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UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Wednesday, November 7, 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, Bak, Bender, Block, Bohn, Carpenter, Cho, Coles, Dawson, Downing, Entzminger, Farrell, Feurer, Fredericks, Gregolunas, Guerrero, Haliczzer, Henning, Hofer, Holly, Kapitan, Kolb, Kowalski, Lee, LeFlore, Lenczewskim, Lin, Long, Lopez, McCord, Middleton, Mirman, Mohabbat, Munroe, Naples, Neal, Peters, Pitney (for Walker), Plonczynski, Prock, Quick, Rollman, Rosenbaum, Sagarin, Small, D. Smith (for Latham), MC Smith, Thu, VandeCreek, Vohra, VonEnde

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Bond, Duerkes, Bupta, Harris, Houze, Latham, Rosato, Schoenbachler, Walker, Ward

OTHERS PRESENT: Blakemore, Bryan, Klaper, Theodore, Wesener, Williams

OTHERS ABSENT: Armstrong, Cunningham, Freedman, Freeman, Kaplan, Prawitz, Slotsve, Snow, Sunderlin, Waas

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Peters at 3:06 p.m.

II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

J. Peters: We have three walk-in items. We have under VI.G., a Resources, Space, and Budgets written report, VI. K., Operating Staff report, and then under Unfinished Business, a response from the UCC on the grade appeals policy that we sent back to them at our last meeting. So, with that, also, let me say this, that at Alan's and my request and students' request, we would like to be able to adjourn by 3:45 today because at 4:00 in the Sandburg, we are going to have a memorial service to celebrate the life of David Bogenberger, the student who tragically died last week. And so we beg your indulgence on that. We really have to break at 3:45. Now, it's possible that we could turn the chair over to someone else, but my suggestion is let's try to get done at 3:45 and see where we are at that time.

A. Quick: made the motion to adopt the agenda with the three walk-in items. **R. Lopez:** was second.

The agenda was adopted as modified without dissent or abstention.

III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 10, 2012 UC MEETING (distributed electronically)

J. Peters: The minutes of October 10, 2012 were distributed electronically. I'll call for a motion of approval.

D. Munroe: Move for approval. **C. Prock:** Second.

The minutes of the October 10 meeting were approved as written without dissent or abstention.

IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

J. Peters: Since we met last time, you know that I announced in my State of the University address that this will be my last year as president. The trustees have begun the process of presidential selection. I have no role in that selection process except to keep the university functioning, to advocate for the university, and to help with the transition, but I'm not part of the process.

But I recommended to Alan that we use this forum every meeting between now and the selection of a new president, for him to update you on the status of the search. He has not officially been named yet, but tomorrow at a special meeting of the board, Alan will be named co-chair of the search committee along with trustee Robert Boey, who actually co-chaired it last time when I was selected. So, I want to do two things today, to let you know that that was my suggestion, and it has been adopted by Alan, and today we're going to have Jerry Blakemore, our general counsel, and the chief liaison between the search committee and the trustees give us an update. So, I'm going to yield my presidential time on that because this is the most important thing that the campus and the trustees will do this year.

J. Blakemore: Mr. President, members of the council, I appreciate the opportunity to provide a very, very brief update on the Board of Trustee presidential search process. Tomorrow the Board of Trustees will meet in special session. The primary purpose of that session will be for the board to select an executive search firm that will assist the search committee and ultimately the Board of Trustees in the recruitment, vetting, and recommendations regarding the next president of Northern Illinois University. The Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees has already vetted four different national search firms, and they will make a recommendation for full board consideration tomorrow.

In addition, the board will, pursuant to the NIU law, which provides the authority for the board to coordinate the search (and the board has the ultimate authority to make a selection or appointment of the next president), will announce the Presidential Search Advisory Committee. This committee is being developed in two different ways: (1) The NIU Constitution has specific provisions related to the membership of such a committee. Many of you are more than familiar with that part of that process because your colleges have selected you, or the Faculty Senate has selected you for that committee. In addition, the board will make appointments to the Presidential Search Committee and their appointments include Bob Boey who is the vice chair of the Board of Trustees. He will serve as the chair of the Presidential Search Advisory Committee.

And Dr. Rosenbaum will serve as the co-chair. There will be other members appointed by the board that will join those from the faculty to comprise a 28-member committee. That committee will meet for the first time tomorrow at 3:00. Once that meeting is formally adopted by the board and it has its first meeting, the operations of that committee will be turned over to the chair and co-chair. They will then be responsible for the agenda. They will establish a time schedule for the search. The Board of Trustees has indicated they would like to have a new president in place by July 1, 2013. We're on a pretty tight time span. The Board of Trustees will adopt a charge which will be presented to the committee, and it will basically outline the responsibilities of the committee.

A. Rosenbaum: Well, first, I'd like to say that the biggest challenge to the search committee is to find someone who can follow up the fine act of President Peters. So, that's going to be a real challenge. Regarding the search committee, the thing I'd like to point out is that the development of the search committee, although articulated in the constitution, is really up to the Board of Trustees. They were not obligated to follow what is written in the NIU Constitution, but they chose to do that and so I think that it is very important and it's a statement of the board's dedication to the culture of shared governance that we have at NIU that they have supported a search committee that is really very heavily represented by faculty members. This committee is going to have to come up with someone to lead the university for the foreseeable future and as we've already learned, there are many financial and other challenges that are facing the university. We will do our best to come up with a worthy successor to President Peters.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

VI. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. FAC to IBHE – Sonya Armstrong – [report](#) – Page 3
[MAP 102](#) (distributed electronically)
- B. BOT Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee – Kerry Freedman and Andy Small – no report
- C. BOT Finance, Facilities and Operations Committee – Alan Rosenbaum and Greg Waas – no report
- D. BOT Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee – Todd Latham and Rosita Lopez – no report
- E. BOT – Alan Rosenbaum – no report
- F. Academic Policy Committee – Sean Farrell, Chair – no report
- G. Resources, Space and Budgets Committee – Paul Carpenter, Chair – report – [October 12, 2012](#) and [October 18, 2012](#) – walk-ins
- H. Rules and Governance Committee – Melissa Lenczewski, Chair – no report

- I. University Affairs Committee – Kathleen Coles, Chair – no report
- J. Student Association – Delonte LeFlore, President, and Austin Quick, Speaker – report

A. Quick: Thank you, Mr. President. Just to reiterate what President Peters said, we would like to welcome and request everyone be in attendance today at 4 p.m. in the Carl Sandburg Auditorium for a very moving memorial to the life of David Bogenberger, a fellow student who passed away tragically last Friday. Of course, any time there is a loss of life here on our campus, especially for the students, it's very tragic and we take it to heart. A lot of people have worked very hard over the last few days to make this a fitting memorial for him, and we request your presence at this event to come together as a community.

J. Peters: Then afterward, I believe the students are holding a candlelight vigil.

A. Quick: Correct, all together it will be about an hour. The memorial service is in the Carl Sandburg and then everyone is going to move out into the MLK Commons for a candlelight vigil and his pastor from his home church is here as well to help.

A. Quick: Then the other thing I wanted to introduce to this body is the Student Association enrolled Senate Resolution #25 which was passed actually two weeks ago regarding the plus/minus system. I will read to you, just because I didn't get it out to everyone. The legislation is as follows:

Whereas students have repeatedly voiced opposition to the changing of our NIU grading system;

Whereas the plus/minus grading policy would create further boundaries preventing student success;

Whereas the freedom of professors to either use the plus/minus or use the current system disrupts the grading conformity of the university;

Whereas this policy would adversely affect students seeking financial aid or postgraduate education by making it more difficult to maintain a high GPA;

Whereas the university seeks to increase the academic success of students in Vision 2020 but a plus/minus policy would most likely reduce the numbers of 4.0 students and the overall GPA;

Therefore, the students of Northern Illinois University representing the senate, urge the university to discontinue efforts to implement a plus/minus grading system.

I just wanted to introduce that for the body. I know that's going to be coming up again but just to hear a formal statement from the student body, but that is all I have today.

J. Peters: Okay, thank you, Austin, and thanks to the students for taking the initiative to put this memorial on today. We appreciate it, on behalf of the university community.

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

A. Small: Out of respect to the Student Association and their request, I will be just taking questions on the written report that I provided. If there are any questions, I would be glad to try to answer. Otherwise, you have seen my report.

L. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Todd Latham, President – [report](#) – Page 4

M. Elections and Legislative Oversight Committee – Abhijit Gupta, Chair – no report

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. [Response](#) from Undergraduate Coordinating Council – walk-in

J. Peters: We have a response from the UCC on the action that the council took sending back for review, the plus/minus grading system.

A. Rosenbaum: The UCC met last Thursday, and we informed them as to what the actions of the University Council were. The UCC was informed that they had three options. The three options are articulated in the bylaws. The option they chose was to send this back to the council with explanation. The reason given by the University Council for sending it back to the UCC was that they had not adequately taken student input into account in coming to their policy decision. The UCC felt that this was inaccurate, that they had taken student input into account throughout the process. They were particularly concerned that students did not avail themselves of the representative positions that they have, both on APASC and the UCC. They felt that given the amount of effort that they have put into this and the fact that they have considered student input and also the fact that they felt that this was really a faculty prerogative, they voted 14 to zero, to send this back to us. The council has to do nothing if it wants this to become policy. So, this does not require a vote. The University Council can, if it chooses, veto this policy. In other words, approval is not required, a vote is not required, but the council has the option of vetoing this policy. If the council chooses to veto this policy, it will take a vote of two-thirds of all voting members of the University Council in order to do that. If we do nothing, this becomes policy.

J. Peters: The item is on the floor.

M. Theodore: I make a motion for the veto.

J. Peters: There is a motion to hold a veto vote.

K. Bak: Second.

F. Bryan: Mr. President, the person who asked to be recognized is not a voting member of this body but you, as chair, have the right to recognize him to speak.

After clarification of the right of the chair to recognize a non-member, President Peters recognized

M. Theodore.

M. Theodore: Thank you, Mr. President.

M. Theodore: Thank you, Mr. President. I will try to keep this brief, even though this is an issue that, as everyone knows, it's been a very broad issue that has constantly come up in University Council and Faculty Senate, It's always been an issue. Dr. Rosenbaum and I did speak to UCC, we did argue this to them and, as you can see with the report, they did disagree with the student input argument. Although he is correct in saying that when it comes to curriculum, and I have reviewed the bylaws, I've reviewed the constitution, when it comes to that, grading is something that is a faculty prerogative.

At the same time though, the S.A. continues to stand firm in its position that a policy that does affect students should involve student input and should involve constant student opinions. That might not be written in stone but that's something that we firmly believe. Students do have positions on these committees. Yes, most of them do not report back to Student Association. We have not been aware of many of the negotiations that have been occurring. Two years ago, we had been involved with the process. We put a referendum on our ballot to get general student input on this. I don't know if everyone remembers two years ago, it was a big issue around campus being debated. That was the system that is different than the one now with the A+ and C- which has since been removed. And we have been hearing amongst many of our constituents, differing opinions on what the policy is now without the A+ or C-. So, this is, in my opinion, a different policy than what were debating two years ago, although student input was involved two years ago, this is a different policy that we think should be brought back to the student body. We do have processes in place that we're looking at in order to gain, in order to survey as many students as possible in order hear what the students think and in order to view the positives and negatives of this policy, but we do request more time on that. We do not see a need to be making this an immediate policy. We do not see a need for moving fast on this when we can be getting more input and can be getting more information on it. That's the most of it so with that, I yield.

M. Henning: My name is Mary Beth Henning, I'm in the College of Education, and I'm going to speak in favor of the veto because I do believe that this policy is not going to help our students. I do recognize that it is the purview of the faculty to make decisions regarding curriculum, but in this case, I don't think it's in the best interest of our students to have the plus/minus system. I also think that there's going to be confusion because, if I remember correctly from our last discussion, we are not going to have parity with our graduate school grading scale and our undergraduate grading scale. It sounds like it's going to be a mess in our classes where we have undergrads and grads together. So, I guess I'm going to urge my fellow council members to vote in favor of the veto.

A. Rosenbaum: With regards to that, the Graduate Council has already passed a plus/minus system, so you already have a situation where you have a difference in grading. It should not be that difficult for faculty members to keep track of the fact that they can give a C- to a graduate student but not to an undergraduate student. Furthermore, the characterization of this as something that has happened quickly is incorrect. The data that this disadvantages students in any way is lacking. The senate committee that looked into this in great detail as well as the Undergraduate Coordinating Council which also looked at this in great detail, was not able to

find any evidence that there is a disadvantage to students from a plus/minus system. The plus/minus system is by far the predominant system in universities throughout the United States. This came back to us from the UCC. They have carefully vetted this. This committee does not act arbitrarily. There was a student member on the UCC that was present. They have six student members. There was one present. That student member also voted in favor of the plus/minus grading system. As you can see, the vote is 14 to zero. I would argue that to veto this would be to disregard, not only the advice of the Faculty Senate and the faculty at large, but also a group of UCC members and APASC members who have been laboring at this for about 2-1/2 years.

D. LeFlore: Hello everyone. I see your point, but I really think that we need to keep in mind of how this system is going to get in place. The UCC said they vetted this over and over again, but it hasn't been presented to the students who actually sit here and vote in the UC to make the item consent. I think that if they're going to present it, how is it going to affect our students now? How is the GPA, is it going to back and forth? We're trying to figure out how is it going to work and if they're going to want us to support this, they have to be able to let us know how this is going to affect the students. I agree that you guys have been putting a lot of work in it. Our students have been putting a lot of work in trying to come up with ways to figure out how this particular plus/minus system is going to affect the students. I said last time, I think that if they're saying that they want this plus/minus system implemented and we've been trying to reach out to figure out is there a way that you can inform us about this plus/minus system and how is it going to benefit us because everything that we look at is going down on the negative form, that it doesn't benefit as much of the students. I don't know if we're looking at this because other schools are moving in this direction. So, we're just trying to figure out, from a student standpoint, how is this really going to affect the students, how this is going to be implemented and maybe if they can work with the Student Association on it, I know that they also pick various students to sit on those committees but again, those committee don't report back to us and they're not obligated to report back to us. So, we're trying to figure out ways that the Student Association can work with them to maybe get more understanding and come up with a way that we can work together on this effort. So, I ask that it still go to veto.

D. Plonczynski: Plonczynski, from the College of Health and Sciences. I have a question for our student members here. From a process improvement perspective, it seems like a major concern is communication between your members on these smaller councils to the bigger group. Let me ask you how you're going to address that.

D. LeFlore: To answer that question is, we have no idea of those students who are appointed to those various committees because those are done by the particular colleges and things like that, so we have no say in those appointments, and we have no knowledge of who are on those committee and what's going on in those committees besides the information that comes through UC and consent agendas.

A. Rosenbaum: To clarify, the members of the Undergraduate Coordinating Council are selected by each college and the students within each college select those members. They are not supposed to be selected by the Student Association. The Student Association, if they wanted to have that changed, would have to make a proposal to change that, either in the constitution or wherever it's articulated.

D. Plonczynski: But, if I may comment, Alan, it sounds like there may be a gap in communication on this part.

A. Rosenbaum: We know that we have a great deal of trouble getting students to attend many of the committees. So, almost every committee that has student positions on it has the same problem, which is getting students to attend the meetings. We would like students to be involved, which is why we have those slots for them on the various committees, but we can't force them to come to those meetings.

J. Peters: I guess having 12 years ago, really dug into the shared governance process here, the logic of student representation on these policy-making committees was imbedded in the fact that it cuts across the academic colleges where the students are studying so that their knowledge that they bring to the committees is imbedded in those disciplines and not representatives from a student government perspective. At least that was my understanding of it, if that's helpful without taking a position on this. So, two kinds of representation that are aimed at two different issues.

D. Cho: My name is Daihee Cho, and I'm one of the representatives from Student Association. Last time when we talked about the plus/minus policy, I recall that it was my understanding that we would like to have more student representation in this policy and then I am not quite sure why it came back to us without having more student representation in deciding the policy. I believe that the Student Association this year, we have much more outreaching to different student organizations or other students. We believe that we can have better communication with those students where colleges. We have more time where if we have opportunity to talk with our students. So, this is my hope that we do not make the decision like right now and I urge you, like everyone, to give us more time so that we can talk to the other student representatives from these colleges so that we can have better communication with the faculty members or the staff members in the university.

J. Peters: Okay, we're voting. A "yes" means we are vetoing the recommendation of the UCC on this grading policy.

A. Rosenbaum: A "no" vote means that this will become policy.

Unidentified: One more time? If we vote, "1" what are we voting for?

A. Rosenbaum: If you vote, "1" you are voting "yes" that you want to veto this policy. If you vote, "2" you are voting that you do not want to veto this policy.

J. Peters: What's the decision rule?

A. Rosenbaum: They must get 39 "yes" votes to veto the policy. This represents two-thirds of the voting members of the University Council, whether or not they're present.

J. Peters: Okay, are we ready?

A. Rosenbaum: So, "1" is "yes," "2" is "no."

N. Bender: I would like to speak if I may.

A. Rosenbaum: The question has been called.

N. Bender: Very well.

The results of the vote were:

1 – YES 24
2 – NO 22
3 – ABSTAIN 2

The motion failed to get the required agreement of two-thirds (39) of the University Council voting members.

J. Peters: So, the veto fails.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. [Proposed Revision](#) to NIU Bylaws Article 14.9.3(2) – biennial Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute – **FIRST READING** – Page 5

J. Peters: We are running out of time. We have, what I understand is a non-controversial proposal to change a bylaw with regard to the Multicultural Transformation Curriculum Institute, and I know that Alan can explain this to you. It's on page 5.

A. Rosenbaum: Essentially the Multicultural Curriculum Transformation Institute has been taking place on a yearly basis. What happens is that they get a large number of people taking it in one year and then in the next year, they don't get many people. So, they will get 15 or 16 in the first year and the second year, they will get 3 or 4. The proposal is that they are going to only offer this every other year and it's purely for economic reasons

J. Peters: We need a motion to change this bylaw.

M Smith: So moved. **Cho:** Second.

The motion was approved without dissent or abstention.

J. Peters: Since it's non-controversial and there's some need to get this done, is there a motion to waive second reading?

D. Haliczzer: So moved. **Unidentified:** Second.

The motion to waive the second reading passed without dissent or abstention. Since the original vote was unanimous, it was taken as the final vote and the motion was considered passed.

IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR

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

XI. ADJOURNMENT.

Meeting adjourned at 3:45 p.m.