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FS Minutes 2014-01-22

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FACULTY SENATE MINUTES
Wednesday, January 22, 2014, 3 p.m.
Holmes Student Center Sky Room

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Arado, Arriola, Azad, Bateni, Briscoe, Chen, Clapp, Deng, Feurer, Gorman (for Ryan), Henning, Hunt, Koren, Kostic, Lenczewski, Looney, Mackie, McHone-Chase, Millis, Moremen, Naples, Newman, Novak, Patro, Pitney, Rheineck, Rodgers, A. Rosenbaum, Sagarin, Siegesmund, Slotsve, Tonks, van Veenendaal, VandeCreek, Wilson

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Bisplinghoff, Bujarski, Carpenter, Chandler, Creamer, Cripe, Daniel, Downing (PTP leave), Fang, Farrell, Frank, Fredericks, Gaillard, Giese, Gupta, Hamayatsu (sabbatical), Jones, Kapitan, Kowalski, Lee, Liu, Long, Lopez, Martin, Middleton, Mogren, Mohabbat, Munroe, Nissen, Onyuksel, Plonczynski, Rollman, M. Rosenbaum, Ryan, Schneider, Sirotkin, Thu, Walker, Ward

OTHERS PRESENT: Bryan, Domke, Hardy (for Haliczzer), Klaper, Streb, Tollerud

OTHERS ABSENT: Armstrong, Falkoff, Gebo, Haliczzer, Hathaway, Small, Smith, Thompson, Waas

I. CALL TO ORDER

A. Rosenbaum called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

A. Rosenbaum noted one walk-in item (January 17, 2014 FAC-to-IBHE meeting report). **M. Henning** moved to approve the agenda, seconded by **S. McHone-Chase**, motion passed.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE NOVEMBER 20, 2013 FS MEETING

W. Pitney moved to accept the minutes, seconded by **J. Wilson**. The minutes were approved as written.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A. Rosenbaum presented the following items:

- Briefly discussed the reasons for inviting Steve Cunningham.
- Provided a follow-up to the Faculty Wine and Cheese Social held in December. The foundation appears to be willing to sponsor it again next year. Senators were invited to take pledge forms for the Faculty Fund back to their departments and also to talk up the Faculty Fund with their colleagues. It was noted that the Faculty Fund is able to award a \$9,000 scholarship that costs the Faculty Fund only \$2000, and that these scholarships not only serve

to improve recruitment, enrollment, and retention, but also to improve the number of high quality students we are able to attract.

- Five Faculty Club lunches have been scheduled for the spring term.
- Called the senator's attention to the plus/minus grading survey in Faculty Matters. Returns have, so far, been weak.
- Updated the senate on the three ongoing searches (CFO, CIO, EVP and Provost), and noted the dates for the on-campus interviews for the CIO finalists (January 27, February 6, February 10).

A. [Pension Reform](#) – Steve Cunningham, Vice President for Administration, gave a presentation on the provisions and implications of the newly passed pension reform bill and answered questions from the senate. Unfortunately, the implications of many of the provisions are not yet clear, as further elaboration of the definitions, as well as whether the courts will throw out some of the provisions are awaited. Highlights (lowlights?) include:

- The university opposed most of the provisions of this legislation and had done so successfully until the bill was rushed through in record time in the special session.
- The most significant reform is in the cost of living allowance and this measure goes into effect for all personnel, all participants whether they're already retired or become future retirees. This provision converts the amount of pension that's eligible for the three percent annuity to a calculation of \$1,000 multiplied by the number of years of service. When we look at a \$30,000 limitation on the applicability of the COLA, that's a severe cut and that's why this provision, alone, accounts for the majority of savings in the pension reform bill. As of January 1, 2016 that \$1,000 times years-of-service calculation gets increased slightly by the Consumer Price Index per year. If, for example, in 2016 CPI was three percent and a participant had 30 years so they were at a COLA limit of \$30,000, that would go up to \$30,900. Three percent on \$900 is \$27. This provision is probably one that is more at risk of being sent back to the general assembly by the courts. There are also skipped years based on the person's age at the time this goes into effect.
- The next change is to adjust the minimum retirement age. For personnel who are age 46 – that's 61 percent of our Tier 1 participants are older than 46 – there's no change in the minimum age to retirement which is 55 years with a penalty if you have seven or more years of credible service or age 60 with no penalty. If you're age 45, it delays that by four months and it goes on down on a fairly complex scale. The maximum delay is 60 months for our very youngest Tier 1 personnel.
- Pensionable earnings is another very large amendment that is significant for higher education. Our concern is that all of these provisions taken together will really make Tier 1 non-competitive. And we're very concerned about retention of our Tier 1 personnel in higher education throughout the state. This provision freezes pensionable earnings. Remember we talked about the general formula which is 2.2 percent times years of service times a high four-year average salary. So you pick the highest four years in your salary history. That then becomes the base upon the 2.2 percent times years of service is a factor against. What this would do is basically for personnel currently making more than the 2011 social security wage base, which is about 108.6M is freeze that pensionable income and not allow it to grow any further. Earnings would be frozen as of June 1, 2014. For personnel that are not yet making total wages at that social security wage base limit, then it would continue to rise up to that

limit and then be frozen at that limit. Tier 2 is already capped at the social security base and it's basically moving Tier 1 and converting it to the Tier 2 pension income limitation except for those personnel earning more than the current six figure wage base. We've had several conversations about this because, especially for faculty, who have been department chairs or have a role overload, their high four-year salary might have been two years ago. It might not be what they're earning as of June 1, 2014. Does that mean the monthly salary as of June 1 or does it mean if I already had a high four years two years ago that's what counts?

- The self-managed plan still exists and more and more new personnel are electing to go into the self-managed plan if they're expecting a little higher income history during their careers. It's a one-time election and that is capped at 240M, but it's defined contribution, it's not defined benefit. It's a whole different type of animal and there is no guarantee.
- On the more positive side, the rate of contributions to the pension system will be reduced by one percent of earnings from eight percent to seven percent, effective July 1, 2014.
- The effective rate of interest used in the money-purchase calculation will be benchmarked on the 30-year U.S. Treasury bond plus 35 basis points. It would be equivalent to about 4.5 percent right now. And so going forward, not going backwards, going forward, that rate of return for service years as of June 1, 2014 in the future would be limited to this new ERI calculation which, over time, will begin to reduce the number of personnel to go out on a money purchase.
- The proposed shift of the normal costs of the pension to the universities is not part of this bill.
- SURS is going to be coming to our campus on April 24 for a pension reform presentation where they're going to answer a lot of questions. It will be in the Sandburg the morning of the 24th. We will be sending out campus wide announcements about this.

A. Rosenbaum thanked Steve for his presentation, and asked about the changes in the service awards. Faculty will be given a service award starting at ten years of service (a change from the current 25) and beginning this year.

V. ITEMS FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION

- A. The Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy [Award](#) – call for nominations – Page 4
Written letters of nomination should be submitted to Faculty Senate President Alan Rosenbaum no later than noon Monday, February 10, 2014.

A. Rosenbaum briefly discussed the history and purpose of the Bob Lane award, and solicited nominations.

VI. CONSENT AGENDA

VII. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

- A. FAC to IBHE – Sonya Armstrong – reports:
[December 13, 2013](#) – Pages 5-6
[January 17, 2014](#) – walk-in

IBHE Faculty Fellows Program [information](#)

A. Rosenbaum explained that Sonya Armstrong sent us a written report only. She is on a sabbatical this semester so we'll only be getting written reports from Sonya. Per Sonya's request, he called attention to the fact that the IBHE has a Faculty Fellows program. Your salary is paid by the university not by the IBHE, but if anyone has interest in understanding more about how the IBHE works, you can apply for this Faculty Fellows program and there is a link in the electronic agenda packet.

B. Student Association – report

D. Domke reported that this Saturday, January the 25, Rebecca Clark, S.A. director of academic and governmental affairs, will host the Illinois Board of Higher Education Student Advisory Committee Conference. The S.A. also is currently looking at possibly changing election procedures for the senate side of the Student Association.

C. University Benefits Committee – Deborah Haliczzer, Chair;
Therese Arado, FS-Committee on the Economic Status of the Profession Liaison
– no report

D. Computing Facilities Advisory Committee – George Slotsve – no report

E. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee –
Dan Gebo and Andy Small – no report

F. BOT Finance, Facilities, and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum – no report

G. BOT Legislation and External Affairs Committee –
Deborah Haliczzer and Rosita Lopez – no report

H. BOT Compliance, Audit, Risk Management and Legal Affairs Committee –
Deborah Haliczzer and Alan Rosenbaum – no report

I. BOT Ad Hoc Committee on Sponsored Research Activity and Technology Transfer –
Greg Waas – no report

J. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – [report](#) – Page 7

VIII. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities – no report

A. Rosenbaum noted that we have no report for Faculty Rights and Responsibilities but he informed the senate that Brad Cripe who was the chair of this committee has moved to the University Council as an alternate. We want to thank Richard Siegesmund for agreeing to step in as chair of the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee.

B. Academic Affairs – Sarah McHone-Chase, Chair – report

1. [Revisions](#) to “Repeating a Course” policy in the NIU Academic Regulations – Pages 8-9

S. McHone-Chase presented the proposed revisions noting that the wording of this change is actually quite minor. On pages 8 and 9, members can see that the language changed from “a D or F” to “lower than a C” and, because NIU does not have a C- right now, this is an insubstantial change at the moment.

A. Rosenbaum noted that when we proposed the plus/minus grading system, the Faculty Senate version that was approved contained both the C- and A+. The Undergraduate Coordinating Council APASC modified that. The reason they eliminated the C- was because there are a number of programs, including the education programs, where if you have less than a C, you cannot be certified as a teacher. One solution is to allow students to repeat courses in which they get anything lower than a C. If we have that rule in place, we can then argue for the inclusion of a C- and consequently we could also throw in the A+ because I think that’s something the students have been concerned about as well. If we approve this, it would take away the argument against the C-.

S. McHone-Chase made the motion to accept the wording change as proposed, seconded by **D. Domke**.

A. Rosenbaum summarized that the Committee on Academic Affairs is moving this change in the grading system. Keep in mind, at this time, Faculty Senate doesn’t have policy-making power, so this would then be sent to the Undergraduate Coordinating Council for consideration and approval.

There was no further discussion and the motion passed by the following vote:

YES – 28
NO – 3
ABSTAIN – 1

C. Economic Status of the Profession – George Slotsve, Chair – no report

D. Rules and Governance – Robert Schneider, Chair – no report

E. Resources, Space and Budgets – Jim Wilson, Liaison/Spokesperson – [report](#) – Pages 10-12

J. Wilson called attention to his report, including a three-page list of all things the committee has been discussing. The committee met twice since the end of last semester and also with the president. In addition, the committee members have been talking also with NIU’s interim CFO,

Nancy Sutfenfeld, about the development of the Policies and Guiding Principles for Annual Budget Development and Multi-Year Financial Planning. At that time, it was currently in draft form and it should be pretty much finished now and ready to be implemented.

The report that we have here is divided into two parts. The first part goes over the goals, objectives of the budget document. And the second part is a number of questions and clarifications that the committee had with regard to the new policy and principles. The committee didn't have too much argument with the substance. Along with this, the committee is developing an agenda for its next meeting with the president which is next week, and along with that the committee will start to develop its next statement of budget priorities which will mirror the kinds of things that we've been talking about this year with the new budget.

A. Rosenbaum added a couple of observations. Number one, it appears that we have an unprecedented level of transparency on the financial side of the university. So more information is available to us now than has ever been available to us. And Nancy Sutfenfeld, who is the interim CFO and who has been drafting these guiding principles, is making an effort to present this to different groups and to collect input. She will be coming to the University Council next Wednesday and she will (he thinks) also present at the senate although this has not yet been confirmed.

F. Elections and Legislative Oversight – Stephen Tonks, Chair

1. Selection of a committee for the evaluation of the Executive Secretary of University Council and President of Faculty Senate – see Faculty Senate Bylaws, [Article 7](#) and NIU Bylaws, [Article 13.6.3.10](#) – Pages 13-14
2. Selection of a committee for the evaluation of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor – see Faculty Senate Bylaws, [Article 7](#) and NIU Bylaws, [Article 13.6.3.10](#) – Pages 13-14

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.