I. CALL TO ORDER

L. Freeman: Good afternoon everybody. It’s spring. Does it feel like that? Not exactly, but hopefully [inaudible] Does everybody who is a voting member have a clicker?

Acting President L. Freeman called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

L. Freeman: To verify that we do, in fact, have a quorum, if everybody could press 1 or A. Our goal is to have a smiley face on your clicker. Okay, we don’t want to have to have a stand-off between Pat and the clickers, because I would actually go with Pat every time.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

L. Freeman: All right, can I have a motion, please, to adopt the agenda?

C. Doederlein: So moved.

L. Freeman: Doederlein moved. Second, Haji-Sheikh, was the correct? Okay. All in favor?

Members: Aye.
L. Freeman: Any opposed? Great.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 28, 2018 MINUTES

L. Freeman: My next request is for approval of the February 28, 2018 minutes. Can I have a motion? [F. Segura moved.] Okay, we have a second from Hunt. Any discussion? All in favor?

Members: Aye.

L. Freeman: Any opposed? Great.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

L. Freeman: Our next item is Public Comment. Until we vote on a process that allows for sign-up and ordering, we don’t have one, so at this point, I would just ask people who are here to comment from the public to raise their hands and be recognized? So, come to a microphone?

VI. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

L. Freeman: Okay, seeing none, we will move on to the next item, which is President’s Announcements. And I have a fair number of updates today. I’ll be touching on items that have been on our attention throughout the semester and the year, and I will be asking some of the folks sitting to the side to help me give you detailed updates.

My first update is in regard to the hiring of a policy librarian. That search has completed, and I am pleased to announce that Professor Rebecca Hunt, who is with us today, has accepted the position of policy librarian. Becqui, will you stand so we can recognize you [applause]. An official announcement should be forthcoming.

The ethics and compliance offer search is ongoing. We have candidate 2 of 3 on campus today, and so we expect that search to resolve within the next couple of weeks.

Last week, Vice President McGill and Executive Vice President and Provost McCord provided faculty and staff with an update on the budget planning process for fiscal year ’19, and I want to say that I really appreciate the work they’ve done and their commitment to making a process that is thoughtful and realistic, proactive, inclusive and transparent. I’ve asked them to expand on their memo a little bit for us today.

But before I turn the microphone over to them, I want to touch on an important and somewhat related topic. In 2016, with my support and encouragement, then-Faculty Senate President Greg Long formed a Faculty Salary [Study] Task Force with the goal of conducting a comprehensive, transparent and replicable study of NIU faculty salaries, the purpose being to investigate any systematic bias, as well as issues of salary compression and inversion. The task force consisted of 29 members and was co-led by Drs. Virginia Wilcox and Kristen Myers from Economics and Sociology respectively, with expertise in both quantitative and qualitative data analysis. And I want to be on the record saying their research and their final report are excellent, and that this report will not sit on a shelf. Salary discrepancy, the potential for bias, develop and expand over time. In NIU’s case, we’ve had the compounding factor of a multi-year budget impasse. And as a result, we have
salary compression and inversion across the university, not just the faculty. The necessary corrective actions for faculty and for all of our employees will require a multi-year plan, and we’re committed to doing that. We’ve started to look at salary equity plans that have been employed successfully by other universities to determine what strategies are most relevant to our situation, and we’ll be bringing suggestions forward through the appropriate channels.

I’d like now to call on the executive vice president and provost and the CFO to provide a brief report on their FY’19 budget development process, basically an update on the memo sent earlier, Chris and Sarah.

S. McGill: Thank you. Good afternoon everyone. As President Freeman indicated, you have received a series of communications over the last two or three months from the provost and I, really talking about where we are with our budget process, describing the process and keeping the community informed of how decisions were being prioritized and considered. We want to talk to you today a little bit more about the process, confirm the assumptions used in looking forward to the fiscal year ’19 budget and then talking to you a little bit about some of the early outcomes and how we’re going to be moving forward.

I think it’s fair to say that our budget process is still a work-in-progress. We are looking at, and constantly looking at the process we’re using, and looking at considerations on how to make it smoother, how to look at a multi-year process, how to insure decisions are made in a collaborative and informative way that position the university not only for success in the next year, but we’re really looking towards our long-term success.

This year, we utilized the Executive Budget Committee to both design and to help us to execute our budget process. We included the Executive Budget Committee in looking at the scenarios submitted from the different divisions and leads to help us understand the results of considerations that were being proposed. We also included the Resources, Space and Budget [Committee] and the Academic Planning Council in our discussions in the process overall to insure that we were having an inclusive process. We wanted to include multiple touchpoints so that decisions were made in a thoughtful, transparent and informed manner.

Right now we’re acknowledging that we’re still in a year-by-year process. We’re right now looking at decisions that will impact fiscal year ’19. We need to be much more mindful about how the decisions today will not only position us for success in ’19, but also look post-’19, ’20, ’21 and forward. As we’re thinking about addressing some of the challenges that President Freeman alluded to, our ability to plan and look forward is going to be essential for our ability to make progress.

As we started the budget process, we mapped out our projected revenue and projected expenses. We identified what that gap was. Unfortunately, expenses out-paced revenue, so we were looking at a budget gap. As we communicated last week, that was approximately a $20 million gap or 6-and-a-half percent of our budget. We asked divisional leads to assess their budgets and propose scenarios back to us that amounted to a low, medium and high target. Those targets were then reviewed in the forums I discussed earlier utilizing the EBC, utilizing our RSB involvement, involvement from the Academic Planning Council and a conversation with senior leaders to share what was being proposed and how to assess the impacts of those decisions. We had a collaborative meeting where we discussed those presentations, really as a way of insuring that by making a decision in one area, we weren’t creating an unanticipated consequence in another. We wanted to insure that how we
moved forward was deliberate, thoughtful and informed.

Based on those discussions, divisional leads were presented with targeted reductions and asked to make a series of proposals. I want to say that, as we looked at addressing the gap, we were careful not to just look at a series of reductions. We really encouraged the ability to look at new revenue sources, so as we presented gaps that targets back, if you will, to division leads, it was really a target that could be made up through a combination of revenue generation, expense reduction or, in many cases, a little bit of both.

The assumptions used in creating our budget, we really looked at central funds, 02 funds. We weren’t talking about grants, contracts or Foundation accounts. We held flat new enrollments as well as steady state retention rates for current students. We looked at budgeting for an annualization of the three percent salary increment for all employees. We looked at implementing the unfunded requests for fiscal year ’18 that were approved. Because the bond revenue component of the university’s budget was pretty flat, debits equal credits, so to speak, we took that out and did not factor that in to our baseline assumptions. So in taking all the remaining categories together, we reached approximately $310 million in anticipated expenses and $290 million in anticipated revenue. Those were the assumptions that went into our process and got us to that about $20 million gap that we identified early on.

C. McCord: So given that analysis, we went back to divisions and first, of course, accepted what almost all revenue, almost any division that said, we can close this gap by generating new revenue. And we pretty much said, yes, please do so, thank you. Our estimates for new revenue as contribution to closing the gap is somewhere in the $4 to $5 million range. We would, of course, wish it were bigger, but we think that recognizing that we are closing 20 to 25 percent of our gap by seeking new revenue rather than simply reducing expenses is an important symbolic gesture, if nothing else, about the realization that the university is going to right itself by more and more finding ways to generate new revenue, rather than by continually finding ways to cut expenses. Some of the areas we’re focusing on are online and offline campus enrollments, increasing philanthropy – not just increasing the dollar amount of philanthropy – but increasing the flexibility of the philanthropy that we are seeking, that it is more and more available to address strategic university goals, rather than going to narrowly targeted projects.

We have a dining strategy. One of the most visible pieces of that is the soon-to-open Coffee and Bagels in the Founders Library. A larger piece of that is, of course, the Holmes Student Center renovation that will really kick off a much larger dining strategy, which we think will not only be more attractive, but will be contributing very positively to our net revenue. And we’re looking at some strategic partnerships to better deploy resources, such as capturing energy savings and being able to contribute energy savings as part of our revenue generation.

As we looked to divisions, we differentiated what divisions were going to be expected to hit what targets. Those divisions that had higher targets assigned to them were predominantly the service divisions. So higher targets went to Administration and Finance, Athletics, Human Resource Services, Information Technology, University Advancement, Student Affairs. Now I’ll put two footnotes on that real quick. Much of Student Affairs’ budget comes from bond revenue, which is targeted very specifically to the particular expense and the particular revenue are closely coupled. As Sarah indicated, we pulled those pieces out. So it’s the non-bond revenue component of Student Affairs that we held to a higher level. Your eyebrows might have also gone up about University
Advancement. Why would you impose a deeper cut on Advancement if you’re wanting to increase philanthropy? Well, we’re not imposing a deeper cut; we’re calling upon University Advancement to generate more revenue that can be made available to the university as increased revenue. So again, it’s not always about cutting expenses, it’s about increasing revenue. And we are calling on University Advancement to provide as much flexible revenue to the university as possible.

In the mid-range, Academic Affairs, Outreach Engagement Regional Development, Research and Innovation Partnerships. At the lower end of the spectrum, protecting things that either are eating our seed corn or simply not available to reduce. At the lower end of the spectrum, Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communication. We are asking for some reductions, but very targeted and very much targeted away from anything that would negatively impact our admissions and recruiting processes. Administrators are not always clever, but we’re clever enough to know that cutting our enrollment function is not the best tactic. We’re also holding out at the lower level university administrative services, utilities, debt services. Again, these are not things that are really amenable to being cut. You can’t really cut debt service.

So these have gone out to the divisions through the budget worksheet exercises. They’re now, the division business managers are working and division leads are working with Administration and Finance to document how these budget actions will be reported. We will continue to monitor our assumptions. We have to make assumptions in order to build a budget. We’ll continue to monitor them. We’ll update them as necessary so that we can keep our budget on target.

Questions, comments? Michael?

M. Haji-Sheikh: As you know, I’m very much have been paying attention to the finances of the university over the last few years, and a couple things I want to ask is how much of this $20 million really can be seeded back to the $11 or so million we missed on the audits. We had $2.6 million we moved out of the bond into the wrong place, literally put into New Hall and Northern View, and the state made us move $2.6 back. And then there was an $8.5 million overstatement of income. So that’s a pretty serious amount of mistake and mis-accounting.

The second question I have is, the money that was spent on the library may possibly be in the same position as the New Hall problem, because none of that facility is part of a bond structure. So when we find out maybe, and this is maybe, that the auditors say that we have to put $800,000 back into the budget, now we’re going to have to hit another cut some point. So are we going to start straightening out some of these things, because this has been going on way too long.

S. McGill: Michael, thanks for raising the issues. I’m going to unbundle them a little bit, and if I can start with the second question you asked first, talking about the funds that were used to fund the operations that are going on in the Founders Library. Those funds are actually from auxiliary enterprises. We’re not using bond revenue for the Founders Library.

M. Haji-Sheikh: Well that’s why I asked was the October statement that the Board [of Trustees] had. It was coming from there.

S. McGill: Yes, you know what, we realize that our labeling system is such that sometimes we use bond and auxiliary interchangeably. Unfortunately, that was a practice that led to some confusion. When you look at the sources of funds, the funds that we’re using for Founders Library are from
auxiliary operations to fund an auxiliary unit.

M. Haji-Sheikh: And those are auxiliary funds are not generated in the bond structure.

S. McGill: That is correct. Going back to your first question about the entries that were made and brought to light as a result of the external audit, those were accounting entries that, while they affect our financial statements and our systems, they’re really somewhat separate from the budget. So as we’re talking about building the budget for next year, the accounting entries are in a different system and don’t amount to cash-out-the-door, if you will. They do amount to how we categorize expenses that were already made in our accounting system, yes.

M. Haji-Sheikh: [inaudible]

S. McGill: We moved the source of funding from one area to another, but the funds were already out the door. So we’re probably saying the same thing in slightly different ways.

M. Haji-Sheikh: As I said, you probably moved what little reserves we probably have after the two years of um, back into that fund, so it’s not, and then, yeah.

S. McGill: What I do want to say about the entries that you raised about the external audit and about the bond funding, if you will, is that the findings had nothing to do with how we spent the money. It had to do with the accounting of it. So we had a new auditor this current year that assessed how we accounted in our system for the use of bond funds and auxiliaries. And in a very simple way of thinking about it, we have one account that we co-mingle funds in that account. It’s a standard practice. We’ve used this practice for a number of years. A number of other institutions in the state actually use this. With our new auditors this year, they took a clean look at that structure and, in their interpretation of some of our agreements, they believed that by co-mingling funds, we weren’t honoring our bond covenants. And there were a series of appeals that went on in looking at this. And we, along with a number of other institutions in the state, were found not to be in compliance.

M. Haji-Sheikh: I read the covenants too, and I would agree with that.

S. McGill: So that’s where those corresponding entries came from. But to be clear, it had nothing to do with how we spent the funds. It had to do with how we accounted for the funds in our system.

L. Freeman: And I want to add something to that. NIU does believe that using bonds for Holmes Student Center is appropriate, but we are sensitive to the questions that, Michael, you have raised, and other members of the community have raised. We don’t want to be doing something that’s inappropriate or indefensible. I asked the General Counsel’s Office to work with an outside expert on the matter to provide additional verification, and we expect the report from outside counsel within a month, and that will be shared publicly.

M. Haji-Sheikh: Thank you very much.

C. McCord: Other questions or comments?
L. Freeman: All right, well then I will continue. First I want to say, thank you, Sarah and Chris. The guiding principles for budget development that were approved by the Board of Trustees charged this process jointly to the chief financial officer to create a fiscally responsible process, and to the executive vice president and provost to create an academically responsible process. And I believe we can see in the changes you are making to the process, both in terms of not doing across-the-board cuts in looking at how we can help grow our way as well as cut our way out of things, and the imperative that we think beyond one-year budgets to multi-year budgets, I think you’re living up to the expectations of those guiding principles. So thank you.

I do want to say just a few more words about the budget and then I’ll race through some additional updates. Things are still uncertain, it’s an election year. And developing a future budget with many unknowns is a challenge we’ve come to know all too well. I appreciate the work that the leadership team and that everyone else across this campus is doing in what is getting to be a scenario that is old and trying. And I commend your creativity as well as your perseverance, much appreciated.

Next week the university is scheduled to testify in Springfield regarding our fiscal ’19 budget to the House Appropriations Committee. Dr. McCord, McGill and Dr. Streb will accompany me to the hearing. We will visit with members of the General Assembly prior to the hearing, and we’ll continue to keep you updated on key developments as they arise.

Shifting gears a little, you may remember at the last University Council that I attended, so not the February, but the January meeting, we had a number of speakers who raised questions and concerns about the use of Maxient software in Student Affairs. And since then, we’ve spent a significant amount of time listening, learning and addressing opportunities that speak to transparency, data governance, the health of NIU’s Greek life and student conduct processes. And in fact, I think it was just last week or maybe early this week, there was an article in the Daily Chronicle about the progress that’s being made on some of those fronts. Provost McCord has been overseeing this dialog, and I’ve asked him to summarize just briefly today the work that’s been ongoing, so Chris.

C. McCord: Thank you. So as President Freeman noted, the University Council here at the end of January there were a number of concerns raised. There were concerns that fall across a number of issues they brought to light. A public health concern, really, that there was a culture of troubling alcohol use among some of our students. I know you’ll be shocked to know we have students who use alcohol, but apparently we do. There is a concern that, coupled with that was a pattern of deliberate evasions of policies including policies put in place to insure safety. There were student concerns voiced about the fairness and transparency of the student conduct procedures, and more generally there was really a very clear aura of distrust and mutual suspicion between some of our student organizations and the university offices involved in conduct.

So as President Freeman noted, there have been a number of activities since. In February, we entered into an alternative sanction agreement with Alpha Sigma Alpha Sorority that replaces the three-year suspension that had been assigned, three-year suspension as a student organization with a progressive – and I think I really mean that word, progressive, in every sense of the word – a progressive set of commitments and restored responsibilities. Essentially, we’re taking a restorative justice approach and really trying to work with the sorority to change the culture and give them the opportunity to change their own culture and grow into a more responsible and more appropriate mode of behavior.
Currently we’re in discussion with Phi Kappa Theta Fraternity about a very similar set of alternative sanctions. We hope to reach conclusion on that very soon.

Rachel Jacob has been leading work from the Student Association, leading a discussion about the off-campus social events policy, and I know has been bringing forward their recommendations on that. Their contributions to that have been greatly appreciated.

The Interfraternity Council has taken its own steps to build a set of self-regulation for its member fraternities. This action was taken independently by IFC. They took this step of their own initiative, and it strikes me as really a very welcome effort of students to come together to take responsibility and leadership for their own conduct and the health of their organizations. We’ve seen this as a very positive step.

As we move forward, there’s an examination underway of the protocols for the use of the Maxient student conduct database to make sure that we are deploying this in line with university policies and principles about responsible use of data. That group has begun their work and will be reporting out, we hope, by the end of summer. It’s a group that involves representatives from Athletics, the Office of Undergraduate Studies, Student Conduct, Academic Diversity; and we’ll be reaching out to engage students in the process as well.

At the same time, we’re launching a larger review of our principles and practices for student conduct procedures focusing on the issues of student organizations. For that review team, we’ve started with an existing body as part of our shared governance – the Student Conduct Advisory Board. But we’re making some adjustments to its membership to make sure that we have an appropriately representative body that will include a balance of students, staff, faculty and alumni. And we’re prepared as needed to bring in outside experts to contribute to that conversation. That work, we expect, will probably, the bulk of that work will probably occur in the fall, and we certainly look for a report on that by the end of the calendar year.

And then finally, as all of those projects reach conclusion, we’re committed to a comprehensive review of Greek life at NIU, to identify the ways to best support a thriving Greek community. We haven’t fully constructed that process yet, but one aspect of it is clear to us. We recognize that Greek life at NIU is multi-faceted. Not all members of the Greek community have the same issues, the same values, the same concerns. And we need to give voice to all of the members of the Greek community as we look at how to build a thriving environment.

So those are all of the activities that are underway. At the upcoming Faculty Senate meeting, Kelly and I will be giving, providing a more detailed discussion about one aspect of that, about the Maxient system and its appropriate use. I’m happy to answer questions about that now, but given that we’ll be presenting that there, I’m also happy to not answer questions about them if you don’t have them.

L. Freeman: All right. Well, I just have one more announcement. Thank you, Chris, again for updating us in such great detail. I really appreciate it. This is the penultimate meeting of University Council for spring 2018, and at our final meeting next month, by way of saying thank you to all of you for your service and giving folks an opportunity to say farewell to this iteration of University Council, we’re providing a little bit better refreshments, maybe some hot hors d’oeuvres and a step up in the overall fare at the table, and I hope that will provide a little bit greater incentive to come
and be appreciated. We’ll also be saying farewell to Linda in the current role of exec secretary of the University Council and Faculty Senate president. And we’ll also be saying farewell to this as the meeting room for University Council. Starting next semester, we’ll be moving this meeting to Altgeld 315 to the Board of Trustees room. And we’re doing that for a number of reasons. There’ll be some construction going on in this building that, while it might not actually impact this room, it could be disruptive overall. We’ve learned that the reliability of the audiovisual capabilities in this room and in this building, in general, is not as great as in Altgeld. And the Altgeld site provides easily-accommodated overflow space for the meeting. So we’ll be trying that next semester, and that concludes my report. I’d also be happy to take a few quick questions. Virginia, I can’t see you hardly behind the projector.

**V. Naples:** I would like to say that I very much, as well as many people to whom I’ve spoken, appreciate the yet-additional faculty salary equity task force survey kind of discipline. I do want it on the record, however, that it is not exclusively because of the budget horrors we have faced for the last two years that there has been a salary inequity problem at this university. Most of you probably were not here at the time, but I started raising those issues to the Board of Trustees more than 20 years ago. Several times I presented that including, if you remember, the chair of the Board of Trustees at the time, Cherilyn Murer, and the first time I presented that to her as well as the other members of the board, the reaction was, “Oh, this is horrible, we have to fix it immediately.” And then absolutely nothing was done. And nothing was done as a result of the Faculty Salary Equity Task Force reports in 2004, 2005, 2008 and then 2011. So this is a very long-term, highly overdue problem. And, in fact, it is illegal. And it is a discrimination issue. So I’m very happy to see that the university is looking at becoming compliant with the law. But it is extraordinarily long overdue, and it has hurt faculty, staff, employees of all descriptions, as well as the students and the mission of the university. So this is another step, fixing this problem is another step in absolutely the right direction. So thank you.

**L. Freeman:** Thank you for sharing that.

**VII. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

A. Approve [Appearances Before the University Council and UC Standing Committees](#) policy per 5 ILCS 120/2.06(g) Illinois Open Meetings Act– Pages 3-4

The proposed policy is consistent with the Bylaws of the Board of Trustees, Article II-Board Operating Procedures, Section 4-Appearances Before the Board, currently in effect.

**L. Freeman:** All right, I think this is my favorite part of the meeting where I hand the gavel over to Linda.

**L. Saborío:** So I think President Freeman forgot to announce that Paul Kassel will be providing entertainment at our last meeting this semester. Was that not…
P. Kassel: As long as there’s Actors’ Equity minimums [inaudible] I’m a union man [laughter].

L. Saborío: He’s a union man. So we can handle that, right.

L. Freeman: I think that you sing for wine I’ve heard, so maybe we can work something out.

L. Saborío: This is getting interesting.

P. Kassel: I’ll serenade you, Linda, how about that?

L. Saborío: That would be entertaining, yes. I would appreciate it.

P. Kassel: [inaudible] Or give Misty my ukulele. [laughter]

L. Saborío: Okay, so we’re going to move on to New Business, Item IX. A. (I did start that didn’t I). So we would like this body to take a look at this policy and approve the Appearances Before the University Council and UC Standing Committees per the Open Meetings Act. This is a policy that is currently in place with the Board of Trustees as it mentions in your agenda. It’s consistent with the bylaws of the Board of Trustees, Article II and Section 4, which is currently in effect. We took the same policy and omitted the words, Board of Trustees, and replaced it with University Council and UC Standing Committees, is what we did. Is there any discussion about this? Have you had a chance to look at it? I’m going to give you a minute just to think about it, I see everybody looking up there above me, so let’s give you a minute, any questions, any comments before we move for a motion and a second, and then we’re going to have a vote on this. Anybody? It’s rather long, so if you’re trying to read it now, I hope you’re a speed reader. Can I get a – or do you have a question?

M. Haji-Sheikh: [inaudible] Before we discuss it, don’t we have to have a motion?

L. Saborío: Yes, we need a motion. Would anybody like to move? Thank you, Michael. And a second. Okay, Virginia. Now is there any discussion, I’ll open up the floor for discussion. Should we do clickers or just do a voice vote? We can do a voice vote.

M. Haji-Sheikh: I did read it.

L. Saborío: You did read it? Okay, good. You have it memorized, don’t you?

M. Haji-Sheikh: Almost.

L. Saborío: From the Board of Trustees.

M. Haji-Sheikh: The one thing that I’m not sure is consistent with OMA, but the Board can deal with that later, is, unfortunately, Rockford’s had a problem with a couple cranks that like to come and talk all the time on the same subject that has nothing to do with what the City Council is doing, and they can’t stop them, because OMA doesn’t allow them to stop them. And if you read closely, it says they can in this set of rules.

L. Saborío: It’s the same rules as the Board of Trustees.
M. Haji-Sheikh: I know.

L. Saborío: It says that you can, if it’s a topic that several have indicated that they’re going to address, it’s the same topic by several people, then you can.

M. Haji-Sheikh: Yeah, I’m just laughing at that. I’m just pointing that out.

L. Freeman: I don’t know if this would require a friendly amendment, I’m looking at the parliamentarian, but I’m certainly willing to concede that, if a provision of the Board policy is examined and subject to change, then we would make the same change.

M. Haji-Sheikh: I think that’s fair. I mean I don’t want to go into digging through it.

L. Saborío: Any other discussion, questions? Yes, in the back, Andrew.

A. Krmenec: [inaudible]

L. Saborío: I can’t hear you, sorry.

A. Krmenec: Can you explain where this document goes? What are we changing? Where does this go?

L. Saborío: This is going to be posted on the UC website. It’s a policy for procedures in how we handle public comment.

A. Krmenec: Has it been vetted by the appropriate subcommittee or committee of this body?

L. Saborío: No, this is just being vetted by University Council, and it applies…the Steering Committee looked at it and approved it. And so we are bringing it now to UC. And this policy, if we approve it today, will apply not only to UC, but to UC standing committees. We’re all subject to the Open Meetings Act. Does that make sense?

Essentially, we are subject to the Board of Trustee policies, and it’s the same policy. Any other questions? These are good questions. This is all new for us. Okay, since we already have a motion and a second, then let’s take a vote. All in favor of adopting or approving the policy, say aye.

Members: Aye.


B. Temporary appointment timeline waiver request per NIU Bylaws, Article 19.5.2.2
   Nancy Valentine, Interim Chair, School of Nursing – Pages 5-6

L. Saborío: Item B., we have with us Dean Block, who is going to introduce this timeline waiver. Thank you, Dean Block.

D. Block: Good afternoon. This is a request for a temporary appointment timeline waiver for the search for the chair of the School of Nursing in the College of Health and Human Sciences. So the
present interim chair was appointed in August. The payment of the search firm for that took a very long time. And we appointed the search committee very soon after the interim chair was appointed, but with the lag in payment and also I wasn’t aware of this policy, frankly, I wasn’t aware of this, it’s gone over six months. And the policy says that we need to actively start the search, which is more than just starting appointing the search committee in six months. So we are starting this search now, and I am asking for a waiver of the already past six-month time limit. I wasn’t aware that this policy also applied to chairs, it was my mistake.

**L. Saborío:** This is why we have a new policy librarian, right? So we need a motion and a second before we have discussion.

**H. Nicholson:** So moved.

**L. Saborío:** And a second?

**K. Chung:** Second.

**L. Saborío:** Any questions for Dean Block? Okay, all in favor of approving the timeline waiver, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**L. Saborío:** Any opposed? And abstentions? No? So that one passes. Thank you.

**X. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

**A.** Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE – Linda Saborío – report – Page 7

**L. Saborío:** Okay, on to our reports. The Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE. You have a report on page 7. We talked about this in Faculty Senate a bit. The only thing I wanted to mention in this body is that, once again, we are working on a one-page document. It’s an info-graphic document titled Make Illinois Great Again Through Funding Higher Education, which I would be more than happy to share with you all when it’s complete. I have to say that, when I mentioned this in my Faculty Senate Steering Committee meeting, the question was, “When was Illinois ever great.” Don’t put it on the record. Oh, I just put it out there, didn’t I. [laughter]

**B.** University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report
Barbara Andree, Catherine Doederlein, Alex Gelman, Mark Riley, Linda Saborío, Kendall Thu

**C.** Academic Policy Committee – Terry Bishop, Chair – no report
L. Saborío: Moving on, Item D., Resources, Space and Budget Committee. We have a first reading of a proposed amendment, and Cathy is here to introduce this first reading for us.

C. Doederlein: The Resources, Space and Budget Committee, in one of its recent meetings, discussed the change that you see here, which is just a proposed amendment, which increases the membership of the Supportive Professional Staff members and Operating Staff members from one each to two each on the Resources, Space and Budget Committee. So you’ll notice in Item C., it’s just shifts that from one to two. In terms of the overall voting make-up, that would have 12 voting faculty members, one student member, and shifting from two to four staff members. So it’s just a total shift in terms of voting members from 15 to 17, and still keeps the faculty percentage of voting members well above 50 percent at 70 percent. That’s not a requirement of this specific committee make-up, but just worth noting within the math of it all.

L. Saborío: And now this is a first reading. Are there any questions, discussion. Yes.

H. Nicholson: After the RSB approved this amendment, some additional suggestions for revision were submitted, so I wanted to share those.

L. Saborío: And we have those ready for you.

H. Nicholson: Thank you. We need a title correction on letter E. It should be the vice president for administration and finance and chief financial officer. And having that person in E makes F a little redundant. Where it says “the senior administrator responsible for facilities,” which is also the vice president for administration and finance. So we’re suggesting that we remove the senior administrator responsible for facilities and then add in instead the executive vice president and provost, who actually serves as the chief resource allocator for academics.

L. Saborío: Okay. We have this ready for you with the rationale. Any other suggestions? This is a first reading, so I don’t need a motion and second. So essentially, we would have the chief financial officer on this committee and the executive vice president and provost as ex officio, nonvoting members. The committee is growing, but it’s a very important committee, so I can certainly understand that. Any other suggestion?

H. Nicholson: Linda, can I just make a comment?

L. Saborío: Go ahead.

H. Nicholson: I just want to express my appreciation for the RSB and for University Council at large for increasing the parity between faculty and staff. Maintaining the faculty as the largest part of the group is important, but we really appreciate consideration of staff’s voice.
L. Saborío: Excellent. Any other comments or are we ready to move on? We’ll be voting on this amendment at the next UC meeting.

E. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Therese Arado, Chair

1. Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, Article 4, Election Procedures of the University Council – Pages 9-10

**FIRST READING**

Additional suggestion for revision

L. Saborío: Okay, next up is Rules, Governance and Elections Committee. We have a first reading, an amendment to the bylaw, Article 4. And Therese is here to introduce this first reading.

T. Arado: This is a change, as you see, to Article 4 of the bylaws. Part of it is to clean up the wording in it, to actually change the committee name that handles things to the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee, which is what the committee name is now. And then also to replace some language that did not inform faculty at the beginning of the process that UC elections were beginning. So switching it to be beginning of the process rather than close to when voting took place. And then also to permit colleges and University Libraries, at their discretion, to hold the UC election in an electronic format, rather than just the paper ballot, which is the predominant form still used, but if a college chose, they could do an electronic form.

L. Saborío: Okay. And now we open it up to discussion. I actually have a suggestion for revision too with this one. After the UC prep meeting with President Freeman and her staff, it was suggested that we include more specific language regarding record retention, so we have added some language at the end, which states, “Upon completion of electronic voting, digital records for ballots cast and final ballots counts shall be forwarded to the Office of University Council. The electronic and paper ballots will be kept by the Office of University Council in accordance with state and university record retention policies.”

Are there any questions regarding this suggestion for revision? The bylaw is growing. It’s a first reading, again, so we will have a vote at the next UC meeting.

F. University Affairs Committee – Reed Scherer, Chair

1. Approve the 2027-28 academic calendar – Pages 11-13

L. Saborío: Okay, moving on. University Affairs Committee. Reed is not here. Where are you, Reed? Michael, you’re also on this committee. Would you like to introduce the academic calendar for the year 2027-28. That is correct, too, by the way. Who else is on the committee who is sitting here.

M. Haji-Sheikh: I’m not the chair.

L. Saborío: Reed’s not here. That’s why I’m calling on you.

L. Freeman: [inaudible]
L. Saborío: We need to approve the academic calendar.

M. Haji-Sheikjh: Well, I mean, come on, these are the standard calendar dates, and we pretty much approve them. I mean, there’s not much we can do. [laughter] Anybody wants to change 2028?

L. Saborío: Yeah, we want to change the misnomer, spring break, to winter break, and make winter break – please just get me out of here for two weeks.

M. Haji-Sheikjh: Please. How about let’s not do Thanksgiving week.

L. Saborío: So why don’t you go ahead and make a motion to approve this. Go ahead.

M. Haji-Sheikjh: I move

L. Saborío: to approve the calendar, all right. And a second?

T. Arado: Second.

L. Saborío: We’ve got a second. Where’s the second? Okay, Therese. All right. Are there any questions? Virginia, there we go.

V. Naples: This is something that has come up many times over the past several decades and was rejected for unspecified reasons every time. Is there any possibility that we might institute at least a couple days worth or a long weekend in the fall semester by moving the beginning by a day or two or the ending by a day or two, because if you consider the fall semester “break” being Thanksgiving, it’s essentially at the end. And yes, it’s useful, but students and faculty and staff, I think everybody would appreciate even a couple of days extra as a long weekend somewhere about in the middle of the fall semester. Everybody comes back much happier after spring break. And even a short break in the fall might help as well.

L. Saborío: I think there was a lot of push-back from students about that, because they did not want to be here longer in December. Oh, look at them all shaking their heads. Or show up earlier in August.

V. Naples: I’m just asking the question.

L. Saborío: Oh, and apparently, the University Affairs Committee – we have a live history book right here – took it up to the committee a few years ago, and they decided, no, not to move forward with it. What do the students think? Would you like to be here longer in December? We have one raising his hand.

T. Martin: I think I speak on behalf of all these guys when I say that we just want to get out of here [laughter]. I don’t mean it, like I love being here, don’t get me wrong, but having those couple of days before Thanksgiving break actually helps us to have a longer break during the winter, which is what we would appreciate more, actually; because we get, I know it’s just like three or four days that we get out earlier, but it’s a lot better for us that way, to do it at the end instead of in the middle.
L. Saborío: Oh-oh, they’re grabbing for the mics.

C. Wang: The other thing that’s really great about winter break is that it also takes some time for students to get externships. I mean, they’re short, but they can also study abroad. I’ve studied abroad during winter break as well, so it’s a longer break and it’s also nice to lord it over all your friends who are at different universities who get like three-four-week breaks, and we get five-week breaks. At least we have that over them. But it is actually important for that winter break for students to use that to further their career or just recharge. I mean I’ve used winter break in different ways the last four years that I’ve been here.

L. Saborío: I think the faculty may feel the same way about that. Go ahead, Michael.

M. Haji-Sheikh: I don’t think we can do anything but edit the 2029 anyways.

L. Saborío: And you’ll all be gone by them.

C. Wang: Absolutely.

L. Saborío: Okay, other comments? Always the calendar produces so much conversation. I love it. Go ahead.

H. Nicholson: I was just wondering if the committee has ever looked at whether or not about the syncing of our spring break with local districts’ spring break. I’m not sure how pervasive it is, but there’s a chance that faculty and students could be impacted by childcare during spring break, and I’m sure it’s impossible because we set our calendar out ten years ahead to actually sync up with local school districts, but I’m wondering if that’s ever been looked at.

L. Saborío: Well one of the issues with that is the local spring breaks are not all the same. DeKalb has a spring break that is different from Sycamore. And then you have, of course, Rochelle, Geneva, St. Charles, so then it would be a question of which district.

H. Nicholson: Right. It’s probably a larger community conversation, but at least DeKalb area.

L. Saborío: All right.

M. Haji-Sheikh: Since my wife was working for the school board as a volunteer in the finance and facilities committee, that did come up in DeKalb. And it turns out nobody, at least when they surveyed the parents at that time – that was about ten years ago – the parents didn’t want to sync up. That was why they never synced up. They pushed to sync up, and they didn’t want to do it. It’s really weird.

L. Saborío: That’s not weird. You get a break away from you kids. [laugher] Sorry, sorry, that went on record too.

M. Haji-Sheikh: [Inaudible]

L. Saborío: Okay, I’m not winning the mother-of-the-year award. I can tell that already [laugher] Okay, so I think we need to vote. We haven’t voted yet on this academic calendar. Let’s vote. What
was the question, right. So we’re going to approve the 2027-28 academic calendar.

**Unidentified:** As it appears.

**L. Saborío:** As it appears. We’re not changing anything. All in favor, please say aye.

**Members:** Aye.

**L. Saborío:** That was a nice chorus. Any opposed? All right, great, so that passes. I don’t know what happened there.

**G. Student Association – Rachel Jacob, President; Christine Wang, Speaker of the Senate – report**

**L. Saborío:** So let’s go on to the Student Association. Do you have a report.

**C. Wang:** All right, let me pull up Rachel’s report real quick, and I will give that. Unfortunately, I [Younan An] could be here; he has an interview. I’m just going to go ahead and while that’s loading because my phone’s decided to be really slow. Earth Week is going to be from April 16 to April 22, so I know [Student] Senate’s going to be doing something that is clean the Kish. And then actually that weekend is NIU Cares Day as well. And there’s a lot of events happening so, you will definitely see those events listed on the flyers that will be posted soon.

And then, this is from Rachel as well. This is the Student Choice Awards. And we’re in the final stage of choosing recipients in different categories, which includes president of the year, organization of the year and so on and so forth. It is taking place on April 16, and it is open to the public. The Student Choice Awards, for those of you who don’t know, is an award ceremony to recognize those students on campus who went above and beyond with their leadership experience and to recognize the organization who impacts the campus the most. So that is Rachel’s report.

I have a few exciting things to report. So we had our elections last week, and we now have a new president-elect, as well as new vice president, treasurer and trustee. The president-elect from the 2018-19 school year will be President-Elect Khiree Cross, who is actually our current vice president. Vice President-elect will Devin Halicki, who is actually currently our director of advertising. The treasurer-elect is Essence Coleman, who is currently our director of student life. And then our student trustee is Nathan Hays, who is currently serving as our treasurer. So I think we have a pretty great year ahead of us, and I’m looking forward to see what comes out of that.

We also did have to hold a special election. That actually happened yesterday. It had to be held, because we did not have enough candidates running in the Senate. We had ten. We need 21 for quorum and 40 total. So we did have to hold a special election. We are now at quorum, but literally right at quorum, so we’ll probably be opening up the Senate for at-large applications, which pretty much means that the current session of Senate we’ll be electing in the next sessions, senators to kind of bolster our numbers a little bit, because we always do lose a couple senators along the way before we start in the fall.

So those are what’s happening with elections. And then we also have speaker elections this Sunday. That’s actually nominations, and the elections will happen the week after. So at the next University
Council meeting, we will know who our next speaker is.

And then today was the Coming Out of the Shadows event. I know a lot of Student Association members were there, including our president-elect Khiree Cross, our president was there too, Rachel Jacob. I was there. A lot of our senators were there. It was a really great showing. It was fantastic, and it really was awesome to see so much support for our undocumented students.

We also passed a resolution to support the March For Our Lives two weeks ago. We didn’t have a meeting last week, but two weeks ago we had that resolution. We had a student come up who actually helped write a resolution to support basically common sense gun reform. And we felt that it was necessary to have a show of support, considering what had happened on our campus ten years ago. And so that will actually be sent to University Council and Faculty Senate very soon. And so, hopefully, we will see that in full at the next University Council meeting as well.

And then moving forward we have a few things to work on before the semester ends. We have the Safe Streets Initiative that we are pushing to be looked at a little further and a little bit more in depth. At the last University Council [Student Association] meeting two weeks ago, there was a strong push from the Loren Hedge neighborhood to remove that from Phase II of the Safe Streets Initiative, which was actually subsequently removed. And so now the parking restrictions that are being discussed right now at the second reading will be basically including the Annie Glidden North neighborhood, which impacts students most. From what I can tell, there is still a strong push-back from students, but we do need to continue to make those concerns heard. And we do actually have a meeting with the City of DeKalb leaders, to some of the City of DeKalb leaders today, and we will discussing that on Wednesday. And we’ll be attending the second reading of this next week at the next University Council [Student Association] meeting. So that’s one of the things that we’re working on.

The No Shame Campaign launched a blog a week ago. I was actually the first person to write it. And we’ll be posting our second person next week. If you don’t know what the link is, we will be more than happy to pass it along to you. Hopefully, it gives a little bit more of a personal insight into how students and how people in general have to manage their mental illness while also being functional members of society. So hopefully, that will be impactful as well.

We’re also looking into launching a video called There’s No Shame. Basically, people would say there’s no shame in my depression, there’s no shame in my mental illness, etc. Hopefully, we can have that done by May, which is the basically Mental Health Awareness Month. And so, hopefully, that will be something that we can do.

And then there is also a Don’t Stress the Test the week of finals, which will be fund.

We also have Culture Week next week, from April 9 to 13, and there’s a lot of really great events going on.

And we are looking into holding two candidate forums for Illinois 70, which is the State Reps race for Bob Pritchard’s seat, which is going to be by our very own Paul Stoddard and then also Jeff Kyker, who is the Republican candidate.

And then we are also looking into doing a debate between Sarah Dayde and Adam Kinzinger who
are running for the seat of Illinois 16th Congressional District. Hopefully, we will be able to do that at the end of this month.

And then next semester, we’ll want to repeat those debates and then add in a gubernatorial debate between J.B. Pritzker and Governor Rauner, which will be very interesting.

So that’s pretty much everything that we’re working on. Again we always have a real busy end of the month, especially in April. Are there any questions? All right.

I just want to give a really quick shout-out before we put the mic away. Stephanie Torres has done a phenomenal job of running our elections. It’s been an exceptionally challenging year for our Board of Elections, and she’s the chairwoman. She’s held her cool through some very, very challenging events. I just wanted to recognize her for that. [applause]

**L. Saborío:** Thank you, Christine. Always busy. Always busy.

**H. Nicholson:** Yes, apparently, it will be me in Barb’s absence. We’re really excited to announce that we’ve been able to award $3,700 in scholarships to four students of Operating Staff employees at NIU. The first is Micah Fagerstrom. He’s majoring in mechanical engineering and son of Mark Fagerstrom, who is a grounds assistant gardner. We have Gretta Ward who is majoring in special education, and she is the daughter of Tracey Ward, who is a Physical Plant r outing supervisor. Then we have Lucas Gray who is majoring in finance, and he is the son of Tim Gray, who is a building service worker. And Olivia Monteiro who is majoring in art history, and she’s the daughter of Jay Monteiro who is a VPA business administrative associate, and Christine Monteiro, internal auditor. So we’re very excited about that.

Also the four Civil Service employees have been chosen for the Outstanding Service Award. However, I don’t believe they have been announced publicly yet, so watch NIUToday for that. I don’t actually have their names.

And then finally we are nearing the end of our self-nominations for council members. Our elections are going on right now. So I would encourage you to talk to any Operating Staff in your areas and encourage them to run for council. We have nine seats this year. The nominations close Friday at 4:30 p.m. They come to me. We have a form on our website. If you go to, I think it’s go.niu.edu/osc-elections, you can find the form there. And we really are looking for some passionate people to join us on Council. Thanks.

**L. Saborío:** Thank you very much, Holly.

**I. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Catherine Doederlein, President – report**

**L. Saborío:** Next up we have Cathy, SPS Council president.
C. Doederlein: It is also our elections time period, and so the nomination part of things has just closed, and we are now checking to see if those people nominated are actually interested in running. The number of people that turn it down is always alarming, but we think we’ll still have a full Council so that’s good news.

It’s also, as is true of NIU in April, it is award season. And so April 10 is going to be when we will be honoring our award recipients. That will be April 10 from 2 to 4 p.m. with the program starting right around 2:30. There will be desserts, a delightful selection of desserts, available in the Altgeld Auditorium, and we encourage you to join us for that, a chance to recognize the four presidential award winners, as well as our certificates of recognition and a few other awards that we have as part of the Council. So appreciate people joining us for that.

L. Saborío: Any questions for Holly or Cathy? No, great.

XI. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Minutes, Academic Planning Council
B. Minutes, Athletic Board
C. Minutes, Baccalaureate Council
D. Minutes, Board of Trustees
E. Minutes, Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
F. Minutes, Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
G. Minutes, General Education Committee
H. Minutes, Graduate Council
I. Minutes, Graduate Council Curriculum Committee
J. Minutes, Honors Committee
K. Minutes, Operating Staff Council
L. Minutes, Supportive Professional Staff Council
M. Minutes, University Assessment Panel
N. Minutes, University Benefits Committee
O. Minutes, Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
P. Minutes, University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
Q. NIU Libraries’ Textbook Task Force request for Fall 2018 purchase recommendations

L. Saborío: So before we adjourn, I would just like to have you please notice Item Q from the Libraries’ Textbook Task Force. They had a very successful program last year and would like to continue the purchase recommendations for textbooks for Fall 2018. And I think that’s actually a link to their website. Are you going to click on it for me to show them? There we go. A lot of information there for you. So I just wanted to point that out.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

L. Saborío: So if there are no further comments or questions, I’d like a motion to adjourn. If not, we can stay. Okay, Christine [Wang]. And a second.

M. Haji-Sheikh: So moved.
L. Saborío: Okay, Christine and then, Michael, are you second?

M. Haji-Sheikh: Yes, second.

L. Saborío: All right. So the meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.