

**Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
May 28, 2015
Legislative Affairs, Research and Innovation
Committee Meeting**

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cheryl Murer at 12:18 p.m. in room 233 at NIU Hoffman Estates. Recording Secretary Cathy Craddock conducted a roll call of Trustees. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, Wheeler Coleman, Anthony Iosco, Robert Marshall, Marc Strauss, Student Trustee Paul Julion, Board Chair John Butler and Committee Chair Cheryl Murer. Also present were President Doug Baker, Committee Liaison Jerry Blazey and Board Parliamentarian Jerry Blakemore. With a quorum present, the meeting proceeded.

VERIFICATION OF APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

Confirmation of Open Meetings Act public notice compliance was provided by Board Parliamentarian Jerry Blakemore.

MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Trustee Strauss made a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Student Trustee Paul Julion seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trustee Strauss made a motion to approve the meetings minutes of the February 26, 2015 LARI Committee meeting. Trustee Wheeler Coleman seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Murer recognized the representatives of the University Advisory Committee, Professor Dan Gebo, who was not present, and Deborah Haliczzer.

As we've been looking at the agenda for today's meeting, began Ms. Haliczzer, it seems really important to comment on some of the things that we're seeing here. Let me tell you an anecdote to start. A few months ago I was riding in a taxi in Los Angeles. The taxi driver said "you know I was seeing this report on these scientists who are doing this really cool research in the Antarctic. They actually drilled down and saw live fish." I said oh yes I know them. He said "no way." I said I do. "How do you know them?" Well we work at the same university. So he was really impressed and so I got to go in detail about our long history with Antarctic research, which really impressed him. This gets to the point that I'm making here and that is that we really encourage every effort we can take to get the word out about the excellent teaching and research that happens at Northern. I don't think we always tell that story as assertively as we can and I'm really happy and applaud the efforts of Marketing and Communication to get that out. We encourage a strong, diverse approach to disseminating our message about the excellent research and teaching that occurs at Northern and all of the other excellent programs that all of us participate in through all of our categories of employment at Northern. This message, Ms. Haliczzer continued, has to be both internal and external; we are all ambassadors of this university and every time that any one of us has a contact with anyone out in the world we talk about Northern. We talk about what we do and students come here because we're doing really interesting things. At a conference, a parent, a person who was an exhibitor said, "Northern, don't you have some good LGBT programs there?" so I talked about it. She sent her daughter to Northern and I got an e-mail back from that same person, who said the reason she persisted in college was that LGBT Resource Center. They helped her get through rough times. When we talk about our research, said Ms. Haliczzer, that's why people come here. Many students really do come here because of the research, because of the activities that people are doing at Northern.

We applaud the efforts of Marketing and Communications and every other venue to talk about the fine work we do. Morale also comes from the pride that we have in working for an excellent institution and that is something that all of us share – faculty, staff, and students. So keep it up. We encourage this.

Chair Murer thanked Deb for the great comments and that what was most important was how she said it with pride in voice and reflective of your comments. The Committee looks to Vice President Teller and the responsibility of the leadership of Marketing and Communications, but the implementation belongs to all of us. [video commercial played]

The Chair continued, the commercial from NIU's Supermileage team taped with Jay Leno in Los Angeles for his cable t.v. show. After playing the video for the committee and attendees, the Chair noted that our students are not here today partly because we're at a different campus, but we wanted to really express our pride in them. This is national recognition and we're so so pleased. She noted that we have Dr. Omar Ghrayeb, the Associate Dean of Outreach and Undergraduate programs here, Dr. David Schroeder, Associate Professor in the Department of Technology and the Supermileage group advisor, and Greer Davis Coordinator of Marketing Communications for the college. We certainly would like you to come up for a few moments to speak about how NIU's College of Engineering continues to excel on a national basis in regards to this competition. Dr. Ghrayeb, can you please say a few words?

Good afternoon, said Dr. Ghrayeb. First on behalf of Dean Vohra, I have to apologize that he has to be in Boston to meet with universities from France to discuss partnerships otherwise he would have been here. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to highlight one of the six successful teams we have in the college and all of them are doing great and you would be proud of all the teams. They are doing a great job with our formula car, Supermileage, air team or robotics. Just to give you an idea, with robotics, they are traveling around the state visiting high schools to start robotics clubs to engage high schoolers and attract them to engineering. They are doing great work. The College sponsors all those teams in addition to the student organizations for one reason: because companies these days they're not looking only for engineers who know how to crunch numbers, they are looking for engineers who have the core competencies like design, but also have the soft skills of teamwork and leadership. We are working to provide and teach those soft skills to our students to prepare them for successful careers. And they are doing great as evidenced by the placement of our students. Chair Murer thanked Dr. Ghrayeb and congratulated the College and its accomplished students.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Committee Chair Murer asked Board Parliamentarian Jerry Blakemore 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. Blakemore noted that no timely requests have been received.

UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS/REPORTS

Information Item 7.a. –

Chair Murer noted that later today the committee will be taking official action on a number of new appointments, but the one that is of particular interest is the nominee for Interim Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships and this committee's liaison, Dr. Jerry Blazey. Dr. Blazey received his PhD in Physics from the University of Minnesota in 1986. Over the past 30 years he has been involved in research in gliding beam experiments and in detector development. He's a fellow of the American Physical Society and since joining Northern in 1996 he has been appointed a Distinguished Research Professor and has been principle investigator for federally funded grants from several agencies. While participating in the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory Collider Program, he served as co-spokesperson of the D-Zero collaboration. He is a highly regarded person who is recognized not only in his academic community of Northern, but equally important he is recognized in Washington as one of the leading individuals who provides counsel, who provides direction, and who provides leadership in the area of research. Chair Murer concluded as she invited Dr. Blazey to make a few remarks. Dr. Blazey thanked Chair Murer for the kind words and the warm welcome and looks forward to the opportunity to work with

the full community to build a research and innovation enterprise. The Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships has a great deal of momentum underway. Dr. Blazey also recognized his predecessor Lesley Rigg and the staff of the entire division for their outstanding efforts to move the division forward. The Chair then asked President Baker if he would like to comment. Dr. Baker noted the vote on his appointment would follow later in the day and that the university went through a rigorous internal search process for this interim role and we had three excellent candidates but very much appreciate the very strong feedback Jerry got from all corners. Chair Murer continued with Committee business and introduced Mike Mann to give an update on the state budget and Senator Ed Maloney to share his insights regarding the legislative session. As you all know, we've introduced Senator Maloney many times.

Mr. Maloney thanked First Chairman Butler, President Baker and the entire NIU community for allowing him to represent the university in Springfield. Last week Speaker Madigan ran a number of bills connected to the governor's turn around agenda that were voted down. All the democrats voted opposed, the republicans voted present. Yesterday President Cullerton ran some bills that related to Governor Rauner's introduced budget specifically as it related to the 31 % cut for higher education. It was discussed that rarely do you see the sponsor of a bill urging no vote. Senator Trotter urged a no vote on this and all the democrats voted no, all the republicans voted present. This is a serious situation. Both the house and the senate are passing appropriation bills that will roll out approximately a six and a half percent cut for higher education. There will be other areas that are cut and they will go home on the 31st with a three billion dollar hole in the budget. Much of the conflict, in defense of the members of the General Assembly, much of the conflict is simply built into this system. As a representative of a particular area, you are doing what you're – part of your responsibility of course is to reflect the views of your constituency. When it comes to spending, spending is all about priorities. If you are an inner city Chicago representative, your priorities are going to be quite different than somebody who represents Lake Forest or somebody who represents southern Illinois. The diversity of this state dictates that all kinds of viewpoints are put out there. And when it comes to spending, that's where it's at. Everybody feels that their issue is most important to them, then it's a matter of settling in on those priorities. Again, this has been a particularly difficult year with the budget being where it is. Basically this budget is going to look like the FY15 budget that has passed. Problems that will persist after that of course, the republicans will claim that this is an unbalanced budget, it's unconstitutional. The democrats will say well we're trying to fulfill and meet the need of the citizens of Illinois and we can't do this without additional revenue. We're hoping the governor will discuss additional revenue. July 1 ends the fiscal year, certain payments have to be made for schools to open in August, and those crises are already being talked about now. Mr. Maloney stated his firm will do their best to stay on top of the situation, advocate for higher education in general, this university in particular, and see what the summer brings.

Mike Mann began his presentation noting he had passed out a three page state legislative update which provides a chronology of the time line of some of the key events that have occurred the past three or four months with regard to the budget development process. The third page provides a walk up of the budget as it's progressed this fiscal year. If you'll go down to the Northern row you'll notice that we started the FY15 fiscal year with an original appropriation of \$93.2 million. Just a couple of months ago the General Assembly passed a 2.25 percent mid-year rescission which reduced our appropriation to about \$91.1 million. You'll see the governor's proposed FY16 budget was at a level 31 and a half percent below our original appropriation. His proposal was a \$63.8 million budget. Two days ago the House passed HB4148 which provides Northern with an appropriation of \$85.2 million. Now that level of funding represents an eight million dollar decrease or an 8.6 percent decline from our original appropriation, but the number you heard Ed mention and you will hear bandied about is that when that level of funding is compared to our revised budget for FY15, it is a 6 and a half percent cut from our FY15 actual appropriation that's available to us. A couple of other things on this chart that are worth noting is the House budget provides the Monetary Award Program with \$397 million which would be an increase of \$23 million over the original funding for that program, and \$32 million increase over the revised appropriation for that program. For NIU students and all students in the state of Illinois who need financial assistance attending college, that is a good sign. Backing up to earlier in this report, there are a few bullets on the front page of this document that talk about where the process began earlier in the

year and it also describes the appropriation hearings that the president provided testimony in front of.

Mr. Maloney added that in terms of lobbying your legislators for whatever it is, additional funding, whatever it might be, always begin with your local legislator. Also, some of the most effective lobbyists as we have seen in Springfield when President Baker brought down some of our students and quite frankly a legislator has piles of paper on his desk all the time with all kinds of numbers in them, but when a student tells his story that has an impact. When a student says 'if I don't get this MAP money, I have to leave, I can't go to school' this has an impact on legislators when they tell those individual stories. Begin with your local legislator and that can be found out very easily by going on the IGLA website. You just plug in your address and you get your local legislator. Lobby them first. The most effective place to lobby them is not in Springfield, they've got seven or eight people waiting outside their office to see them. If you can make an appointment at the local office, they've set aside time so they're more likely to listen. And again, students are certainly the most effective lobbyists when they come prepared to simply tell their stories.

Dr. Baker noted his thanks to Mr. Maloney and continued that over the years he's always found students to be the most effective lobbyists. In his experience, the bottom of the pecking order were presidents, the next step up the lobbyist, the step above that was faculty and at the top of the pyramid were students. They spoke from the heart and they told what was really going on. They were the stakeholders. We've tried to employ that this year and our students were very effective. We had two students in the Senate and three in the House and at the end of the House hearing they applauded the students. So it was very impressive and they ended up inviting three students back. We had good stories that stick with people and we're going to continue to tell those stories. It's not a column of numbers it's the lives that are going to be changed or the opportunities not realized when these cuts come through and we have to share those stories and really show the impact in bringing them to life. So I just want to thank them. Last week there was a meeting with the presidents and two board chairs with legislators that President Baker was unable to attend but Board Chair John Butler went on the university's behalf. Board Chair Butler was asked to comment on the meeting.

Chair Butler began by noting there were several vice presidents and two board chairs representing their president. The delegation was led by the University Illinois President Timothy Calen who was in his ninth day on the job and Northeastern Illinois University President Sharon Haas who is in her ninth year of her job. These were good meetings. The group met with Governor Rauner's Chief of Staff and Secretary of Education and with President John Cullerton, House Republican Leader Jim Durkin, and House Speaker Michael Madigan. Senator Maloney summed up the disposition of the leadership. The republican leaders are very frustrated by the democratic sponsored spending bills and wanted us to know that the governor would not back down. He would insist on the adoption on several pro-business measures before discussing a revenue option. But it was clear that a revenue option was something that the governor would discuss at some point if the conditions were proper. The democrats expressed the need for revenue option noting the amount of money the state would have available if it retained the income tax increase that it permitted to sunset also mentioning that surrounding states; if we had their income tax rate how much more money we would have. Democrats also were of the mindset that the governors people were not taking into account some of the court orders, consent decrees and such that would obligate the state to pay for certain things that would not be covered under the existing proposed budget. And also the democrats seemed to give us a very subtle warning that we need as a community to stay in front of the media with respect to reputational issues; citing most frequently the College of DuPage situation, suggesting that there was less sympathy for the situation that higher education is facing because of these news stories. That was not good to hear but it was frank. Chair Butler noted that he believes presidents left Springfield optimistic that the budget reduction would not be as severe as 31% but knowing that it is inevitable that it would be significant, absolutely inevitable.

Information Item 7.b. – (no discussion)

Information Item 7.c. –

Chair Murer reached out to Harlan Teller and his staff and invited Mr. Teller to describe the work of the

Division of Marketing and Communications. Harlan Teller thanked Trustee Murer for giving his group the opportunity to talk about marketing and communications today and that it was the first time that he has had an opportunity to talk strategically about what they're trying to do in the division. He also thanked Deborah Haliczzer for her remarks and said he needs about 20,000 more anecdotes like that. What his division is doing with regards to stories like Antarctica is very intentional and is to create a better balance in terms of news coverage between things that are of interest to the campus versus things that are of interest it 'across the moat', meaning beyond the castle and across the moat. The team is looking for stories that show NIU in a position of being unique, differentiating first and premier, those kinds of things. The Antarctica story clearly has captured the imagination of the media and it's been very intentional on our part as to what we're doing with regard to promoting it. We had one billion media impressions from that individual story. We need to use earned media to build reputation and brand while we become very strategic about how we focus our paid spending dollars. Abby Dean, our acting director of marketing, will be speaking about the toys in front of you. Jennice O'Brien is our Director of Creative Services. Abby and Jennice are two people that I think are emblematic of the kind of talent that we have in this Division and have done a lot over the last year to help support me and to do the things that we need to do to become a little more focused and strategic about our communications. I do want to say a couple things, prefatory remarks, before we get into the slide presentation. I just want to give a very quick bit of context. I have not been airlifted into this situation fully birthed, as they might say. This is a division that's been doing some excellent work for a very long time. This is a very passionate, committed, mission-driven group of people that work in the marketing and communications division. They were doing some excellent work before I got here and will be doing some great work after I'm long gone. This division was put together in 2009 by my predecessor who had to put together the vision from a disparate group of parts; put it together, mold them into a cohesive team that worked together, have a sense of pride, a sense of direction and a sense of vision, to the extent that this division when I got here had all that. As a tribute to her and we always build on what other people have done in the past and what I'm trying to do is to build on that. What I'm trying to do in my two year tenure here is to really provide maybe a little more strategy, focus, and direction going forward to what we need to be doing as an organization, both as a division working on university issues and the way we interface with the colleges and the other divisions.

Mr. Teller continued by saying these are things that all of you already know quite a bit about but it's important to have some context. We have fewer Illinois high school graduates. The pool is getting smaller for us. The only major segment of high school graduates that is growing is the Hispanic segment and we have plans to be more aggressive in that area going forward. It's a hyper-competitive market. We have 65 colleges and universities that have offices on the ground in Chicago. There are a thousand colleges and universities that are doing some kind of marketing or advertising in that market. So we have a shrinking market in the state of Illinois. We have a thousand colleges and universities going after that market. And finally we have serious cost pressures, particularly from community colleges where they're both friends and they're also adversaries in some ways, in the sense that we're looking to bring students to this campus that want a four year residential experience, and at the same time there's a cost involved with that. From an internal standpoint, we're somewhat fragmented. We've talked about this a little bit in terms of our approach to advertising, marketing and communications; in terms of spending as well as thematically how we communicate. We talked about many voices and many looks in terms of the way we present ourselves graphically and the tonality of our communication and we're clearly under resources. This means that the dollars that we do have available we have to spend very wisely. As part of the presentation, Mr. Teller provided a slide that shows some of the colleges and universities that are competing against as you can see that the University Marketing and Communications spend is about \$750,000 down from about \$1.1 million the previous year. That's about 70% of our overall advertising spending. So another 30% of our spending is with other divisions and colleges. What we're doing is kind of recalibrating to focus more on those paid media channels that we think are going to affect enrollment most directly. Digital is an area that we're going to continue to spend relatively more in connection with our overall dollars. You're going to see us upping our game in digital. Lesson out of home, we need to be in out of home, particularly when it comes to promoting orientation and open house and other activities on campus and out of home provides a reminder to people that are already considering us, already have us in their consideration set that we're a good place to be. But it's very much more of a kind of a diffused

branding kind of image building awareness strategy and in terms of our advertising dollars, we really need to be where we have an opportunity to work with the SAM people to drive enrollment. Chair Murer asked Harlan to define "out of home". Harlan explain that out of home would be largely billboards, digital and otherwise. Out of home could also be events. For example we've contracted with a group called Home Team Marketing that actually provides us a branded presence on high school campuses during athletic events and things like that. We have an opportunity to go in and interact with students. That would be considered an out of home kind of thing. So it's a combination of awareness building kinds of activities like a billboard and direct engagement activities like the Home Team Marketing. One university and many tag lines. I've never been to Hoffman Estates. This is a beautiful campus. It's a nice conference center. It's a little bit small in terms of the room. It's like a Springsteen concert that you have people outside coming in. So I went to the website to see how I get here and I go to the landing page, who knew, there's a tag line for this conference center. It's called where meetings come together which I kind of think of as the clash of meeting or something like that. We have a tag line for a conference center. We have a lot of tag lines here. I'm not necessarily saying that it's bad to have lots of tag lines; but when you have about one tag line per thousand students, that's a lot of tag lines. And it says two things to me. Number one, it says that there's a very strong sense among our colleges and our divisions that they need to put a stake in the ground with regard to their unique character and unique proposition. And that's fine, that's important. But it also says to me that there's a thirst for a cohesive narrative for this university that can be used across the board to help bind us all together and with nature imploring the vacuum if you don't have that, then the vacuum is filled by other things. I can't say I have a definitive point of view with regard to multiplicity tag lines; all I can say is I think that the fact that we have so many of them, even for our conference center here, is emblematic of a larger issue. Another issue, Mr. Teller noted, are the many graphic looks. We've been working with one of our outside marketing consultants to kind of analyze how we present ourselves to students and perspective students. It's all over the place. Some of the stuff we do is very good, but a lot of it kind of is all over the map. And so there can be some work done here. And then finally, I have Waldo over here. Our marketing staff, if you look purely at people that deal with marketing as opposed to general communications or campus communications, it's seven percent of our staff. I could say that Abby is Waldo, but we have two and a half Waldo's. My point is that if you're talking about our staff, we are significantly underweighted with regard to marketing talent. Now just so I'm completely and intellectually honest about this, a lot of what Jennice does in her Creative Services area - which is video, design, publications, photography, etc. - obviously feeds into the work that we do in marketing. I'm emphasizing this to make a point and that is when it comes to pure marketing, we are underweighted. And the result of all this, this is a study that Lipman Hearne did for us, a very small competitive assessment that we did at the very beginning of my tenure here as interim VP, is that our yield is lower than our competitors. This shows ISU and UIC and it shows us and our yield has been going down over the year and you can see that delta between us and the other guys. That's a function of a couple things. I think it's a function of brand strength or lack of brand strength.

Trustee Butler asked about the yield. Mr. Teller explained that yield is the people we admit, which is the nominator, and the people that accept, which is the numerator. Last year was 19% of admitted students actually came to NIU. But we need to be higher than that. Actually there's two fundamental things. We need to have a bigger numerator and a bigger denominator. We have to work on both. So I came in here and began thinking about what we need to be doing and what sequencing needs to be done. And to me there was a series of fundamental key priorities starting with some very low hanging fruit that we needed to get to immediately. What I wanted to do when I walked in here was to do what traditionally you would do as a marketer or a communications consultant, which is a study. We needed a brand perception study to get ourselves a benchmark, understand how our stakeholder perceive us, our awareness, what we're known for, etc. I thought it was very important for us because there was a thirst from people to understand the narrative, the story of how we talk about ourselves. So we started to work on building a new narrative and tag line. Secondly, filling resource gaps in the division and aligning our internal resources more effectively to better serve not only the university overall, but the colleges and divisions, and to step up communications, staff and faculty. Deb you're absolutely right, the brand stewards, the brand ambassadors, are the people inside. If they don't believe the proposition then there becomes dissonance and then people don't come and they don't get to experience what they have an opportunity to experience here. Speaking as a first generation student who came here to NIU in the early 70's and

got the tools that I needed to be whatever success I've had in life is largely come from those four years of being at NIU. We want to make available to thousands of other people that kind of opportunity and we need to coalesce around that brand proposition in order to make that happen.

As for our digital assets, Mr. Teller continued, Jennice is going to talk about prioritizing voice and graphics. Abby is going to talk about getting more integrated with academic affairs and enrollment and being more aligned with how we go to market. Making news is also critically important. Building on work that was done by my predecessor, in 2010 we did an extensive brand review, did a ton of research. We had a base of data to look at to figure out whether there's something here that could be helpful. You can position yourselves anywhere along the spectrum; who you are, what you do, how you do it, who you do it for, and what's the result. Overall positioning for companies is on that results side but there's also aspects of these other parts of the spectrum as well. What I came away with was obviously we want to focus on student success, that's our cornerstone goal and that's the offer that President Baker has made and that's the offer that he's that he's trying to coalesce the university around. Secondly, education tailored to the individual. It strikes me how hard we work to try to cater to the needs of the individual student. It was true in my day, and it's clearly true today, and I think it's very important. The idea of having a big college with a lot of resources, but the culture of a small college where we can provide a lot more tailored help is I think very important to us. I felt that learning today, leading tomorrow was just a little too generic and passive and did not get at the character of who we are. It's a good attempt. It's certainly descriptive of what we do, but from a standpoint of making an offer to prospective students it wasn't quite where I wanted to be. I came to Dr. Baker and talked about a concept that I was messing around with called 'build your own life' and the idea of tailored education, etc. I thought it was pretty good. Then I had my first meeting with my directors. Abby had the proofs of one of the view books we've won awards for and the cover of the view book said "Your future our focus" and I'm thinking to myself wow that's a lot better than anything I can come up. I thought why don't we take this for a spin. Let's give this a shot. So we've started to socialize over the year the concept at NIU 'it's your future, our focus' with three fundamental themes; student career success, big university resources with small college culture, and student-centered education. This is what I call a narrative footprint. I have encouraged the colleges and divisions to take this structure and create their own narrative footprint around the same thematic elements. This is the view book. This is a terrific piece of work. Very personal, very warm, exactly the tone we were looking for. Here's an example of embedding the narrative. Even though I wrote it, I do like this. "We offer the best of both worlds. A first class education, a university with immense resources and a wealth of educational options to choose from in the context of friendly, down home environment where people care about each other and feel part of a community of citizens and scholars." You'll see a lot of these narrative pieces in a lot of different things. In the Baker report and some other collateral and some other things that we're doing. It's just a way of embedding it. We always like to have a slide of Dan Gebo in every presentation that we do. This is actually going to be a template for an ad campaign that we're rolling out and calling 'celebrating faculty' which is honoring what the faculty is doing particularly in connecting students with the triangle offense and we're trying to kind of revive that concept and bake that in. This one says, sometimes the best ideas, the best way to build a future is by looking at the past, and of course Dan is an anthropologist and it fits very well. This is the graphics standards manual and you get a sense as to what kind of tonality of communications we're aiming for. This also extends to the alumni. The Alumni Association came to me. I'm actually on the Alumni Board but I'm stepping down at the end of the month. I've looked for ways of working with the Alumni Association because the alumni really, I want to be really inextricably linked to our value proposition as a university. We worked with Michaels Walters Advertising with a concept that's a play-off of Your Future, Our Focus called Your Future, Our Network.

(shows video)

Mr. Teller continued, these are the messages and themes that we were talking about before. There's billboards on I-294 and I've seen those but they look pretty good. The second thing, just to talk very quickly about the resource gaps. This is what we looked like when I got here in media services, publications, web, university marketing and public relations. Very scattered. We're not that big a division really. Media services is kind of an island onto itself. It included smart classrooms and a lot of the

technical staff. We redefined our mission as the generation, creation, and distribution management of content. We want to be in the content business, not in the technical business. So we basically moved a lot of that technical staff over to do it so that we are left with the content creation piece of communications. Our business is about three different fundamental buckets. One is what I call campus communications. By the way, it's something we do extremely well. We are great campus communicators. We really have the drill down on how we communicate and disseminate information, in particular to staff and faculty. Brad Hoey runs that and our stakeholders, is very clear here, university marketing which is under Abby's leadership right now as acting marketing director. We've tied that off to provide more attention specifically to marketing. And then finally what I call enterprise communications, which is reputation management which includes issues management, crisis management, thought leadership, intellectual capital development, media relations; all those things that relate to building NIU's reputation. And clearly that's where research and innovation lives most notably. Then across the matrix is creative services. We took design and photography and video and web which is all over the place, and we put it all under Jennice's leadership and she's doing a remarkable job, not only with getting great results, building a team, and also looking at where we can be more efficient which obviously is critically important to us right now. I'm going to talk very quickly about output versus impact because we are going through the program prioritization process. As a division, it's been an incredibly useful exercise to us because clearly, I know the question has been asked a number of times, how do you measure what you do. Well there are two fundamental types of measurements. One is what I call output related which is really advertising value equivalency, measurement of media sediment. In the case of our Ask Me campaigns, a number of people who agree to be Ask Me members and how that motivates them, etc. Impact is where we really want to live. The big challenge with impact is we're part of a great chain of being. We're not necessarily enrolling, signing people up, we're part of the process. I think Trustee Murer called it relay at one point; kind of a relay race. We pass the baton to somebody else and then that goes down the field and so we're part of that. So measuring the specific impact with regard to what we can do. Enrollment is a little bit difficult but we're going to try to be a little more precise working with Eric's people as to how we can look at that a little more granularly. Perception is very important and the most important project I think that we're going to be doing in fiscal 2016 starting on July 1 is a benchmark perception study, which is something that I wanted to do and which we now have an opportunity to do assuming that we're still going to have the budget for that and hopefully we will. Finally, I'm going to talk quickly about stepping up communication, staff and faculty. I got here before Welcome Days and we developed an entire campaign around Welcome Days, including an employee service campaign called Ask Me, I Can Help. If you've been on campus you've seen the banners. If you go on our website, you can see capsule profiles of our employees that have volunteered to be in our campaign. We're looking at expanding that. We've actually solicited nominees from students. Who on campus has helped you the most and honor those people and we're looking even going further along and looking at an awards structure working with Eric's people as to how we can extend the life of that campaign. We did our first town hall meeting. We've done several. We're also doing what we call Twitter takeovers where Eric and his people have an opportunity to spend two hours interacting with students on issues that are near and dear to their hearts. So we're doing a lot of things on a lot of different fronts. This summer, we're implementing a first line supervisor communications campaign dealing with department chairs as well as first line supervisors on the staff side. It's a real challenge to even identify exactly who those people may be. But in my experience, and I've done a lot of work in organizational communications, a lot of times the bottleneck of communications is at that first line. You have to really be able to get to them and build trust and build interaction with them in order to communicate down through the organization so that you don't just have top down communications. We do a very good job of top-down communications. We want to have more communication that's multi-dimensional than we do today.

Jennice O'Brien presented to the group and said that in optimizing our digital assets, our powerful and most important asset is our website. The new template is a combination of proximity to the top of the website, most frequently visited and most crucial to recruitment and retention. We did a few small sites just to get some momentum going. The two big ones that will be coming on line in the next month are admissions and graduate school. We try to share this information with departments and use that as a basis for talking about what pages really still need to be there and which don't. Then we help them develop an entirely new navigation, reframe the content from a recruitment and retention perspective,

and remove content that's intended for internal audiences. The other thing I should mention is usability testing. We do use usability testing with target audiences to see how they are able to navigate the website. We wanted to get this done for Orientation sign up and it looks fantastic. What you see here is the desktop view and the mobile view. This is really cool that we're able to customize it for mobile view called responsive design. There's a team in Anne Kaplan's division that does this and it's making sure that the look of the page is optimized for the device that you're viewing it on. That is all built into part of this process. What we are initiating with this redesign process is this web centralization initiative. What we want to be doing is implementing a comprehensive content strategy. We have 60,000 web pages on the NIU web server. My team is probably responsible for like a fifth of them maybe. What we really want to do is improve collaboration and communication between the college and department web masters and our team in Marketing and Communications. We want to build a high impact web presence, create externally appealing content, stop that file cabinet mentality, and make sure that our web pages are representing our brand and our useful to our audiences. Probably the core component of this centralization effort is starting a web governance committee. It has representatives from every college and what we've been really trying to do with the committee is empower our partners in the college to really own their content, to take down what doesn't need to be there, to put up what should be there, and just make important decisions about content. We are aware of the analytics and the things that are occurring on the site so that we can always be tweaking it and making sure that we're getting the most out of it. It's been a really good process. Search engine optimization is also a component of this. I'll go through this really quickly. We're talking about the organic part right here. Perspective students are always searching for academic programs on the web. They might not know which university they want to go to but they know what they want to study. So they might Google anthropology program. If we don't come up on this page, they're not going to find us. And that's really how their search begins. As part of our web centralization process, we are trying to impact every page so that we rise up in these rankings. When we rise up in the rankings, we get more visibility and then hopefully we're converting more college bound students into prospects. But again, we have top ranked programs that show up on page nine or ten and it's just because of the way the content is formatted on the page. It's not hard, but it is a lot of work so it's something we have to keep up at and this is the first time we've really made an effort to effect this kind of information.

Abigail Dean continued the presentation by explaining we have a pilot project right now with one of our consultants, it's called Riley Connect. They've been optimizing for forty different key words. We handpicked a few academic programs if they were on like a mobile website because Goggle is currently penalizing sites that are searched for from a mobile device if they aren't in a mobile format. There's three components; key word research, on-site optimization, and off-site link building. We're seeing good results. I think the most important part of it was that the consultant came and did a training session for our web governance committee and sort of demystified it, showed everybody the components of the research, the optimization and the off-site link building, and then handed them a flyer on how to go back and do it at their desks. We're hoping that as they do the audits and keep working on their web pages, they start building this into it and pretty soon we'll have that for all of the web pages. The other major digital asset is our social media. We're also doing a centralization process with that. Our social media was sort of on audio pilot/life support while the position was vacant for a year. Holly Nickels did a great job setting up that whole program and then she's stepped away from it. Holly's replacement, Taylor Hayden, came on board in November, picked up the ball and kept running with it. She's been assessing the state of the social media landscape at NIU. We have almost 500 social media accounts that we're aware of that are representing the university. They're not all saying the same thing. Taylor has been spending a lot of time trying to get social media managers thinking strategically, trying to engage their audiences, and also social media is free so lots of times departments will just think we should have this, but it's another thing that requires daily care and feeding and managing, so she's been trying to get them to the point where if it's not working out, they can just turn it off. It's not a bad thing, it's not a failure, it's an experiment, it's over and let's devote our resources to something that really makes impact. And then she's also been doing a great job reengaging our fans on our institutional channels. Here's some samples of the things she's been doing. You've got the Twitter take over and we've been boosting posts on Facebook related to newsroom stories. She did a whole Huskie love stories campaign and lots of cute stuff on Instagram. So we'll talk about harmonizing our voice in graphic looks and in all of our publications. We started with

publications. With one of our partners, Simple Truth, we did an audit of 40 to 50 different publications that we've used for recruitment. Through that, you know the purpose is to have a cohesive look and a cohesive sound so that we are more authentic and believable in our communications. If perspective students pick up three or four different publications and they don't sound the same, they don't look the same, and they're not saying the same things, there's a high probability they won't believe what they're reading regardless of whether it's true or not. So the harmonization process is to build that trust and the authenticity of what we're saying to build brand recognition and to build belief in our brand as well. That's one of the before quote, this is some of the work that Simple Truth did with us. The before quote is actually from the view book, the Your Future, Our Focus book. And so they showed us before how we've worded it and how it could be a little bit better. We want to be personal, inviting and warm. We want to be talking to the students so we're revising an institutional tone that was a little bit cold, to something that's more warm and authentic. So we use less NIU and more 'us', more 'we'. We use less 'our student' or 'students' and more 'you' so that students understand this is an offer we are making to them. So the tone helps students feel like we're communicating directly to them and helps them start imaging themselves at NIU and taking advantage of all we have to offer. In a day and age of images they are so important, especially to this group of recruiting students, the traditional age recruiting students, they live on Instagram. Instagram is all about photographs and so we need to be speaking their language in images as well as what we say in our words. So if you look on the left, the before, we want to get away from posed pictures, pictures that are a little less in terms of like low res images and we want to get away from the pictures that show these huge buildings with little to no students. It doesn't create a great image about what they can experience here, it leaves them feeling a little lonely. But if you look on the right, what we want to do is have more of that candid expression. Even in those that are posed, they don't seem overly posed and they all have wonderful smiles on their faces and look like they're enjoying themselves because they are. And that's the great part about this is those are our students having a great time and so that speaks volumes to our perspective students. What we want to do with this, with the audit and everything that we're doing, is try to harmonize. You saw that slide that Harlan showed all of our different looks. It creates a cacophony. I like to liken it to if you go to an orchestra performance. When everybody is warming up, everybody has a very important part, but when they're warming up it doesn't sound very nice. But once they all start playing from the same sheets, they're saying the same things, they're not playing the same things, but they're playing in concert with each other and it sounds wonderful. So that's our goal. What we want to do is start building a better communication and teamwork with our university partners as Jennice said with the web communications. Helping the colleges, as Harlan said, figure out that footprint and how they can strengthen the parent brand as well as their own unique individual brand.

Ms. Dean continued by saying we want to work with each unit to help them, to give them tools. What you're seeing right here is the image library. This is the current one but we're working on a newer one that's a little bit more easily searched so that they can find all of those wonderful photos that we have of our students and use them. Other examples would be we provide templates for newsletters, letters, all sorts of things, brochures. One example of harmonizing tone and giving a shout out to Greer and her coworkers in the College of Engineering is to be able to have an iconography that both works for design as well as way-finding. This set of iconography is from the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology's undergraduate view book. It helps students know where they're looking and what they're looking for and then they also have this on their website so that the students are seeing the same things when they start to go and do a little bit more in depth research for themselves on-line. They're seeing the same things and it's a very harmonious experience for them. In the past, our work with university partners and this is only going back six years, but it's been on an ad hoc basis. We're taking advantage of opportunities as they come up and that's only going to get us so far. What you see in front of you are examples of how we've been able to take one look but carry it through a lot of different publications. What you have in front of you is a search piece which we send to, so people who don't really know us yet, when they fill out that card they'll send it back and then we can give them more information. So the search piece, a view book, the folder that has stuff in it, that's what we send our admitted students. The Viewfinders in front of you are actually brand new. This is our trial run, but the purpose here is to – another constituency that we haven't talked about is high school counselors. High school counselors are being recruited like students, like student athletes almost. They're being flown to universities throughout

the United States. This actually was an idea of Danny Rollins, Director of Admissions. She had one sent to her from a peer institution and so she and I started talking about making this available to high school counselors to have this – these aren't branded. We didn't have the time to have them branded on the outside, but the final version will have branding on the outside and will be able to sit on a high school counselors desk so that when they're talking with students, the students could pick it up. The current reel right now is there's only seven images so we had to pick seven things that we want to talk about, but the plan is to keep providing them with more reels. So maybe they get a reel that's exclusively College of Engineering and Engineering Technology or any of our other programs. So again the purpose there is to start giving those high school counselors the information that they need to help advocate for us as well. Harlan talked about the funnel, the enrollment funnel, and where we can make our impact. So this is the typical enrollment funnel and there's lots of different versions out there. Strategizing with SAEM, we looked for ways to how we can affect and impact the funnel. At the top it looks something like providing more and stronger leads for student who want to know more about us. In the middle, it's segmented communications both demographically as well as per program. Also driving applications in the middle of the funnel there. Towards the end it looks like the yield communications, trying to incorporate, speak, close the deal, but help students understand that NIU is the right place for them and we offer an amazing opportunity. I view the last piece of communications, the yield communications, as retention as well. When we're recruiting the students who are NIU students and we're helping them decided to come here, and continuing that communications throughout their first year, I think that's going to help us a lot when we talk about retention as well. So we've contracted with five different marketing partners. Right now we work off of assumptions and anecdotes of what we think our students feel about us and the stories that we've heard, but this benchmark study will help solidify all of that and give us a platform to start working from. With Riley Connect they've been our partners with the SEO, search engine optimization, and we're going to pilot some digital marketing programs, so we'll be out there in the digital space talking about individual programs. Simple Truth is continuing to help us refine the brand and help us talk about harmonizing all the colleges and divisions. And then finally Studio V. which has exhibited phenomenal design work and in creating a lot of our collateral that we need to produce.

Harlan Teller resumed by giving a shout-out to Paul Palian, our Director of Media Relations, who is with us here today. We have, right now, a three person, hopefully soon-to-be-back into a four person Media and Public Relations shop. These are ex-journalists, they are proud of what they do and they're very good at it and a lot of the national and global media that we're gotten on Antarctica, on the tele-pressure survey, and on other things is really largely Paul and his team's handiwork. The teams has had some terrific stories that have gotten really great coverage, not just locally and regionally, but also nationally and globally. With Antarctica we're talking about \$7 million in advertising value. Game of Thrones, now this is one of those categories of you never know what is going to tap into the cultural zeitgeist of the media establishment. We teach a Game of Thrones class. I'd like to talk to him about that at some point. We pitched the Game of Thrones course as a media angle and we started out as a story on our NIU newsroom site which is our newly-created website that's devoted completely to those stories that we think are going to get external visibility or are going to be appealing beyond the moat. This is one. This is a three and a half minute clip that we're going to leave you with. It's from Fox Business. It is a very unusual achievement to get a three and a half minute clip on any national broadcast and we did it here. And I think what's really great about this is that, well first of all the fact that the host is so enthusiastic about the story and about the concept, but the messaging that our professor is able to convey about the seriousness and purpose of this course and how it connects to the mission of the university, it's pretty remarkable. So without further ado, here's the end of our presentation. Happy to take questions after this.

(plays 3.5 minute clip with Professor Jeff Chown being interviewed about his Game of Thrones class)

It is that we began with a national clip and ended with a national clip so when people want to know what are we doing in marketing and communications, remarked the Chair. I think this was an important presentation. We've talked as a board about what we do about marketing, what are we telling people, what about our branding. We've talked about this for a long time and it's a little bit to the side of the core of this committee of research and technology and innovation, but we won't get the best and the brightest

to do our research Jerry unless we attract them to NIU and I think it's the work that you're doing. What strikes me also in the work that you're doing in this past eleven months and I was very pleased that you also talked about the fact that it's build upon a foundation that was strong as well and that there are a lot of people who've been working on this for a long time. But you're making it much more relevant and you're making it something that communicates effectively not just with people who are the age of this board, but more importantly communicating with the students that are coming in. I'm sure we have a lot of questions but thank you for your time and the excellent presentation.

Trustee Boey commented that he had been a trustee for almost 20 years and this is the first time he has been given an idea of the overall picture of marketing and complimented the team for their work. Student Trustee Paul Julion added the information packets are so appealing and easy to read now, and have amazing, historical, facts. He added that it is likely to catch a lot of prospective students in the future. Trustee Strauss also remarked, thanking the team for their presentation. He did ask that the result of the planned perception study be shared with the Board, as those results will inform decisions that have to be made by other committees as well as this one. He also remains interested in the measurement issues. Mr. Teller addressed Trustee Strauss's question with regard to the perception study and confirmed the team was going to be looking at a cross section of our stakeholders; at current students, perspective students, parents, guidance counselors, alumni, faculty and staff. The idea is they take a real 360 degree look. That's why we want the faculty and staff to be part of it because getting a benchmark for their attitudes, their perceptions, and where their mind is at this point is critically important. A lot of times what you come out of these studies with is a little bit of gap analysis between the inside out perspective versus the outside in perspective and then how do you mesh up between those perspectives. It's going to be very comprehensive. It's going to be statistically valid. It's going to be quantitative. We may do some focus groups as the predicate for getting into the quantitative piece of it, but the idea is to really have a basis in fact and benchmark to measure. Now you're talking about measurement, that's clearly from my standpoint again going back to that slide, there's output related measures, there's impact related measures. The output related measures I can give you. We've got \$12 million of ad equivalency for Antarctica; \$7 million for somebody else. I can quantitatively tell you what we've gotten for specific executions from an output standpoint. Impact is really, that's the Holy Grail is figuring out how you move the needle in terms of perception, in terms of behavior. Again, there are a lot of different variables that go into a decision, a student's decision to come to a school. How well that school communicates to them and how resonant the messaging is around that school's communications effort is only one of those inputs. So getting really precise with regard to actual behavior is a larger challenge. Trustee Strauss added we share the view that it's an important task to undertake and the perception study in addition to what it will tell us about marketing, it will tell us about how our facilities are perceived, the quality of the instruction, which experiences on campus and off are important and how it is that people make their way through the systems and what obstacles they encounter. Those are all valuable pieces of information that are actionable in other areas beside the development of a marketing and promotion campaign. Mr. Teller said it would be the cornerstone of what going to do from a communications standpoint going forward. A lot of what we do at the university from a university marketing standpoint is selling the university. It's very clear to us we have to get a little more granular in terms of selling programs and majors and things that we specifically are trying to drive students into and so the digital work that we're going to be doing, there's going to be some very specific metrics with regard to that program; and quite frankly Marc, one of the reasons why I did put a little bit of a hiatus with regard to our paid media spend is that I was having a difficult time getting visibility into what our return on investment was for that particular spend. So we have been very prudent and a lot more focused in terms of how we've been spending our money and going forward in fiscal 2015 and that will continue, but to your point, the brand perception study is going to help us a lot in a lot of different dimensions.

Trustee Wheeler Coleman thanked Harlan for the great work, great images and getting visibility for the university, as he said he struggles with the lack of clarity around the recruitment effort and how to move that needle. Recruitment is becoming really personal these days and having a sophomore in high school and seeing how other institutions are reaching out to her already, I'm just saying wow, I'm amazed. And so I do have questions about what other institutions are doing this really, really well. Not just promoting

their images but reaching out to students and courting those students at a really early age long before they make a decision to go to institutions. At some point Eric my thought is that I'd love to hear more of what we're doing on that front. How we're leveraging technology to get to a more comprehensive understanding of our prospects so we can get them to make a commit to our organization. I think we've got to use technology to do it. My question would be, what institutions are doing this really, really well? What institutions are having success with promoting their image, success with enrollment in getting students to not only apply, but to actually enroll? So I'm going to put that out and I'm not expecting answers right now but at some point would love to hear some additional feedback. It probably will come to another committee I'm assuming because there's definitely a linkage here.

Harlan agreed that we have to be in the schools at a much earlier age than juniors and seniors. You've got to get in early and actually, point of fact, we have a number of programs particularly in the P20 area that are designed to do that, to get us visibility at the middle school level into early high school. So that's really going to be an important thrust for what we do but I think I'm going to ask Abby to talk briefly about that.

Abigail Dean agreed we do need to be in front of high school students earlier, because those higher achieving students are starting their college search processes at the end of their freshman year, beginning their sophomore year. Right now I'm working on a calendar for Danny and I and other university partners to work from and to look at and where do we need to be for different segments of the population and that is certainly one of them. To speak to your piece about technology, the orientation piece that's at everybody's – let me show you here. This was the mailer that we sent to all admitted students for our orientation inviting them to come and check out campus, but what we used you'll see on the inside cover here, it's an application called Layar. L-A-Y-A-R. AR is 'augmented reality'. So any of the pictures that has the logo on it, will actually animate and it's a video of our orientation leaders talking about their experiences at NIU. One of the things we're trying to do with recruitment materials is have it be a peer-to-peer conversation because this generation is very, very savvy. So our students talk about their real experiences to build that bridge of student to student communication and so that we're taking that sort of administrative voice out of it and students hear from real students what their experience is and how well they liked coming to NIU. Trustee Bob Marshall also asked if we could in the near future get a fuller idea on the outreach to the community colleges.

Chair Murer commented that when Marc asked what the accountability standard might be, it becomes enrollment. That's the real mark of what have we achieved and it becomes a tool and so the interdisciplinary relationships between marketing and admissions goes to really what Wheeler asked about as well. This was a great presentation, she concluded.

OTHER MATTERS

Chair Murer asked to give a few moments to the liaison of the LARI committee, Dr. Jerry Blazey, to hear his comments about where the committee is going in the future from the faculty and community perspective and areas that the committee might touch upon in the future. Dr. Blazey gave a few examples on areas that would be good to take a close look at and also to offer some advice and guidance as we move forward in those areas. Also to help us use these areas to help brand the university because the branding comes from successful programs where we can call out our expertise and success. He spoke about a major reorganizational initiative that the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships has undertaken – the merger of the Office of Sponsored Projects and Grants Fiscal Administration. It is really important to reduce the burden on our researchers. One thing is reorganizing with the Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships to reduce that burden. The two offices, the Office of Sponsored Projects deals primarily with pre-award activities. They help the faculty write their awards and submit them to the agencies or the foundations. The latter, the grants fiscal administration deals with post award activities; it helps them spend their money, helps them deal with compliance activities, make sure everything is on the up and up and we can survive audits and we're doing everything properly. Well in the past the two units resided in different divisions. Pre-award was in RIPs and post award was in the Division of Finance. This meant the researches had to deal with two divisions to do their work and that causes a lot of burden. Recent estimates from NSF is that our researchers spend 42 percent of their time

on administrative tasks. And that comes from both the federal regulations, from state regulations, and from university regulations. One thing we can do to retain our faculty and to make them more production is to push that burden down as far as we can. So with VP Phillips assistance, we've started that merger. We're confident that this new structure under Dara Little will help us with that streamlining and make our process more efficient. One of the primary goals for RIPS is to reduce their burden. Dr. Blazey remarked would be a good area for the committee to take a look into understanding the climate our researchers live in. Our most productive members, the sort of compliance issues they need to deal with, and a drill down and the Committee's advice on what more we could do would be really helpful. So in the programmatic area, the FermiLab, NIU Cluster of Research Excellence which we've started using the acronym CRE which was initiated by President Baker when he first came, and is built on our proton computed tomography project and our accelerator programs, will be well under way. We're starting nearly entering an agreement with Fermi Lab on building this cluster research excellence and I think a discussion of that, how it's going, how we might make it more successful, and more broadly a discussion of the cluster concept for promoting research would be a good thing to have with the committee as well. A lot of schools take a two-prong effort to promote their research. One is these clusters and another one is targeted hires. We need to have balance between those two; we need to understand our resource need and our priorities and continue these discussions with the Committee. And finally, the third thing, it would be appropriate at some point to have a review of our programs to promote the innovative programs for our students, alumni, and staff. The Division is taking a holistic approach to build an innovative ecosystem for all three of those groups, our students, our faculty and our alumni. There's a number of possibilities on- and off-campus that are in some nascent stages I would say. But in due time it would be really useful to have a discussion with the Board about the components of that program and how we might best move those forward. Chair Murer thanked Dr. Blazey and ask if there are any other matters that should come before this committee. Trustee Strauss pointed out that they had skipped over the federal legislative update and asked if next time we might have a focus on the federal level as to what it is that we're doing with regard to identifying research opportunities and then pursuing those at the agency level since the funding opportunities have shifted from Congress to the agencies. Chair Murer agreed that we need a report at the next meeting in August to discuss these opportunities and what are we doing, especially as the federal budget goes into place in October. Dr. Blazey added that Anna has been very successful in building a presence for NIU and that we are now starting to have continuous, regular conversations with both the agencies and the Hill. It's been a big success and it would be worth doing that.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting date of the LARI Committee will be November 12, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Murer asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Strauss made a motion and it was seconded by Trustee Coleman. The meeting was adjourned at 1:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cathy Craddock
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.