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UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Wednesday, February 22, 2012 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 Agendas, Minutes & Transcripts.

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Alden, Barth, Bender, Brandt, Coles, Corwin, Dawson, Downing, Elish-Piper, Farrell, Gaebler (for Rosato), Greene, Gupta, Haliczzer, Holly, Holt, Johnston-Rodriguez, Kapitan, Kowalski, Lee, LeFlore, Lenczewski, Lin, Long, Lopez, McCord, Middleton, Mirman, Mogren, Mohabbat, Munroe, Neal, Peters, Pritchard, Rosenbaum, Sagarin, Shortridge, Small, D. Smith (for Latham), K. Smith, Sunderlin (for Bond), Theodore, Thu, Towell (for Schoenbachler), Walker, Willis

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Bond, Bozikis, Echols, Foss, Heller, Houze, Hurt, Kreitzer, Latham, Lindvall, Quick, Rollman, Rosato, Rossi, Schoenbachler, Steadman, Vandecreek, Venaas, Vohra, Von Ende,

OTHERS PRESENT: Blakemore, Bryan, Cunningham, Griffin, Hansen, Hemphill, Kaplan, Williams

OTHERS ABSENT: Finley, Freeman, Freeman, Prawitz, Slotsve, Snow, Waas

I. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order at 3:06 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

J. Peters: We have two walk-in items to add to the agenda, item VI. A. the Faculty Advisory Committee report to the IBHE, and VI. K. the Operating Staff Council report.

N. Bender: made the motion. **J. Kowalski:** was second.

The agenda was approved with the addition of the two walk-in items without dissent or abstention.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 1, 2012 UC MEETING
(distributed electronically)

R. Lopez: made the motion. **S. Farrell:** was second.

The minutes were approved as written without dissent or abstention.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

J. Peters: All right, welcome everyone. I have some preliminary reactions to the governor's budget message. I had a preliminary look at the budget, although I think it's fair to say that we're still analyzing the specific details. But, the speech was titled, "Rendezvous with Reality." I do think that the governor really did focus well on the fiscal problems facing the state and how those woes relate to some structural things that have accumulated in the budget, and you know what those are. The five public pension systems are expected to be 15 percent of all general spending this year, that's \$5.2 billion, and he indicated how that has ratcheted up in the past several years, and the reason for the ratcheting, to me, is pretty clear, and that is the state was not putting in their portion. That added to the liability, and that added to the percent of the budget that you had to put in to catch up. So, there you have it, \$5.2 billion.

The governor made kind of an interesting distinction. He says three-quarters of the pension costs are non-state employees, and he referenced as non-state employees teachers in the districts, community college people, and state university people. So, you're not state employees according to that analysis.

The state could face, in addition to that, the other structural problem, which is bigger; the state could face \$21 billion in unpaid Medicaid bills by 2017, and he went into that quite a bit. The way we do Medicaid in the state of Illinois is very different from the way everybody else does it. So, he said we really have to grapple with those two problems before the legislature gets out of town for the summer. But, he did talk a lot about balanced budget, and I think that's encouraging.

There wasn't an awful lot of unrealistic program support in that budget, which governors like to do. They like to put money into those things that push the state forward; that you believe in. There was little of that and more on balancing the budget. In order to work toward this balanced budget, what that really means is about \$430 million in spending cuts, which translates, among other things, into about nine or ten percent cuts to the code agencies. We're not a code agency.

Governor Quinn laid out three priorities involving changing the way the state operates in the 2013 budget and one is pension stability. This is on our minds all the time, and we want to reform the system and share the burden. That was his concept. You know, I'll talk about it a little bit later, but we feel that the Illinois Government and Public Affairs Institute proposal has a lot of merit based on a discussion of that issue. The pension issue has to be addressed.

Medicaid is maybe even bigger, and that requires restructuring, adjusting eligibility, reduce fraud, efficiencies, and the governor did not indicate how one would do that nor did he indicate how you would exactly do pension reform except shared responsibility. In both instances, he's impaneled task forces to look at those issues, Medicaid and pensions. But, he challenged the general assembly to find a solution to those two issues.

For those things that he'd like to invest in on the margins and in order to meet the balanced budget, he did hint at what he called, "tax reforms," or, "eliminating loopholes," and he wasn't

very specific on this. He said that strengthening the graduation pipeline is important to produce students that are qualified to attend college and so, in that regard, K-12 is important. He did make some rather strong statements about his commitment to education and how brainpower is the most important thing the state can do to produce jobs. I'm pleased to report within all of this that the proposed NIU budget, state university budgets, are about the same. We're grateful that our basic budget is flat. In other words, our general revenue for this year is put in about the same level as it was last year, about \$100 million. Remember, our total budget is about \$436 million from all sources. Again, \$100 million comes from general revenue from the state. I think that's a vote of confidence in us and the importance of education and higher education from the point of view of the governor.

He did put some money into two education programs. He is very much committed to preschool education, early childhood, and he has earmarked \$20 million. And I believe that money would have to come from closing the tax loopholes. And \$50 million to add to the Monetary Award Program fund. There is \$440 million in that and about 144,000 students across the state, both universities, community colleges, private, and for-profit students. There's another 140,000 students who are qualified who would like to get it, but it's a first-come-first-served sort of algorithm. So, he is proposing \$50 million more to add to that \$442 million. So, I'm in favor of that. I wish our base budget was increased, but it's aid to students and a lot of students just can't afford an education any longer, so I think this is a good thing.

There were other things the governor said that I'm less certain will get funded, but nonetheless, he talked about \$1 billion investment in safety and technology for state buildings, and we have at least, it depends on how you estimate it, \$250 million to \$500 million in deferred maintenance issues on this campus. So, I think that's important, that's part of our Vision 2020. Whether we'll see any of that, I don't know.

One thing that the governor didn't talk about but I'm concerned about is that we have an \$8.5 billion backlog in state payments from this fiscal year. But, I think our last payment was December 6. Our last payment from the state was December 6, so our unfunded liability has grown to approaching \$60 million at this point. I'm reading in that is he has no fiscal plan to accommodate that \$8.5 billion in this fiscal year, and that is something that is of great concern to us because of the precarious nature of our cash flow.

Let's turn to pensions for a moment because that is, among these other things, that is front and center. Steve Cunningham has been working for the public universities. You haven't seen him around, and he's doing a great job to help get our views known about pensions and find out what's going on. A week or so ago I asked everybody to really take a look at the pension reform proposal from the very prestigious Illinois Institute of Government and Public Affairs. It's built on the idea of shared responsibility, and I hope you can all take a look at that. We're going to have a forum on this before spring break where we invite everybody, and I imagine a lot of you and a lot of annuitants will come, and we're going to go through this and answer questions.

S. Cunningham: I think it's on Wednesday, the 7th in the Sandburg Auditorium.

S. Cunningham: So we'll be prepared to discuss the IGPA report, the ongoing developments in Springfield of which there are many, and what some of the options and alternatives are. We've

been reporting on this to different groups for the last 18-24 months, and President Peters has been talking to the campus about this, but the general consensus is that this general assembly will be the general assembly where there are probably some very long-term changes made to the structure and the funding of the pension system.

J. Peters: Our read of what's going on right now is that the governor has a taskforce on pensions, for which the legislative leaders have joined in partnership, as a bill has to come through the legislature. There are talks that are going on with the complicated set of players involved in the five state pension systems. As I've said many times, we have five systems, five different ways of funding and, from the point of view of the governor and the legislature, they have to have one solution. They can't have five solutions.

S. Cunningham: We discussed and provided testimony on Senate Bill 512 and then went into a number of working group meetings with the House Personnel and Pensions Committee throughout the fall. There are, I think, currently at least 25 or 30 new pension bills that have been introduced, a wide range of topics. Eventually, those will all be combined into some sort of omnibus proposal that will be effective for all of the five major public retirement systems, but probably in different ways. All of this relates to the state's ability to enter into a stable funding plan for unfunded liabilities, and that is what's driving all of this. Had there not been the unfunded liabilities, we would not be having these discussions right now, because the normal cost of the plan is modest compared to both public and private sector pensions plans. So, this is all about the unfunded liabilities and looking for ways to offset state costs so that the state can stabilize those unfunded liabilities, which is really critical to our long-term welfare.

J. Peters: We don't take a position on many bills, but there are some bills we will take a position on. I will, this university, every university, community college, publics and privates, will take a strong view on exemptions on any conceal and carry legislation that would keep us, our ability to keep our campus safe and to keep guns off our campus. There are also many bills that are introduced every year about waivers for dependents for those who work at universities, and we think that's an important benefit and a public good for the community, and so we will continue to track those.

All right, now I want to turn it over to Alan Rosenbaum who has a result of a vote.

A. Rosenbaum: A while back, we considered the nondiscrimination policy of the university. The Board of Trustees passed a revised nondiscrimination policy and then the University Council voted to change the constitution, itself, to reflect the nondiscrimination policy that had been approved by the Board of Trustees. So, that would have been Article 9.2 of the constitution.

This changing the constitution is a three-step process. The first part of it was the vote of the University Council. It then went to a faculty referendum. The full faculty was given the opportunity to vote. We needed a majority of the faculty voting. The final vote from that referendum was 412 Yes, 21 No. So it passed overwhelmingly at the faculty level. This was sent on to President Peters to be transmitted to the Board of Trustees. The third, and final, step of this process is that the Board of Trustees must approve it, and our expectation is that it will be considered at the March meeting. And I imagine the Board of Trustees will be okay with it since it's their language that we are putting into the constitution. So, hopefully they will like it as

much now as they did when they passed it.

J. Peters: Oh, okay, I hope you're right. I think you will be. All right, good work. That's closing the loop and I'm moving that to the board.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

A. FAC to IBHE – Earl Hansen – [report](#) – walk-in

B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – [report](#) – Pages 3-5

A. Small: Thank you to the people in the food service; it was a very nice breakfast that we had there before the event started and then there was a swearing in ceremony for Wheeler Coleman, our new Board of Trustees member, I believe he's taking the place of Manny Sanchez. I believe Manny was an inaugural member of our Board of Trustees years ago, so Manny served with pride and distinction for a long time.

A. Small: We proceeded on then with the report of the outcome of sabbatical leaves. It looks like in the 2008-2009 academic year, 47 faculty were awarded faculty leaves, brought in 25 applications for external grants and projects and produced funding of excess of \$5.5 million. It also benefitted 500 students. Two particular faculty leaves were highlighted. The one thing that you saw was the pride and the enthusiasm of these two faculty people when they stood up there and talked about their faculty sabbatical. Next, the committee voted to eliminate two emphases and one specialization program. Pages 11 and 12 list the sabbatical leaves that are going to be put forward to the full board to be approved for the 2012-2013 academic year.

J. Peters: You are absolutely right, those reports are extremely important to the board. I mean, it just reinforces their commitment to support our sabbatical program which really is a meritorious professional development competitive program. It just reinforces their commitment to that kind of program at a time when they are disappearing from the American higher education landscape.

C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – [report](#) – Page 6

A. Rosenbaum: Okay, I'm going to keep this brief. You have the numbers in front of you. The FFO subcommittee approved the student fee recommendations for the upcoming year as well as the room and board rates. Under President Peter's direction, the fee increases are kept to an absolute minimum. Dr. Williams does a great job of keeping the fees as low as possible. These are done in conjunction with the consultation with the students. The student fee recommendation is the students will see an increase of 2.52 percent for the students who pay health insurance. For those who opt out, the percentage is a little bit higher. Room and board rates will increase about 1.5 percent. This includes no increase in the board rates. The committee also approved the mass transit contract for the upcoming year and also the student accident and sickness insurance contract, and this apparently accounts for a great deal of the increase that we see in the student

fees. Apparently health insurance rates have gone up dramatically and Dr. Williams and Dr. Hemphill did a great job of negotiating the contract.

- D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee –Todd Latham and Rosita Lopez – [report](#) – Page 7
- E. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report
- F. Academic Policy Committee – Karen Brandt, Chair – no report
- G. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Laurie Elish-Piper, Chair – [report](#) – Page 8

L. Elish-Piper: Much of the report was already included in President Peter’s opening remarks, so I’ll just draw your attention to a couple of points that weren’t specifically mentioned.

Item 1.c., at our last meeting we found out that the MAP funding for fall 2011 has been received. That was approximately \$10 million, but we’re still waiting on a similar amount for the spring term. So, in addition to what the state owes us, there is also that MAP funding that gets rolled into the total.

In addition, item 1.e., we had an update on some of the capital projects that are either ongoing or planned. As you know, Cole Hall is open, and hopefully you’ve had a chance to visit it or to participate in the grand opening event. We’re told that the first-year residence halls are still on track to open in the fall. We also got an update regarding the use of performance contracts to deal with some of the repairs such as roofs and electrical projects and possibly the steam lines.

Our group is going to be addressing the budget priorities task that we’ve been charged with at our next meeting where we’re going to formulate a statement regarding where the budget priorities should be for the coming year and we will be doing that early enough that we’ll be able to bring it back both to Faculty Senate and to this body for input before we officially present it and vote on it at hopefully the last meeting of the year.

- H. Rules and Governance Committee – Suzanne Willis, Chair – no report
- I. University Affairs Committee – Richard Greene, Chair – report

J. Peters: Moving along, we have Professor Greene, chair, University Affairs Committee.

1. 2021-2022 academic [calendar](#) – Page 9

R. Greene: I’d like to call your attention to the academic year 2022 academic calendar on page 9. I’d like to move on behalf of the University Affairs Committee that the academic calendar for 2022 be approved. **D. Haliczzer:** was second.

A. Rosenbaum: 37-YES, 2-ABSTAIN. The motion passes.

2. Revisions to [Guidelines](#) and Principles for Establishment of Academic Calendar –

R. Greene: Again on behalf of the University Affairs Committee, I'd like to make a motion that these changes be approved. [An equipment malfunction distracted us and there was no second.]

The motion passed by voice vote without dissent or abstention.

J. Student Association – Austin Quick, Speaker – [report](#) – Pages 11-12

M. Theodore (substituting for A.Quick): As everyone can see, we have a lot of our main points here. I'll just be giving an update on two of them. The Student Satisfaction Project, which is a student survey about all department services, gaining student opinions and input is being led by our director of student life. It's operating on schedule, and the executive branch will be processing results by the end of the semester, so we will be reporting those back. The other point of importance is that at the last meeting we mentioned that we were auditing the top 15 S.A.-funded organizations, and an update on that is all 15 organizations, including the Student Association, have turned in their full ledgers on time and the S.A. will be reviewing them via the Rules and Procedures Committee

K. Operating Staff Council – Andy Small, President – [report](#) – walk-in

J. Peters: Andy Small had that walk-in Operating Staff Council report.

A. Small: A few highlights. Workplace Issues Committee is working on the employee evaluation form. We encourage everyone to evaluate their employees on an annual basis. Outstanding Service Award: you have until February 24 to submit the application for the Outstanding Service Awards to any of the deserving operating staff people in your area. The Public Relations Committee received four applications for our Civil Service Dependent Scholarship. For those of you who may not know what that is, the operating staff raised \$25,000 to endow dependent scholarships. We give those to dependents of operating staff people here at NIU. We're proud to give those to two deserving students every year for \$500, and we're approaching the \$1000 per year mark, and we'll give that shortly. I included the civil service positions audit again, encouraging everybody to make sure they follow the state statutes when filling civil service positions.

L. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Todd Latham, President – [report](#) – Page 13

D. Smith (substituting for Todd Latham): You have your report in front of you. I just wanted to touch on highlights. We did have representatives of the Presidential Commission on the Status of Persons with Disabilities give us a report on universal design and student accessibility. The SPS Council has been inviting our representatives from the various committees of the university to speak. In the last meeting, we had two representatives from the Campus Parking Committee speak to us on various things that they've been working on in increasing safety on campus. The council did approve the SPS Outstanding Service Award recipients, and we'll have the names to you at the next meeting; not everybody has been informed of whether or not they got that. So, the reception for those folks will be April 17 in the afternoon. The council decided to participate in this year's wellness fair, which will be on March 28.

M. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abhijit Gupta, Chair

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

J. Peters: Now Unfinished Business; we have two items. Second readings, vote on both. One deals with those changes in the sabbatical policy, and the other is a kind of a fix up on operating procedures for the University Council. I'm going to ask Alan to bring both of those forward.

A. Proposed changes to NIU Bylaws, Article 8, Sabbatical Leave [Policy](#) –
SECOND READING – ACTION ITEM – Pages 14-19

A. Rosenbaum: Keep in mind that this is a bylaw change and, to make a bylaw change, we have to have a vote of two-thirds of the full membership of the University Council. That would be 41 positive votes. The first one we're going to vote on is the Article 8, the revision to the sabbatical leave policy.

The motion passed by a vote of 41-YES, 2-ABSTAIN.

B. Proposed changes to NIU Bylaws, Article 3, [Operating Procedures](#) of
University Council – **SECOND READING – ACTION ITEM** – Pages 20-21

A. Rosenbaum: The second item is the proposed changes to the Bylaw Article 3.

The motion passed by a vote of 43-YES, 1-ABSTAIN .

Both motions received the required two-thirds vote necessary to amend the Bylaws.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

J. Peters: Alan Rosenbaum came to me recently and indicated that he had a communication from someone who had been with the university and served us well for many, many years and has indicated his intention to retire, and that is our ombudsman, Tim Griffin. Tim, you have served us with distinction for a long time, decades. Tim has indicated that he will be leaving us at the end of the semester. We will have opportunity to honor him. We really appreciate your service, and we're going to get to miss you.

This does trigger a process articulated in the Bylaws. What is called for is that every eight years, or at the time of a vacancy in the office, so we're at the time of a vacancy in the office, the University Affairs Committee of the University Council shall review the question of continuing the need for the office of ombudsman. The University Council shall give strong consideration to the recommendations of the Student Association, Faculty Senate, Operating Staff Council, and Supportive Professional Staff Council. University Affairs will be launching that, we'll write up a charge and then, based on the outcome of that, there's a procedure for a search process.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

J. Peters: I might also say that we did have a tremendous loss in the university this week. Tim Emmons from public radio, after a long, difficult bout with cancer, succumbed to that dreaded disease and he worked up until the end and provided great leadership for us. Services are Saturday, and I just wanted to bring that to your attention.

The other thing is that next Thursday, we have Board of Trustees meeting and we'll be bringing an item on a salary increment to vote for the Board of Trustees. So, hopefully, we'll have some good news for you after that meeting.

X. 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
- Q. 2011-2012 [Meeting Schedule](#)

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.