

Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT AFFAIRS
AND PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**
November 7, 2013

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Robert Marshall at 9:01 a.m. in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Sharon Banks-Wilkins conducted a roll call of Trustees. Members present were Trustees Wheeler Coleman, Cheryl Murer, Marc Strauss, Student Trustee Elliott Echols, BOT Chair John Butler and Chair Marshall. Trustee Robert Boey and President Douglas Baker joined the meeting in progress. Not present was Trustee Anthony Iosco. Also present were Committee Liaison Lisa Freeman and Deputy General Counsel Gregory Brady. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

Chair Marshall announced that President Baker had been delayed due to radio interviews in Chicago. Also, Trustee Iosco was unable to attend because of serious family illness.

VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Confirmation of Open Meetings Act public notice compliance was provided by Acting Board General Counsel Gregory Brady.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Trustee Murer made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Student Trustee Echols seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Boey and seconded by Trustee Strauss to approve the minutes of the August 29, 2013 committee meeting. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

I would like to share with you a few of the potential agenda items that we will be covering during the forthcoming year. This is a partial list of what might be considered in the future:

- interdisciplinary teaching
- adding innovative retention models and tools (particularly for freshmen and sophomores)
- oversight of Greek life
- the quality of student life
- increasing positive interface between the campus and the City of DeKalb
- the affordability and availability of financial aid
- the assessment of learning
- developing strong education programs
- international student support services.

Thanks to my fellow Trustees who also contributed and will continue to contribute to this list throughout the year.

On today's agenda, we have one action item Open Access to Research Articles Task Force, and five information items which include Outcomes of the Diversity Leadership Summit, Diversity of Faculty and

Staff, Enrollment Management, Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Update and Oversight of Academic Programs.

Chair Marshall recognized the representatives from the University Advisory Committee, Andy Small and Dan Gebo.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Chair asked Acting General Counsel Brady if any members of the public had registered a written request to address the Board in accordance with State law and Board of Trustees *Bylaws*. Mr. Brady noted that he had received no requests to address this meeting.

UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORTS

Agenda Item 7.a. – Diversity Leadership Summit

Interim Provost Lisa Freeman called on Dr. Janice Hamlet, Coordinator of Academic Diversity Programs, to give a report on the Diversity Leadership Summit held at NIU on Friday, September 6, 2013. She stated that Dr. Hamlet would be talking first about the impetus for the summit, providing an overview of the summit and then concluding with some recommendations and actions to realize the potential of this important event.

I am very grateful for this opportunity to talk about a project that was near and dear to my heart on a professional and a personal level, and important to the future of diversity at NIU, Dr. Hamlet began. On September 6, approximately 77 people, diversity leaders and stakeholders from across the university, in their roles as administrators, staff, students and faculty, as well as community representatives, gathered in the Capitol Room of the Holmes Student Center for a Diversity Leadership Summit. The theme for the summit was "A New Beginning: Building Bridges, Engaging Leaders, and Harmonizing Voices."

The summit was conceived and designed to establish a sense of community among the leadership of the various units that focus on cultural diversity throughout the university. The expected outcome of the summit was that the diversity leaders and stakeholders attending the summit would go back to their units and share with their colleagues and fellow students the ideas that emerged from the summit in order to develop and implement action, igniting campus-wide conversations about diversity in efforts to build a stronger, more organized and unified campus community centered on engaging and promoting diversity, inclusion, equity and social justice.

Dr. Hamlet reported that following a greeting and brief introduction regarding the purpose of the summit, President Baker began the summit with two icebreakers. He asked the participants to form two human sculptures visualizing how we see diversity currently existing at NIU and how it should exist at NIU, and the two were vastly different. The other participants at their tables were asked to define water, explain water to someone who has never seen it. Responses ranged from very concrete definitions of what water is to more symbolic, metaphorical explanations. The President explained that the purpose of this activity was symbolic of the fact that we live in our own tanks with different ways of doing and seeing things, having different lived experiences. Then we come here to integrate with others and our lives impact others. The exercise also illustrated the many ways we can define and interpret terms contributing to our diversity, even when it comes to defining the word diversity.

Each table was assigned a specific issue to discuss and come up with action steps in addressing specific issues. The roundtable discussions generated a wealth of action steps and ideas which are summarized in the report. The summit resulted in an afternoon of knowledge sharing, collaboration, collegiality, high energy, enthusiasm and optimism for the future of diversity at NIU.

The week following the summit, participants received a post-summit survey, which yielded a response rate of over 50 percent. The responses were very positive about the summit and the opportunity to be

among other diversity leaders and stakeholders. However, in response to a question asking participants to rate NIU's diversity efforts on a scale of 1 to 5, an overwhelming majority rated the university with a 3, which is average. The reasons offered for their responses ranged from "the absence of a chief diversity officer" to "fragmented efforts to engage diversity."

From the wealth of information generated at this summit, it is my hope that the summit will result in visible and viable outcomes beginning with acknowledgement that (1) diversity has to be recognized as being at the center of our institutional viability, a core value of our academic mission with the understanding that diversity is more than numerical representation, it is also about the quality of lived experiences as students and employees; (2) an institutional definition and mission statement about diversity inclusion, equity and social justice so that every goal and objective is a manifestation of that institutional definition and our mission; (3) the creation of a diversity strategic plan that will be updated every two or three years as we acknowledge and celebrate our accomplishments, work to overcome our challenges and deliberate on the work that still needs to be done; and (4) a centralized Office for Diversity with an administrator who reports directly to the President and/or Provost and has genuine opportunities to affect lasting change through the integration of diversity and inclusion into the university's infrastructure with accountability seeking and ongoing assessment of diversity programs and practices. Creating a work environment that is rich in diversity, is inclusive and just for all employees and students, is not only intellectually sound but must be a moral imperative.

Included in Dr. Hamlet's report is also a Statement of Support from the members of the Academic Diversity Programs Advisory Committee in which they advocate the need for the university to move from a compliance model of diversity to a proactive model that capitalizes on the advantages that diversity offers to the academic mission. The full report can be found on the Academic Diversity Programs website that has been launched today. It is also available through the homepage A-Z Index under Academic Diversity Programs. Please take the opportunity to not only read the report, but look at our wonderful website that was created by the University Communications Office.

In conclusion, Dr. Hamlet said, I am very appreciative to Former Provost Ray Alden and Vice President Anne Birberick for supporting my vision to coordinate and host this summit. I am equally appreciative to the Academic Diversity Advisory Committee who supported this effort and, finally, to President Baker for accepting my invitation to be a vital part of the summit. I was very pleased with the outcome and all of our efforts.

It is very exciting any time a university promotes intellectual discourse, Trustee Murer remarked. I was intrigued by your comments and struck by how easily we moved from a terminology of diversity to some of the issues you were dealing with, which has nothing to do with demographic differences, but rather human respect, ways in which one adapts to a workplace. I hope I might be invited to participate next year, because I am very interested in the definition of diversity since sometimes the connotation may be too narrow. In reply to a query from Trustee Murer regarding her definition of diversity, Dr. Hamlet stated, I define diversity as the acknowledgement and respect of human differences and lived experiences, which includes the intersectionality of human experiences. Many times we want to sectionalize people when we are in so many subcultures. Many times I have gone to conferences and am asked to choose whether I wanted to be a member of either the Black Caucus or the Minority Women's Caucus. Being Black and female, I deal with those two issues at the same time, I will not choose. I believe that finally, in the 21st Century, our voices are beginning to be heard and that intersectionality is now becoming commonplace. People are beginning to realize that we are more than just one cultural group and we have to look at each other in the totality of who we are and those experiences.

The ideas of an institutionalized definition, mission, plan and leadership were the most dominant topics that kept coming up, Dr. Hamlet said, and regardless of what specific issue each table was asked to address, they kept coming up. In the individual responses, people reported that that they wanted to see diversity, not just hear the term.

The various types of diversity were discussed, including some that maybe others had not thought about in terms of religion and in terms of acknowledging our veterans as a cultural group. So, the range of diversity certainly expands to include even intellectual diversity. One of the things about a diversity of perspectives or intellect is that we have to be very careful because we all can be in the same unit, be in the same gender and of the same ethnic background, and diversity of opinion will be there. We cannot rely on just that, the whole range, as much as possible, needs to be there.

My congratulations to you on your fascinating report, Trustee Boey said, especially from the viewpoint of what your group of 70-plus people did in one given day. That one day has opened up a frontier that you can continue possibly once or twice a year. You have started something that is very concrete and very important; but your challenge is going to be how to retain that presence.

I was struck in reading the report by a couple of things I want to draw some attention to, Trustee Butler said, particularly Category 5, Infuse Diversity in All Aspects of Students' Education and Engagement. The point that you make in your report strikes me as a profound one, which is that we really need to reward this activity when we hire, particularly, faculty of color into tenure-track positions. We need to recognize that they bear the diversity burdens of their departments. It also is important for the Board to really focus on the movement from a compliance model to a model that values diversity and seeks proactive ways of encouraging it. That is where we will find ourselves most challenged as an institution.

In reply to a query from Trustee Strauss regarding follow up on the energy generated from the meeting, Dr. Hamlet replied that after the initial announcement of the upcoming summit, President Baker charged Katrina Caldwell, representing Student Affairs; Karen Baker representing Human Resources; and me, representing Academic Affairs, to collaborate on how we see diversity operating so that we could brand ourselves regarding diversity at NIU. The three of us met and then brought other people in, many of whom were participants in the summit, and some who were not. This is an ongoing project, but we are in the process of coming up with a strategic plan and a way that we can identify ourselves and our diversity at NIU. All of the Trustees' interest in diversity's existence and making it work is very supportive. I hope that you will continue to make sure that diversity remains not as an afterthought, or tacked on at the end of the agenda, but a crucial part of your planning, your deliberations and your discussions.

This is a fabulous report with great information and it sounds like there was a lot of great energy generated, Trustee Coleman commented. As a reminder to my fellow Board members, on May 10, 2012, we approved a new Mission Statement for the university. One section says the following: "In pursuit of our vision and fulfilling our mission, the University values: "A community of diverse people, ideas, services and scholarly endeavors in a climate of respect ..." Then I read that comment and that dot point and said, wow, how powerful. We all need to raise the question of whether this is just a comment on a website or are we actually trying to live it? We updated the University Mission Statement in May of last year, but I read about eight of our college mission statements and many of the new values we adopted in May have not found their way to the mission statements of the university's colleges. One of those is diversity. When we talk about instituting a climate of diversity and inclusion, we can have a diverse population, but that does not necessarily promote inclusion, so it should be a combination of promoting diversity and inclusion, beginning with our given missions. We need to look at all of our college mission statements and see that they are properly aligned to the university mission statement we passed last May.

I hope people understand the value of having a diverse university and one where inclusion is accepted or realized among the masses. Our demographics are changing. We have to figure out how we grow our institution by opening up our minds, opening up this environment and allow others to perceive this environment as one where they are respected and included. Also, when we talk about diversity, it does not only mean the color of your skin. There are other diversities that are not as obvious that we have to take into consideration, such as diversity of religion, diversity of beliefs or sexual orientation. We need to create a climate and an environment that will recognize and respect people, no matter what their

diversity, Trustee Coleman concluded, and we will have a climate of respect and inclusion when it comes to diversity.

Agenda Item 7.b. – Diversity of Faculty and Staff

This item follows, quite logically, the presentation we just heard, Dr. Freeman said. It is a report on the diversity of faculty and staff at NIU. Certainly, Dr. Hamlet's report, the comments that grew out of the Diversity Leadership Summit and the reflections that we just heard from the Board of Trustees members remind us that university communities really should be diverse and inclusive in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, culture and their intersections. This is a moral imperative and it is aligned with our mission. But most importantly, it is a pathway to excellence because diversity gives the university the vibrant intellectual community, the community of ideas and respect that we expect institutions of higher learning to be. Ideally, the diversity in a university should reflect the world at large. As we just heard, this should be true across the leadership, the faculty and the student body. When I came to NIU three years ago, one of the things I was really excited about, moving from a very homogeneous institution in Kansas to NIU, was the diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, beliefs in our cabinet, in our deans and in our student body.

There is a lot of competition in the marketplace and NIU is not at the forefront with respect to the salaries, opulent office space or resources it is able to offer. But these are likely not the only reasons for the diversity challenge that we face. For faculty, by gender, we have good qualitative data that were presented to the Dean's Council within the last couple of weeks by a group of faculty and administrators representing our College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, who were funded by the National Science Foundation to look particularly at women in STEM fields, and particularly at advancement from the untenured rank of assistant professor to the ranks of associate professor and the movement from associate to full professor. The issues that came out in that study are multifactorial and are probably issues that also play into our retention of faculty of color and faculty from underrepresented groups. I wish we could look at these turnover rates and these data and say our work is done, but I am happy that we are beginning this conversation at a time when there is so much support from the Board of Trustees and so much energy across the different communities on our campus to move us in the right direction by having honest conversations and sharing data.

I appreciate your comments that there are likely multiple causes for this result that were not reflected in the written material, Trustee Strauss remarked. It also is suggestive that these aggregated data may shed some light on college or department specific factors that could be remedied. Because the direction of the result that is reflected in these data is no different than we looked at three years ago in the Vision 2020 program, we have to figure out what we need to do differently in order to begin to achieve a different result. Also, we, as a Board, need to take a look at this more often than every three years so that we are able to judge whether what we are trying has had effect or if we need to try some other approach. Trustee Murer and Butler made comments in agreement with Trustee Strauss. They both indicated that, in addition to the data they have on turnover attributed to retirements by category and those attributable to nonretirement and separations by category, they would like to see more specific data on turnover rates specific to race and gender as well. We often are comfortable saying what is probably true, Trustee Butler said, the situation in the State of Illinois is having a detrimental effect on our ability to recruit and retain faculty. Certainly, it is a factor, but to what extent? We have seen success in the recruiting of minority and female faculty. But just as we succeed in recruiting, we are losing female and minority faculty at a rate that is possibly higher. Is it possible that the Board can do something to counterbalance the impact of the unsatisfactory benefits environment within the State of Illinois?

You are correct about the relative rates of recruiting and retaining faculty from diverse backgrounds, Dr. Freeman said. We have challenges both in recruiting and retaining faculty across the board. Certainly, your suggestions are excellent. We are doing things at individual unit levels, but do not really compare notes or have things integrated across the Division of Academic Affairs so that people can learn

from effective or best practices that are developed in various units at NIU. The fact that the Board is so supportive of these efforts is very meaningful.

Agenda Item 7.c. – Enrollment Management Discussion

Dr. Eric Weldy, Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, gave a presentation and led a discussion on enrollment management. Dr. Weldy indicated that he would attempt to answer some of the questions that were raised in the last committee meeting. He also was preparing a packet with more detailed information for the Board. Some of the topics covered included: reasons why students leave NIU; graduation and retention rate comparisons; student headcount and credit hours, instructional and recruitment costs; programs and facilities, residence hall occupancy as well as constraints hindering growth in some areas of our academic programs; community colleges and transfers; and Enrollment Management's strategic plan.

Agenda Item 7.e. – Open Access to Research Articles Act Task Force

Dr. Freeman explained Open Access as a model that allows scholarly authors to maintain greater control over their publishing rights, and also provides the public free access to research results without the constraints of costly journal subscriptions, thereby maximizing the social and economic benefits of university research to the public. Illinois Senator Biss is the author of the Open Access to Research Articles Act, an act that was recently signed into law by Governor Quinn. Senator Biss spoke at NIU on October 25, culminating a week of events at NIU celebrating Open Access Week. The Open Access to Research Articles Act in Illinois requires each public university to establish a task force to consider how it can best further open access; to review how peer institutions and the federal government are addressing open access; and to consider the academic, legal and other questions related to an open access policy. Members of the Task force include:

Patrick Dawson, the Dean of the University Libraries is the chair
Winifred Creamer, Distinguished Research Professor from the Department of Anthropology
Carl Von Ende, Associate Professor, Biological Sciences
Stacey Erdman, Digital Collections Curator
Jim Gilden, Senior Special Project Manager from SAGE Publications
David Gunkel, Professor in Communications
Greg Long, Professor of Allied Health and Communicative Disorders
Mike Mann, Assistant Vice President, Budget and Planning, Finance and Facilities
Tom Parisi, Editorial Associate, Media and Public Relations
Jaime Schumacher, Project Director, National Leader Grant, University Libraries
Gleb Sirotkin, Associate Professor, Mathematical Sciences; and
David Stone, Associate Vice President for Research, Division of Research and Graduate Studies

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to endorse the Open Access to Research Articles Task Force. Trustee Murer so moved seconded by Trustee Butler. The motion was approved.

Agenda Item 7.f. – Oversight of Academic Programs

Dr. Freeman asked Vice Provost Carolinda Douglass to brief the Board on Oversight of Academic Programs.

NIU has a very rigorous process of oversight of our academic programs, which occur every eight years, Dr. Douglass said. This past year, 22 programs and centers that came from two colleges and one division were reviewed. The process revealed that all 22 of the programs were in good standing. There are some follow-up reports for eight of the programs that will be reported on either next year or the year after, depending on the program. Trustee Butler said he would like to hear about the Test for Academic Preparedness and the current controversy at the state level with respect to the cut score being increased and the effect that is having on the recruitment and retention of female and minority students within the education programs, particularly at the elementary education level, at an upcoming meeting, due to time

limitations. Also, I would like us to discuss the question of ESL and bilingual education, and what our strategy is to increase the preparedness of our students to operate within that environment.

Trustee Strauss requested more detail regarding outcomes assessment and subsequent prioritization of academic programs. What we received, I believe, were summaries of the actual reports. And the summaries seem to focus on costs, survey of usefulness by the graduates and the number of students that were in the programs. What I'm interested in is basically how we benchmark what results we're trying to get out of these programs or centers. And if I could get some more information on that general topic, I would appreciate it.

OTHER MATTERS

Trustee Strauss requested a return to the issue of admission and retention after the Board has received the benefit of Dr. Weldy's full report.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee will be announced shortly.

ADJOURNMENT

Trustee Strauss moved to adjourn, seconded by Trustee Murer. The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:43 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon M. Banks-Wilkins
Recording Secretary

In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.