I. CALL TO ORDER

L. Freeman: Good afternoon everybody. That was your call to order, good afternoon, and you look very orderly. I’m sure we’ll have a few people joining us late, venturing back from the Sky Room, which is not where the meeting is and actually not accessible today anyway. We’ll figure it out.

NIU Acting President L. Freeman called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

L. Freeman: Our first action item is the verification of a quorum. I’m told that the magic number today is 29, which is my lucky number, I was born on the 29th of one of the months, so it’s a good number for me. And, Pat or Ferald, could you give us the instructions on how we verify the quorum.

F. Bryan: We just need to push A on your clicker, please.

L. Freeman: All right, so push A if you are a voting member. That’s who should have the clickers. And that will let us know whether or not we have the magic 29 for a quorum. We may need to reopen voting after everyone has. I’m glad I’m not the only who kind of forgets things over the summer. We should all be sympathetic to our students as well as to ourselves. Again, vote A if you are a voting member who’s here. If you’re not here, vote B – that was from the provost. Great, we
have a quorum, so we can move along. It’s a beautiful day, so I’m sure everybody wants to try to move through the agenda as smoothly as possible.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

L. Freeman: May I have a motion to adopt the agenda. That was Scherer. And second?

Unidentified: Second.

L. Freeman: All right. And all in favor.

Members: Aye.

L. Freeman: Opposed? Great, the agenda is adopted.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 2, 2018 MINUTES

L. Freeman: Approval of the May 2, 2018 minutes. Can I have a motion? Doederlein. Second?

Unidentified: Second.

L. Freeman: Okay, thank you. It’s hard for me to actually see everybody and call out their names, so we may have to figure out how to do that. All right. Has anyone signed up for public comment. Oh, we didn’t vote. See I told you I’m out. All who want to approve the minutes of the May 2 meeting, aye.

Members: Aye.

L. Freeman: Opposed? Yep, see we’re rusty. We don’t have clickers. We don’t know where the meeting is, and I can’t keep track of the agenda.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

L. Freeman: Item V is Public Comment. Has anyone indicated the desire, or does anyone have the desire to address during the public comment period? Okay.

VI. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS

L. Freeman: Then we will move along to Item VI, the President’s Announcements. And I want to start again by saying welcome back, but also by saying thank you. Thank you for your service in shared governance. Your participation makes the university stronger, and I’m sure that everybody who’s here could also be somewhere else – in the classroom, in the studio, in the lab, in the field, or just taking a nice walk on a beautiful day. So very much appreciate your sacrifice for the university.

The executive secretary of the University Council suggested a number of topics for updates today from me or members of the leadership team, either because the topics are very timely, like our ten-
day enrollment numbers, or because there was activity that occurred over the summer, and we want to make sure everyone’s aware of what’s going on. And so I’ll speak to those briefly. And when I’ve finished addressing those topics, I’ll allow some time for Q&A.

So yesterday was the tenth day of the semester. That’s when we release our ten-day enrollment numbers, and we did that. Overall enrollment was down 4.8 percent or 873 students compared to last year. Our total enrollment is 17,169. And this was essentially an expected result, given an incoming class that doesn’t offset the departures associated with a large graduating class. And for those of you who were at commencement in May, it was a fairly large class in terms of undergraduate and masters students. This trend has been a factor for several years, and we’ll actually continue for one more year. We have one more large class to graduate.

Some positive notes are that new freshmen, new masters students and new doctoral students were all slightly above last year. This is the third straight year our new freshmen have been above 1800, so we have stabilization there. And the academic profile inched up. Our high school GPA this year increased to 3.31 from 3.28, and ACT to 22 from 21.9.

Disappointing to see transfer students down by 139 students. The decrease was from 1716 to 1577. And clearly this is a trend that needs to be addressed in a targeted fashion. We plan to increase financial aid and scholarships offered to transfer students.

Freshman retention was stable at 73 percent. Transfer retention increased a bit to 83 percent. And I’ve said previously, and I’ll say it again here, that to significantly increase freshman retention, we need to really focus on closing the equity gaps. And there’s a lot of excellent work that’s already being done to this end at the level of the colleges and the universities in collaboration with the Provost’s Office and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Office.

We have a multi-year strategic enrollment plan that’s being finalized, and it will be communicated and implemented over the course of the next two months. The high level goals and strategies have been established, and we’re finalizing measurable objective and tactics, so stay tuned. And the plan is part, really, of the major retooling of our student recruitment efforts that have been going on for a while. I just thought I’d review what’s happened in the last 18 months. In the last 18 months:

- We’ve brought admissions and marketing together within the same division.
- We’ve hired a new vice president of enrollment management, marketing and communications in June of 2017, and I’ll actually ask Vice President Jensen if he wants to comment in a minute.
- We hired a new director of admissions in June 2018, Quinton Clay.
- We’ve revitalized admissions materials and websites, that’s going to be an ongoing process to keep pace with expectations of students and parents in the very technology-driven world.
- We’ve introduced new digital strategies and tactics such as phonecasts and texting to drive awareness and engagement.
- We’ve examined and adjusted the way we allocate tuition dollars and scholarships in an effort to better attract and retain high-quality students.
- We’ve held tuition flat for four years; and, while we didn’t fully implement out-of-state tuition equal to in-state in time for a huge effect on this year’s numbers, those strategies are
part of our long-term plan to increase our regional and national competitiveness/

- We’ve increased funds available for scholarship. Last year’s total scholarship giving to the foundation increased 23 percent year over year, with an additional $1.2 million raised. And NIU has been allocated $2,735,000 under AIM HIGH. AIM HIGH is the state of Illinois’ new merit-based means-tested matching grant pilot program, matching in the sense that to receive the funds, the universities must match the allocation with new institutional aid above the FY18 levels. And we’re working on the exact deployment plan, but we plan to accept the allocation.

I think at this point I’ll just ask Sol if he wants to add anything.

S. Jensen: Yes, thank you, President Freeman. I want to start actually by echoing some of your comments, not repeating all the statisticals, but really just sharing my appreciation. You know, enrollment is really everyone on campus’s role, both recruitment and retention. And I’ve been here just over a year, and in this year have developed really close relationships with the deans. Went out and met with almost every single one of the department chairs. And it’s just great and very heartening to see the partnerships that are out there. And I can tell you there’s a lot of willingness from all the colleagues across campus to really partner and participate in both the recruitment and in improving retention. Maybe just a couple adding to a couple of statistics I think are pretty noteworthy.

I think first of all, although increasing the incoming class GPA from a 3.28 to a 3.31 may sound like a very slight increase, actually over the course of an average 1850 students, that’s a pretty big accomplishment in one year. Similar to increasing retention rate by one percent, while it may not sound like a lot, but that’s actually impacting quite a few students. We are very proud of the academic profile that we have. And going along with that, some of the other information that we’ve collected is we granted over – or not granted, but enrolled – over 100 more students who came in with one of our scholarship, our merit scholarship awards. So again, we’re just having an increasing number of strong academic students who are coming in. And as part of that, we have increased the number of Huskie Legacy Awards. These are scholarships given to children of alumni. We had over 90 additional students who received that Legacy Award over last year. So that’s a pretty impressive, we’ve done some very target communications and initiatives that are really directed at our alumni. And we’ll continue to do a lot more with that. But those are just a couple additional things that I wanted to draw out there. But I do want to just echo the president’s comments about our appreciate for all that you individually do as well, for we all play a role.

L. Freeman: Thank you, Sol. The next item I was asked to address that I’m excited to address is the Policy Library initiative. Did you want to as a question?

Unidentified: [inaudible]

L. Freeman: Sure, why don’t you go to the microphone.

R. Scherer: Quick question as to whether you’ve assessed – I’m sure the fact that we have a strong job market right now has influenced the transfer students coming in. Have you tried to assess the impact of the job market on transfer students.
S. Jensen: That’s a great question, and it’s very valid. It is, I believe, impacting it. We haven’t done any official assessment to note that’s exactly what’s doing that. But at the same time, there also are fewer students at Illinois community colleges as well. And so there’s fewer students – I think we’ve shown a chart before, at least last year, about the number of high school graduates in the state. And it will continue to decline for about the next 20 years. So generally, it’s more challenging to get more of the high school students to enroll, but as they enroll at community colleges, there’s just fewer to transfer. Now with that said, you know through the Provost’s Office, Ron Smith is again a relatively newer hire who’s doing a lot of great work. And I think over this past year, alone, there’s been an over 40 new articulation agreements that have been created with various community colleges. And, of course, the big one is the one with Harper that we’re continuing to work on. It’s gotten a lot of press, and we’re excited to roll it out, maybe in the spring or fall of next year. And so there’s been a lot of work happening even behind the scenes that is setting us up for a lot of progress moving forward in the future.

L. Freeman: Certainly when I talk to community college presidents, they believe that the job market and the positive job market is influencing the drop in enrollment that they’re seeing. And one thing that actually neither Sol, nor I, thought to mention is we do have an increase in online credit hours and off-campus credit hours. And as people take advantage of the positive job market, either as they’re working on an associates or baccalaureate completion, having those options available to enroll the students and keep them driving toward baccalaureate completion is going to be important for us.

Please grab a microphone. We’ll have to put a mic in the middle, I think, next time maybe. Tony, could we think about that.

K. Thu: Do we have any understanding of why it is that Eastern University had such an uptick in enrollments overall and particularly among freshmen. Their freshmen numbers were up by 25 percent.

S. Jensen: Yeah, we haven’t, I mean I haven’t personally met with my colleague over there. But they had a really, really big and successful marketing campaign this year. They hired an outside firm. But I think they put a lot of dollars into it. Even early on when we presented to the Higher Education Working Group, which was February.

L. Freeman: Yeah, February or March.

S. Jensen: We had seen their presentation, and they included a lot of the marketing work that they had done. It was pretty slick, and I knew even then that it was probably going to be a pretty successful campaign.

L. Freeman: All right, anything else before I move on to Policy Library and Ethics and Compliance Office? Great.

So as you may remember, a Policy Library initiative was actually proposed and developed through shared governance, particularly the University Council Rules, Governance and Elections
Committee. And I’m looking at Therese, because she played a role there. The intention is to reduce confusion about NIU policies and procedures by minimizing unnecessary redundancy, clarifying policy management responsibilities and insuring policies are kept up to date.

Rebecca Hunt, associate professor in the College of Education, became NIU’s first policy librarian on August 16. You may remember we applauded her selection at the end of last year’s University Council. And she’s hit the ground running, building on excellent preparatory work that was done by former University Council executive secretaries, both Greg Long and Linda Saborio. An overarching policy on policies is in the final stages of review, and a communication plan is under development. So stay tuned.

The Policy Library is housed in the newly-established Ethics and Compliance Office, along with a number of other functions that were previously housed in other areas, including IT accessibility, records retentions, and investigations. And with respect to investigations, this office provides oversight to affirmative action and Title IX investigations, as well as to the management and strategies relative to complaints in administrative investigations. Criminal investigations stay with Public Safety, and that’s the way it’s always been.

Sarah Garner, who was formerly the director of investigations in Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance, is now the acting director of the Ethics and Compliance Office, as well as keeping the hat of Title IX coordinator. And the way this happened is that, after two failed searches for an ethics and compliance office director, when the office had really just the policy library and IT accessibility, the formation of the office was made possible by Sarah Adamski Garner’s willingness to step up to the leadership role, and by a restructuring that was enabled, in part, by the university’s decision not to refill the associate vice president position that was formerly held by Karen Baker.

And Karen Baker’s retirement also provided an opportunity to modify the structure of the university’s Affirmative Action, Equity and Compliance programs overall. So going forward, as part of its diversity inclusion and affirmative action efforts, Dr. Edghill-Walden’s office, Academic, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, will oversee faculty, staff, Civil Service search processes in areas related to equal opportunity employment and affirmative action. They’ll do the training on implicit bias. They’ll analyze data, assist with recruitment plans to attract applicants from under-represented groups, help with advertising and play a larger role in there. And you can look on the web and see how the org charts have changed. I’m pretty excited about this. We are very committed to increasing the diversity of our faculty and staff. And it’s been very challenging. Continuing to do the same thing over and over was probably not going to produce different results. And I think this at least gives us a way to rethink our efforts, processes.

Some of you may have been out on the beautiful day on Tuesday afternoon to see PricewaterhouseCoopers’ Blind Spots van on the Martin Luther King square in front of the Holmes Student Center. And we’ve been very lucky to partner with PricewaterhouseCoopers to get some excellent educational materials helping people understand implicit bias, how we can think differently when we’re looking to hire folks. And we had over 400 people go through the van. And although we’re not the leader in the country, we are the leader in Illinois in terms of participation in that effort. So I think that speaks to our campus’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.
Next thing I was asked to speak about were our Higher Learning Commission results. And I really don’t want to steal the thunder of Ritu Subramony, because she’ll be giving a more detailed presentation to University Council in October about the assurance review. But I just want to share that it’s very good news. NIU has successfully completed the four-year assurance review with all the criteria and core components met. And that’s not always the case. In fact, there’s almost never the case that there’s not some finding, outcome, etc. to address. So everyone who worked on that deserves a lot of thanks. And we’ll be having a celebration event, but just wanted to share the good news, because we don’t always have good news to share.

As part of our commitment to improvement, and actually in direct response to what we heard from the university community, Chris McCord’s convened a working group to review aspects of the university’s human resource processes to make recommendations on opportunities to improve these processes. And I’m going to actually ask Chris if he just wants to say a few words about that.

C. McCord: So we’re going to be, as President Freeman indicate, we’re taking a sort of process approach. We’re looking at the various processes, mostly focusing on hiring, classification and compensation issues, because those seem to be the processes that have the most friction. So we’re going to be looking at those. We’ve got a team that represents many of the different aspects of the university’s participants in the hiring process. They’ll be reaching out to an even larger audience to make sure we have input from across the campus. And we’re hoping to be able to bring back recommendations for process improvement, probably early 2019. And we’ll be reporting out in various venues about those recommendations.

L. Freeman: And I have one other brief item, and then we’ll have another opportunity for Q&A. Dr. Blazey’s been working diligently to insure the sustainability of the NIU Press imprint in the context of a resource constrained environment. And this is an effort that began before Program Prioritization and that accelerated as a result of that process. And, Jerry, I know that you’re willing to give an update.

J. Blazey: Yes, of course, I am, President Freeman. We’ve been working on this since the spring of 2016. And as the president mentioned, one of the outcomes of the Program Prioritization process was the identification of sustainability challenges with the Press in terms of both income or revenue generation or subsidy, however you want to say it, and also in terms of maintaining personnel. It’s a quite small press. In trying to move forward, there are some difficulties with maintaining adequate workforce.

So after a lot of thought and consultation and input from various stakeholders, we determined the best option for the Press, its authors, the university – and what was most important, our responsibility to the academy – was that we should form a collaboration with an acquiring university press, which would assume many of the functions that a press engages in. And I just want to stress that, for me, the guiding principle was sustaining the NIU imprint as a contribution to the broader academy, especially in those disciplines that require university presses to get their results out.

So last year, we submitted a Request for Proposals, an RFP, open to Association of University Press members in the United States for an agreement for them to carry forward the NIU Press imprint.
And interestingly enough, and for a variety of reasons, we received no response on that RFP.

Subsequently, the constraints around procurement were a bit looser. Because of the failed RFP, we were able to reach out to university presses to investigate possible partnerships with them. And we did reach out to Cornell University Press, which arguably one of the best university presses in the country. And we were very interested in partnering with them, because their book list is well matched, both their back list and their front list, to those titles of the NIU Press. And I’m happy to say they had a very strong interest in supporting the NIU imprint.

We’re actually quite excited about this collaboration. Cornell has a well-developed market and well-matched title areas, has the highest possible reputation. And it will actually strengthen the NIU imprint reputation by attracting high-quality publications to the NIU imprint and insuring the publications are widely marketed.

We expect the Cornell University Press will support the production, marketing and fulfillment of 15 to 20 books a year. We’ve been running about 15 or less, because we are in kind of a holding pattern, and our workforce has been a bit unstable. Getting it back up to 20 would be really great. And that will be maintained under the NIU imprint. Production tasks that Cornell will undertake will include copy editing, formatting and printing, as well as fulfillment and marketing. But NIU will continue to provide the acquisition, editorial services and a press board to evaluate which books should go forward for production.

Not quite done yet, though. In accordance with state law, we’ve initiated the current sole source posting, which was posted on Monday. It will be posted for comment for two more weeks. Following completion of the sole source requirements, we will enter into discussions with Cornell regarding details of the arrangement and the transition. I’m hopeful that the transition can proceed quickly and we should be well along by the end of the calendar year. That comment period closes in two weeks.

I think it’s important for me to say that the NIU Press will honor current and future contracts and agreements, remain committed to serving the academic community to the continuity of the imprint. And we’re quite pleased that we’ve found what looks like a sustainable path forward. So I can take some questions.

K. Thu: I’m just curious, when the books come out, whose name will be on it? How will that work.

J. Blazey: So if you think like Penguin Books, there’s many imprints. So Penguin will publish it, but there’ll be NIU imprint on the spine or on the inside of the cover.

L. Freeman: But it’s not Penguin, it’s Cornell.

J. Blazey: Thank you, President Freeman.

L. Freeman: All right before we move on, oh, Holly.

H. Nicholson: What will happen to the NIU staff that’s currently in the Press?
J. Blazey: So it’s a great question, and I’ve been very, very sensitive to that. Many have already left for various other opportunities at the university. I guess you could say they saw the writing on the wall. So we’re operating now with two full-time people and three part-time people. They’re extra help so there’s no issue there. They actually, I think, all were NIU employees and came back to help out. The acquisitions editor, it’s my expectation that she will stay on with us. There is one individual that will receive a year’s notice, but I am looking at options for him at the university. Unfortunately, there’s not really a good match. We’ve had long discussions, and I think it’ll work out fine.

L. Freeman: All right, before we move on to the annual report from the Ombudsperson, any other questions for me or for the other members of the leadership team who are here?

A. Ombudsperson Annual Report per Bylaws, Article 20.1 – Sarah Klaper – Pages 4-17 Presentation

L. Freeman: Okay, so the next item is one that comes to us regularly per Bylaw Article 20.1. And I want to invite Sarah Klaper to present the Ombudsperson annual report. But before she gets going, I really want to thank her for all that she does to support our campus. And for those of you who have read the report, I hope you will agree with me that her constructive approach has identified a number of areas where administrators, faculty, staff and students can work together, particularly to improve communications, professional development and other aspects of NIU. So, thank you.

S. Klaper: Thank you. One of the things we do on campus is to try to help with self care and morale. And this was our kindness rocks project. If you are familiar with the kindness rocks projects, it is where you paint rocks and put positive messages on them. Sounds kind of trite, like who cares, but actually it has made a significant impact. And we put a table with our materials on it and these kindness rocks that we posted positive messages on in the College Grind at the Holmes Student Center right before finals. We did it in December, and we did it again in April/May. And it was actually quite positive and very lovely.

In January I had one student come to me and say, I didn’t know your office existed. But you know the funny thing was, I was in the College Grind, and I saw this table and it had all these rocks on it. And one of the rocks really spoke to me. And so I picked it up, and I put it in my pocket. And it really kept me going for the next three weeks. And it was a student with some significant mental health issues and was in crisis. And she said that that helped her make it through. And coincidentally, our brochures were on the same table. And so that prompted her in January to come and see us and to receive some assistance in her journey.

All right, so our office is all about conflict resolution, prevention, dealing with conflict while you’re in it, but then also how do you move from it when it’s done. We try to help strategize with people. We attend difficult conversation meetings all over campus. And we also do mediations.

We have four main qualities to our office. The first one is that we are a confidential resource. I don’t let anyone know who comes to see me or what we talk about unless it is regarding child abuse or an imminent physical threat. Everything else, including Title IX, is confidential in my office.
We are also neutral. We are one of the designated neutrals on campus. I work with everybody, faculty, staff, students, administrators, alumni, families, community members, anybody who touches NIU. And so we’re not allowed to take sides. Instead what we do is we listen, lay out options as to how you can handle your situation and help if there is a process we can help with. We’re just allowed to be anybody’s lawyer or advocate in the process.

Sometimes people say, oh, she’s really not neutral. I’ve been in meetings with her, and I’ve heard her speak, and she’s got an opinion on stuff. And, yep, I do. I totally do. But our office follows the mandates and the standards of practice of the International Ombudsman Association. And that stresses that we have to remain impartial and neutral and be focused on fairness and objectiveness. But we are permitted to advocate for fair and equitably administered processes. So if you are a decision-maker and I’m coming to you about a problem, it’s because it’s usually process-based, policy-based. And my opinion is about a process or a policy or how it’s being applied.

The previous slide was that I am also informal, so there are places on campus and off, to file formal complaints. My office is not authorized to receive formal complaints on behalf of the university. I am not an office of notice. But that’s because I’m confidential, so I don’t pass information to the rest of the university. But if you need to file a formal complaint, I can help you get to the right place, help you with it. I just am not authorized to receive it in my office.

I’m also independent. I report to the president, and I get evaluated by University Council – feels like frequently. I might be coming to you, ask you to potentially change that. I am independent, so I am outside of the normal administrative processes of NIU. I don’t belong to any department or division have a natural bias.

We don’t keep a lot of records in our office. The things that we do keep is just statistical data, information about who comes to see us – not the names – but the types of cases, the types of people who come in to see us. We had 704 complex cases this past school year. Our reporting period is May to May. And we consider a complex case anything that requires an appointment. That number is up 130 complex cases over the previous year. Simple referrals are people who call and just need to know what form I need to fill out, what office do I need to go to. And they get answered usually by Gay Campbell, who is our administrative assistant in our office. And she’s wonderful. She’s worked in multiple areas of campus for the past 20 years.

Policy development – I’m frequently requested to participate in policy development meetings. Or I get consulted by decision makers on campus about the creation of a new policy or the modification of an existing policy.

Something to note is that I have a great colleague at University of Iowa. Her office contains two full-time ombuds, a part time ombud and an admin. My office contains me. I have a graduate assistant who works for me for 20 hours a week, and an admin. University of Iowa has probably total double the population, and I’m including faculty, staff and students, their whole population. It’s approximately a little bit less than double ours. They have the same number of cases that they see in their office with that level of people on campus. And so I try to think about why do we have so many? And it could be multiple reasons. First of all I give kudos to our office, because most of
the people who come to see us have heard of us word-of-mouth, or have participated in a meeting where one of us has been. And generally speaking, people have a positive impression of our office. And so we get more people. So our advertising, our marketing approach, but then also just our participation and reach across campus. Is the flip side that we have a lot of issues on campus? Yes, I’m sure. But I wanted you to know that to know the level of work that my office is doing in comparison to other schools. It’s significant. And it’s significantly high. And yet we’re doing it, and we are serving people and serving the campus and attending shared governance meetings and commission meetings and helping people across campus. And so I just wanted you to be aware that it’s not like we’re slacking off in our office. We are perpetually running around.

We also keep track now of the complexity of the circumstances for cases, because it’s usually not the case that somebody shows up in my office, asks one question and leaves and I never see them again. Frequently, I see people multiple times. I do not count them as distinct people, part of that 704 number. Instead we just start keeping track of how many times I’ve seen the same person on the same exact issue. You’ll notice that a lot of times, it’s just twice. Somebody comes in, they talk to me, they go take some action based on our discussion and then they follow up with me about next steps.

Sometimes it’s quite a few times, like 12 visits. That’s a lot. Nine visits. Seven visits. All those are a lot. Usually, those are cases dealing with grievances. Our grievance process is quite lengthy and confusing. And so somebody dealing with a grievance process and trying to navigate their way through that. Or a tenure appeal process will frequently last multiple visits. And, of course, I’m always, especially with tenure appeals, working with the faculty personnel advisor. But people like to strategize with multiple people – two heads are better than one. And so while the faculty personnel advisor is permitted to advocate for that person, I am not. I’m just there to help them develop a strategy that they can choose to act on.

You can see that we have a whole variety of people that come to our office. And, let’s see, for students we had 262 students come to our office, undergrads and graduate students. Faculty, we had 111. Operating staff, 139. And SPS, 168. All of those are an increase over last year, which is something to note considering that we do have 17 unions on campus, including two new unions that serve a significant portion of our employee population. Also other resources, people can go to – Employee Assistance, Human Resources and Counseling and Consultation Services. So SPS, we had 37 more people than last year. Operating Staff was 47 more. Faculty, 26 more. And students 12 more than last year.

Some trends and concerns – of course, the budget is always a concern. We’ve heard numerous times about 700+ days without a budget, budget hangover, and we’re still in it. And that is dramatically affecting how everybody is operating across campus; how people are holding onto money, even grant money; how people are not filling positions or not being permitted to fill positions; how we’ve had to restructure different departments and divisions in order to be most efficient and most effective. But that is all extremely stressful for the people who are in it.

I put the health and mind, because mental health and physical health have played prominent roles in the visits for people in my office. I keep track of what the main issue that somebody comes to see me about, but then also other issues that they are addressing with me. And this year I had, I believe,
67 people come and talk with me about their physical and mental health concerns. They were never the primary concern in the office. Instead it was a side issue. I am so stressed in my job dealing with my classes, trying to get my dissertation done, but mainly job – it was mostly employees – that I am now on heart medication. Or I recently had to go on anti-anxiety, anti-depression medication. I’m seeing a professional about these different issues. That’s very troubling. That’s very troubling. And we’ve had a horrible budget situation so, of course, everybody is stressed. And we’ve had reorganizations, and we’ve had layoffs, significant layoffs in the Civil Service area. And we’ve had many, several, I don’t know how you want to count them, SPS, who have been non-renewed. And it’s very stressful for folks to deal with that issue.

And then the last thing is particularly for staff, but really and faculty too. It’s an issue of respect, not feeling respected in the workplace. And that appears in many ways, people yelling at each other – you know, a symptom of stress; people not being respectful when they reach out to another office and being rude to the person; people being rude to students in their offices; or a faculty member, perhaps, making a student feel humiliated about their disability accommodation request. Things like that are where I’m hearing respect concerns.

Other issues, human resources, it’s a common theme. And a lot of it is not Human Resources’ fault. I’m just going to throw that out there. I have had about a million meetings with Celeste Latham and Pulchratia Smith, and they’re tired of looking at me, by the way. But people are really exhausted with the lengthy hiring process and how long it takes to get positions approved. Also job descriptions and job classifications for Civil Service getting those approved. Promotional material, getting promotions, we have an issue with what the practice and policy is within Human Resources is different than what the impression is across campus with supervisors. So there are many supervisors on campus who have been here a long time, and they do things the way they’ve always done them. However, Human Resources is no longer doing it that way. But there’s a disconnect about how that should be. So we have people who are being promised promotions and new positions and new salaries, who are not actually getting those, because once the supervisor gets around to getting that paperwork to HR, HR says we can’t do it this way. We can’t do it. And so then the person doesn’t actually get the promotion they were promised, maybe a littler one instead of a bigger one. And they’re not getting necessarily the salary that they were promised. But that’s because there’s a disconnect in communication. It’s not anybody’s maliciousness. There’s a disconnect in communication. So I’m suggesting that, because HR is trying desperately to follow rules of the Civil Service system, and also hiring processes with affirmative action and doing things the right way, instead of how we always used to do them, if we could increase communication from HR about what those policies and procedures are so that people know better. And so they’re not holding onto paperwork, and so they’re actually consulting with HR before they move forward, that would be super helpful. But also, just because there’s confusion.

Also there’s been a lot of work with the State Universities Civil Service System – some people call it sucks, they call it success. So it’s all what you want to do. But because SUCCS is doing a whole change in job classifications and that’s dramatically affecting how NIU behaves. And so HR has somewhat frozen, depending on what the job description is, but the problem is then that there is not a whole lot of communication, because HR is waiting for the state, but then people on the ground are waiting for HR. So there’s a lack of communication there. And so that’s been a challenge. But it’s mainly because they’re waiting on the state.
Also there’s been a lot of stress regarding SPS conversion to Civil Service. A lot of, a lot, a lot of SPS positions are going to be converted to Civil Service, and there’s not a lot of knowledge about how that’s going to happen or what happens to you and your benefits and your seniority. And so increased communication on those issues where HR knows the answer. And where they don’t, just say we don’t know yet would also be helpful. And these are all things I’ve said to folks at HR, so it’s not like this is a big shock. And the timelines for hiring.

Oh wait a second, sorry, go back. Other issues, of course, salary. Faculty, I know, are working through the faculty union to address salary issues, compression, inversion, all of that. That’s also a concern with staff. And again a misperception across campus that we can only hire people in at the lowest salary level for their classification. And that’s not accurate, but that is the impression, because that’s how we always have done it in the past. And that’s extremely frustrating, because then the only way you can get an increase is if you change jobs or if you get a competing offer. And we all know that getting competing offers is dangerous for institutions, such as ours, because what if you get a competing offer from a state that has a ton of money for education. You’re basically forcing people to go look for greener pastures, when we really, really want them to stay here. And that’s a challenge.

Also empowerment – we have a bunch of supervisors on campus who are not aware of their full authority. And so when people bring them concerns, they’re not sure how exactly to deal with those concerns. And sometimes the answer they’re giving to the people who are bringing them concerns is that there’s really nothing I can do about that. That faculty member who was horrible to you is tenured, there’s nothing I can do. That supervisor, you know, there’s really nothing I can do. They’re Civil Service, nothing can happen to them. Not true, none of that’s true. But when we have supervisors who are not aware that they have any authority or have been specifically told they don’t. But if we can have some, again, increased communication, training for supervisors about how to supervise and how to deal with behavior problems or other concerns, that would be awesome.

And then the whole civility thing. It really needs to come from the top, and it has. President Freeman has spoken as recently as I believe it was last week, although I’m losing track of time, publically about leadership coming from the bottom, it also comes from the top. And what is acceptable and is not acceptable. And my recommendation is that it should be an expectation in every office and department on this campus that people will be kind and will be civil with one another. You can still be assertive, but you don’t have to be a nasty human being. And even though we are all super stressed out, you can still deal with others with kindness and respect. And that needs to be an expectation. And when it’s not met, it needs to be addressed.

For student concerns, we had a significant number, I believe it was 52 students, who brought concerns about not receiving disability accommodations. And that’s quite a few, 52, that’s a lot. And I know that the Disability Resource Center is working very hard to meet the needs of students and to do a ton of training across campus. If you have concerns about how to work with disabilities, individuals with disabilities in your area, please contact them, because they want to come and train you. They also are experiencing the same staff turnover that the rest of campus has experienced. And so they are severely understaffed at the moment, although they did just hire a new access consultant. But she’s still in training. You know it’s that tricky time where the person is great and
we’re so excited to have them. And yet they still can’t see people. But they are doing fabulous things. They just need some more.

Other concerns – Syllabi are a concern. Students come to see me who are concerned because their syllabi are not clear. They don’t have sufficient information. They’re not sure how they’re being judged and graded in class, so grading standards go right hand-in-hand with that. We don’t really have syllabus requirements. If you look at the APPM, the syllabus requirements are one – to have an ADA disability statement in the syllabus. Everything else is a recommendation, which I understand is an issue that many consider to be part of academic freedom. I throw it out there that maybe it’s not, and that maybe we should just have some standard things in our syllabi. So that might be something that University Council might want to consider, because we have a lot of people, 72 people, came to my office to talk about their syllabi and grading standards and not understanding. And, therefore, some of them led to dismissals from their programs. That was mostly graduate students I was dealing with, who were dealing with dismissals. And so my helping them through their college process as well as the Graduate Council Appeals Committee.

And then the last thing for students was student conduct issues, and navigating the student conduct process. But Student Conduct has developed a new training program for their advisors, and they have more advisors than they’ve had in many years. And so students have more resources, people to walk them through the process, and that’s very helpful.

Here are some thank yous. You know, we don’t always get thank yous. In office, in particular, we don’t ever hear the end of the story, hardly ever, because people aren’t required to tell us what the results have been. But sometimes, they do email me or call me or come back to say, hey you really helped. So that was wonderful.

And thank you very much. Does anybody have any questions. All right, thank you.

L. Freeman: All right, I am going to ask the executive secretary to take over the microphone and the gavel to run us through the rest of the meeting.

T. Arado: Didn’t know I got the gavel as well, that’s exciting.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA

T. Arado: All right the next thing on our agenda is to approve the consent agenda. It has four items. One is approval of the UC Standing Committee member roster. One is approval of the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustee membership, confirming Sarah Marsh for a three-year term. The third is we are referring to the Academic Policy Committee, the review of the policies for distance education. This review is required in the policy for every five years, and it’s up for that review. And the fourth item is approving the nomination of Richard Baert to serve as a community at large member on the Northern Star Publication Board for a three-year term. Can I have a motion to approve the consent agenda?

W. Penrod: Move to approve.
T. Arado: Did you get that, Pat. Great, may I have a second?

O. Chmaissem: Second.

T. Arado: All those in favor, say aye.

Members: Aye.

T. Arado: Opposed, nay? Any abstentions? Great, we have a consent agenda approved. Thank you.

A. Approve the 2018-19 UC Standing Committee membership rosters per NIU Bylaws Article 2 – Page 18

B. Approve the 2018-19 University Advisory Committee to the BOT membership roster, confirming Sarah Marsh for a three-year term (2018-2021) per NIU Bylaws, Article 17.4.1.1 – Page 19

C. Review Policies for Distance Education Courses Carrying Undergraduate Credit every 5 years, APPM Section III, Item 23 – refer to Academic Policy Committee – Pages 20-21

D. Approve nominee, Richard Baert, Pensions & Investments Newspaper (a Crain Communications publication), to serve as a community-at-large member of the Northern Star Publications Board for a three-year term (2018-2021) per committee membership guidelines – Page 22

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws Article 15.7 Committee on Initial Teacher Certification – Pages 23-25

FIRST READING

Jenny Parker, Associate Vice Provost for Educator Licensure and Preparation

T. Arado: We have no unfinished business at the moment, so I’m going to move on to the new business section. Our first item on here is a first reading of a proposed amendment to a bylaw related to the Committee on Initial Teacher Certification. Associate Vice Provost for Educator Licensure and Preparation Jenny Parker is here to introduce it. Jenny, you can take over.

J. Parker: Thank you very much. I’m Jenny Parker, the associate vice provost for educator licensure and preparation. I’d like to introduce Jim.

J. Ressler: Hello, Jim Ressler, chair of the UCIEL Committee for this year.

J. Parker: And we would like your consideration of the amendment to the bylaws. This past year,
we have taken a look at the bylaws. Jim and I both facilitate that committee, we meet monthly. And to be sure that the bylaws represent the current workings of educator licensure at NIU. And so we have looked at the committee structure, the internal committee structure of UCIEL. We’ve looked at the membership to see whether that is representative. We’ve looked at streamlining and being sure that our clinical partner, clinical placement folks are included, and they have not been, up until this point. And we’ve also looked to be sure that all the language is updated to reflect that it’s educator licensure and no longer teacher certification or teacher preparation. So we respectfully ask for your consideration of the amendment.

T. Arado: Thank you. Since this is a first reading, people can certainly ask questions if they have any. And this will be coming back then at the next UC meeting for the second reading and vote. No questions? Okay, thank you very much.

J. Parker: Thank you.

B. Temporary appointment timeline waiver request per NIU Bylaws, Article 19.5.2.2
Abul Azad, Acting Associate Dean for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, Outreach and Diversity, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology – Pages 26-27

Donald Peterson, Dean, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

T. Arado: All right, moving along, we are going to move on to Part B under New Business. Is Dean Don Peterson here? Okay. The first of the next two items is for a temporary appointment timeline waiver request. Dean Peterson? And we’re going to hand B first and vote on that, and then move to C.

D. Peterson: Great, thank you very much. Hi, I’m Don Peterson, dean of the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology. What we’re asking for here, based on NIU Bylaws Article 19.5.2.2. Essentially under 19.5, the Acting and Other Temporary Administrative Appointments, is the continuance of appointment of acting associate dean for undergraduate academic affairs, outreach and diversity, Dr. Abul Azad, so that the college could conduct within the typical windows respective to engineering can conduct a proper search this year.

T. Arado: Okay, thank you. Pat, do we need a motion on this? Okay, may I have a motion to accept the timeline waiver?

M. Haj-Sheikh: So moved.

T. Arado: Michael Haji-Sheikh was our motion. And my second?

G. Chen: Second.

T. Arado: May I have a vote on the waiver of this – discussion, I’m sorry – thank you guys, I appreciate it. Any discussion on this.

D. Peterson: I’ll add to the discussion. We hope to place the individual this year.
T. Arado: Excellent.

D. Peterson: So I hope not to be here next year.

M. Haji-Sheik: [inaudible]

T. Arado: Michael, can you take a microphone so we get it recorded?

M. Haji-Sheikh: As a member of the engineering faculty, I totally support this. Abul’s been a very good faculty member, and he is well-respected within the college.

T. Arado: Thank you. Any other comments or discussion? Okay, now I will move for a vote. All those in favor of this, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

T. Arado: Opposed, nay? Abstentions? No abstentions, okay, great. Dean Peterson, could you go on to the second one then.

C. Temporary appointment timeline waiver request per NIU Bylaws, Article 19.5.2.2 Federico Sciammarella, Interim Chair, Department of Mechanical Engineering, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology – Pages 28-29

Donald Peterson, Dean, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology

D. Peterson: The second again under the bylaws Article 19.5.2.2 or 19.5 the Acting and Other Temporary Administrative Appointments, is for the continuance of the interim chair, Dr. Federico Sciammarella, in the Department of Mechanical Engineering. We head launched a search last year, which ultimately was unsuccessful, and we want to continue this this year. Dr. Sciammarella has been doing a decent job in maintaining the stability of the very large Department of Mechanical Engineering. We feel as though he could maintain those duties this year, and would like to continue with the search throughout this year, again targeting those windows that are common to engineering searches in academia.

T. Arado: May I have a motion to approve the waiver of this timeline?

M. Haji-Sheikh: I guess I’ll move again. [inaudible]

T. Arado: Michael Haji-Sheikh again. Second, Gary Chen. Thank you, I appreciate that. Any discussion on this one? Okay, seeing none, I would like to call for a vote. All those in favor, please say aye.

Members: Aye.

T. Arado: Opposed nay? Abstentions? Great, thank you very much, Dean Peterson.
D. Peterson: Thank you, everybody.

X. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES

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

T. Arado: Okay, now we are on to Part X., Reports from Councils, Boards and Standing Committees. Our first report is from the Faculty Advisory Council to the IBHE. Linda Saborío is here to give us a report.

L. Saborío: Good afternoon. This is the same report that I gave to Faculty Senate last week. So for those of you who have already heard it, feel free to check your emails, I won’t be offended at all.

For our last meeting of the 2017-18 academic year, the FAC attended the June 5 board meeting at the University Center of Lake County. The chair of each caucus, from the private institutions, the public and community colleges, was invited to share with the IBHE the principal topics or challenges that each of our caucuses found to be of particular concern. And so here’s a summary of the topics that were presented to the board at the June 5 meeting.

From our chair of the FAC, was highlighted the lack of voting faculty representation on the IBHE. Despite the fact that faculty representation is statutorily embedded in the board’s membership by careful design, we still do not have legally mandated representation on the board.

From the public caucus, our chair discussed the importance of a liberal arts education and the many strengths and breadth of skills and knowledge that a liberal arts education can provide. Also within the state of Illinois, we seem to be competing when instead we need to work collaboratively. For example, dual credit was once something that four-year institutions left to the community colleges so as not to compete with them. Now with bordering states offering our states dual credit, the time has come to discuss offering dual credit in four-year institutions without creating a sense of competition and with clear transitions beginning with K-12 to community colleges to the four-year institutions. Finally, we need to address the stressful rhetoric in the state of Illinois, because it is extremely harmful to our enrollment.

From the private and proprietary institutions, the caucus chair highlighted the impact the lack of resources for institutions has had on students, faculty and staff. He argued that education is an investment and not a cost, and he urged the board to find ways to education the legislature and the general public on the importance of investing in higher education.

And then finally, from the community colleges regarding the conversation of two-year colleges offering baccalaureate degrees, the caucus wanted to go on record to say that they are not in favor of community colleges offering four-year degrees. Offering four-year degrees would impede upon their ability to fulfill their mission, which is to provide a quality two-year degree. Many community colleges do not have faculty, and they do not have the facilities to offer four-year degrees. Simply put, it would be too costly for them to do so. A caucus chair remarked that Illinois would be better served making more two-plus-two agreements and clearer articulation agreements.
There is a full audio recording of the June 5 board meeting available online if you’re interested in listening to the entire discussion.

The first meeting of this academic year for the FAC will take place on September 1 at Judson University, and I believe that then concludes my report. Are there any questions. If none, thank you.

T. Arado: Thanks, Linda.

  B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – report
    Holly Nicholson, Catherine Doederlein, Therese Arado
    Alex Gelman, Sarah Marsh, Kendall Thu

T. Arado: The next report is the University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees, and that’s me giving that. The only things I wanted to highlight from the Board of Trustees Committee meetings were presentations that were given by Jenna Mitchell and Anna Quider. Jenna Mitchell is our Illinois state legislative liaison, and she’s based down in Springfield, and she started, I believe, this summer. And Anna Quider is our federal legislative person, and she’s out in D.C. Both of them gave reports on legislation recently passed, recently died in session or pending, that affects higher ed. And their information is actually at the Board of Trustees minutes web page. You can see the reports that were in for that day, so you can see what’s affecting higher ed at the state and the federal level. I would answer questions, but I couldn’t answer questions on those reports. So, any questions, though? Okay.

  C. Academic Policy Committee – Vicki Collins, Chair – no report
  D. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – Jim Wilson, Chair – no report
  E. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Richard Siegesmund, Chair – no report
  F. University Affairs Committee – Hamid Bateni, Chair – no report

T. Arado: Our next four committees – at the moment, we don’t have reports since we just got going in the academic year. Our next item is the Student Association – oh?

R. Scherer: If I may, with regard to the University Affairs Committee, if I can enter into the record a little comment as the past chair. We left at the end of last year unfinished business, which was with regard to streamlining of the ombudsperson’s annual report, and it’s my hope that that proposal gets taken up by the new committee.

T. Arado: Okay, great, thank you. And I am sure Sarah is happy to hear that. Thank you, Reed.

  G. Student Association – report
    Khiree Cross, President
    Tristan Martin, Speaker of the Senate
T. Arado: So we are now at our Student Association report. Khiree Cross and Tristan Martin, our president and speaker of the senate. Do we have a report from the Student Association? Feel free to come on up.

K. Cross: How’s everybody doing? For you all who don’t know me, my name is Khiree Cross. I am the current Student Association president. Tristan, I didn’t know if you wanted to come join me? Perfect. I’ll let my fellow speaker introduce himself.

T. Martin: Hi guys, in case any of you don’t know me, I have the pleasure of service the Student Association Senate as the speaker of the senate for the 2018-19 school year. It’s nice to be up here, guys.

K. Cross: Some of the things that we’ve been working on, have upcoming: First, we’ve been moving forward with the No Shame Campaign. On October 9, Brooke Rutland is coming, she works for ESPN. They’ll have an athlete and a news reporter from ESPN to work on talking about athletes with mental illnesses that come up from being an athlete or from just being a student or just being an every day human. So we’ll be partnering with them on October 9. So we’re looking at hosting lunch from 12:30 to 2 p.m. with students leaders of select choice.

Also October 5, Active Minds will be here. They usually do a huge campaign for suicide awareness. They have about maybe 5,000 book bags planted around the campus. So I’m looking to partner with them as well.

Also we have a meet-and-greet coming up. It’s going to be on October 2 in the MLK Commons. We’ll be handing our paraphernalia for the Student Association just letting students know about the S.A.

And also the last thing we’ve been working on is the undocumented scholarship. We’ve been working on that, myself, Tristan, DREAM Action, some of the administration and the NIU Foundation has been working on getting a scholarship for our undocumented students. We believe it is imperative that our undocumented students feel that they have a place here at NIU. We speak about adversity and inclusion and they matter to.

T. Martin: Thank you, Khiree. So as Khiree kind of hinted at, our summer’s been really, really busy. So we’ve been working on a lot of things like he was saying. Just want to mention a couple things of interest. So first off, the Student Association has kind of been pairing closely with the city of DeKalb in making sure that our relations are together, making sure that we are kind of informing each other of what the other is doing, just so that the student body is able to know the transparency of the city of DeKalb. So actually today in a couple of hours, we’re actually going to be having our first student work group meeting with the city of DeKalb. And pretty much that’s going to be where student leaders, such as the city manager and other city officials, come together and we brainstorm ideas on some of the things that are important to students, are important to the university as a whole, just to make sure that we are on the same levels of communication. They know where the students are on certain things.
On that, the Student Association was closely monitoring the Safe Streets Initiative over the summer. It has gone into full effect, so we have kind of gone into that and done some things on the student side. So one of the things that we worked on was working closely with the chief of policy of NIU, Chief Phillips, to make sure that the Huskie Safe Line is even more active overnight than it usually is, because we don’t have as much parking, if not any at all, than we had before. We’re trying to make sure that students have that transportation to get home. It’s really important to us.

The other kind of things that we’ve been working on are voter registration. Since mid-term elections are coming up pretty close here – November 6 will be when they happen – the Student Association has the privilege of being appointed as an entity that can appoint deputy registrars. On top of that, we’ve also kind of worked with SILD [Student Involvement and Leadership Development] to insure that a certain function of Huskie Link has gone active – it’s called TurboVote. And on this, students can register via proxy vote to register for the federal, state and local elections, which is kind of huge. So we’ve been working with that just to make sure that students are registered for the next election, because we think it’s really important.

Going forward on that, the next thing that we’ve been working on is insuring that candidates from that election are coming to NIU. So the first one that we’ve been working on is to insure that the 70th District candidates for state representative are going to be coming for a debate sometime in October. We don’t know what date specifically we have set for that yet, but we do have a couple in-the-air things right now. But we do plan on having candidates, Jeff Keiper and Paul Stoddard, come before the students and kind of give a little bit of their perspective of where they’re at with helping the student body.

Beyond that, Khiree and I have been working to make sure that the Student Association is as transparent and cooperative within itself as possible. So I’ve been working very closely with a couple of directors. To list a view, I’ve been working with Madalynn Mershon, she’s actually sitting back here right now, on some of the academic policy and some of the back-to-school drives that she’s actually been having a really big part of. I’ve also been working with Hailey [Wegrzyn] – I can’t pronounce her last name for the life of me – she’s our director of environmental affairs. We’ve been working really hard that clean up after the football games happen at the tailgates. If any of you guys have been to the student tailgate after the football game’s been done, it’s not a pretty sight, to say the least. So we, as a Student Association, take it upon ourselves to make sure that we are leaving the area as clean as possible. Not only that, but just so you guys know, some of the resources that we gain from that, such as the aluminum from the cans, we donate that. And we actually make sure that that’s taken care of, given to proper charities, given to proper places. And I also have to give a little bit of credit to the local people who come out to that as well. They do a lot with helping us. And we help them, and it’s a really nice cooperative effort.

Beyond that, another thing that I’ve been working on over the summer is the Disability Awareness Month, which will be in October. One of the things that I find very well that works with the No Shame Campaign is insuring that people with any sort of disabilities on campus are given the resources, are given the events, etc. as necessary, that they need. So the Student Association has kind of partnered pretty closely with a grass root movement called the Disability Awareness Month. It’s led by Kelsey Williams. And pretty much what we’ve been doing lately is just kind of planning some dates, planning some events that we can go forward and kind of bring some student talent to.
And I’ll have more on that for you guys, hopefully, in October.

Finally, some of the other things that I’ve been working on is just I met with Dr. Anna Quider over the summer. And one of the things that she kind of put the bug in my ear about was for the students to create a list of federal priorities. And Khiree and I are going to be working pretty closely to make sure that happens, just so we can show the federal government that we, as students, do have priorities, that we do need to be taken care of. And we’re going to be doing the same thing on the state level as well.

Past that, I also met with Dr. Sol Jensen over the summer as well. And one of the things that I had an idea from our conversation was to have, hopefully, have senators reach out to their high schools, reach out to the people that they know from high school as a recruiting mechanism so they can, hopefully, recruit some NIU talent from those high schools.

And then finally another goal that has been pretty big of mine is just to make sure the Student Association is as involved with student organizations on campus as possible. Usually what happens is the student organizations come up to the Student Association Senate for full approval. And after that they disappear from the Student Association. So it’s been a goal of mine, and I know it’s been a goal of the vice president and director of organization development, to make sure that we, as a Student Association, are as integrated in the student processes as possible. And I think that is where I will end my report. Thank you. Does anyone have any questions for us.

**K. Cross:** I have a few more things. Also I failed to mention that the S.A. has been working closely with Athletics. We feel that our student athletes need more support. So I’ll be meeting with Athletics, and they’ve added a lot of improvements to the games. Students tailgate every home game, but the problem is students don’t go to the game after they tailgate. So essentially, Athletics has been working with trying to meet students in the middle. So they’ve added a section in the stadium where students are allowed to consume alcoholic beverages legally, of course. Then they also have added a beer garden in the east side of the stadium for students to also – just more attraction for students. Then they’ve also amended the way the band comes into the stadium. So instead of going on the outskirts of the tailgate, the band now goes through the tailgate, so that’s been attracting a lot more students to go to the game. And then they’re also going to have sections in the stadium where student organizations, Greek or non-Greek, can represent with flags, do chant-offs, things of that nature. So we can bring more attraction to the games.

And also I’ve been working with a student named Caitlin Sharkey. She wants to bring feminine products into the dorms. She believes that, if there is tissue in the dorm hall, there should be feminine products as well, easily accessible for students, whether you can purchase them or you can get them for free. She feels as if – and I also agree – that students who come from high school where your parents are pretty taking sole responsibility for a lot of things that you should do normally as an adult, you come to college and you’re just kind of lost. So it’s just kind of providing that guidance for them, putting the feminine products in the dorm halls. So I’ll be working with RHA to get that ball rolling as well.

And now I’ll open the floor for questions.
L. Freeman: I just wanted to compliment both of you for using your voices as voters and as advocates and as members of the S.A. who want to make NIU a better place. And I want to say that none of the old folks in this room really think it’s ugly when you see the artifacts of your tailgate. We’re glad that you’re having fun, but we’re also glad that you clean up.

K. Cross: Any other questions? Thank you.

T. Arado: Okay, we are on to letter H in our reports. This is a report from Operating Staff. I saw Holly had to leave. Did she leave a report over there.

C. Doederlein: So as some people might know from Board of Trustees, I serve as Holly Nicholson’s unpaid spokesperson, and she has informed me that she does not have a report today and apologizes that she had to leave early.

T. Arado: Thank you, Cathy.

T. Arado: So we are on to Supportive Professional Staff Council, and do you have a report on behalf of you?

C. Doederlein: I do, I do. So to kind of echo some of the sentiments that Sarah Klaper shared during her report, just want to kind of continue to echo concerns that we’re having from SPS as a population that I imagine likely led to some of the spike in the people that were coming from the SPS classification to meet with Sarah’s office. And I imagine we’ll continue to see a spike from that. As Sarah mentioned, the State Universities Civil Service System, SUCCESS, as I’ve heard it’s intended to be called, has gone through a procedure update that means that positions that have previously been flagged to shift from Supportive Professional Staff to Civil Service, that we had been given the opportunity to essentially leave up to the department and the employee what their decision was on making that shift. And then after the person vacated the position, it would be refilled as Civil Service. The procedure update now requires that the position just be shifted to Civil Service, whether that person would prefer that or not. Now thankfully, there’s a 16-month window, the clock of which starts October 1. But the process to get there isn’t just, I mean it’s not just switching things over. One has to determine the person’s seniority in switching to their Civil Service classification, what the most appropriate Civil Service classification is. If it is a shift from salaried to hourly for any reason, that can impact vacation accruals. And obviously, for the hiring department, when they need to refill that position, it can have an impact on the hiring process.

A lot of cases of confusion or concerns stem from lack of information or misinformation. And I think that’s something that we’re trying to work through within the SPS constituency. But if you have SPS employees within your areas that are expressing anxiety about this, that just is to kind of give you a little bit of a sense of what’s going on. It’s definitely something that the administration is quite aware of and HR is quite aware of. And we’re thankful that they’re working with us to sort of work through that communication concern. And our representative to the Merit Board within the
Board of Trustees, who is John Butler, has also been willing to kind of listen to the concerns in case there’s anything that he could take to the Merit Board.

Essentially, their decision has passed, so there’s not necessarily much to be done there. It’s more probably within each university to go forward and determine how best to proceed, but we are appreciative that the board is still willing to entertain our concerns in case there is anything that can be done at a state level.

**L. Freeman:** Cathy, I just want to add that Dr. Streb is representing me on the presidents and chancellors call today, because I am here. But other universities, other presidents and chancellors are also concerned about the way these policies have been enacted and how it affects our workforce and our ability to maintain valued employees. And that’s going to be a continuing topic of discussion. And I’ll keep everyone in the community updated on action items that come out of those conversations.

**C. Doederlein:** Thank you for that. And one additional item I just kind of wanted to note. Sometimes the concern or people will suggest that the concern about a shift from Supportive Professional Staff to Civil Service is somehow because Supportive Professional Staff are better than Civil Service, and that is so not the case. And anyone who comes to me with that type of argument, that, well I have a Ph.D., I couldn’t possibly be Civil Service, I explain that I intend in no way to support or help them. Just speaking honestly, because that is definitely the concern. It really is a matter of just making sure that, for those people that are shifted to Civil Service, that they have the appropriate protections relative to their time with NIU and their time within the state system. So I just wanted to kind of say that publicly, because I think it’s something that can be misunderstood or misconstrued, that it’s somehow: I can’t possibly be Civil Service, because that is beneath me. That is not something that we, as an SPS Council, support or want to have be out there as even a message, because that’s not the concern. It’s really about the people involved and the impact it might have on them individually.

**T. Arado:** Thank you, Cathy.

**XI. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**T. Arado:** That brings us to our informational items. So I just want to direct you to these. They are in the materials that were sent out for today’s meeting and have links to the various minutes and reports from different councils and groups across campus.

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
R. 2017-18 Annual Report, Athletic Board
S. 2017-18 Annual Report, Faculty & SPS Personnel Advisor
T. 2017-18 Annual Report, Graduate Council
U. 2017-18 Annual Report, Office of the Ombudsperson
V. 2017-18 Annual Report, University Assessment Panel
W. 2017-18 Annual Report, University Benefits Committee
X. 2017-18 Annual Report, University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
Y. 2017-18 Annual Report, University Council Personnel Committee
Z. 2018-19 Faculty Senate meeting dates:
   Sep 12, Oct 10, Nov 7, Dec 5, Jan 30, Feb 27, Apr 3, May 1
AA. NIU liaison to SURSMAC
   NIU HRS is recruiting one academic and one non-academic employee to serve as liaisons to the State Universities Retirement System Members Advisory Committee. To learn more, contact Celeste Latham or Liz Guess.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

T. Arado: After that, I see that it’s adjournment. May I have a motion to adjourn?

K. Thu: So moved.

T. Arado: Kendall Thu. May I have a second?

J. Wilson: Second.

T. Arado: Jim Wilson. We’re adjourned.

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.