden. And so, there is significantly increased traffic since that's happened. And so, now we have also more students living across that road, and it's often sort of dangerous, especially at night. One of the things I worry about when I'm coming back from teaching in the evening is this increased traffic, not great visibility and more students. So, I just want to make sure

that, when we're looking at these things, really trying to make sure that the people on this campus are safe, but also the people who are driving through campus are safe, and so thinking through those considerations. Thanks.

G. Middlemist: Thank you.

F. Bryan: I want to follow up on that thought about safety. One of the consequences I did not hear you address, but I've certainly noticed, is that there is a greater amount of traffic on Gilbert just because of the lack of north/south routes. To me, that is a bigger safety issue given that that's a major residence hall between other major buildings that students traverse a lot. And I've seen that when I go that direction. Is there some consideration for increased safety at Gilbert?

G. Middlemist: I appreciate that too.

G. Beyer: Greg Beyer, College of Visual and Performing Arts and specifically the School of Music. I want to thank everyone for this amazing conversation and the really thoughtful comments. My comments are of a parallel nature, but concerning a related, but different road closure, specifically the fact that the bridge over the Kishwaukee River immediately to the east of the School of Music has been closed. And when this happened, again without any warning or without mention that this would happen, I became aware of it at first, not because of the closure, but because several cars came into the north lot of the School of Music and proceeded to continue down the walkway on the east side of the School of Music to get to the other side, because they were confused. They saw the road closure and rather than stop and turn around and go back down the road that's in between Gilbert and the Art Building, they literally drove their cars down the sidewalk. If there had been pedestrians there, that could have been extremely problematic and would be a liability for the university for sure.

That bridge was closed, and we all heard about that and knew that was coming last summer. And it was closed for longer than anyone anticipated, but they did open it again. But this most recent closure, I didn't see any notification regarding that. And furthermore, and this is a comment that has a similar resonance with some of the comments that have already been made, we have several visitors coming. This weekend is the first weekend of auditions at the School of Music, and we'll have families and parents and people trying to get to the building to audition for us. When that road is in a real state of disrepair with roads blocked on both sides, not only does it create similar traffic issues – I've seen an incredible amount of traffic going down that road between Gilbert and the School of Music, as a result of that closure and the other closure, and that road is crumbling as a result on both ends; I think you've probably seen that too. But it doesn't really send the right kind of message, I think, for visiting families too. Because this is recruiting season, this is a timely issue, and I wanted to bring it to your attention in parallel with this, because it's obviously a related concern. Thank you.

G. Middlemist: I appreciate that. We'll let the City know on that one.

B. Creed: I have one question. I'm just curious to know, John, you mentioned a communication plan going forward. I'm just curious if there are any details that you're willing to share, or are able to share, at this moment, about how you're going to continue communicating with campus or bringing information in from campus or out to campus?

J. Heckmann: That's a very good question. I think this has given myself an opportunity to think how do we facilitate more discussion as we go forward with the evolution of the closed section of Normal. We need to get into more discussions with the City. They've been focused on bridges and on the intersection projects as the first [inaudible] of their efforts along Lucinda before they can focus on the closure of Normal. So, as we get into some discussions and we throw out some options, we'll find some venues that we can come back and say, hey, here's what's being talked about, here's what's being considered. And maybe coming back to one of these sessions would be a good opportunity to collect some feedback on the ideas that are being vetted.

B. Creed: I speak on behalf of the University Council, I think this would be a great venue for it. And even over the summer, while we are not all on contract, there are mechanisms for UC to meet over the summer to hold those meetings as an other point of communication. I'm sure you're not as familiar with our bylaws as I am, but there are those mechanisms. So, even if it's off the academic calendar, this body can still meet. And still thinking through along the ways of how the campus can help you inform in those conversations with the City and to elevate those concerns from campus. I think, clearly, there's demand here to be a part of that conversation or share our perspectives so that it can be advocated for on behalf of the university campus.

Are there any other questions or comments on this topic?

G. Middlemist: I really appreciate everybody's candor and feedback. It is how we learn and grow. And so I can think of things differently. We tend to go along the same patterns that we always go into, and so this challenges us sometimes, and I really appreciate that. And, Therese, if I was one of the people that didn't reply to an email you sent, you have my deepest apologies. And you can always, anybody can always nudge me if I haven't replied to an email. It probably means I read it on my phone and forgot to mark it "unread" and it's gone forever in the pile. But I take email really, really seriously; so if I ever don't respond to an email, please nudge me, because it just means that I read it and I moved on to the next email and didn't think clearly enough to unread it. Everybody have an amazing semester. I'm excited for the spring semester and all that we have before us.

B. Creed: Thank you both, and I appreciate your willingness to come and have the conversation and listen; so, thank you.

IX. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – no report
Linda Saborío, NIU Representative to FAC-IBHE

B. Creed: That brings us to item IX, Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees. We have no report from the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE.

- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report
Felicia Bohanon, Natasha Johnson, Ben Creed
Larissa Garcia, Karen Whedbee, Brad Cripe

B. Creed: For the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, it's a very quick report. For those who were there, if there's something else you'd like to add, please feel free. The main point of conversation of note here is that President Freeman shared the university goals to the Board of Trustees, and the Board of Trustees approved those goals, the focus of efforts university-wide for the upcoming year. You can see that as part of the Board of Trustees report that's on the website.

- C. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee –no report
Marc Falkoff, Chair

B. Creed: There's no report from Rules, Governance and Elections Committee.

- D. Student Government Association – report
Chris English, Deputy Speaker of the Senate
Landon Larkin, SGA Treasurer

B. Creed: And from Student Government Association, I saw Chris. Will you do a report?

C. English: Hello, I'm Chris English. I'm representing the Student Government Association, specifically the legislative side of it. Our biggest update is that this Friday, we will be having our State of the Senate talk. If you're interested in what we're doing in more detail, we'll be doing that in, I believe Carl Sandburg. We are also working toward getting ready for annual funding renewal; so, we're reaching out to all of the student organizations and making sure their constitutions are up to date and they are following all the bylaws, making sure they're compliant in that aspect. If you know anyone who would be a good position for student justices, we're still looking for student justices for the student supreme court. So, please send your students our way, and we'll look forward to getting them in. And that's it.

B. Creed: Chris, is there an option to watch the State of the Student Government Association online, or is it just in person in Carl Sandburg.

C. English: I'm not quite certain, but I can work to try to get it online, as well.

B. Creed: Thank you.

G. Beyer: Time?

C. English: Thank you, my bad. The time will be Friday at 12 noon.

- E. Operating Staff Council – report
Natasha Johnson, OSC President
Zac Birch, Jay Monteiro, Tiffany Morris, Sara Richter

B. Creed: Up next is Operating Staff Council report. Do you have a report today? Thank you.

Z. Birch: Hi everybody. My name is Zac Birch. I work for Housing and Residential Services, and I am on the Operating Staff Council. Operating Staff Council has been working on finding creative ways to engage with civil service and operating staff employees. Many of our colleagues are working from home, and others are still on campus; so we have to be creative in how we're engaging with both audiences. As we have mentioned previously, the Civil Service Emergency Fund is currently open, and we are taking donations – We have many of our colleagues that cannot afford their necessities. We've heard of staff homelessness, staff that are in need of food pantries, and everything else – to support our fellow colleagues. The Operating Staff Council is asking if you are able to make a donation or able to help create a matching offer for a donation to help others to donate, we would really appreciate that to show that we all care for our operating staff colleagues in that capacity.

Additionally, this is my last University Council meeting. I am leaving the university in two weeks, so I wanted to take the opportunity to thank this body, Operating Staff and President Freeman, in particular, for really showcasing the importance of shared governance at the university level. I have really learned a tremendous amount from everything. I look forward to taking that to my new endeavors. Thank you all so much.

B. Creed: Thank you, Zac.

- F. Supportive Professional Staff Council – report
Felicia Bohanon, SPSC President
Tom O'Grady, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe

B. Creed: Supportive Professional Staff Council – do we have a report? No report.

X. 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](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- G. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- H. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- I. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- J. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- K. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- M. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- N. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- O. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure

P. 2023-24 UC schedule: Sep 13, Oct 11, Nov 8, Dec 6, Jan 31, Feb 28, Apr 3, May 1

B. Creed: That brings us to informational items. A through O are the Policy Library and minutes. Item P – I want to draw your attention to our next meeting, which is February 28.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

B. Creed: And that brings us to adjournment. Do I have a motion to adjourn?

N. Johnson: So moved.

B. Creed: Second?

J. Monteiro: Second.

B. Creed: All in favor?

Members: Aye.

B. Creed: Thank you all for meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.