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FS Minutes 2011-11-16

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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
Wednesday, November 16, 2011, 3 p.m.
Holmes Student Center Sky Room

Disclaimer: These minutes should not be taken as a verbatim transcript but rather as a shortened summary that is intended to reflect the essence of statements made at the meeting. Many comments have been omitted and, in some cases, factual and grammatical errors corrected. The full verbatim transcript is available online at the University Council Web site under Faculty Senate / Agendas, Minutes & Transcripts.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Allori, Arado, Azad, Bateni, Bisplinghoff, Brandt, Cappell, Chen, Coles, Collins, Corwin, Daniel, Deng, Downing, Elish-Piper, Finley, Frank, Gaillard, Goldblum, Kolb, Lash, Lin, Lopez, Mackie, Martin, Mirman, Pitney, Poole, Rheineck, A. Rosenbaum, M. Rosenbaum (for Zahay-Blatz), Ryan (for May), Sagarin, Slotsve, Staikidis, Tonks, Valentiner, VandeCreek, Willis

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Arnhart, Blecksmith, Calvo-Byrd, Chandler, Cripe, Fang, Farrell, Feurer, Greene, Gupta, Holt, Houze, Johnston-Rodriguez, Kapitan, Kostic, Kowalski (on sabbatical), Lee, Lenczewski, Long, May (on sabbatical), Middleton, Mogren, Mohabbat, Munroe, Nicolosi, Nissen, Novak, Onyuksel, Rollman, Shortridge, Thu, Von Ende, Wade, Walker, Zahah-Blatz

OTHERS PRESENT: Austin, Bryan, Griffin, Haliczzer, Latham, Monteiro (for Small), Rintala, Sunderlin

OTHERS ABSENT: Freedman, Hansen, Prawitz, Small, Snow, Waas,

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Rosenbaum: We have four walk-in items: a report from the Student Association, the BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee report, the BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee report, and the BOT Legislation Audit and External Affairs Committee report. I need a motion to adopt the agenda with the four additions.

J. Corwin: made the motion. **C. Downing:** was second.

The agenda was adopted with the four walk-in items, without dissent or abstention.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 26, 2011 FS MEETING

J. Corwin: made the motion. **C. Downing:** was second.

The minutes were approved without dissent or abstention.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum: I think most of you are aware that SB512 was not acted upon by the Legislature. This is due, in no small part, I think, to the outpouring of opposition by the Annuity Association and people at the university, and so they felt that they did not have the votes to pass it. It probably is not going to go away completely, as you all know, there are going to be changes to the pension system one way or another. So, if not 512, then something else, and we'll have to maintain vigilance. I don't know how many of you took the advice that was given last time and joined the Annuity Association. We hope that many of you did and spread the word to your departments as well.

Second item, I've been asked by Jay Monteiro to mention the Human Resources Services blood drive which will take place on Tuesday, December 6. There is a pamphlet out by the refreshments and if you're interested, there is some information there about how to sign up.

David Wade is our representative on the Blue Ribbon Panel on Workload that was put together by the Provost. According to the Provost, they are in the final stages of preparing a report and the Provost has assured me that the draft of the report will come to the senate. We will not be the only group that gets it and we will not, of course, have the right to veto it, but we will have the opportunity to review it and to let the provost know how we feel about it. That will probably come to us early in the spring semester.

V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS

- A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – no report
- B. Student Association –Austin Quick, Speaker – [report](#) – walk-in

A. Quick: Good afternoon. I'm just going to keep this very brief because I'm going to bring it up to University Council next week, but I wanted to let you, as the faculty, know one of things that we're working on. And I've actually met with members of this body already in regard to the lack of a student grievance policy here at Northern. We're currently looking at other schools and benchmarking where they're at, the ones that have them, and the ones that don't, looking why they don't have one. Dr. Rosenbaum had already mentioned through University Council Steering Committee that they had tried, I don't know if you want to elaborate on the history of that.

A. Rosenbaum: The short story is that this was sent by the UC to the senate in October of 2003. The senate was charged with forming a committee to look into the development of a grievance

policy. Ultimately, two years later, the senate did put together an ad hoc committee. The ad hoc committee included, among other people, the ombudsman, Tim Griffin, representatives from Brian Hemphill's office [I think Brian Hemphill, himself, was on it for a time], Larry Bolles, a number of faculty senators, and two Student Association representatives. The committee included about 16 people. Apparently, it was an unwieldy committee and they had a lot of trouble getting together. Nothing came out of it. The committee just died because the chairs of the committee were dealing with some health issues. Bill Tolhurst was one of the co-chairs of that committee and you know he has since passed away. The other co-chair was Buck Stephen from math. I suggested that Austin might want to mention it to us in case we had any feelings about whether we want this handled within the senate, which is a suggestion that we could make to the University Council, or whether we think it should be handled by an ad hoc committee set up by either the council or the senate.

A. Quick: And one of the things that I wanted to mention also is that this is not, when we looked at this, it wasn't looking at a specific grievance policy towards faculty, it was a grievance policy for faculty, and all the professional staff that work here at the university. One of things that I've had in our office – we've dealt with a lot lately is students have come to us saying, "I've tried different avenues and I'm having X, Y, Z problem with such and such a professor or this department and I don't know what to do." That's when we found out when I had my, the staff researched a little further, that there was nothing, there were no guidelines that we could find, and that's when I brought it to University Council steering and we're looking at doing this.

The other thing that we're working on that's kind of a hot-button issue for us is a lot of students complain here about the amount of money they spend on fees and where that goes. And I'm not talking about academic fees, I'm talking about these other fees. And one of the things I've wondered myself, and this year I was asked to be on this bond fee committee, and one of the things that we're working on right now is that the fee for the next year is going to be \$35 per credit hour for these bond fee buildings. Those buildings consist of this building right now, Campus Life, the Rec Center, the field house, the Convocation Center, and the stadium. For example, out of that \$35, this building alone gets \$12.88 of every credit. Here's the problem that we see and this is what we're going to be working with the director of this facility and Dr. William's staff. \$12.88 of every fee, I think the total budget for the Holmes Student Center was about \$5.9 million, we're paying about \$5.8 million of that. On top of that, we're also paying when we need a room. Like for senate, I paid to use this room up here; I pay every time I need a microphone – \$5 for every one of 12 microphones and the equipment. They have an equipment fee that's all included in this budget that we're paying. So, in my mind, I feel, "We already own the building. We own the equipment. Why am I paying twice?" I don't understand that. I understand if we were only like a half owner, but the way I see it is, "We're a shareholder and we own it, and why am I paying for every little thing when we've already done that." So, we're going to look at, and this is, and I'm going to speak very frankly to you, I think you all are very educated so you like frank conversations, the way this was presented to us and what I was asking on this committee, we meet with the different departments, whether it be Recreation Services, Convocation Center, and the Holmes Student Center. I think what's happened with it, it's been steamrolled every year, just push it quickly and get it out of the way. Students are looking at what they're getting for the amount of money they're spending and \$35 a credit hour is a lot of money. The students are not about trying to take that back but making sure we get value for our

dollars. One of the things that I have said many times, this building in particular, we need to get away from the student center and make it a student union. This needs to be a place that is truly student centered and is friendly, is inviting. We have to find a way to make the school more appealing to students. Again, we're not looking to decrease the amount of money and the fees, but making sure that once we pay those fees, we're not then paying again to use the facilities we already own.

A. Rosenbaum: Again, back to this issue of not having a student grievance policy, I know that it was not an item that was high on our list when we last discussed it, but in part, it is because it is a very difficult issue. It's hard to come up with a policy where faculty won't feel that it can be abused by students. It's also the fact that there are students who are abusive toward faculty and we don't actually have a grievance procedure for that.

S. Willis: I can give a little bit of history on it since I was executive secretary when it first came up. In 2003, we were just finishing up the new grievance procedure for faculty and staff, both SPS and operating staff. That was the end result of what was basically a three-year process involving a committee roughly the size of the one that was then constituted to look at the student grievance policy. It was recognized at the time that not having a similar policy for students outside grade appeals was something that ought to be addressed and that's why this committee got organized. On the other hand, it's a heck of a job. The committee that wrote that original grievance policy that you now see in the bylaws was roughly 12-15 people. It met over a period of three years, and I don't think it would have gotten anywhere except that Jerry Zar kept the whole thing together and just kept pestering us until we finally got the thing done. So, I would not disagree, in fact I would agree, that the same thing needs to be done for a policy affecting students. But somebody really has to take it on and be willing to be Jerry Zar for about two or three years and really make it happen or I suspect that what happened the first time is going to happen again because it's a really, really, really hard job, and you need somebody who is going to be willing to take it on. I'm not volunteering by the way.

A. Quick: The idea that it's going to be difficult does not mean anything to the students. We want to see it started. We want to see it finished. And if it takes putting the right students and the right people in those positions, we will do that. A tough challenge is not something we are going to back away from. This is something that should be there. When you find staff and departments who are rude and unwilling to work with students, there needs to be some type of mechanism that students feel empowered to be able to say something. Because at the end of the day the empowerment is, "I'm taking my money away from here and I'm going to go somewhere else." I look forward to the challenge because I think we can find something that is equitable for all and everyone would be happy with.

C. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – [report](#) – walk-in

A. Rosenbaum: I don't think we have either Kerry or Andy here, so you have the report as a walk-in, but I don't think we have anyone available to answer questions.

D. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – [report](#) – walk-in

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, next is the BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee report. Greg Waas wrote the report that you have in your folder.

E. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Todd Latham and Rosita Lopez – [report](#) – walk-in

T. Latham: Dr. Lopez and I attended Legislative, Audit, and External Affairs Committee. It was the first committee meeting that we've had since the new Board of Trustee members were placed. In this meeting, Anthony Iosco was seated as the new chair of the committee, so it was our first opportunity to have discussions with him and go through the committee process. We did have some nice presentations in that part of the committee.

Vice President Buettner actually provided us with an update of the 97th General Assembly that was essentially what's taken place in veto session. It was kind of quiet, but she did highlight some bills that we want to keep an eye on that might have some implications for NIU.

Danielle Schultz then presented as the NIU internal audit director about her office and, if you recall, my presentation from last year indicated that they were short staffed. This year, they've met their full staffing requirement. They had 18 projects that were planned.

We were then given a presentation, again by Kathy Buettner about NIU brand recruiting. I must say, as a parent of a teenage student looking at NIU, our marketing plan and our recruiting has greatly increased. I am very impressed with the documents and the process that we go through. One of the neat things was the social media, where they went over how many hits we have on facebook and discussions take place, how many tags. Then we also looked at YouTube about how many times that they utilize those and you should look at these on the website and see what kind of products we have. I've seen one of my own students that I had taught four years ago in the video. She was a great student and it's nice to see her face representing NIU. So, I would recommend that you at least look at these and see what we're using to recruit students and how we're recruiting them because it's very important and it's basically an indicator of what the future will be like, how we will attract students and how we will retain them at this university.

F. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – Rosemary Feurer, Chair – no report

B. Academic Affairs – Charles Cappell, Chair – no report

C. Cappell: We hope to have some recommendations early spring semester on the online grade evaluation. I have had an hour-long interview with Murali [Krishnamurthi] who is instrumental in documenting and establishing best practices and reviewing the online procedure. We've got

contacts in the ed school we're going to be following up. We're collecting articles. The grading system evaluation committee is probably not quite, moving at a more deliberate glacial speed than other parts of the committee.

A. Rosenbaum: I should have mentioned this in my announcements, but the Graduate Council approved plus/minus grading for graduate students. So, irrespective of what happens with the plus/minus grading system at the undergraduate level, we will have a plus/minus system for graduate students. I'm still confident that our joint committee will iron out the bugs and we will have the plus/minus system approved for undergraduates, as well.

C. Economic Status of the Profession – Michael Kolb, Chair – no report

A. Rosenbaum: I talked to Michael about the fact that we ought to start reevaluating the economic status of the faculty. Did the committee decide to embrace that and look into it?

M. Kolb: We are going to try to organize.

A. Rosenbaum: There is a link on the Provost's home page to a report that compares salaries at NIU to salaries at other universities.

D. Rules and Governance – Gretchen Bisplinghoff, Chair – no report

E. Resources, Space and Budgets – David Goldblum, Liaison/Spokesperson – report [November 1, 2011](#) meeting and [November 8, 2011](#) meeting – Pages 3-6

D. Goldblum: We have had two meetings since the last Faculty Senate meeting. The first meeting was a committee meeting on the 1st of November. We usually get a budget update from Dr. Williams, but we also reported on a meeting that Laurie and I had with Mallory Simpson, the president of the NIU Foundation. There were some questions about the True North Campaign and how much money was raised and where that money was going. So, the details are there. They raised about \$162 million, and we were under the assumption that they had more latitude where that money went. Almost all of that money that was donated, 99 percent of it was donor designated funds: 22 percent went to facilities, mostly Barsema, Yordon, and alumni center; 11 percent went to student scholarships; 5 percent went to faculty support, that's donor-designated faculty support, going to specific departments for research for conference travel, etc.; and about 50 percent went into things like visiting lectureships, symposium, equipping laboratories, departmental funds. She told us that when there is a significant contribution that is not donor designated, she does meet with the president and the provost on priorities they might have for providing small amounts, or large amounts of money for other programs. We were also told that there were, in that 10-year period, about 2,800 donations that came from faculty and staff, either current or retired, for an average donation of about \$2,500 during that period. So, a significant portion of that came from us.

We also met with Dr. Williams over the money on campus that we've received from the state. We're still waiting for a lot of money from the state, some of it's from last year, and they're also in arrears for this year. It's nothing new. We're also out the MAP money we paid to students in

the fall and again, that's nothing new. With respect to facilities, as you may all know, Cole Hall is opening for spring semester teaching. They are hoping that first-year housing project will be ready for fall 2012 enrollment of students. They've renovated Grant North Tower C, it's occupied and they are working on other efforts to make the campus more appealing to students.

The more substantive meeting we had was on the 8th of November. We met with President Peters, Provost Alden, and Dr. Hemphill to talk about a number of issues and I'll just run through those kind of quickly. Most of the comments from the president dealt with the pension reform. The main message I took away from that is that SURS is a small part of a very large problem and that we may just have to kind of sit back and watch this all happen without potentially too much input given that we are only a very small piece of the big puzzle.

Provost Alden discussed the strategic planning process. They had 24 proposals for continuing projects that are going on now, 28 new proposals came into his office, and they're going to be working on recommendations for those in the coming months. A lot of discussion revolved around performance-based funding. The president and the provost felt this was coming to a university near you by FY2013, and it has become a very serious conversation at the state level. They think 1 to 3 percent initially might be performance based. But the impression they get is that this will eventually ramp up to maybe 15 percent of the university's budget will be based on some performance metrics. The question was opened as to what those metrics would be. There was discussion about number of graduates, etc. The other issue was whether this would be a separate pool of money that might be allocated to universities on a competitive basis or would this be a portion of your base budget determined by how the performance goes. The other issue that the president mentioned is that the senator who has proposed this, Senator Maloney, is retiring this year, so it seems like, in the president's mind, this is the best chance to actually get something positive for the university this year.

Also, we had a discussion about how the pension reform might affect faculty and staff and Provost Alden presented some data that Joe Grush collected and the bottom line is about 35 percent of faculty are eligible for retirement this year, and there is a concern that we will lose more people than we normally do. They have no way of knowing what will happen in June. It seems like this might be a very short period of time when there is an issue with people leaving perhaps a year earlier than they would otherwise. They don't expect people to leave two or three or four years earlier given the equations for retirement, but it might be a one-year problem. So, we talked about how this might affect people who stay here, students and faculty and departments as vacancies arise as people leave earlier. We also talked about how the general condition of benefits for faculty in Illinois might affect our ability to recruit new faculty. President Peters thinks that we're probably not that different from many other states, so we don't stand out as being a troubled state, not that that makes us feel any better.

The last part of the presentation came from Dr. Hemphill who gave a very detailed discussion of how the university is trying to actively recruit more students to campus. He gave us a little bit of a history that until fairly recently, we had at least about a 1,000-person waiting list in most years for admission to NIU. Current enrollment is around 23,000. The goal is to get it up to about 27,500. Given that a lot of our money now, our budgetary money is coming from tuition, he pointed out that for every 500 students we are below our cap, we are losing about \$10 million in

revenue, which is significant. The other thing he mentioned was that the demographics in the state of Illinois for high school graduates has changed dramatically and will continue to change with a significant drop in the number of Caucasian high school graduates and a large increase, a tripling, of Latino graduates from high schools. So, they are working on recruiting efforts that will take advantage of the changes that are taking place in the demographics. They have also seen a significant drop in students applying to come here from DuPage and Kane counties. They feel like a major issue is the perception of the campus with respect to security and safety, so, they are putting a lot of energy into improving that and also improving campus technology in the residence halls.

S. Willis: I just had one comment. I was at a reception a month or two ago for prospective students and their parents and one of the parents spoke to me – this is relevant to the perceived safety issue – and he said they visited and there was a fairly visible campus police presence and his interpretation was that, if he saw these police around, it must be a dangerous place. So, I just present that as a bit of feedback.

D. Goldblum: I would make one more comment. I think Todd mentioned the fact that most of us who live in this area have noticed that our high school students have not been getting any information from NIU for recruitment purposes and I guess that's changing now. For a long time, they figured that if students, if there were high school students in DeKalb County, they would know about NIU, they wouldn't have to be contacted. In the future, they are going to be sending out information to high achieving students in DeKalb as well. So, I think, across the state, they are reaching out. They're also trying to attract more out-of-state students by offering scholarships that might waive out-of-state tuition, try to get high-quality students from Iowa and Wisconsin, and Indiana.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Therese Arado, Chair – no report

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

X. NEW BUSINESS

XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

XII. INFORMATION ITEMS

- A. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- B. [Minutes](#), Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee
- C. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- D. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- E. [Minutes](#), Committee on Advanced Professional Certification in Education
- F. [Minutes](#), Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education
- G. [Minutes](#), Committee on Initial Teacher Certification
- H. [Minutes](#), Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- I. [Minutes](#), Committee on the Undergraduate Curriculum
- J. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee

- K. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- L. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- N. [Minutes](#), Undergraduate Coordinating Council
- O. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- P. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, before we adjourn, remember it is our last meeting of the year, so I hope you all have good holidays and we'll see you all again in January.

J. Corwin: Made the motion to adjourn. **S. Willis:** was second.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.