

Minutes of the  
**NIU Board of Trustees**  
**Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee**  
August 16, 2018

**1. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chair Wasowicz in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Parrish conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Dennis Barsema, Wheeler Coleman, Robert Pritchard, Timothy Struthers, Nathan Hays and Committee Chair Eric Wasowicz. Trustees John Butler and Veronica Herrero were absent, but arrived a few minutes later. Also present were Lisa Freeman, Matt Streb, Gregory Brady, Chris McCord.

**2. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING**

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

**3. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL**

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Butler moved approval of the meeting agenda, Trustee Hayes seconded the motion. The motion passed.

**4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to approve the minutes of May 10, 2018. Trustee Barsema moved and Trustee Coleman seconded. The motion passed.

**5. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Committee Chair Wasowicz welcomed everyone and mentioned the hard working group in attendance and that the work would continue. He then stated that there was one approval item, authorization to retain an executive search firm to support selected searches within the Division of Athletics and two informational items, Enrollment Management Processes and 2017/18 Faculty Emeritus recognition.

**6. PUBLIC COMMENT**

General Counsel Brady indicated that Trustee Butler has appeared for attendance and there was one request for public comment, Dr. Michael Haji-Sheikh.

Dr. Michael Haji-Sheikh: I was a little concerned, I was watching and listening to the last meeting and I want to emphasize what the Acting President and Dr. McCord and Dr. Krishnamurthi said about tenure and promotion. You have a hard time even getting adjuncts to come here and if you're going to scrutinize all of us one at a time to try to decide which one of us are worthy and which one of us are not, beyond the very rigorous, very, very, very rigorous tenure and promotion process, then you're gonna end up with nobody here. You're already losing faculty at a very high rate. Some of them are going other places. Some of us are going to retire. Okay. And you're not replacing them at the rate even to keep up with the course load demand. Right now my department is 30% below load capacity. We can't even offer the classes. We have two new degree programs that we just had added and you can't even offer enough classes to almost graduate people. So I think when you veer off into our lane, you're really going to make it harder to bring people here. And I, like I said, I was really stunned to see how deeply people were starting to look at the politics. Yes I've actually criticized most of you, but you're a public body and I'm a citizen of Illinois and that's different than my academic talent and what I do here for the university. I can separate those two items and maybe you guys ought to also. Thank you.

Committee Chair Wasowicz thanked Dr. Haji-Sheikh and asked if there were any comments from UAC members. There were no comments. Committee Chair Wasowicz stated for the record that Trustee Veronica Herrero had arrived.

## 7. UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Agenda Item 7.a. Authorization to Retain Executive Search Firms to Support Selected Searches for the Division of Athletics**

Chair Wasowicz: At this point, I'd like to ask Executive Vice President and Provost McCord to present the University Report.

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord: Thank you Chair Wasowicz. As noted we have one action item this morning, an authorization to retain executive search firms to support selected searches for the Division of Athletics. Pursuant to public policy and NIU Board regulations of previous approvals, it's recommended that the Board authorize the president to retain such executive search firms to assist in the search for head coaches in the Division of Athletics as may be necessary. Due to the critical roles and functions that head coaches fulfill at the university, there's a justifiable need to use search firms for such positions per NIU policy on the use of external search firms when the criteria related to special expertise and candidate screening are cited. The policy is included in your board materials for reference. The Illinois procurement higher education consortium annually endorses a list of search firms that are pre-qualified through a competitive bidding process. It is recommended that the firm either be selected from the list of vendors approved through the RFP process. We do this annually as a preparatory measure because if the moment comes where a head coach needs to be replaced, that search process often needs to be executed very expeditiously and we may not be at a moment in the cycle where Board approval can be sought at that moment. We seek pre-approval to go forward at the moment if it is needed. It is recommended that the president be authorized to select executive search firms to support selected searches of head coaches for the Division of Athletics. It is further recommended that the president report plans to retain such search firms to the Board as soon as is practical and periodically report back to the Board regarding the selection and status of such searches. The university recommends that the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee endorse the request and that the president forward it by means of the president's report to the Board of Trustees for approval at the September 13, 2018, meeting.

Chair Wasowicz: Do I hear a motion to accept this proposal?

Trustee Coleman: So be it.

Trustee Barsema: Second.

Chair Wasowicz: Discussion?

Trustee Barsema: This might be best for Matt, what percentage on average of head coach searches just in general would you say actually involve a search firm versus the Athletic Director just using his or her network?

Matt Streb: I think Debra may be here as well, most of your searches for coaches that are not in your revenue sports are not going to use a search firm. You will see football, men's basketball, women's basketball more likely to use a search firm. Even there because of AD's networks and things like that often times they're not using a search firm. Deb, do you want to add anything to that?

Deb Boughton: Matt's about right on that. I would say, particularly for the ones he mentioned, football, men's and women's basketball it's fairly common even at the higher resource institutions. I think what you're going to see a lot of the times is a real conservative approach to search firms and choosing them. And you all are seeing a lot of press right now at the higher resource institutions about coaches making different decisions that maybe aren't congruent with the institution. I think the background check is really important. An Athletic Director can only do so much as far as background checks. So even in our discussions about how do you use them and when, that piece of fully vetting an employee is really, really critical so I would say if it came to a point we would likely use them for, a search firm, for the four sport programs that are highest, not priority but highest fan love, so football, men's and women's basketball and volleyball would likely be the only ones we would go through and it may not even be to the volleyball point.

Trustee Barsema: What do we find as the average cost of doing a search for a head coach and does it differ from doing a search for a different position here in the university, like a vice president?

Deb Boughton: Well I wouldn't know that piece of it, but I know the last time we hired women's basketball it was around \$20,000.

Trustee Barsema: 20?

Deb Boughton: Yes. And it varies you know when we're talking about what our searches might look like, again if we're going to prioritize the background piece of it, it's likely we don't need to go out and have a search firm find us candidates. What we might need them to do is fully vet them through a process. So really prioritizing that piece of the work with it, not needing them to come in and tell us who we might hire, but more so doing the work that maybe might make sense from a background check standpoint. So that may limit the scope of what a firm would need to do for us and likely limit some of the expenses. So again the last time we searched for football, I believe it was a little bit more than that probably around 50, and again I know the market has changed.

Trustee Barsema: Thank you.

Chair Wasowicz: Any other questions? Thank you. Any other discussion? We have a motion on the floor so all those in favor signify by saying aye.

Members: Aye

Chair Wasowicz: Opposed? The motion carries.

## **8. UNIVERSITY REPORTS**

### **Agenda Item 8.a. Enrollment Management Presentation**

Executive Vice President and Provost McCord: Thank you. At this time I'd like Vice President for Enrollment Management Marketing Communications, Sol Jensen, to join me at the podium. We'll be giving a presentation about enrollment management.

Sol Jensen: Good morning trustees. It's been a while since we've had a formal update to the board and I thought this would be a great opportunity. It's actually been one year since the provost and I presented to the Board about ideas of things that I learned over the first couple of months of my time here and outlining some things of action that we were going to be taking both through recruitment and retention. I thought this would be a good opportunity after a year to come back and report back on some of those things as well as talk about some plans of where we're heading and the direction that we're going. I thought we would start with a little bit of context. I think it's important to sort of set that stage, remind everyone about where we sit from an enrollment standpoint. This is no surprise, but again just to reiterate where we stand as a state. The reason we're focusing on the state of Illinois is because our undergraduate population is 95% of the state of Illinois. We obviously want to change some of that, but at the same time this is who we are. We know we have almost 150,000 high school seniors over the next 15 years. That number is going to continue to decline. As a state we export two and a half students for every one that we received from out of state.

Trustee Barsema: Sol, can I ask you a question? I'm assuming this is interactive or do want us to hold questions until the end?

EVPP McCord: No, go ahead please.

Trustee Barsema: Okay. I have two questions. One is in our perfect world what would the mix between in state and out-of-state including the international students be? You mentioned it's 95 right now I assume. In an ideal world what do you think that mix should look like? And second, given the fact that we have eliminated the out-of-state uplift on tuition, what in your mind is the benefit that out-of-state students bring to NIU?

Sol Jensen: Great question. I think the first question is a little bit more difficult to respond to with an actual number. We are here first and foremost for the students in the state of Illinois. We want to be

here and we want to serve our regions of our state. At the same time, and I think this gets to your second question, we are also a diverse campus. That included diversity of the entire country and the entire world. We want to increase the number of students who are coming from the west coast, from the southeast, from the northeast to be able to diversify the types of students that our Illinois students interact with. I think the secondary benefit to bringing in more students from out of state is that we know and research shows that the students where they graduated from college because of internships and other experiences that they have here, they're more likely to stay. And so this is also a strategy for the state to try and – as we can develop a broader strategy of bringing more students from out of state to Northern Illinois University, we can through our partnerships with alumni and all the different corporation and businesses especially in the Chicago to Rockford area. I think we have a great potential to keep those students here in the state, and as an active alumni, to further enhance the number of students coming from Illinois. I don't know exactly what that right mix would be, but I can tell you that when you look at 95% come from Illinois and if you take high school graduations from about ten years ago, project them out another 20 years, there's a difference of about 30,000 high school students. So when 95% come from the state, we know that we need to diversify, but I think there's bigger, broader implications that we want to have our students from the state of Illinois having that interaction with students from other cultures, other backgrounds.

Trustee Barsema: Do we have information on our peer institutions in Illinois that we would look at ourselves competing with for students on what their mix is of in state versus out of state, like an Illinois State or UIC and such?

Sol Jensen: We're able to collect all that information. The only other public university that really has a large out-of-state international presence is Urbana-Champaign. But given various locations, different academic programs, there are certainly other institutions that are going to have a little bit more pull.

Trustee Barsema: Would you say that right now, based upon what you know, we are at equal to where some of our other, outside of the U of I at Champaign-Urbana, we're pretty much in line with where the other state schools are on the in state versus out of state mix?

Sol Jensen: I would say we're pretty close in line. UIC, which you know now has become probably our top competitor in terms of cross apps, really does draw almost primarily from Illinois as well.

EVPP McCord: Just one small observation, there are institutions that are situated very close to the border. Western has a campus a mile from Iowa. SIU Edwardsville is just across the river. So there are institutions that draw more heavily for very specific geographic reasons.

Trustee Struthers: That was a well-rounded topic of context. The 2.5 to 1 export of Illinois students, I look at the size of the pie in absolute numbers, the shrinking high school population base and then I know that this out of state migration number has grown over the last ten years and I think the absolute number was net 18,000 and I know this is a lagged bit a data, like maybe a year or two; I just think about the size of the pie. If you take the first, the broadest pie, being high school graduates and then shrink that down by the export piece, is the pie shrinking faster than our enrollment? I think our enrollment is declining faster than the shrinking of that pie. I think that would be good data to know. I think the absolute numbers of the 2.5 to 1 is important, but I think that watching that absolute number of, and I think it's 18,000, is very, very, very material. If we could only get 10% of that delta year to year, or if that obviously more importantly, if that delta could change and reverse trend. So should the focus be on from the state of Illinois perspective to try and reduce that net 18,000 to 12 or is it equally or more important for us to have strategies to get a bigger piece of that shrinking pie?

Sol Jensen: I think what this data represents here and it actually perfectly goes into this last point and then the next slide. Which I think we have a dual opportunity here. One is that now right now we don't have an out-of-state institution in our top ten competitor list. So I think there is an opportunity for us to draw more students who are leaving the state. With that said, we know and I think informally at least, we presented this will be the first time we actually present in front of this board, that our actual number one competitor are students who do not go to college at all. So I think we can spend time focusing on the number of students who are leaving the state, but the number of students who are being admitted to

our institution, who are not going to college at all, actually vastly outweighs the number of students who are actually leaving the state. So, there's dual opportunity, but there's probably more opportunity for us to have a bigger impact on those students who were admitted to NIU. This past year 700 first year students were admitted to NIU meaning they had the academic qualifications to be admitted. In fact, if you look at that first year population, their average GPA was about a 3.4. These students were receiving merit scholarships from us. But for one reason or another they did not enroll at NIU. They did not enroll in a community college. They did not enroll at any institution last fall. And that's 700. If we can even get 100 of those students who were admitted to NIU and didn't go anywhere, or if we can help get them to a community college, where we have a strong partnership, then have them transfer to us at a later point, I think not only are we helping that student, we're helping the state, we're helping our own institution. This is pretty important information I think that we've been looking at. The other piece of data here is that two-thirds of these students we found are first generation. They're first in their family. And so that's given us a lot of incentive to rethink okay how do we specifically communicate or work with first generation students and their families? How can we better communicate with them? How can we better help them to understand the value proposition not only of NIU but of higher education? I think we can take some of that responsibility on ourselves to be more proactive in assisting with this population. Collectively, if you look at our first year students and our transfer students last year who did not enroll anywhere who were admitted, we have over 1000 students who did not enroll anywhere last fall. So here again no new news but just a look at the enrollment profile over the past few years. That's sort of the reality of where we're at with NIU in enrollment. We're looking to turn that around. It's important as we always present to make sure that we're reaffirming that we serve many different types of populations at NIU. As you can see, we have...

(Audio glitch)

Sol Jensen: Obviously the main campus, as you can see here both on the grad and undergrad side, is primarily where our population currently is and has been for many years. Although that population of students who are enrolling is changing and more students are moving online and – or at least a hybrid of off campus. I think that we need to continue to pay attention to that and continue to, as we talk about communicating and marketing and recruiting, we have to do so in a different manner for all those different populations. And then of course with both grad and law those are really driven by national trends. Many of them are driven by economy and various things, we have to look at that and I would say where we've had similar ups and downs have been pretty similar to other graduate enrollments as I've met with other colleagues across the country.

Trustee Struthers: Sol, could I make one comment? I think just for the benefit of the Board, we see the trend line on undergraduate and graduate, obviously as smaller incoming classes replace larger outgoing classes, even if we have small increases in the new freshmen class, our total enrollment will continue to decline. I've done my own projections but I haven't seen the university do them, but try to extrapolate historical data and project that out and I would, again from an expectations perspective it's pretty clear that we would see continued decline for a couple of years in enrollment even if we were flat to a little up in new freshmen, new transfers. So I think it's just again important to manage context there and expectations for everyone. I would love to see us do projections. I know there's risk in that, but I think it sets a bar and again maybe helps drive strategy more. But I think for the benefit of us all, no matter how good of work we do, we'll continue to see that decline a bit and again it's critically important that it starts to go up.

Chair Wasowicz: Tim, I think that is what I had in my opening comments when I said we're working hard and we got a ways to go, if you read between the lines, that's what I meant. We're doing a lot of good things here right now, but it's going to take time.

Trustee Struthers: Yes, no doubt and I think if we can set expectations with ourselves, the public and everyone I think that's really, really important.

Sol Jensen: Great, yes, thank you. I'd like to spend a few minutes talking about some of the things that we identified last year as initiatives. I'm reporting back to let you know where we're at with many of

these different activities. First and foremost, you may recall from our presentation last year, some are overarching guiding principles. Something that really set the pace for our recruitment plan. This is something that, as the provost will talk about, is part of our process. There is probably going to be some refinement to those guiding principles, but you know essentially graduating diverse population, recruiting and graduating a diverse population, access and affordability and how critical that is, and then the alignment of resources across the campus.

Trustee Pritchard: Your first point on guiding principles, where does the concept of helping a student move through the system and graduate come into play? Is that part of our guiding principles?

Sol Jensen: Well, this is one of the revisions that we're making. The guiding principles for last year were really meant for recruitment, for undergraduate recruitment, not the entirety of the enrollment. The way that we're moving towards now is having the overarching guiding principles for the entirety of the enrollment process which that would then include the things that you're referring to.

Trustee Pritchard: Good. I'd be anxious in hearing more detail in a future presentation.

Trustee Herrero: One thing is related to what we just heard, the retention piece, they're in the pipeline, right? Given what you said earlier about that population and students who aren't going to any school and receiving any education, they were in our pipeline at some point. I guess it's part of the first bullet, which is really stressing that what other creative or how we can leverage technology even more than we have, because I think we just started last year, to make sure that we're getting more of those students in the classrooms. Just focus on that population, because it's big.

Sol Jensen: Yes. We broke down the different activities in different categories. This first one is more direct and personalized messaging. I think for those who were here last year you heard me talk a lot about personalization and how we message to students. We did create three new newsletters to additional audiences that we did not have before. Parents of admitted first year students, to community college advisors and to high school counselors to let them know about what's going on on-campus. We held five different counselor breakfasts for high school counselors and community based organization advisors, community college advisors and those were really successful and it was both us giving updates as well as receiving feedback from them which I think was just as important. We held something called a phonecast which was newer. This is a pretty innovative opportunity. We try and phone call students all the time and it may not be a surprise that they don't answer very often. The way the phonecast works is like dialing in to a radio show, on our end we have panelists, whether that's currently enrolled students, and we had the president there, along with our dean of students. For the parents we've done some phonecasts with a couple of the different colleges as pilots and we included some of their faculty and chairs, and we have seen just great results. The very first phonecast we did we had about 650 parents of admitted students who joined us, it would take us months to have a communication with that many parents. The admitted student one we had over 500. So again this was an innovative way that we are trying to get the message out, essentially, they just ask questions and it's like a radio phone-in show. We introduced text messaging. The way we used it this this year was to help increase yield and to decrease the summer melt. We introduced this during our orientation session, where students now opt in to the texting and now we're sending them information throughout the summer leading up to move in day and then we'll continue to text them throughout the year important reminders about scholarships, financial aid deadlines, important things that are happening on campus. We expect this to help with both recruitment and with retention. You've heard me talk a lot about the need for improving communication plans. I would say we're not finished yet, but we have improved quite a bit. We've added a lot more new content. We've been reaching out to students earlier to try and get them interested at an earlier stage with stronger calls to action. We lowered the out-of-state tuition and going along with that now we've incorporated a lot more in advertising and reaching out to certain regions out-of-state. We restructured our merit scholarship. Recently, you've heard us talk about using Ruffalo Noel Levitz as a partner and we have a weekly meeting with them to look at all of our data and we've identified places where our merit scholarship was not performing and so we were able to just make a slight tweak to the scholarship for next year.

Trustee Barsema: Can you share with us what that tweak was and why we made it?

Sol Jensen: Yes. It's going to get a little detailed, if you look at our very top level of academic scholarships, it's a \$7,000 award. Then we move down to a \$4,000 award. And as we broke it down, to each different level, the \$7,000 level, let's say we broke it down into eight different segments, what we can do is look at the yield rate on each of those segments and what we're looking for is certain patterns. We did it on the level two and the level three, and what we found was actually the top three or four aspects of level two, so the \$4,000 award, were underperforming. So we were actually seeing higher yield rates of students at the lower end of level one than the higher end of level two. About 24 – 25% yield and when we got to the higher level of level two, we were seeing about 18, 17 – 18%. So what we did is we took those three or four bands of the level two, increase those by \$1,000 to see if we can get that 18% back up to the 25% that's in range with both the lower end of level one and the lower end of level two.

Trustee Barsema: Did you start that with this incoming class?

Sol Jensen: Yes. For the fall of '19.

Trustee Barsema: For fall of '19?

Sol Jensen: Yes, we're using the information we learned from this year to project out towards next year. We also created a couple different grants. I think it's really important to note that we worked very closely with the marching band, we have worked towards half recruitment and half retention, the students who are offered this grant are not able to utilize it during their first year, we were telling them about it. They could utilize the grant in their second year. We did that specifically with the marching band, to increase the numbers and I can report that we've almost doubled the number of our marching band for this coming year. I think it's close to 200 or so in terms of numbers and we're very pleased with that. It's a housing grant that students can use during their second year. Increased visibility; we licensed additional names with a search campaign. This is our first year doing a search campaign. As I think the board knows, we will hopefully have a vendor to do this for us in the future. We purchased additional names of future terms, again more sophomores and juniors than just the seniors. Some very targeted out-of-state and transfer as well, which we hadn't done transfer in four or five years. Advertising presence, this is not only a good example of NIU making a big slash down at Ogilvie downtown, but it was another way of collaborating. We worked with the MBA program and did all the designs for them that they wanted, they did a takeover of Ogilvie twice this past year for a month each time and it was splashy. Since they were doing Ogilvie we went and said, "Okay, let's look at Metra and Pace and other transportation avenues." During those periods of time it was very large NIU splash and that was during our peak recruitment season in October and then another one in April.

Trustee Barsema: Sol, I think this might be the appropriate time to bring this forward. I've had, in the last week, two separate occasions where recent NIU grads, who were my students say "You know the thing that I realized as one of the great benefits of coming to NIU was that once I graduated or as I graduate, the 150,000 alumni here in Chicago". Both of them got their jobs through alumni and the network that they have, they asked me if we market that? Is that a part of our marketing campaign of why to come to NIU, because of the power our alumni base in Chicago? I said that I would ask.

Sol Jensen: It is. It is one of many that we use as our value proposition. The proximity to Chicago, also all of the great resources and as I mentioned before, it is something that we like to tout. We have this great alumni base, passionate, many of them want to hire other Huskies because they know about the work ethic that they have, and in many cases they know that many of our students have had to work harder than other students who are graduating from other institutions to get to where they are.

Trustee Barsema: I have to think back to the point that Chris made a little bit ago, when you look at the other public institutions in our state albeit they're great institutions, as we are. Southern, most of their students are from the southern half of Illinois, they aren't from Chicago. Western and Eastern likely has the same characteristics. Now I would expect that Illinois State likely has the same characteristics that we do. A lot of their alumni live in the Chicagoland area. Clearly UIC does as well, but I mean to me, that's a

key marketing point for us in terms of why to come to NIU. The power of our alumni base.

Lisa Freeman: If I could just add something to that. I know that when our College of Business markets to both undergraduates and graduates, even though Illinois State for example, may have as many alums in Chicago, it's a day's drive. You can get up in the morning in your own bed, come out and teach or interact with our students and go home and sleep in your own bed and it's still an easy day. The ability of our alumni network, not just to mentor students while they're in school and help students succeed professionally when they graduate, but to be engaged during the educational experience in the classroom and otherwise, is a real asset and I know that the College of Business markets that.

Trustee Struthers: I would also just ask the question, on legacy scholarships, it seems we haven't done a whole lot there. I think with the massive alumni base that we have in the greater Chicago area and just in my somewhat uniformed view of that, it seems like there could be a bigger lever we could pull.

Sol Jensen: May I address that?

Trustee Struthers: Please.

Sol Jensen: It's in my next slide. We launched something called the Alumni Legacy Locator this past year. This is an opportunity for us to connect perspective students with our alumni database and what we've seen this year is that we have awarded about 175 more alumni legacy scholarships than last year. We've doubled the number of alumni legacy students who enrolled last year. So that's about 310 compared to about 160 last year. We have made a lot of great strides specific to alumni.

Trustee Butler: So there's – when I'm looking at this MBA advertisement, this is an example of the new way of talking about this, may not be so new but maybe new to me. There is inbound marketing and there is outbound marketing. The inbound marketing is the marketing that is designed to find the people who are looking for us already, in some way, that we would not see, generally because it's so personalized, so targeted, we wouldn't necessarily see any of that?

Sol Jensen: Correct.

Trustee Butler: Then there is outbound marketing. This is an effort, generally, to increase our brand presence. How do we decide who gets the outbound marketing resources versus the inbound marketing resources?

Sol Jensen: I will say half of our total advertising budget is now more on the inbound side. So it's the advertising that most of us in this room are never going to see, because it is targeted to specific individuals who have visited our site. We are targeting them on various ads. With the MBA program, they had their own funding, this was a partnership, we engaged with them on. I'm not fully aware of what their strategy is in terms of inbound versus outbound. We won't know what the results are until another month or month and a half. Typically we want to strike that balance right. We want the public visibility and brand awareness, at the same time, brand awareness does not always equate to recruitment or to enrollment. We want to have the really specific directed targeting that's mostly done online now, we can get them straight to a page. One of the things that we did create this year was those 15 online programs. That's something we hadn't done before. But we created advertising campaigns very distinctly for each of the online programs that we have with a specific landing page for every single one of those programs, when someone clicks on an ad, they'd come to a brand new landing page, that is now really enticing about that program. I think that's something we're looking to go more and more towards.

Trustee Butler: But it is the case, perhaps a loaded question, you have a general budget for outbound marketing that could be customized for a department that you believe has strong potential for the recruitment of students, even though that department or that program may not itself have the resources to support that outbound marketing campaign?

Sol Jensen: Yes and I think that will be part of our strategy. As we look into the out-of-state and the different types of advertising we have out-of-state, there are certainly some academic programs that already have more of a national draw and I think we can continue to build upon that. Through what's called a halo effect, we can build up the other programs as well. There's certainly avenues that we can



build upon those things. In the essence of time, I know we need to move through this a little. I may just take one or two of the activities that we're doing on retention, that are updates from last year. On this slide, I think a great one to point out is that the student experience team. This is a group of individuals coordinated by leaders of the Office of Equity, Academic Diversity and Inclusion, Student Affairs and the Office of Undergraduate Studies who have come together and increased the communication and collaboration amongst themselves to better engage our students. Lastly, the bullet about first generation students, as we know about half of our students coming in each year are first generation, first in their family to attend. There's a new initiative by first and second year experience and OSEEL, leading efforts to identify faculty and staff who are first in their family to graduate, who've gone on to be successful. I know that they're planning an event in September for our incoming first generation students. Maybe just a couple thoughts here, we do have increased opportunities for undergraduate research, identifying additional seniors, rising seniors for the Angel Touch program. This is a huge benefit to many of our students who, again going back to our guiding principle of access and affordability and being able to provide some options of funding for these students, are so close to graduating and to help them cross that line. I'm going to turn it over to the provost for a couple more slides.

EVPP McCord: Thank you. As an institution that's committed to community engagement and particularly committed to connecting our students to the community, it's very natural for us to focus on partnership opportunities as part as our enrollment efforts. And these really run the gamut from very local to regional to state to national. They span from partnerships within the higher education community, across the public sector, the private sector, and in some of these President Freeman often speaks about the importance of relationships as resources. In some cases we are building the relationships. In other cases, we are converting it to a resource. In the interest of time, just to feature one or two; our P20 network has really established itself as a state presence in the pathways from high school to community college to four year institutions. They are taking a leadership role in setting state policy, in bringing people in to state standards and that's positioning NIU exceptionally well to have relationships with community colleges and high schools. We are part of national efforts such as the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU). APLU has a transformation cluster initiative that is bringing together universities nationwide with common interests. We are part of a group of eight universities that are looking at the issues of underserved populations, how we can best address those. We're going to be involved in data sharing and sharing best practices. So we're going to be part of national conversations about how to best serve our students.

Sol Jensen: Just a couple final thoughts, we thought it was important to point out some new leadership that we have at the institution as well. And I think the individuals are here, but I wanted to introduce, many Board members may not know yet, but I've asked Quinton Clay to please stand. He's our new Undergraduate Director of Admissions. Again very excited to work with him. He has a long history of experiences and he's already within two months infusing a lot of new ideas and I think I wanted him to be here so you all could meet him. And then Jason Rhode who is our Executive Director of Extended Learning. I think in the future you'll hear a lot more about where we're heading with online programs and again we've mentioned earlier about the potential growth that there is and Jason's doing a great job already bringing us to that. And Omar Ghrayeb who was just recently named the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies. And so again, Omar and I, I think, are going to work very, very closely. Again this gets at your point of all the way from recruitment through graduation and you know where the handoffs happen and how one impacts the other and so I look forward to working even much closer with Omar. We also finally established over this past year a strategic enrollment management committee. This is a cross-divisional committee. I think that's important. We had representatives from every academic college. We had obviously folks from EMMC as well as student affairs and even a couple other of entities that had very close relationships. This is a group that's really focused on recruitment, retention, and graduation and identifying some of those ways that we can help in all situations really that action group. I think the group that can get things done. So again just a couple of different things that we've worked on throughout this past year, really the past semester, and you know I think that SWAT analysis and some of the ideas that came from there really led into the next part of this presentation and where we're heading now as an institution.

EVPP McCord: We were charged by the Board last year to develop strategic approaches. The activities you've heard described were activities we undertook because we knew we could not stop, pause our activities, while we planned strategically. We needed to be going full speed and planning as well. So our planning process really has taken a very structured approach in order to begin with our mission, vision, values, principles, so that as we develop from there and I'll unfold the planning framework that we have developed from there. We want to make sure it is firmly grounded in who we are and what our values are, so that we, as an institution understand, as we move forward at the tactical level, we're all firmly grounded in sharing a common perception. Part of the planning process, we went through I think one of the most important values of it, was it strongly affirmed the leadership's commitment to our vision and values and I think really grounds all of us at the leadership level moving forward in a very clear united understanding of who we are and what we're aspiring to. We're in the midst of a planning process. We've held a couple of retreats. The first one as I said really focused on principles, values, goals. The second retreat evolved that to the level of strategies. We've taken a structured framework approach where our mission, vision, values inform our enrollment goals. Our enrollment goals in turn inform strategies that we can deploy. Each of those strategies will have a leader accountable for it, that they will take forward. That leader will develop the objectives, the measurable objectives, the specific numerical and quantifiable measurements that will inform our activities. And then from all of that come the tactics that we specifically pursue. The structured approach, I think is really important to make sure we are truly aligned in the tactics we're pursuing. That they're not disparate, that they're not disconnected, they're a part of an overall structure. We are still refining these: our goals, our strategies. We have developed preliminary statements on each of those. Those are still in refinement. But even though they're in refinement and we're not yet ready to share those, I do want to walk you through an example to show you what our thinking is and how this cascades all the way down to truly impactful tactics. One of our values stated in our mission, vision and values statement is to provide access for a broad spectrum of students to high quality programs. That's one of our values. That doesn't change. From that we have an enrollment goal of supporting equitable access opportunity and success for students from diverse backgrounds. From that goal, which is more specific to enrollment, we have a strategy to develop a process for quickly innovating new programs so that we can nimbly meet the demands of the market. We don't just want to be developing programs, we want to bring them to market in a timely fashion. From that strategy which if that's firmed up in that form will presumably fall to Academic Affairs to be accountable for and take the lead on. One aspect of that, one objective from that, will be to increase enrollments in online programs by 15%. And then from that measurable objective, we derive tactics that we need to pursue in order to achieve that objective. Some of those tactics, not all of them, include creating a new online and off-campus program proposal and development process so that we can be more nimble in our development. And then taking that to market by increasing marketing and implementing a new inquiry response process that we are now in an RFP stage for. So that's the strategic framework we're working through. We will be finalizing that soon and it's important to note that each of these strategies, objective tactics will have a different time sensitivity to it. Some of them will be urgent. We will need to act on them immediately. Some of them will be more delayed because they will be at a point in the recruiting or retention cycle where immediate action can't be taken anyway. For example, if we want a summer bridge program, well we're not going to deploy a summer bridge program for summer '18. That would be summer '19. We can see that coming. Not that we can wait until '19 to plan for it, but we can see that coming. If this is something that's a fall activity, of course then we need to be more urgent about it. So each of these strategies, as we solidify it will be assigned to a leader to be accountable; that leader will deploy a team; that team will develop an understanding of the objectives, the tactics, the resources needed, the time sensitivity; leadership will evaluate that and then we go forward. Any last questions?

Chair Wasowicz: I have a couple of comments. The transfers that we had, from some of the phonecast things that we are doing and I know we're doing some things with the community colleges, is there anything we can do to get any data on people we think might be transferring from other universities?

EVPP McCord: We have access to national clearinghouse data that tells us where students go. So it's lagged. We can't see it in real time, but we have access to national clearinghouse data.

Chair Wasowicz: Because that might give us trends...

EVPP McCord: Yes, that tells us the students who apply to us, actually you saw that in one of the earlier slides, where what we presented was to demonstrate our leading place where transfer students go is nowhere. Again, with a lag, and we use that to try and inform our planning.

Chair Wasowicz: I like the idea of the phonecast and the texting program. Especially texting programs, but to get these transfer students and I know we've poured through data on some of our calls on this. The second thing is in regards to the band, I'm not sure if you're aware of this, but I think Ohio, University of Ohio, has one of the largest bands in the country and you might want to look at what they're doing and if that helps us in that area. And then thirdly, Quinton welcome aboard, I happened to run into some people from District 211 last week, I guess you had met with them, they were talking to me as if I was totally knowledgeable of this, which I was not, but meeting with the College of Business about how we can bring down the cost of education, I think that is a big part that we deal with here, how we can get programs that they're doing in their district, which I think is a second largest in the state, to be able to flow right into Northern. They were ecstatic about it, by the way, and they spoke great things about you, so there's your first compliment and hopefully many more to come. But it's good stuff.

EVPP McCord: The Dell project with District 211, Harper and us, is part of a national wide project as well. Their project involves the Dell project nationally, involves community college to four year. We're unique in that our project involves high school to community college to four year institution and involving district 211.

Chair Wasowicz: Okay great. They were pretty juiced about this and they really liked the idea of bringing down the cost of education and funneling people through.

Trustee Struthers: A question with respect to Board involvement, the Chair and the Vice Chair of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Personnel Committee, are you guys involved in the strategic process that's being formed right now?

Chair Wasowicz: We are on calls, both with Chris and with Sol separately. You might be reading my notes here, that I want to be in on one of those. I have it circled to attend that.

Trustee Struthers: Let me see it later, to make sure it's there.

Chair Wasowicz: It's here, I think we will be. We've been going through the data, we spent quite a bit of time, Veronica and I, the other day with Sol pouring through spreadsheets and looking at where people are coming from and where we're losing people. I want to get in on one of those meetings and that will happen. Thank you.

Trustee Herrero: I just want to add that, one, I'm really excited to see everything that we're doing on the enrollment and recruitment side. We have been spending a lot of time with Sol and it's hard to see what the fruits of labor can be immediately. I do believe that this will all pay off. I think that Sol is looking at all of the right things and asking all the right questions of the data to see where the lowest hanging fruit is to increase enrollment and where we need to take more of a longer term strategy or a longer term strategic approach to gaining. For instance, I think the macro trends are really difficult to wrap your head around and get your hands into, but not something that we should ignore. It's really exciting to see the team take a two-prong or multi-pronged approach to it. One question I do have though, is on the retention side with the equity gap piece. I know that this is something that is really important to President Freeman and to all of you and we're putting a lot of energy to this, but do we have a sense for the impact of the equity gap in a significant way, what kind of impact it would have on overall enrollment. Do we have any projections for that?

EVPP McCord: The simple answer is significant. We have significant populations of underserved students. We have equity gaps that are comparable with our peer institutions, that if we can address the equity gaps for our underserved populations, we will make huge strides in impacting our overall retention rates. And that's absolutely our primary target. That's a clear understanding that's emerged from the data is the best way to address our overall retention issues are to address our equity gaps. I do not have that number in my head this instant, but we absolutely are looking at that not just in qualitative terms but in quantitative terms.

Trustee Herrero: As a follow-up to that, are we looking into strategies that other universities have used to successfully address the equity gap?

EVPP McCord: The ACLU transformation cluster initiative is exactly such a process. We have also been part of an AAC&U, American Association of Colleges and Universities, project that likewise has been looking at national trends. And I think there are aspects where we are at or ahead of the curve in terms of our engagement. We are looking at issues in, for example, our gateway course, we've identified that as a clear opportunity for improving retention and it seems like we are sort of at the front edge of that work nationally.

President Freeman: Could I just add one thing to that? I want to make a point that equity gaps are not about differences in academic preparation as the dominant factor. Equity gaps exist for complex reasons and they exist because the things at the institution and also things in society, but as we address them and address them in a meaningful way with a significant impact on our enrollment, we actually help all of our students. We see things in that population because the students have the most complex lives, they're financially more fragile, they have maybe less social capital because they're first in their generation, first in their family to go to school. But when we increase access to student support services, when we encourage students to ask for help when they need it, when we figure out how to help students feel more financially secure while they're in school. When we look at gateway courses that may be preventing some students from progressing in their major, we also may be helping students who wanted to be STEM majors and got channeled somewhere else. So addressing equity gaps could have a tremendous impact on enrollment. It's morally the right thing to do. It's consistent with our mission and values, but it also will have a benefit across the institution and it's not just about academic preparedness and I just wanted to make that point. Thank you.

Trustee Barsema: Could I just ask, this is not a question, this is a request. In a future meeting can we have an overview of the Pathway Program? From two standpoints, I was part of that committee a few years ago when we developed it. The feeling at that time was that it would be another reason why students would want to come to NIU. They could enter the Pathway Program or one of the Pathway Programs of their choosing and get on the path of their major quicker than they would if they did a traditional two-year Gen-Ed sort-of schedule. I'd like to get an update on the program itself because I know a lot of time and attention went into it. Is it making a difference? Are we seeing the benefit that we thought we were going to see and are the students seeing the benefit that we thought they were going to see when that program was developed? Because I thought it was a fantastic program and I would love to hear that we've accomplished or that we are accomplishing our goals on it. So if we could add that to a future agenda, that would be great.

EVPP McCord: Certainly. NIU Plus has been a really important part of our realigning of our undergraduate curriculum.

Trustee Barsema: Right, it's called NIU Plus.

EVPP McCord: We'll be happy to bring that back to you. Absolutely.

Trustee Barsema: Thank you Chris.

Trustee Coleman: I've got a couple comments I want to make. No questions. First of all, Sol congratulations on one year with the institution. When you first came here, I remember telling you that this is not an item that we're going to solve overnight. Clearly enrollment is one of our top priorities as a board, as an institution, and that you are one of many that have to be actively engaged to help us resolve this matter. Thank you for leading this effort, being on point, and Chris also thank you for your support. I'm excited about the SEM Committee. I think a committee that engages other key leaders within the institution to pick their brains and hold them accountable for enrollment is the right way to go. I trust we will have a lot of data and a lot of reports that we will use to help make key decisions. We know to move the needle is going to take efforts from everybody. Everyone owns enrollment, not just you and sometimes I'm sure, Sol, you feel the weight of this critical matter on your shoulders, but I just want to ensure you that you are not alone in this effort and we want to continue to encourage everyone

to support Sol and the rest of the team, the SEM Committee as well in terms of moving this critical matter forward for the university. So thank you.

Sol Jensen: Thank you.

Chair Wasowicz: I think we start every meeting saying that to Sol when Veronica and I meet with him.

Trustee Coleman: I also failed to recognize the Chair and Vice Chair that are working closely with the administrative group on this key topic, thank you for your work as well.

Chair Wasowicz: Alright. I think we have one other item.

### **Agenda Item 8.b. 2017-1018 Faculty Emeritus Recognition**

EVPP McCord: I know that we are running a few minutes late and we do need to be brief with this information item, but I think I'd be remiss if I didn't take a moment to note the value that the academy places on those faculty who have dedicated their careers to their disciplines, to their students, to their colleagues, to their communities; and at the stage when they retire, it is an academic tradition that faculty who have served the institution are accorded the honorary title of Emeritus. It is a title that confers certain practical benefits. For example, a discount on parking, but it really is meant mostly to honor people who have served the community so well and I really want to underline as I look at the list of individuals who have retired from the university, left the university in good standing, the vast amount of contributions over the years that these colleagues have brought to it. As I look at these names, many of whom I know quite well, and think about what they have accomplished, the students they've served, the research and artistry they've accomplished; these are enormous values that we can be very proud. We are pleased to honor them as they conclude their careers with us and welcome them into a new role within the NIU community.

Chair Wasowicz: Any comments?

## **9. OTHER MATTERS**

Chair Wasowicz: Are there other matters to come before the committee?

## **10. NEXT MEETING DATE**

The next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee will be Thursday, November 15, 2018.

## **11. ADJOURNMENT**

Committee Chair Wasowicz asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Barsema moved and Trustee Hays seconded. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Parrish

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.*