

Minutes of the
Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University
Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee
November 15, 2019

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 am by Chair Pritchard in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Parrish conducted a roll call.

Members present were Trustee Rita Athas, Trustee John Butler, Trustee Montel Gayles, Trustee Veronica Herrero, Trustee Eric Wasowicz, Board Chair Dennis Barsema and Committee Chair Robert Pritchard.

Trustee Madalynn Merson was absent.

Also present were President Lisa Freeman; General Counsel and Board Parliamentarian Bryan Perry; Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram, Board Liaison Matt Streb; Vice President for Administration and Finance Sarah McGill; Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships Jerry Blazey; Vice President for EMMC Sol Jensen; Vice Provost Carolinda Douglass; Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Vernese Edghill-Walden; Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Kelly Wesener-Michael and UAC Representatives Alex Gelman, Cathy Doederlein, Jason Hanna, Sarah Marsh, Kendall Thu and Jeffry Royce.

2. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

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

3. MEETING AGENDA APPROVAL

Committee Chair Pritchard asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Wasowicz moved approval of the meeting agenda and Trustee Gayles seconded the motion. The motion passed.

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Committee Chair Pritchard asked for a motion to approve the minutes of August 15, 2019. Trustee Gayles moved to approve the minutes and Trustee Wasowicz seconded. The motion passed.

5. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Chair Pritchard welcomed everyone and advised that there would be presentations on professional excellence awards for faculty and staff, oversight of academic programs, community college partnerships, and an overview of the College of Education. He added that there are three approval items, two new degree programs; Bachelor of Arts and Sciences in Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies and Doctor of Philosophy in Kinesiology and Physical Education. There is also an authorization to retain the executive search firms to support searches for the Division of Athletics. Committee Chair Pritchard then recognized the University Advisory Committee liaisons and invited them to offer comments to the committee.

Cathy Doederlein expressed excitement about the new degree offerings that would be discussed and hoped they would be well received. She also commented on the acknowledgement of those who have received recognition for professional awards of excellence.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

Committee Chair Pritchard inquired to Mr. Perry if any members of the public registered a written request to address the board in accordance with state law and Board of Trustees bylaws? General Counsel Perry advised that no timely requests for public comment were received.

7. UNIVERSITY RECOMMENDATIONS

Agenda Item 7.a. Request for New Degree Program in Bachelor of Arts/Sciences in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Committee Chair Pritchard requested that Executive Vice President and Provost Beth Ingram present the university report.

EVPP Ingram advised that two degree programs and authorization for an executive search were being presented to the Board. Agenda item 7.a. is a request for a new degree program, a Bachelor of Arts and a Bachelor of Sciences in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies. Adding this major helps NIU become current with the discipline and to meet the needs of the students. The Center for the Study of Women, Gender, and Sexuality already offers courses regularly taught by joint appointment faculty, graduate assistants, and staff, as well as a certificate and a minor in Women and Gender Studies and certificate and minor in LGBTQ+ studies. She stated that the university believes that this will be an additional credential students can seek. About 20 majors are expected in the first year, growing to 50 by year five, and the new program is cost neutral. She concluded by requesting approval of the program.

Chair Pritchard requested a motion to approve the request for a new degree program, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts in Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies? Trustee Athas moved, Trustee Butler seconded. The motion carried.

Agenda Item 7.b. Request for New Degree Program in Doctor of Philosophy in Kinesiology and Physical Education

EVPP Ingram stated agenda item 7.b. is a request for a new program in Doctor of Philosophy in Kinesiology and Physical Education. The program is designed as an interdisciplinary doctorate across the sub disciplines in Exercise and Sports Sciences contained within the department KNPE. The proposed program will distinguish itself from peer programs by focusing dually on training on both research and teaching, which is different from other programs in the state. She expects three students in year one, expanding to twenty students by year five and the program will be cost neutral. She concluded by requesting approval of the item.

Chair Pritchard requested a motion to approve the new degree program. Trustee Gayles moved. Trustee Herrero seconded. Chair Pritchard requested discussion.

Trustee Barsema requested to learn more about the statement in the rationale about the strengths in the program for sport develop and as a tool for social change.

EVPP Ingram requested that Chad McEvoy, David Walker, and Laurie Elish-Piper approach the podium and that Chad McEvoy, the department chair address the question.

Chad McEvoy advised that sport for development is a growing are of study within the disciplines in Kinesiology and Physical Education. KNPE has distinguished itself as a leader in this regard. In the past year faculty and a group of students went to Belize and another group will go this year, to lead a women's sport summit, the first of its kind. A year ago, a group of faculty and students went to Sri Lanka, part of a US Department of State grant. Underdeveloped countries utilize sport as a unifying tool, that bring people together, break down barriers, provide social and emotional learning, training and development both from a diplomacy perspective, as well as from a youth development perspective.

Trustee Barsema asked how the trips are funded and if the college had proper funding for them.

Chad McEvoy spoke about external funding opportunities. Faculty has been successful in receiving a couple of large grants from the US Department of State. They seek to use sport for diplomacy as a tool to build international relations across the globe. Chad requested that Dean Elish-Piper speak about the college's Educate and Engage program.

Dean Elish-Piper advised that the Educate and Engage program has a global component. They work with external funding and partners. As an example, last summer Dean Elish-Piper was part of a trip with the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, they visited Laos and Indonesia, and had opportunity to meet with the embassies, talk with their ministers of sport, recreation and education, talking about some of the different collaborative opportunities that might be available. The ministers were extremely interested in the kinds of things that Chad described, in both of those countries. They are currently working to scale up programs in those countries in Southeast Asia. There are multiple sources of funding, they tend to be external and grant based funding.

Trustee Barsema asked about the other two schools in the state, that have a similar program, if they focus more on research or if they are doing outreach programs relative to social change.

Chad McEvoy wasn't able to speak to the University of Illinois Chicago's expertise in this regard, adding that NIU has colleagues at UIUC that do work in the area. They collaborate with those colleges in a number of different ways. They believe the University of Illinois Chicago's doctoral program in the Kinesiology disciplines focus on other areas of study.

Trustee Barsema asked if they had sought funding from professional sports teams and leagues.

Chad McEvoy remarked that the NBA, while heavily invested in the continent of Africa, to his knowledge has not gone so far as to formalize external funding opportunities. If such opportunities become available, the faculty is well positioned to pursue them.

Chair Pritchard asked about recent research projects of significance.

Chad McEvoy remarked that in addition to the areas already mentioned, the faculty is very active in the sport for development area and have pursued funding opportunities across the globe. He then discussed the new lab that Chairman Pritchard had recently visited. This lab will enhance the ability to conduct high-level research and pursue external funding.

Trustee Wasowicz asked if students coming out of the program were more likely to fit in with academic or government programs.

Chad McEvoy responded that students are primarily trained to become faculty members at universities like NIU or across the world. As noted in the program proposal, many of the doctoral programs in the field are research focused and research focused alone. Many doctoral programs exist primarily at heavy research universities, the students lack training in the broader totality of what faculty members do in terms of teaching, service, outreach, in addition to conducting strong research. Often times those perspective faculty members are well equipped to become scholars, but lack the skills to be highly effective. Our program is poised not only to provide outstanding research training, but also to help train future faculty members to be outstanding service and outreach focused teachers.

Chair Pritchard moved forward the vote. The motion carried.

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

EVPP Ingram presented agenda item 7.c., an item to provide executive search firm services for searches for head coaches within the Division of Athletics. Remarking that given the quality needed in a head coach, the use of search firm allows us to expand the pool and recruit qualified

candidates. She recommended that the president be authorized to select executive search firms to support those searches and that the university recommends that Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and the Personnel Committee endorse this request and move it on to the board.

Chair Pritchard asked for a motion. Trustee Wasowicz moved. Trustee Gayles seconded. Chair Pritchard asked if there were questions.

Trustee Athas asked if there are search firms that specialize in Athletics. She also asked if the approval was for assistant coaches or just head coaches.

President Freeman offered to answer the question and made the board aware that John Cheney from Athletic operations was in attendance. She continued that there are search firms that specialize in hiring coaches. The search firm is used for the head coach position, not for the team that often comes with a head coach. The timing of coach searches are based on anticipated rhythms in the end of a season and sometimes on the unexpected departure of a coach. Because it is important for student athletes to feel secure, NIU tries to fill positions as quickly as possible with coaches whose talents mirror the teams. This is a request to delegate to the president the authority to authorize search firms so that when a situation arises, the university can move in a time-frame compatible with a successful search. Governing documents require that for any position other than that of president, the board must authorize the use of search firms, and because on a season endings or coach departures rarely mirror the rhythm of the board meetings, delegation of this authority is requested annually.

Trustee Gayles asked how the search firm was compensated, if it was based on a percentage of the salary.

President Freeman responded that each search firm has different schema for how they're compensated. Some of them charge on an hourly basis. Some of them take a percentage of the salary. Some of them have a flat rate for a menu of services. She pointed out that the item reads that the university either uses a firm on an approved list or an RFP, based on state procurement laws. The procurement department assists in getting the most competitive arrangement.

Trustee Herrero asked if NIU uses a successful search firm, does it have to go through a full RFP process every year.

President Freeman responded that it depends if the firm is on the approved list of executive search firm vendors, published by the state office of procurement. Firms that continue to maintain the State of Illinois required paperwork to be on that list can be used without doing an RFP. If Athletics doesn't feel that the most appropriate firm is on that list, they have the opportunity to do an RFP to obtain a search firm. The university is authorized for professional services under \$100,000 to work without an RFP, although if over \$20,000, there must be at least two bids. So there are basically three avenues to obtain executive search firms depending on the exact situation.

Trustee Butler requested that when the item goes before the full board, it contain the statutory language that includes the criteria the board needs to make the determination.

President Freeman advised that it is normally included, apologized for the oversight and promised the item would be appended for the full board.

Chair Pritchard moved forward the vote. The motion carried.

8. UNIVERSITY REPORTS

Agenda Item 8.a. Professional Excellence Awards for Faculty and Staff

EVPP Ingram presented agenda item 8.a. recognizing professional excellence awards for faculty and staff. Each recipient was invited to the board meeting. EVPP invited the recipients to stand to be recognized and thanked them for their service.

Chair Pritchard thanked the excellence award recipients.

Trustee Athas requested the selection process and criteria for the awards.

EVPP Ingram advised that nominations are received, and committees are formed per NIU regulations to review applications. The committee presents their selection to the Provost. The Provost recommends the selection to the President. EVPP Ingram invited President Freeman to remark further.

President Freeman remarked that for each award category there is a solicitation of nominations, a vetting process that is very competitive that involves a committee. For the presidential awards, ultimately the president is the final recommender, but the endorsement is pretty typical of the committee. For the faculty awards, each of the processes is managed by the member of the Leadership Team with the most expertise in that area. The Research and Artistry awards are overseen by Dr. Blazey's office in Research, Innovation, and Partnerships. The Engagement awards are overseen by Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development. The Provost oversees the teaching awards as well as the Board of Trustees awards. The staff awards are overseen by the staff councils. For the awards related to teaching or where teaching is a component, there is actually feedback solicited from former students as well as an introduction of teaching evaluations. For awards related to research, artistry, and scholarship, the standard types of things are used to look at those; grants, publications, and performance awards are considered in the overall process. For the Board of Trustees professor awards, Faculty who are excellent in all aspects of the university's mission are honored. The candidates have to demonstrate excellence in teaching and research, artistry or scholarship and engagement.

Agenda Item 8.b. Oversight of Academic Programs

EVPP Ingram presented agenda item 8.b. Oversight of Academic Programs. She explained that every year the results of the reviews from the prior year are compiled, indicating what was requested from the programs, the outcomes of the review, and then how the programs responded to the recommendations of those reviews. This report comes to the AASAP Committee and to the board as an information item. It will also go to the Illinois Board of Higher Education and it is used on reporting to NIU's accreditor, the Higher Learning Commission. She advised that Carolinda Douglass was available to answer questions as her office manages the process.

Chair Pritchard advised that board packet contained twenty-six academic programs that were reviewed and asked if there were any particular notes or concerns raised in the reviews.

Carolinda Douglass replied that while there is an ongoing discussion about faculty succession planning and enrollments, there wasn't any particular things noted in the review. All of the programs are in good standing and continue to be in good standing. She continued that in the more detailed report, enrollments, assessment and student learning outcomes are being monitored.

Trustee Butler thanked Dr. Douglass for the oversight and work that she performs. He asked about the Bachelor of Science in Middle Level Teaching and Learning. The program began in 2016, so why it was reviewed so soon?

Carolinda Douglass advised that new programs are typically reviewed after a couple of years, definitely no less than three. The fact that this one came up in two is likely to align with accreditation.

Trustee Gayles asked about the eight-year cycles used for program review, if that is an internal policy or a policy set by the state of Illinois.

Carolinda Douglass responded that the policy is set by the state of Illinois, the IBHE.

Chair Pritchard added that NIU has written permission from the IBHE to modify the requirement, aligning it with accreditation.

Trustee Wasowicz asked about some reviews that involved Jerry Blazey, the Interdisciplinary Study of Language and Literacy and Family violence and Sexual Assault.

Vice President Blazey replied that the university recently instituted a set of policies and procedures to review research centers every four years. Research changes rapidly the emphasis must be adjusted. The four-year cycle works well within the eight-year cycle of the IBHE, allowing the opportunity to review and discuss the direction of the research centers with Directors on a more frequent basis.

Trustee Barsema asked about the Academic Planning Council.

EVPP Ingram advised that it is a group of faculty, two representatives from each college that is chaired by the Provost. She requested that Carolinda Douglass advise specifically who sits on this council.

Carolinda Douglass advised there are two from each college, except Law, which has one and Liberal Arts, which has three.

EVPP Ingram continued that it is a faculty shared-governance committee, with work being done by subcommittees who work very closely with the programs to do an in-depth review and then the reports are forwarded to the entire committee for questions or comments.

Trustee Barsema asked if the committee meets on a regular schedule, or as needed.

EVPP Ingram responded that they meet on a regular basis, the reviews are spread over the course of an academic year.

Agenda Item 8.c. Community College Partnerships

EVPP Ingram presented agenda item 8.c. Community College Partnerships, the work being done with community college partners. About half of new students are transfer students. We have exciting new programs going on with community colleges both local and a little further afield. She introduced Ron Smith, Director of Community College Partnerships.

Ron Smith gave a presentation about community college partnerships, starting with how the office came in to being. He spoke about solutions and establishing pathways for transfer students with community college partners. He also discussed a new reverse transfer agreement that allows credits to transfer to and from community college.

Trustee Gayles asked if NIU was alone in trying to recruit community college students or are other state institutions attempting to recruit them. He also asked how competitive NIU is with other state schools in this regard.

Ron Smith replied that this is a practice nationwide. He added that NIU has a strong brand and is still developing what makes the university unique. He concluded that the university is also starting to talk to the high school level.

President Freeman added that NIU's reputation as a research university that supports innovative solutions placing students that are industry, sector and workplace bound. Outreach programs engage students in summer research programs.

Trustee Herrero added there is now a trend of working with students from high school through early college to determine what makes sense for their bachelor's degree. From a student perspective NIU is exemplary in terms of being student centered. She then asked if NIU programs shared space with DePaul and Harold Universities.

Ron Smith said that is correct.

Trustee Herrero continued that student could start feeling a stronger sense of belonging with all of the institution along their path. She then asked about the work in process with the Dell Foundation and Kishwaukee, if NIU had a roll in helping students start to acclimate to the four-year experience.

Ron Smith advised about projects that are in place to leverage and integrate with the students, having a dedicated representative that visits regularly. A narrative is established, and dialog created early in the students' experience.

Trustee Herrero stated that it could be as simple as inviting them to a football game.

Trustee Gayles asked about the goal of increasing Latinx population and if the university is doing anything more focused toward community and city colleges of ethnicity.

Ron Smith advised that he is always inclusive in his endeavors, looking to identify and target groups that have been under-represented.

Quinton Clay interjected and introduced himself. He described the efforts being undertaken in Undergraduate Admissions, transforming more literature into Spanish. Creating Spanish podcasts that feature the Latino Resource Center.

Trustee Wasowicz asked if the program with Kish was a beta test and if so, when will the program roll out to everyone else.

Ron Smith discussed some plans in the pipeline to establish additional cohorts. He also remarked about the number of students that migrate to colleges in other states.

Trustee Wasowicz asked about the 211 program and if it had been rolled out yet.

Ron Smith advised that the program is still in beta testing.

Trustee Barsema advised that he started NIU as a result of a program offered by COD. He asked Ron about his background and who he typically worked with at the community colleges.

Ron Smith discussed that he usually works with individuals at the administrative level and higher. It can sometimes be the departmental level and there is not always consistency. If you get the buy-in from the top, it makes it a whole lot easier.

Trustee Barsema asked about Ron's background.

Ron Smith advised that after graduating college he started in consultative sales. He transitioned into HR where his passion for higher education began to develop. He started with the University of Phoenix in downtown Chicago. He received promotions and ultimately started a national operations role working with community colleges at a national level. That led to a position with Career Education Corporation in Schaumburg. Then he transitioned into community college, working at Oakton Community college which lead to him being hired at NIU.

Trustee Herrero asked the two degrees in three program, training high school teachers and maintaining high quality of degrees and output.

Ron Smith advised that a process is in place to engage with high schools and identify teachers who need appropriate credentialing. There is an individual responsible for establishing and maintaining those relationship.

President Freeman added that one of the reasons Kish became the prototype for doing the three degree in two years accelerated degree is because the university has awareness of the local high schools, how they use AP and dual credit. When the program expands to Wabauunsee or Elgin, where different high schools have different ways of doing dual credits, NIU must be able to accommodate that accelerated senior year using different models

Trustee Butler asked if NIU is doing anything to affect the advising that students receive when they enter community college with regards to the degree choice. Particularly non-transferrable programs.

Ron Smith stated that this might best be answered by the Quinton Clay from Admission, adding that students tend to self-advise.

Quinton Clay talked about a community counselor conference that is held on campus, discussing issues and best practices. There is a high school and community college newsletter.

President Freeman discussed students that commit to a career and technical path in the AAS without fully understanding. She mentioned Meryl Sussman from OERD and Cliff Merman who worked to create a Bachelor's of Science in Applied Manufacturing Technology where a student who graduated with an AAS might complete their gen eds in one year and then complete a degree of a Bachelor's of Science and Engineering Technology online or at NIU.

Chair Pritchard added that in legislature they talked for many years about the fact that some faculty were not receptive of transfer credits. He continued that the university must look at what the best interest of the student, while maintaining the quality of the programs that NIU is known for.

Chair Pritchard called for five-minute recess at 10:18 a.m.

The committee reconvened at 10:26 a.m.

Chair Pritchard requested that EVPP Ingram continue to present the university report.

Agenda Item 8.d. College of Education Overview

EVPP Ingram introduced Dean Laurie Elish-Piper to discuss the contributions made to discovery, learning and outreach by the College of Education.

Dean Elish-Piper gave an overview of the college, starting as a normal school to prepare college educated teachers. She discussed that the college is housed across three buildings on campus. In addition to preparing teachers, they also prepare principals, superintendents, school business officials, counselors, mental health counselors, sports and fitness professionals for successful careers. She also discussed the graduate online education program that is offered. The college also recently started an educator in residence program. She went on to discuss all the advances being taken by the college.

Chair Pritchard asked about the make-up of half graduate and half undergraduate students and how that plays in to the emphasis of dual credit classes in high schools, where the teacher has to be certified or a master's degree candidate in that particular specialty.

Dean Elish-Piper advised that many teachers have degrees in curriculum and instruction or elementary education or special education where there is need in terms of dual credit in the discipline. She continued that she has been involved with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Center for P20 Engagement on getting more teachers dual credit qualified. Dean Elish-Piper asked if Dean Ledgerwood wanted to add anything.

Dean Ledgerwood advised that they are working on establishing programs in Math and that would be in line with the cohort model. NIU professors would go out and teach in the school district to a cohort of Math teachers, to get them either the 18 credit hours they need for certification to a dual credit or a master's degree depending on the demand. They are exploring programs in Biology, English, and History.

Trustee Gayles asked about a statement that Dean Elish-Piper made, that thirty-nine percent of students were students of color and if she saw the same trend in teachers for K through 7th grade, particularly men of color.

Dean Elish-Piper replied that not as many as the university would like participate, and that is a concern. She then discussed an initiative called “Call Me Mister”, discussions with community colleges that she is part of a sub group of the Illinois state board of education that is working to grow and diversify the workforce across the state.

Trustee Herrero discussed that students are arriving that are not ready to take college courses and the challenges across the state about equities, cultural competence, culturally sensitive pedagogy, and how the college is addressing these issues.

Dean Elish-Piper replied that as part of a group called Deans for Impact, a national non-profit that’s focusing on how to help dean be agents of change to address those very issues.

Trustee Butler requested that Dean Elish-Piper share some of her recent success with the other universities in Springfield, with respect to the test of academic preparedness and proficiency.

Dean Elish-Piper began that part of the teacher shortage in the State of Illinois is a manufactured crisis. Policies were created that made sense, but were not updated. The test of academic proficiency was a requirement for admission into a teacher education program with a cut score that was so incredibly high, just a small fraction of students were passing it and it became a real barrier for students to get into teacher preparation programs, not just at NIU, but across the state. then the Illinois State Board of Ed made some adjustments and lowered the cut score and also allowed use of the ACT or the SAT as a proxy for that exam. It still disproportionately limited access to teacher education programs to individuals of color specifically African American applicants, which was a significant concern. She had the honor of being the Chair of the Illinois Association of Deans of Pubic College of Education, testified in front of the Education Committee to discuss the impact of this basic skills testing requirement and ultimately it was repealed.

Trustee Wasowicz asked about the trend of enrollment in the education area and how compares with ISU and the University of Illinois Champaign, which is recruiting heavily in this area

Dean Elish-Piper advised that enrollment numbers are up. She did not know specifics on the other universities’ enrollment, and gave examples of programs where NIU is significantly up.

9. OTHER MATTERS

Chair Pritchard asked if there were others matters to be brought before the committee.

10. NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and Personnel Committee will be Thursday, February 13, 2020.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Committee Chair Pritchard asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Barsema moved. Trustee Herrero seconded. The motion approved. Meeting adjourned at 11:16 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.