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## FS Minutes 2011-10-26

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**FACULTY SENATE MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, October 26, 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, Armstrong (for Daniel), Azad, Bateni, Bisplinghoff, Blecksmith, Cappell, Chandler, Chen, Collins, Corwin, Cripe, Deng, Downing, Fang, Feurer, Finley, Gaillard, Goldblum, Houze, Kolb, Kostic, Lin, Long, Lopez, Mackie, Martin, Mirman, Nicolosi, Novak, Poole, Rheineck, Rintala (for Pitney), Rosenbaum, Sagarin, Slotsve, Staikidis, Tonks, VandeCreek, Von Ende, Wade, Willis, Woo (for Abdel-Motaleb), Zahay-Blatz

**VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT:** Abel-Motaleb, Arnhart, Brandt, Calvo-Byrd, Coles, Daniel, Elish-Piper, Farrell, Frank, Greene, Gupta, Holt, Johnston-Rodriguez, Kapitan, Kowalski (on sabbatical), Lash, Lee, Lenczewski, May (on sabbatical), Middleton, Mogren, Mohabbat, Munroe, Nissen, Onyuksel, Pitney, Rollman, Ryan, Shortridge, Thu, Valentiner, Walker

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Bryan, Griffin, Haliczzer, Hansen, Hill (for Small), Latham, Rintala, Sunderlin

**OTHERS ABSENT:** Freedman, Prawitz, Quick, Small, Snow, Waas

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**A. Rosenbaum:** called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Prior to the adoption of the agenda, **A. Rosenbaum** explained the use of the clickers for voting purposes and clickers were distributed to the voting members of the Senate.

**II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**R. Lopez:** made the motion. **C. Downing:** was second.

After some commotion regarding the use of clickers, the agenda was adopted as written and without dissent or abstention.

**III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE SEPTEMBER 28, 2011 FS MEETING.**

**S. Willis:** made the motion. **J. Novak:** was second.

#### IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

**A. Rosenbaum:** called the Senate's attention to the brochures containing the names of new faculty which were printed up by Media Services, and invited members to take one if they wished.

**A. Rosenbaum:** called the Senate's attention to President Peters' memo of the previous day regarding SB 512. This is a proposed Illinois Senate Bill, which, if approved, will change the current retirement plan to a three tiered plan. The president clearly was concerned enough about this to send out a memo actually encouraging us to contact our legislators. He was, of course, careful to not say what we should say to our legislators and so it's up to you what you tell your legislators and also whether you contact them. I'm not going to say much more about that because, as you know, this year we've asked our Committee on Elections and Legislative Oversight to begin doing the legislative oversight part. So, Therese Arado is going to give us a little bit more information about Senate Bill 512 when we get to that her report. The university has set up a website to track pension issues. It's [www.yourpension.niu.edu](http://www.yourpension.niu.edu) and it contains a lot of information and recent articles on the pension issues. I believe SB512 could have a serious impact both on people who are currently hired and also our ability to hire people going forward. As our benefits package becomes less appealing, it may become more difficult to hire new faculty.

I want to update you on status of the misconduct policy. We talked about this at the last senate meeting. After a bit of discussion, the senate decided not to ask the council to send this misconduct policy back to the Undergraduate Coordinating Council. It was described in the minutes, so I'm not going to reiterate that whole scenario, but I do want to tell you what happened at the University Council because I think it is of importance. Between the senate meeting and the council meeting, it occurred to me that while the UCC does have authority over catalog language, they don't have authority over the grade appeal policy. The grade appeal policy, as it stood, did not accommodate academic misconduct penalties, and so they rewrote the grade appeal policy which they do not have the authority to do. The University Council decided to send that issue to its Academic Policy Committee which will consider whether to rewrite the grade appeal process or, alternatively, perhaps create a new process that will apply only to academic misconduct penalties. Because that part of it was sent to committee, the proposed catalog language no longer made any sense and so the council voted to send that back to the UCC with the advice of holding onto it until the council has revised or changed the grade appeal policy. Also, a number of people in here were concerned about the wording of the grade appeal policy. The provost also had some problems with the wording of the grade appeal policy, not just the wording of the changes that were made by UCC but with the policy as it existed before UCC even made any changes to it. So, this is still a work in progress and many of the concerns that were raised in here can still get into the conversation.

**J. Novak:** Will we be voting on this again or not?

**A. Rosenbaum:** No, but I guess it's conceivable that if they write something in council that we really don't like, we can then bring it up and reconsider it.

**C. Cappell:** If we wanted to contact the committee that's rewriting this policy, who would be the contact person?

**A. Rosenbaum:** The Academic Policy chair is Karen Brandt. This is kind of a mixed bag. I think on the one hand people have a lot of frustration over the length of time that this has been bubbling around. When it's finally resolved, hopefully we'll have a policy that is well written, that makes sense, and that gives students due process and that is also acceptable to the faculty and doesn't infringe on academic freedom or faculty authority in the classroom.

## **V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION**

A. Accessibility [statement](#) for syllabi – Greg Long – Pages 3-4

**A. Rosenbaum:** Greg Long is here and I'm going to ask him to talk a little bit about this. Again, I want to make it clear to people that this is not something that faculty are required to do. Neither is it something we have to vote on or adopt as a body; it's just being called to your attention and we're asking that you also call this to the attention of your departments.

**G. Long:** Thank you for the opportunity to share this with you. I'm coming wearing a couple of different hats, one certainly as a faculty member and the other as chair of NIU's Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities. The other hat was last spring, I was acting coordinator for general education. In that role, I worked with a student group, Student Advisory Committee on Learning Outcomes, and they were interested in how the syllabi were constructed and so forth and we got a sample of about 50 gen. ed. syllabi and looked through them for a variety of different issues. One of the things that was really quite apparent to me, given my interest in disability and accessibility, was that many of the syllabi that we reviewed did not say anything about if you're a student with a disability, where would you go, who would you contact? This is a significant issue in that when students are in public education K-12, schools are mandated to identify, to assess, to intervene, support and so forth. It's an entitlement program. When you move into the postsecondary environment, it's an eligibility program. So, students have to document on their own, students have to disclose, they have to seek supports. And so, from our standpoint, we as a university have a responsibility to let students know the availability of the CAAR office, the Center for Access-Ability Resources. So, when I was working with the student group last spring, it was fairly surprising in that a good number of syllabi, I'd say roughly half of them did not even mention that students have the right to seek an accommodation for a class. When it was mentioned, and I will say that oftentimes, they would say you have a two-week maximum to inform your instructor. That comes from the old catalog. There was an old catalog copy that we had that did, in fact, used to say you have a two-week minimum. That's obviously both incorrect and illegal because there's any number of things that could happen mid-semester where you could break an arm, you could be in an accident. From that point on, you have the right to request an accommodation. You don't have a right to go back and say, "Oh, by the way, I goofed up on exam 1, so now let me take it in an accommodated fashion." So, I would like to encourage you, and I agree with Alan that this is not something that you can mandate but certainly from the standpoint of good practice and protection from both the university standpoint as well as from student education, it would be really helpful if we could promote the proper statement and this is the statement that is included in this document is the one

that has been endorsed by the Center on Access-Ability Resources. This is the statement they are encouraging all of us to put in our syllabi. So, I just wanted to bring that to your attention and say to the extent you can, please promote this because it's beneficial to everyone.

**S. Willis:** One thing that I've always been sure to include on my own syllabi is that, in order to get accommodations, they have to go through CAAR. I'm not sure that the statement that you have here makes that entirely clear.

**G. Long:** That is something that they've not necessarily addressed but you are right. There is no accommodation that can be provided unless it comes through the CAAR office. In fact, we should not accommodate students unless they come to the CAAR office.

**A. Rosenbaum:** I think a number of the things that have come up recently, such as the misconduct policy, have driven home the importance of paying attention to the syllabi. It's really in faculty members' best interest to have a carefully worded syllabus that includes all of these things such as what your penalty will be if someone is accused of academic misconduct; such as the policy on accessibility, etc. Since each of you represent a department, we ask you to go back to your departments and distribute this and hopefully people will begin using it or some version of it.

B. Presidential Engagement Professorship Selection Committee –  
One Faculty Senate representative is needed to serve on this committee.  
Meetings will be held at 1 p.m. Monday, Nov. 7, Jan. 9, Feb. 13 and Feb. 27.

**A. Rosenbaum:** The next item is the Presidential Engagement Professorship Selection Committee. The Faculty Senate is entitled to a representative on this committee. I know that one of the things we are concerned about here is that there aren't enough committees in this university and you really don't have anything to do with your free time. So, here's an opportunity to get involved with a committee. So, is there anybody that's interested in engagement or would like to represent us on the Presidential Engagement Committee? You have a lot of information here so you know that there are only four meetings. It's not a huge time sink.

**R. Lopez:** Can you say anything more?

**A. Rosenbaum:** Well, this is the newest of the presidential professorships, and these are a very good thing for the faculty. Professorships come with stipends so, in addition to honoring some of our own, the recipient also gets an amount of money: "Each Presidential Engagement Professor will receive upon appointment, an increment of \$2,000 to base salary, a grant of \$5,000 will be provided during each year of a four-year award period following a nonrenewable appointment to be used in any legitimate activities directly related to the improvement of the professor's engagement initiatives, equipment, graduate assistants, supplies, travel, secretarial help, except for personal salary." So, it's an honor, and it's good to see the administration providing funds to honor professors who are doing a particularly good job in research, teaching, and now engagement. So, we should really be supportive of this.

**R. Lopez:** volunteered.

**A. Rosenbaum:** Thanked Rosita for being willing to represent the Senate on this committee.

## **VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

## **VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COUNCILS**

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – [report](#) – Pages 5-7

**E. Hansen:** We met at North Park University in Chicago. I will tell you that a basic issue is still performance-based funding. On the bottom of page 5, the third bullet from the bottom says that the high school quality improvement needs to be connected to this and that's for sure. If we're going to be judged on the product that we're turning out, then we better be judging the product that's coming in. That's the basic feeling of the entire Faculty Advisory Council. There were some questions in the last bullet on MAP money not being allowed to go to proprietary institutions and that's one of the Senate Bills, 1773. There are a lot of unresolved issues and if you read through this, you will see that the Faculty Advisory Council, whether they were from the private institutions or from the state institutions, all were on the same page with regards to they want to know what's going on and they want to have some control over what we're going to be evaluated on, whether it's going to be certificates, diplomas, bodies going out the door or what. We're talking about three percent of the budget and it's going forward with or without money and I will tell you right now, there is no money. So, it will come out of your regular budget is what we're being told.

**A. Rosenbaum:** I know everyone has an interest in this performance-based funding, so this is an important issue and I'm glad that the FAC is paying attention.

**J. Novak:** I have a question about what the 60 percent is about.

**E. Hansen:** Well, that's what they are calling for. It requires that state institutions have a 60 percent graduation rate of our students by 2025. The difficulty is that some students come here or other institutions that will never graduate.

B. Student Association –Austin Quick, Speaker – [report](#) – Pages 8-9

**A. Rosenbaum:** We have a report from the Student Association, but we do not have the reporter from the Student Association. Austin Quick is in Springfield at the moment, and he asked us to let you know that he is in Springfield fighting for our pensions. So, thank you, Austin, and his report is on pages 8 and 9.

C. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – no report

D. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – no report

E. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Todd Latham and Rosita

Lopez – no report

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

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

E. Resources, Space and Budgets – David Goldblum, Liaison/Spokesperson – no report

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

**A. Rosenbaum:** Our last is Elections and Legislative Oversight and Therese, will you bring us up to speed on Senate Bill 512?

**T. Arado:** Hopefully everyone did have a chance to read President Peter's email and I'm just repeating some things you've already seen. If you haven't, in that message, he has a couple of links that send you to very useful, very informative places. One's a summary on Senate Bill 512. As far as I could tell, as of today, nothing had happened with this, but don't let that lull you into thinking they're not going to do anything with it. The veto session goes yesterday, today, tomorrow and then it also is part of November. Once they choose to take action on it, they can move a bill very quickly through both chambers. So, if you have an opinion on this subject one way or another, you want to contact the relevant people because they are talking about it down there, even if they're not saying so in the news yet.

What this bill does, and I know we've heard this a number of times in different places, is it alters the pension system into a three-tier program. The first tier is the traditional pension system that exists; however, it changes the employee contributions to that significantly. The second tier is the tier that started for people being hired after January 1, 2011 that has a different contribution system. The third tier is the self-managed plan. The idea with this bill is that, as of July 1, 2012, every employee in most of the pensions, the City of Chicago and Cook County issues take place later, but at least for SURS, the university system, will have to elect one of these three tiers. If you do not make an election, you will default to tier 2. There are actually a number of pieces of information that you can link to from this email that will tell you what the distinctions are in the tiers. But the main effect of staying in tier 1 is that your contributions go up significantly. It will go up immediately to 15.31% and can go higher after three years.

What also happens in the tier 1 defined benefit is that they will recalculate what contribution amounts should be every three years. That does not mean your contribution requirement will go down every three years. It could go up and up after that. Tier 2, the employee contribution is 6 percent. Tier 3, or self managed, is 6 percent as well. What they said with the every-three-years

recalculating, an employee can move to a different lower tier, but you couldn't move up to, back up to, tier 1 if you left it. Once you're gone, you're gone. So, if somehow, whatever calculation they did was a benefit to you, you can't move back into it. Even if they don't act on it in the next two weeks, spring is right around the corner and having your opinion heard, whether you like this bill or not, having your opinion heard is what you have, it's the opportunity we have to talk to our legislators.

The Illinois General Assembly website is actually very easy to use, and if you pull up a bill, you can look and see who is involved, who is sponsoring things, who is doing things. It's [www.ilga.gov](http://www.ilga.gov) and then everything on there is arranged by bill number for the current stuff that is going on. So, if you want to know if your particular representative is sponsoring or going against something, you can take a look at that information there too, and it's just organized by the bill number.

**A. Rosenbaum:** First of all, if they change it, the benefits you've already accrued stay as they are. Whatever you've earned to date will be frozen at the current level so you won't lose what you've already earned. It's not going to happen retroactively, but all your money going forward will be in one of these three tiers and, as Therese mentioned, that tier 1, the main problem with that is, of course, the state cuts back its share of the contribution to 6 percent and our share goes up to 15.31 percent, which is the equivalent of getting a 5 percent or so cut in salary because its pre-taxed money we don't get taxed on it, so it's not going to cost us a full 7 percent, but it's going to cost a substantial amount of money to stay in this plan and also as Therese mentioned, they can reconsider this every three years. So, that could go up.

**T. Arado:** The actual language is that after three years, each employee will contribute the normal cost, and they define the normal cost as the true cost of the benefit earned in that year.

**A. Rosenbaum:** So that could be a big problem, and we all have noticed that when the state doesn't have the money for something, they just don't pay it. So, we could get into this and still not get the money. The big problem with tier 2 is you have to work a lot longer because I think it doesn't kick in at full strength until age 67. The other problem with that is that it has a cap of \$106,000 a year. So, regardless of what your salary is, the most you could get per year would be \$106,000. That may sound like a lot of money at this point, but it may not sound like a lot of money 30 years from now. The third tier is the self-managed plan and, if you've been watching the stock market, you would know that the self-managed plan probably will not contribute to you sleeping well at night. But at least with that you have some control over what you invest in.

So, if you are concerned about this bill, I think it's worth noting that they tried to pass this in the spring and the outcry from the constituency was sufficient to prevent them from doing it. People made a lot of calls in the spring and the legislators I think were affected by that.

**D. Wade:** Let me just put out one more plea for joining the SUAA, State Universities Annuitants Association. Believe me, if the legislature acts, and there is some argument that they won't with redistricting, it will be legally challenged. It's running clearly in the face of the constitution and legislative history and everything else. So, I would encourage you to join the Annuitants Association and further, the Annuitants Association has now created a legal defense fund, which is going to finance a certain amount of this legal challenge and I would urge you to direct your



additional funds to that legal defense fund. I'm in for \$250 to the defense fund. I feel it's in my self interest to do so, and I would encourage you all to do the same.

**R. Blecksmith:** How do you join up?

**D. Wade:** [www.suaa.gov](http://www.suaa.gov), I think, and you can follow the links from there I would assume.

**D. Haliczzer:** Go to the university website. Look for Annuitants Association. The application form is online. Call Lee Ann Henry at Advancement Services and, for a very modest rate, you can join the Annuitants Association, and they will tell you about the legal defense fund and SUAA Action, which is the lobbying group. We, on the benefits committee, Michael and I, certainly applaud David's comment and please join. At the last Annuitants Association board meeting, which I attended, they handed out information about how many SURS members are in each representative's district and how much money is represented by that, and they took a lot of the credit for stopping the legislation last term. So, they really do have a voice. We all need you to join. Please gently twist your colleagues' arms.

**A. Rosenbaum:** As you're probably getting from a number of these comments, this is an organization that actually does something. They are really doing a good job for us.

**C. Downing:** As a representative, to take things back to our people, you said you can't say something like, "Vote this way or don't vote this way," but are we allowed to say, "Dear members of the College of Business, we strongly urge you to join the SUAA." That's okay to say?

**A. Rosenbaum:** Yes, I think that is okay.

**C. Downing:** On university time and university equipment, all that?

**D. Haliczzer:** The official version on that is, since we are talking as employees to our colleagues about terms and conditions of employment, that is not political activity. That is asking people to join our own employee and annuitant group doesn't offend the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

**A. Rosenbaum:** I think you've all gotten the idea of how important this is. Please take it back to your constituents. We need to stay on top of this. It's really very economically important to us as a group.

## **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**

**S. Willis:** made the motion. **T. Arado:** was second.

Meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m.