

Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT AFFAIRS AND PERSONNEL
COMMITTEE MEETING
November 12, 2015

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Chair Robert Marshall in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Liz Wright conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, Wheeler Coleman, Cheryl Murer, Struthers, Robert Marshall, and BOT Chair Marc Strauss. Members absent were Trustees John Butler and Raquel Chavez. Also present: President Douglas Baker, Committee Liaison Lisa Freeman, Board Liaison Mike Mann, General Counsel Jerry Blakemore, Dean Derryl Block, Assistant Vice President Meryl Sussman, Director Aline Click, Specialist on Video Media Jennifer Howard, and UAC Representatives Dan Gebo and Leanne VandeCreek. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel Blakemore indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Blakemore also advised that a quorum was present.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Strauss so moved and Trustee Boey seconded. Two modifications were made to the agenda. First, that Item 7.d. be moved for consideration before item 7.a.; and also that item 8.b. be moved for consideration before item 8.a. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Marshall noted that the changes to the agenda were due to the time constraints of the presenters and the late start time. He welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There are four items for approval. These items include: a request to delete an emphasis 1: Hospitality Management within the Nutrition, Dietetics, and Wellness (B.S.) program; a request for a constitutional amendment to article 4 of the NIU Constitution; a request for a constitutional amendment to article 7 of the NIU Constitution; and approval for Athletics to obtain executive search firms for selected head coaches positions.

In addition to the approval items, there are three information items. The first item is the annual report on the Overview of Academic Programs. Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman will provide updates on the status of Program Prioritization and NIU's report to the IBHE on Low Performing Programs. The second item is a report on online programming. Meryl Sussman, Assistant Vice President for Outreach Adult and Non-credit Programming, will present information on NIU's Office for Online Program Development and Support, its focus on quality in online instruction, and its plans and strategies for positioning the University as a leader in quality online programming. The third item will be a discussion with the Committee on future agenda items: both agenda items that are standard to the Committee and those that the Board has requested.

Chair Marshall recognized the representatives from the University Advisory Committee (UAC) and asked if they had any comments to make to the Committee.

Professor Long thanked him for the opportunity and noted that he had a couple of quick comments. He continued that issues of moral and salary continue to be concerns for faculty and staff. Resource cuts and limits on funding are making this year more difficult on employees. People are pulling together and supporting one another throughout this difficult time. There is continued support for Program Prioritization, although, it is also causing some stress among faculty and staff. In the long run it will be valuable and he appreciates the support services and opportunities that have been made available to the program authors. Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman will be attending the Faculty Senate meeting next week to give us some more opportunity to talk about this.

Professor Long continued that the University Advisory Committee is always interested in collaborating and providing feedback to the Board. The Board should feel free to reach out to the UAC. His final comments were that the UAC was working very hard to educate both Faculty Senate (FS) and University Council (UC) members on basic issues associated with shared governance. They are also bringing in people to provide resource information to keep FS and UC updated on technology, Program Prioritization, and other current topics/current issues.

Chair Marshall thanked Professor Long for his remarks.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the AASAP Committee meeting August 27, 2015. Trustee Strauss so moved and Trustee Coleman seconded. The motion passed.

PUBLIC COMMENT

General Counsel Blakemore indicated that there was no request for public comment.

UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORTS

Chair Marshall asked the Executive Vice President and Provost, Dr. Freeman, to present the university report.

7.a. AUTHORIZATION TO RETAIN EXECUTIVE SEARCH FIRMS TO SUPPORT SELECTED SEARCHES FOR THE DIVISION OF ATHLETICS

Executive Vice President (EVP) and Provost Freeman thanked Chair Marshall. She also thanked all in attendance representing an action or an information item for their patience with the slight changes in the schedule.

EVP and Provost Freeman continued to item 7.a.: the authorization to retain executive search firms to support selected searches for the Division of Athletics. This item was moved first because Associate Director of Athletics, Debra Boughton, needed to leave for other commitments as soon as the item was complete. In keeping with the provisions of Public Act 97 08104 and NIU policy on the use of external search firms, which was approved by the Board of Trustees on May 23, 2013, authorization was requested from the Board to use external hiring search firms. This would address the potential need to hire coaches over the holiday break. Holiday Break is often a time of turnover in head coach positions. Provost Freeman clarified

that there are no known vacancies at this time, but because actions in athletics have to be taken on a short timeline, this change would ensure these potential situations can be handled with appropriate approval.

EVP and Provost Freeman noted that in this case, the use of search firms is particularly important due to their special expertise in candidate screening for specific types of coaching positions. It is important to make sure that coaches are well vetted regarding issues that may require more extensive investigation. The committee's recommendation was that the President be authorized to select executive search firms to support selected searches for head coaches in the division of athletics. The committee further recommended that the President report plans to retain to such search firms as soon as practicable and then periodically report back to the board regarding the selection and the status of such searches. The university recommends that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee endorse this request and ask that the president forward it by means of the president's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its December 10, 2015 meeting.

Trustee Boey moved to affirm the recommendation brought forward by EVP and Provost Freeman.

Trustee Strauss seconded the motion.

The motion passed.

7.b. REQUEST FOR DELETION OF EMPHASIS

Provost Freeman continued to item 7.b.: request for the deletion of the emphasis, Hospitality Management with the Nutrition, Dietetics and Wellness. Provost Freeman recognized Dean Block, of Health and Human Sciences, in attendance. An overview was provided (summarized as follows): The Bachelor of Science program in Nutrition, Dietetics and Hospitality was recently renamed in Nutrition, Dietetics and Wellness. This change followed the Illinois Board of Higher Education approval allowing NIU to offer a new program: the Bachelor of Science in Hospitality and Tourism Management. This was done to ensure that the tourism and management program was visible and to create programs that were more attractive to the market of students that are served. The new degree replaces the need to offer the emphasis under the existing degree. Hence, the university recommends that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee endorse this request to delete the aforementioned emphasis. The committee asked that the President forward it by means of the President's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at the December 10, 2015 meeting.

Chair Marshall requested a motion.

Trustee Strauss affirmed the motion and requested to pause for a question.

Trustee Coleman seconded the motion.

Trustee Strauss inquired if there are any students currently trying to complete this emphasis that would be adversely affected by immediate elimination.

Dean Block responded to Trustee Strauss' question by explaining that students presently in the Hospitality Management program would still have the courses available with the new major. He explained that this motion does not change the curriculum. As the Hospitality and Tourism management is its own major, the name of the emphasis is no longer necessary. So, students would be able to continue and progress in their program without any problem.

Trustee Strauss clarified by asking: if anybody who would have had an emphasis is instead going to have

a major and will be taking the same courses?

Dean Block affirmed Trustee Strauss' summation and further specified that if a student decides to go with a new catalog then they could go with the new major.

Chair Marshall asked for any additional comments or questions and called for a vote.

The motion passed.

7.c. Request for a Constitutional Amendment to Article 4

Provost Freeman invited University Council Executive Secretary and Faculty Senate President Greg Long to address the meeting on the request for constitutional amendments.

Faculty Senate President Long thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak and introduced the first constitutional amendment (Article 4). The amendment will address the need for flexibility in the standing committees and the request would move the specification of such committees from the constitution to the bylaws.

Trustee Boey motioned to approve the amendment described by Faculty Senate President Long.

Provost Freeman offered to read the recommendation.

Trustee Strauss reiterated the nature of the recommendation: the university recommends the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel committee endorse the request for the amendment in our printed material for this agenda item and requests that the president forward it by means of the president's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at its December 10, 2015 meeting.

Trustee Strauss seconded the motion.

Chair Marshall asked if anyone would like further discussion on the motion and the amendment.

Trustee Strauss offered comment on the good sense of the amendment and its fortunate timing (as there is not an ad hoc committee on governance meeting at this time and it would not have been able to be added to their agenda until after our December board meeting). Trustee Strauss voiced his preference, as there is a block of time reserved in the ad hoc governance committee for discussion of changes that these requests go through that channel instead of directly to this committee in future.

Chair Marshall called the vote.

The motion passed.

7.d. Request for a Constitutional Amendment to Article 7

Faculty Senate President Long continued on the item 7.d.: a request for a constitutional amendment to Article 7 to create a parallel construction across students, operating staff, and university faculty. Currently, Article 7 identifies students as the only ones who are "integral" to the university system of governance. The premise of the amendment would be more inclusivity in its identification of the university community indicating across all three councils that each of these afore mentioned groups are integral to shared governance.

Trustee Strauss motioned that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee endorse the proposed amendment contained in the printed material and asked the President to forward it by means of the President's report to the Board of Trustees for its approval at its December 10, 2015 meeting.

Trustee Coleman seconded the motion.

Chair Marshall called for a vote.

The motion passed.

8.a. PRESENTATION: ONLINE PROGRAMS

Provost Freeman introduced the next agenda (informational) item related to on-line program development and support. This item was presented in direct response to requests from a number of the trustees and turned the presentation over to Assistant Vice President for Outreach Adult and Non-Credit Programming, Meryl Sussman.

Asst. VP Sussman acknowledged her colleagues in the room and thanked the committee for the opportunity to present. She introduced her colleagues Aline Click, the Director of e-Learning Services, and Jennifer Howard, the Specialist on Video Media.

Asst. VP Sussman introduced the topic by sharing the beginning of her involvement in distance learning working with a fire department and the success of that first program. Asst. VP Sussman then outlined the items for the presentation and played a video of experts that addressed online learning as a key to 21st century instruction.

(Video played)

Asst. VP Sussman continued by outlining the motivation for NIU's involvement in on-line learning including, but not limited to: providing accessibility to the 3 million adult learners in the Chicagoland area who have not completed their degrees, enrichment of interactions among learners, meeting various learning styles, and allowing students to repeat lessons as many times as they need. Additionally, on-line programs offer students the chance to use and thus learn about technology – skills that are needed to be successful in the 21st century. Finally, NIU's programs are leaders in this field and research in this field. Asst. VP Sussman introduced a video illustrating on-line learning.

(Video played)

Asst VP Sussman introduced another video displaying further advantage of on-line learning in scheduling accommodation.

(Video played)

Asst. VP Sussman described their work with faculty who are considering moving courses to an on-line delivery. That work includes discussion of success in their current course and how it can be equated with new technology while retaining what they and students enjoy about their courses. Faculty work with e-learning specialists to see how technologies could be employed to keep these elements present in their courses. Asst. VP Sussman emphasized the variety of ways that materials can be presented online offering options for students with different learning approaches and abilities. Additionally, Asst. VP Sussman reminded to committee that on-line doesn't assume disconnection and that often online meetings are

synchronic.

Asst. VP Sussman continued by summarizing the collaboratively formed office called Online Program Development and Support or ODPS. The goal was to contribute to the development of high quality NIU online programs that would attract audiences who cannot come to DeKalb to take classes during the day. ODPS put together a promotional team who can message out to external audiences about the availability of programs.

Asst. VP Sussman expressed ODPS priority that, as a research university, NIU must focus on research in this field and contribute to the ongoing advancement of online learning. She then introduced a video on an overview of the e-learning services.

(Video played)

Asst. VP Sussman continued by describing the e-learning staff of 11 professionals actively engaged in research on learning delivered through technology. She also shared the impact of NIU's subscription of Quality Matters: an international organization that has a rubric of guidelines for high quality student experience on-line not course content. Quality Matters deals with the structure of a course for better student outcomes based on faculty and peer reviewed research in the field of on-line learning. ODPS has been following Quality Matters rubrics.

Asst. VP Sussman concluded by describing the relationship between faculty and instructional designers. Additionally, Asst. VP Sussman described the start of online communities for faculty to participate within the Quality Matters initiative. Additionally, Asst. VP Sussman informed the committee that Provost Freeman is intending to start an advisory committee on online learning, including faculty, to look into issues, barriers, and concerns.

Provost Freeman thanked Asst. VP Sussman and opened the floor to questions.

Trustee Struthers asked for information regarding how much of the total learning in the university today is e-learning as well as a possible future projection for e-learning.

Asst. VP Sussman answered that 10-15% of NIU's credit hour production is through online learning. She also noted that some of this could be students who are on-campus who choose to enroll in an online course. The ten year projection was unclear but high as faculty members begin routinely incorporating on-line learning in all courses.

Trustee Struthers addressed Provost Freeman on the idea of score carding as a strong measure of the pie chart shifts between e-learning and traditional courses.

Provost Freeman agreed with and responded to Trustee Struthers comment as well as advising precaution for the handling of metric data. She addressed the varied nature of student groups, their needs, and their learning preferences with regard to online learning. She advised that as dashboards are developed constant reevaluation of those dashboards will be needed to keep up with a world that is changing very quickly.

Trustee Boey asked if the classroom size is going to be much smaller in the future.

Asst. VP Sussman suggested that the classroom could be larger as more people are coming into a section. Additionally, an online program can attract students from all over the world. Research shows that adult learners like to meet the people that they are going to communicate with and 65% of on-line learners tend to take online courses from universities within 100 miles of where they live and work.

Trustee Strauss introduced economic concerns and asked what the cost is to develop a wholly online course.

Asst. VP Sussman provided an estimate labor cost with the instructional designer of about \$10,000 for a course (that does not address the cost of infrastructure which is needed and the tools that are needed to bring the technology to the course). She also reminded the committee that these courses would have a larger audience and possibly greater revenue stream.

Trustee Strauss addressed concerns that courses would be at a higher cost because of various institutional costs associated with online course offerings. He additionally commented on the need to address who would bear the cost of various levels of instructional development.

Aline Click, Director of e-Learning, responded and clarified that the \$10,000 cost would be for the first time a course was offered. She expanded and explained that a course offered many times and over many sections would have the cost spread out. Redevelopment of courses and updating is also part of what ODPS provides. Help for faculty and staff who want component online pieces added to their course is not currently part of ODPS' services.

Asst. VP Sussman redirected to the issue of off hour support. She stated that off hours support for students is a different service paradigm that would be needed in order to capture the working adult population.

Trustee Strauss asked about assessment in online courses and meeting the needs of different learners in that portion of a course.

Asst. VP Sussman replied that for some people the on-line learning is not suited, for other people it is well suited. She shared research that has shown that the learning outcomes are the same for the students who succeed in either a face-to-face or an on-line. She introduced retention issues in online learning that will need to be addressed.

Trustee Coleman offered support of online learning and the need for more investment in it. He also mention online learning would be part of the on-going strategy. He also referenced the prioritization process as a place to investigate when courses could be pushed to online offerings. Trustee Coleman recognized it as an opportunity to be a school without borders as well as a way to increase NIU's revenue stream. He also introduced the high-speed fiber controlled by the university as an example of the resources at NIU's disposal that can be leveraged.

Chair Marshall asked about a slide from the presentation on windmill energy. As community colleges are starting to produce the associate degree in the windmill energy technology, does NIU have the capability to set up some capstone programs through the on-line learning for some of these programs that are around but not quite here?

Asst. VP Sussman confirmed the possibility brought up by Chair Marshall and provided some examples of that action that has begun.

Provost Freeman added that the programs referenced by Asst. VP Sussman recruit from a population NIU has not served before. This population has an Associate's of Applied Science degree, which had been previously considered a terminal technical degree. In doing on-line and in collaborative programs with community colleges, NIU is preparing citizens of the world, doing work force development, and enabling that completion target (that's important in the state of Illinois) to be reached more effectively.

Asst. VP Sussman also briefly addressed the possibility of putting post graduate certificates and master's

degrees online.

Chair Marshall closed this information item.

8.b. OVERSIGHT OF ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

Provost Freeman introduced the next informational agenda item, item 8.b.: the annual oversight of academic programs. She reminded the committee that the quality of academic degree programs are monitored using a variety of processes and that data is used to inform planning and decision making about the programs. Provost Freeman reviewed the advisory committees, and the internal/external review processes required by the regional accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission, and the Illinois Board of Higher Education. Additionally, Provost Freeman introduced new processes under consideration with regard to program quality and indicators of program performance. The Illinois Board of Higher Education has provided established definitions for low performing programs and NIU will be required to report on those. Provost Freeman provided the following comments on those definitions: they consider only the average number of degrees conferred and average enrollment without regard to quality or cost. Using that definition, NIU fared very well and very few programs were identified as performing poorly (some which have already been eliminated). Other programs were so new that students have not been in the program long enough to have completed it. Provost Freeman reminded the committee that the program prioritization is underway and that the comprehensive website is updated frequently.

Trustee Strauss requested copies of assessment reports this year.

Provost Freeman confirmed that assessments would be distributed again this year.

Trustee Strauss inquired about the format of the reports.

Provost Freeman clarified the format: full reports that inform a summary that goes to the IBHE and the board as well as the background reports drawn on campus.

Provost Freeman informed the committee that she is often asked how program prioritization will change the program review process and requested that her answer go on the record. She continued by saying that even though program review compares our programs and benchmarks them against like programs at other institutions, program prioritization is really focused on looking at different types of programs at NIU to allocate resources and identify opportunities for growth and innovations. She explained that NIU is planning to align the data that are used in the two processes and to alleviate the work burden on faculty associated with program review over time by linking our program to our budget process more closely.

Trustee Coleman inquired about the completion percentage of program prioritization.

Provost Freeman replied that program prioritization is approximately 40% completed and that the narratives are due on December 11. The task forces that are reviewing those narratives and providing the ranking will be working throughout the spring.

Trustee Coleman asked if there is a financial projection component to the report both with regard to spending and saving.

Provost Freeman answered by explaining that various costs are factored into the overall narrative about the program. She expanded by specifying in which ways costs are linked to quality as well as the types of questions asked in the preparation of the narratives. She continued by explaining the task force review of the programs from the narratives. These reviews/reflections of the committee task force work will be used

by senior leadership to make budget decisions and linked to a five year budgeting process.

Trustee Coleman asked when the aforementioned budget decisions will be effective.

Provost Freeman relied that it will begin in fiscal year '17.

8.c. FUTURE INFORMATION ITEMS

Provost Freeman reminded the committee of the annual agenda items such as sabbatical presentations, sabbatical approval, promotion and tenure approval. In addition, a number of issues that may come up in the future were listed: the process we use to assess student learning; an update on strategies for serving students and sustaining the academic mission in an era of constrained resources; a relook a summer session AP credit and dual credit; recognitions of our faculty and staff; celebrations of individuals who have received professional accolades, awards or recognitions as a result of their great efforts on and off campus; a summary of student support services on campus; and a report on the work of the senior associate vice president for academic diversity and chief diversity officer.

OTHER MATTERS

No other matters were discussed.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date of the AASAP Committee will be tentatively February 18, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Marshall asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Coleman so moved and Trustee Boey seconded. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Wright
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.