Present: G. Aase/BUS; M. Ayers/LIB; M. Barnes/VPA; A. Birberick/Vice Provost; F. Bryan/LAS; A. Ferguson (BUS); E. Klonoski/Acting Associate Vice Provost; M. Johns (LAS); M. Konen/LAS; J. Kot/LAS; M. Shokrani/HHS; S. Sibley (HHS); J. Stacey (student/LAS); L. Sunderlin (LAS)

Absent: T. Adeboje (student); T. Atkins/LAS (F ’15 leave); P. Braun/HHS; C. Campbell/EDU; L. Guo/ EET (F’15 sabbatical); J. Knapp (student/HHS); F. Sciammarella/EET;

Guests: D. Smith, Catalog Editor/ Curriculum Coordinator; J. Ratfield, Vice Provost’s Administrative Assistant

I. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by M. Shokrani, seconded by L. Sunderlin to adopt the agenda with changes suggested by A. Birberick which include moving New Business, Item A, Renique Kersh (Engaged Learning Tracking of co-curricular activities) to follow the approval of the minutes and adding an update on infused writing by E. Klonoski under New Business. Motion approved unanimously.

II. Approval of minutes from October 1, 2015 meeting

M. Shokrani made a motion to approve the minutes from the October 1, 2015 meeting, seconded by J. Kot. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Reports/Minutes from Standing Committees

A. Admissions Policies and Academic Standards Committee

Birberick reported on these minutes. She said the students in accelerated degree programs discussion is still ongoing. They are trying to work out some language issues. She added that there was discussion about the grading scale points and it was decided that no changes needed to be made.

A motion was made by M. Shokrani, seconded by M. Konen to receive the September 16, 2015 minutes of APASC. Motion passed unanimously.
B. Committee on the Improvement of Undergraduate Education

Birberick recapped the meeting. She said they elected a committee chair, approved minutes and she told them of the defeat of the proposed curricular committee restructuring. She also went over their responsibilities.

J. Kot made a motion, seconded by A. Ferguson to receive the minutes from the September 21, 2015 meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

C. Committee on the Undergraduate Academic Environment

Klonoski indicated that the meeting was an update on UNIV 101, a PLUS update and discussion about the proposed curricular committee restructuring.

A motion to receive the April 14, 2015 minutes from CUAE was made by M. Barnes, seconded by M. Shokrani. **Motion passed unanimously.**

D. Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum

No minutes to review.

E. General Education Committee

J. Kot reported on the September meeting. It was informational including introductions of committee members. They learned the pathways applications were available for evaluation in between meetings. She said ARTE 109, which had been discussed before where the department requested consideration to be included in the Nature and Technology domain was finally approved pending approval from the CUC. They were also told that all the new general education courses would be in by September 30th for them to review.

A motion to receive the September 17, 2015 GEC minutes was made by A. Ferguson, seconded by M. Konen. **Motion passed unanimously.**

J. Kot reported that they got through all the Pathways. There were seven received, six approved, Klonoski added. Kot said there was a lot of discussion – all committee members thought there was something missing from all of the pathways however there is still a whole year for them to be worked on. The biggest problem was the lack of variety in colleges; although there is sufficient variety within disciplines. Klonoski said
that the courses recommended for Nature & Technology domain, the committee didn’t think belonged. He has been working with the pathway leader to make adjustments.

Evaluations of the new general education courses were done on-line by committee members. Courses that fulfilled the requirements for a general education course, were passed as a group. There were many courses that didn’t have consensus approval so it was decided that, due to time constraints, they would look at whether the course fits into the domain it was being proposed for. Klonoski indicated he had asked GEC chair, Brianno Coller, to send clarification to committee members regarding how the courses should be evaluated.

A motion to receive the October 15, 2015 GEC minutes was made by J. Kot, seconded by M. Barnes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**F. University Honors Committee**

M. Shokrani reported that this was the first meeting of this year; the meeting was partly informational. He mentioned the new acting Director, Joel Stafstrom, has taken over for J.D. Bowers, who left the university. He reported a 26% increase in freshmen and transfer students enrolled in the Honors program. He reported that the College of Education and Visual and Performing Arts are still underrepresented in the Honors program. They discussed program prioritization. The China Study Abroad program had 15 student and faculty participants. Some sub-committees were formed, one will address Honors Faculty Status, which has not progressed as desired. They are hopeful to have that process streamlined and clarify the criteria.

In-course contracts were discussed. The Honors committee seems to be steering students toward mini-sections. There was discussion of the benefits of teaching honors and remuneration.

A motion was made by J. Kot, seconded by F. Bryan to receive the September 4, 2015 Honors minutes. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**IV. Other Reports**

**A. University Assessment Panel**

No report.

**V. Old Business**

N/A
VI. New Business

A. Engaged Learning Tracking of Co-Curricular Activities

Birberick introduced, Vice Provost for Engaged Learning, Renique Kersh who was present to discuss the engaged learning tracking of co-curricular activities. Kersh introduced her program advisor, Tony, who will be handling most of the administrative responsibilities of this process.

Kersh explained that this tracking was part of the PLUS initiatives. The goal is to allow students who have had a co-curricular experience have an academic transcription. She said it was a great opportunity for the institution to allow students to be thoughtful about what they get involved in and have that experience notated on their academic transcript. It is very much a student-driven process. Kersh explained the first phase in the process has been to determine the criteria. They have identified a set of general criteria which the activities would be judged by as well as a set of category specific criteria. The categories are: experiential learning, service learning, leadership, professional development, artistry and undergraduate research. Kersh noted that these activities are ones that students will not receive academic credit for. She explained that students will approach a faculty member with an activity in mind and review with that mentor the general and category specific criteria to determine whether or not the proposed activity will meet the criteria for the transcript notation. Once the experience has taken place the student submits a form to the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) which indicates how each criteria has been met. The faculty member will receive an email from OSEEL indicating that the student has submitted this form for transcript notation. Once approved by the faculty mentor, OSEEL will work with the Registrar’s office for the notation on the student’s transcript.

Kersh indicated that there is much research indicating employers want their students to engage in these types of activities while they are in college. These types of hands-on learning activities help develop critical thinking skills, the ability to make effective decisions, professionalism and all the things we hope students gain. These types of activities are occurring and this gives the students an avenue to receive the notation. Kersh emphasized that these are not activities that students receive academic credit for.

Kersh indicated her main purpose for coming to the meeting today was to make committee members aware of the opportunity and requested feedback. Fall 2016 is the target date for the co-curricular notations to go into effect, so there is still time to incorporate feedback. Kersh said that after this initial phase of selecting criteria, they would follow with policies, rules, regulations phase. That will answer questions regarding how many times a student can submit a request the transcript notation paperwork, what happens if a student gets denied is there an appeal petition process,
The third part of the process is the marketing to students, how do we make sure they are aware and learn the steps necessary to get the process set-up.

There was discussion about research opportunities outside the university and making sure they are legitimate. There was some discussion about companies not providing performance related information. There was also discussion about the quality of the experience. The students will write how the experience met at least one of the eight student learning outcomes. Kersh also mentioned internships and how they are handled and whether that process would be incorporated into this process or remain a separate process. Last suggestion was surveying recent alumni to see if it would have been beneficial for them to have this option.

B. Writing Infused Update

Klonoski talked about how this requirement stems from a PLUS task force recommendation for two upper division writing courses. He put together an implementation team that looked at standards around the country and they came up with a proposal for the criteria. He has met with all the College Senates and all but one college curriculum committee and that will take place later this month in addition to the Curricular Deans, Advising Deans, held an open forum and met with two student groups. There is unanimous support for increasing writing. The challenge lies in the implementation and the details. The criteria which will impact student entering NIU with 30 credits or less include: a cap of 35 students per section; the writing component of the course must be 25%; students must get feedback on their writing and there is a 3000 word limit. The requirement can be met in general education courses, within the major or through electives. There was also discussion about the support the Writing Center would give to departments as well as resources it would receive. Birberick said the Provost had agreed to such support.

VII. Adjournment

M. Konen made a motion, seconded by L. Sunderlin to adjourn @ 2:50 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeanne Ratfield
Administrative Assistant
Office of the Provost