

**PRESIDENT’S REPORT TO THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
FEBRUARY 11, 2010**

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**I. ACTION ITEM**

**A. FISCAL YEAR 2011 TUITION AND FEE RATES**

The Board of Trustees of Northeastern Illinois University is required by its enabling Act to adopt tuition and fee rates for students attending the University. Each year, the Board reviews and adjusts those rates to recognize the budgetary needs of the University and the appropriate contributions students should make to meet those needs. Historically, given the University's ongoing commitments to access and to providing a high-quality affordable education, the Board has adopted tuition and fee rates that are among the most affordable of the Illinois public universities. Equally important, the Board adopts tuition rates that reflect a fair and appropriate contribution from students to the cost of their education. It is with those continuing commitments and parameters that this report presents the proposed fiscal year 2011 tuition and fee rates to the Board.

Clearly, students are the campus constituency most affected by changes in student tuition and fees. At the November 2009 Board meeting, the proposed fiscal year 2011 tuition and fee rates (beginning fall 2010) were presented to the Board and to the University community for review and discussion. After the November meeting, on January 12, 2010, the Provost and Vice President for Finance and Administration met with the Student Government Association (SGA) in a forum open to all students to present the proposed tuition and fee rates and to discuss student concerns.

At that meeting, discussions centered on the fiscal climate at the University and the appropriate contribution students would be called on to support important University initiatives. Specifically, the administration, as part of this tuition proposal, committed to increase the number of course sections by up to 70 in fiscal year 2011 to reduce wait lists and improve time to degree through advising and career counseling services, develop two new academic programs, complete the installation of new technology in all classrooms, and continue to upgrade technology in student computer labs. The students were generally understanding of the need for the proposed tuition increase and supported the program and quality improvements. The students were receptive to these initiatives and the administration agreed to add course sections that met student demand, with some emphasis on adding upper division courses.

**Overview of Current Tuition and Fee Rates**

In fall 2004, a state law took effect requiring all Illinois public universities to guarantee new undergraduate students level tuition for four consecutive academic years. In fall 2009, the sixth cohort of undergraduate students attending Northeastern entered the University under the tuition guarantee program.

One result of the tuition guarantee program is the effect on tuition comparisons among institutions. Prior to fall 2004, most universities had one basic tuition rate for undergraduate in-state resident students and it was much easier to compare and assess tuition rates among

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public universities. Now, because of this legislation, all Illinois public universities have at least five different tuition rates for in-state undergraduate students. This complicates tuition comparisons. The Illinois Board of Higher Education recently developed a methodology for comparing tuition rates that involves weighting each university's various tuition rates by the number of students paying the corresponding rates. Those rates and comparisons are included in this report.

Tuition comparisons are important because they provide a means to assess student costs among somewhat similarly financed institutions. Table 1 presents fiscal year 2010 weighted average tuition rates at Illinois public universities for new undergraduates and for all undergraduate students.

As noted in a recent Chicago Sun-Times article, the fiscal year 2010 tuition rate increase for new undergraduate students enrolling at Northeastern was 11.4 percent, the highest among the Illinois public universities, which averaged 5.2 percent. However, the actual tuition rate at Northeastern is lower than six of other public universities and higher than the other five universities, meaning our tuition is at the median for Illinois public universities. The tuition for new full-time undergraduates at Northeastern is \$7,350, or 89 percent of the statewide average of \$8,249. Given Northeastern's location in Chicago, having a tuition rate for new undergraduates at the median among the public universities and 11 percent below the average tuition rate for Illinois public universities, our tuition rate seems reasonable and consistent with our affordability goals.

For all undergraduate students, Northeastern's current year average tuition rate is \$6,293. As with new undergraduates, Northeastern's rate is below seven other public universities and above the other four. Our overall undergraduate tuition rate is 16 percent below the public universities state average of \$7,499. Stated differently, on average, full-time undergraduate students at Northeastern pay \$1,206 less per year for tuition than the average for all Illinois public universities.

Table 2 provides comparison data for graduate tuition and shows that the fiscal year 2010 rate for students at Northeastern is \$5,880, 72 percent of the statewide average of \$8,199. The current year graduate tuition rate increase of 11.4 percent exceeded the statewide average of 6.7 percent. Six public universities have higher graduate tuition than Northeastern and four have a lower average rate. Governors State has the same graduate tuition rate as Northeastern.

Table 3 provides a comparison of the tuition costs for undergraduate and graduate students at Illinois public universities. Because graduate education is more costly than undergraduate education, it follows that graduate students should pay more for their education than undergraduates. For the past three years, Northeastern has established graduate tuition at the rate paid by the entering undergraduate students. This assures that no undergraduate students pay more for their education than graduate students. Statewide, graduate students pay 24.2 percent more than undergraduate students. However, these data should be

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interpreted with caution because the graduate costs at several campuses are inflated due to the high cost of certain graduate programs, for example, medical education.

**Setting Tuition and Fees in a Challenging State Fiscal Climate**

The fiscal climate in the state of Illinois has had a direct impact on tuition and fee rates at Northeastern and all other Illinois public universities. The following figure summarizes changes in state appropriations and undergraduate tuition rates over the past 10 years. Between fiscal year 2000 and 2005, state funding decreased 2.7 percent while tuition increased 22.0 percent. However, Northeastern ended that period with fiscal year 2005 state appropriations \$6.2 million, or 13.6 percent, below fiscal year 2002 appropriations, the highest appropriation. This is the compelling story. Even with our increases in state funding from fiscal year 2005 to the current fiscal year 2010, we remain \$2.0 million, or 4.4 percent, below our level of state appropriation in fiscal year 2002. These are actual dollars changes; they are not adjusted for inflationary increases.

**State Appropriations and Undergraduate Tuition Rates FY2000-FY2010**

Fiscal Year	State Funding (in thousands)	% Change	Undergrad Tuition per Credit Hour	% Change
2000	40,330.4	----	94.25	----
2001	42,610.1	5.7%	97.50	3.4%
2002	45,396.8	6.5	101.00	3.6
2003	42,585.4	(6.2)	107.50	6.4
2004	39,077.7	(8.2)	110.00	2.3
<u>2005</u>	<u>39,227.7</u>	<u>.4</u>	<u>115.00</u>	<u>4.5</u>
2000-2005	(1,102.7)	(2.7)	20.75	22.0
2005	39,227.7	----	115.00	----
2006	39,247.7	.1%	126.00	9.6%
2007	40,026.3	2.0	136.00	7.9
2008	40,770.7	1.9	156.00	14.7
2009 *	43,401.9	6.5	170.00	9.0
<u>2010</u>	<u>43,401.9</u>	<u>0.0</u>	<u>190.00</u>	<u>11.8</u>
2005-2010	1,776.7	4.5	75.00	65.2

\* Includes \$1.5 million in restricted funds for Hispanic Serving Institution Initiatives.

Even when faced with the sharp funding decreases in fiscal years 2003 and 2004, Northeastern adopted fairly modest tuition increases of 6.4 percent and 2.3 percent. Other than the 6.4 percent increase in fiscal year 2003, tuition increases at Northeastern during this first five-year period did not exceed 4.5 percent.

However, in the second five-year period, when state funding remained below the previous funding level of fiscal year 2002 and the modest state funding increases were not enough to address salary, utility and inflationary increases, tuition increased more significantly. The University maintained modest tuition increases until fiscal year 2006, and then increased tuition at higher rates only in response to several years of state funding shortfalls. State

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funding levels will continue to challenge the ability of Northeastern and the other public universities to hold down tuition costs.

Not reflected in these state appropriations are additional funding requirements by the state of the University that must be funded within these available resources and reserve requirements that were imposed in several years on public universities by the governor that reduced available spending of state funds.

In fiscal year 2002, the University incurred a new requirement to contribute \$1.1 million annually to the Illinois state group health insurance plan. This was a new requirement for all public universities and continues into the current fiscal year. Public Act 94-4 requires Northeastern and all other public universities to make a contribution to the State Universities Retirement System for increases in employees' salaries above 6 percent in any of the four years used to determine average earnings for retirement purposes.

Also, in fiscal years 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2009, reserve requirements were imposed on Illinois public universities which required the universities to set aside (not spend) a portion of their annual state appropriation.

What this means for tuition in the State of Illinois is that not only are public universities impaired by decreasing state appropriations, they also are experiencing a pattern of being required to pay additional state expenses out of these decreasing state resources. Because the University operating budget has two primary funding sources – state appropriations and student tuition revenue – any reduction in available state funding results in either greater reliance on student tuition revenue to fund University operating expenses or greater pressure to reduce University services and programs.

**Addressing the University's Strategic Goals**

Northeastern has a long history of reallocation and will support our newly adopted strategic plan and goals through internal reallocation. However, as mentioned above, we continue to be challenged in supporting these goals because of state funding short falls.

For fiscal year 2010, the University reported to the Board our highest strategic priorities and we will continue to invest available resources in these areas. These priorities are ensuring student success, enhancing academic excellence and innovation, providing urban leadership in Chicago and the region, investing in exemplary faculty and staff, enhancing University operations and facilities, and strengthening the financial position of the University. These are the strategic goals endorsed by the Board in September 2008.

As the University community discusses and considers fiscal year 2011 tuition rates, the appropriate balance between affordability, access, and educational quality improvements must be found, all within the state funding climate outlined above.

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In addition to operating budget issues affected by state funding, the University also must consider the operations and quality improvements that are supported by student fees. Student fees support such areas as technology, student activities, the Student Union, campus recreation, and student health services. The student demand for services in these areas continues to increase. For example, requests continue to grow for new fee-supported student clubs, expansion of health services, additional computer labs, and faster and more robust internet connections.

A major initiative is underway that is supported by student fees, the new University integrated information system – *NEIUworks*, and the new University portal - *NEIUport*. A major component of this system is the expansion and improvement of student services, including a significant expansion of web-based student services (e.g., on-line registration, bill payment, financial services, degree audit that provides specific information on course/major requirements on a case-by-case basis).

In addition to the program requirements, student fees also support the various offices that administer the specific fee programs, such as the offices of student activities, health services, and campus recreation.

**Timely Graduation Incentive Pledge**

As part of the University's annual review of student charges, the University is exploring a program that would provide financial incentives to undergraduate students who complete their undergraduate studies in a timely manner. This program concept is consistent with the University's strategic goal which calls for strategies to ensure student success from recruitment through graduation. It also is consistent with the Illinois Board of Higher Education's Public Agenda which calls for incentives to improve student time to degree. In addition, the University is exploring further program expansion during weekends to help facilitate timely degree completion. These initiatives are still under discussion.

**Tuition and Fee Proposal**

Table 4 provides proposed tuition and fee rates for fiscal year 2011. The proposed tuition rates attempt to balance the needs of the University, the continuing commitment to keep the costs of attending the University affordable, and the ongoing fiscal challenges resulting from the lack of significant new state funding.

In fiscal year 2011, in compliance with state statute, there will be five different tuition rates for in-state undergraduate students, depending on the date of first enrollment at Northeastern. For three of these rates there will be no increase; for those students entering in fall 2007, fall 2008, or fall 2009. This level tuition will be in place for approximately one-half of our undergraduate students. For students entering prior to fall 2006, the tuition rate will be \$210 per credit hour, an increase of 10.5 percent. The latest cohort with an expiring tuition guarantee, those first enrolling in fall 2006, will see tuition increase by \$35 per credit hour, to

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\$210, or 20.0 percent. The in-state, undergraduate tuition rate for new students would be \$260 per credit hour.

For in-state graduate students, the proposed tuition rate is \$260 per credit hour, an increase of \$15 per credit hour, or 6.1 percent. For each in-state tuition rate, there is a corresponding non-Illinois resident tuition rate that is twice the in-state rate.

In fall 2010, there will be three cohorts that have had their four-year tuition guarantee expire; those cohorts first enrolling in fall 2004 through fall 2006. When the tuition guarantees expire, the tuition charged those students will revert to the rate charged students who enrolled at Northeastern prior to the implementation of the tuition guarantee program, referred to as the "continuing rate" that is subject to annual adjustment.

The setting of the continuing rate in relation to the rates for students with a tuition guarantee has been a continuing challenge. Intuitively, it seems that the rate for continuing students should be the average of the four guaranteed tuition rates. However, when analyzing the guaranteed rates it was determined that the increase for the continuing students to reach the average would be too large. In addition, with the large number of transfer students at Northeastern, the number of students using the four-year guarantee is less than at more traditional public universities. As a result, the tuition proposal this year starts a three-year plan to bring the continuing student rate to the guaranteed tuition rate for the third year cohort by fiscal year 2013.

The tuition and fee rates provided in Table 4 are presented to the Board for consideration and approval.

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Table 1  
ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES  
FY2010 UNDERGRADUATE TUITION INCREASES

(Annual based on 30 credit hours)	New Undergraduates				Weighted Average All Undergraduates			
	Enter	Enter	\$	%			\$	%
	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Change	Change	FY2009	FY2010	Change	Change
Chicago State University	\$ 6,870	\$ 7,470	\$ 600	8.7 %	\$ 5,975	\$ 6,486	\$ 511	8.6 %
Eastern Illinois University	6,540	7,170	630	9.6	5,496	6,266	770	14.0
Governors State University	6,120	6,720	600	9.8	5,547	6,229	682	12.3
Illinois State University	7,680	8,280	600	7.8	6,720	7,434	714	10.6
Northeastern Illinois University	6,600	7,350	750	11.4	5,565	6,293	728	13.1
Northern Illinois University	6,920	7,260	340	4.9	6,143	6,375	232	3.8
Western Illinois University	6,456	6,779	323	5.0	5,850	6,276	426	7.3
<u>Southern Illinois University</u>								
Carbondale	6,975	7,388	413	5.9	5,981	6,744	763	12.8
Edwardsville	5,850	6,201	351	6.0	5,088	5,540	452	8.9
<u>University of Illinois</u>								
Chicago	8,791	9,203	412	4.7	7,753	8,409	656	8.5
Springfield	7,215	7,403	188	2.6	6,215	6,805	590	9.5
Urbana-Champaign	10,915	11,096	181	1.7	9,386	10,173	787	8.4
Weighted Average	<u>\$ 7,838</u>	<u>\$ 8,249</u>	<u>\$ 411</u>	<u>5.2 %</u>	<u>\$ 6,876</u>	<u>\$ 7,499</u>	<u>\$ 623</u>	<u>9.1 %</u>
NEIU as a Percentage of State Average	84%	89%			81%	84%		

Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education Data

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Table 2  
ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES  
FY2010 GRADUATE TUITION INCREASES

	<u>FY2009</u>	<u>FY2010</u>	<u>\$</u> <u>Change</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>
Chicago State University	\$ 4,488	\$ 5,256	\$ 768	17.1 %
Eastern Illinois University	5,232	5,736	504	9.6
Governors State University	5,400	5,880	480	8.9
Illinois State University	4,896	5,280	384	7.8
Northeastern Illinois University	5,280	5,880	600	11.4
Northern Illinois University	6,296	6,576	280	4.4
Western Illinois University	5,178	5,709	531	10.3
<u>Southern Illinois University</u>				
Carbondale	7,629	8,482	853	11.2
Edwardsville	5,838	6,012	174	3.0
<u>University of Illinois</u>				
Chicago	11,388	11,946	558	4.9
Springfield	6,144	6,390	246	4.0
Urbana-Champaign	10,818	11,169	351	3.2
Weighted Average	<u>\$ 7,682</u>	<u>\$ 8,199</u>	<u>\$ 517</u>	<u>6.7 %</u>
NEIU as a % of State Average	69%	72%		

Note: Graduate rates are based on 24 enrolled credit hours.

Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education Data

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Table 3  
ILLINOIS PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES  
FY2010 GRADUATE TUITION  
COMPARISON WITH UNDERGRADUATE RATES

	FY2010 Graduate Tuition	Comparison - New Undergraduate And Graduate Tuition Rates	
		FY2010 New Undergraduate Tuition Restated to 24 Credit Hours	Graduate Tuition Percent Difference Undergraduate Tuition
Chicago State University	\$ 5,256	\$ 5,976	(12.0) %
Eastern Illinois University	5,736	5,736	-
Governors State University	5,880	5,376	9.4
Illinois State University	5,280	6,624	(20.3)
Northeastern Illinois University	5,880	5,880	-
Northern Illinois University	6,576	5,808	13.2
Western Illinois University	5,709	5,423	5.3
<u>Southern Illinois University</u>			
Carbondale	8,482	5,910	43.5
Edwardsville	6,012	4,961	21.2
<u>University of Illinois</u>			
Chicago	11,946	7,362	62.3
Springfield	6,390	5,922	7.9
Urbana-Champaign	11,169	8,877	25.8
Weighted Average	\$ 7,682	\$ 6,599	16.4 %

Note: Graduate rates are based on 24 enrolled credit hours.

Source: Illinois Board of Higher Education Data

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**Table 4  
NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
Schedule of Proposed Tuition and Fees  
For Discussion Purposes Only**

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	Change FY10 to FY11	
				Dollar	Percent
<b><u>TUITION (per credit hour)</u></b>					
Undergraduate - continuing	\$ 170.00	\$ 190.00	\$ 210.00	\$ 20.00	10.5 %
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2004	155.00	190.00	210.00	20.00	10.5
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2005	160.00	190.00	210.00	20.00	10.5
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2006	175.00	175.00	210.00	35.00	20.0
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2007 <sup>1</sup>	195.00	195.00	195.00	-	-
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2008 <sup>1</sup>	220.00	220.00	220.00	-	-
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2009 <sup>1</sup>	-	245.00	245.00	-	-
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2010 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	260.00	n/a	n/a
Graduate	220.00	245.00	260.00	15.00	6.1
Non-resident Undergraduate - continuing	340.00	380.00	420.00	40.00	10.5
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2004	310.00	380.00	420.00	40.00	10.5
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2005	320.00	380.00	420.00	40.00	10.5
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2006 <sup>1</sup>	350.00	350.00	420.00	70.00	20.0
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2007 <sup>1</sup>	390.00	390.00	390.00	-	-
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2008 <sup>1</sup>	440.00	440.00	440.00	-	-
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2009 <sup>1</sup>	-	490.00	490.00	-	-
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2010 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	520.00	n/a	n/a
Non-resident Graduate	440.00	490.00	520.00	30.00	6.1
<b><u>MANDATORY FEES</u></b>	<b>47.00</b>	<b>49.85</b>	<b>51.90</b>	<b>2.05</b>	<b>4.1</b>
Activity Fee	3.60	3.70	3.80	0.10	2.7
Student Union Fee	6.75	6.75	6.75	-	-
Campus Recreation Fee	3.60	3.60	3.60	-	-
Performing Arts Fee	0.70	0.70	0.80	0.10	14.3
Student Health Service Fee	1.65	1.65	1.70	0.05	3.0
Computer Resources Fee	12.50	14.50	15.75	1.25	8.6
Academic Enhancement Fee	7.50	7.50	7.50	-	-
Parking Fee (waivable)	10.70	11.45	12.00	0.55	4.8
Green Fee - rate per semester	3.00	3.00	3.00	-	-
Health Insurance Fee <sup>2</sup>	474.00	528.25	528.25	-	-
<b><u>TUITION AND FEES (based on 15 credit hours, excludes health insurance fee)</u></b>					
Undergraduate - continuing	\$ 3,258.00	\$ 3,600.75	\$ 3,931.50	\$ 330.75	9.2 %
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2004	3,033.00	3,600.75	3,931.50	330.75	9.2
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2005	3,108.00	3,600.75	3,931.50	330.75	9.2
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2006	3,333.00	3,375.75	3,931.50	555.75	16.5
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2007 <sup>1</sup>	3,633.00	3,675.75	3,706.50	30.75	0.8
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2008 <sup>1</sup>	4,008.00	4,050.75	4,081.50	30.75	0.8
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2009 <sup>1</sup>	-	3,730.50	4,456.50	726.00	19.5
Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2010 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	4,681.50	n/a	n/a
Graduate	4,008.00	4,425.75	4,681.50	255.75	5.8
Non-resident Undergraduate - continuing	5,808.00	6,450.75	7,081.50	630.75	9.8
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2004	5,358.00	6,450.75	7,081.50	630.75	9.8
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2005	5,508.00	6,450.75	7,081.50	630.75	9.8
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2006	5,958.00	6,000.75	7,081.50	1,080.75	18.0
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2007 <sup>1</sup>	6,558.00	6,600.75	6,631.50	30.75	0.5
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2008 <sup>1</sup>	7,308.00	7,350.75	7,381.50	30.75	0.4
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2009 <sup>1</sup>	-	7,405.50	8,131.50	726.00	9.8
Non-resident Undergraduate - newly enrolled Fall 2010 <sup>1</sup>	-	-	8,581.50	n/a	n/a
Non-resident Graduate	7,308.00	8,100.75	8,581.50	480.75	5.9

<sup>1</sup> Per Public Act 93-0028, Illinois undergraduate students newly enrolled starting Fall 2004 will have their tuition held constant for a period of four continuous academic years. This policy was extended at NEIU to non-resident undergraduate students.

<sup>2</sup> Assessed to all Undergraduate students enrolled in 12 or more credit hours who do not show evidence of other health insurance coverage. Final fee calculation for fiscal year 2011 is contingent on the results of negotiation with the insurance carrier. Amount shown is the charge per semester. Note that the Spring semester fee now provides insurance coverage during the Summer semester.

Note: Tuition and fees, other than health insurance and the Green Fee, are charged on a credit hour basis for each credit hour enrolled per semester up to 16 credit hours. There will be no tuition and fee charges for credit hours enrolled above 16 hours per semester.

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**I. ACTION ITEMS**

**B. EXPENDITURE RECOMMENDATION: PHYSICAL EDUCATION COMPLEX  
SKYLIGHT AND WALL REPLACEMENT**

**ITEM DESCRIPTION:**

This project replaces the existing 220 foot long sloped skylight and supporting wall in the Physical Education Complex. The skylight was installed as part of the original construction of the building in 1988. In past years the skylight has leaked and, more recently, the wood wall that supports the skylight has begun to fail. The wooden support will be replaced with a structural steel support. The skylight will be replaced with a new skylight utilizing thermo pane low e glass. Work also includes partial demolition and rebuilding of masonry support walls; cutting with patching and replacing of existing roofing; and rebuilding the interior soffit/wall below the skylight with metal studs and gypsum board. Board of Trustees approval is requested for this project.

**PROJECT COST:**

Base Bid	\$255,450
Additional funds if needed	<u>25,500</u>
TOTAL COST:	\$280,950

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:**

University Operating Funds	\$280,950
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**RECOMMENDED VENDOR:**

Chicago Commercial Contractors  
11921 Smith Drive  
Huntley, Illinois 60142

**SUMMARY OF BIDS:**

	<u>Base Bid</u>
Chicago Commercial Contractors	\$255,450
FBG Corporation	276,600
CMM Group	367,500
Boller	382,000
Berglund Construction	396,950
Bulley & Andrews Masonry Restoration	453,700
Paul Borg Construction	458,000
Kovalic Construction	479,000
Central Building	497,900
Wight Construction	560,710

## **II. INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. REQUIRED REPORT FOR THE HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION**

Northeastern Illinois University welcomed the Higher Learning Commission for a comprehensive evaluation visit January 22-24, 2007. The purpose of the Commission's visit was the evaluation of NEIU's application for continued accreditation as a comprehensive university. The accreditation was approved for the maximum period of ten years. In addition, the evaluation team's report indicated NEIU's need for strategic planning. Following its visit, the Higher Learning Commission requested a progress report covering the University's development and implementation of a strategic plan and its integration with other University processes and priorities. This progress report was due by the end of January, and the complete report was sent to the Higher Learning Commission on January 14, 2010. The body of the report is included here (without the various appendices). We expect the Higher Learning Commission to be fully satisfied, even pleased, with our report. We will receive the Commission's response in a few months and will inform the Board at that time.

**Northeastern Illinois University  
Chicago, Illinois**

**Progress Report  
January 12, 2010**

**A report in response to the comprehensive evaluation visit January 22-24, 2007 from the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.**

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### **Section I: Introduction**

Northeastern Illinois University welcomed the Higher Learning Commission, a commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, for a comprehensive evaluation visit January 22<sup>nd</sup> through the 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The purpose of the Commission's visit was the evaluation of NEIU's application for continued accreditation as a comprehensive University. Following their visit, the Higher Learning Commission requested a progress report covering the University's development and implementation of a strategic plan and its integration of strategic planning with other University processes and priorities. This progress report follows, detailing our accomplishments in strategic planning and integration.

In recent years, the public discourse in America has focused on the idea of change. Many leaders have called for change, though there are many conflicting notions of what changes are needed in our country. It is clear, however, that comprehensive urban universities are being called upon to provide higher education to a large and increasingly diverse population of students.

As the needs of students in our region change, Northeastern Illinois University must respond by rethinking our curriculum, our programs, and even our institutional culture. We need to deliver educational services to students with new goals and new professional paths. To do this, we need to plan to use our intellectual and material resources creatively and effectively. The NEIU Strategic Plan, presented in Section III, outlines goals and actions that define our efforts to make these changes. The process for developing this plan, outlined in Section II, included all internal constituencies (faculty, staff, students, and administration on the main campus as well as those at the Centers) in comprehensive strategic planning.

As the Strategic Plan integrates the university's main goals into a single document, it also functions as a tool for integrating planning for academic programs (including assessment); the use, maintenance, and construction of physical facilities; and the human resources, student support services, and the financial resources needed to implement and sustain the Strategic Plan. Section IV outlines how we have successfully integrated these areas by means of the Strategic Plan. In Section V, we discuss our progress on University-wide assessments and outcomes assessments and their connections to strategic planning.

### **Section II: The Planning Process**

In October 2007, the University publicly advertised for consulting expertise to assist in our strategic planning process. After a review of the submitted proposals, two firms were brought to campus for a series of discussions with the University community on how they could best assist us with our strategic planning process. In February 2008, Pappas Consulting Group Inc. was selected and worked with the University community over several months to assist us in the strategic planning process and the development of appropriate Strategic Goals and Action Steps.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE  
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FEBRUARY 11, 2010**

A major tenet of our strategic planning process was to be inclusive and open. This was done by having several public forums and numerous focus groups, and using technology to communicate to and get input from all areas of the University community. Public sessions and focus groups were held at all University locations. The University formed a Steering Committee of twenty-one faculty, staff and students, representing all campus locations, to provide overall leadership and communication. In addition, a Planning Team was formed that included eighty-two individuals, representing the Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, and all University areas, departments, employee categories, students, and University locations.

The following table describes the distribution of participation by the University community in the strategic planning process.

Faculty and Chairs:	28
Students:	6
Administrators and staff from Finance and Administration:	9
Administrators and staff from Student Affairs:	8
Administrators and staff from Institutional Advancement:	3
Administrators and staff from special programs:	5
Deans and Associate Deans:	10
Administrators and Staff from Academic Affairs:	7
Administrators and Staff from the Centers- El Centro, Carruthers' Center for Inner City Studies (CCICS), Chicago Teachers' Center (CTC):	7
Board of Trustees, Foundation Board, President's Office:	3

As the process began, Pappas Consulting was provided background data on the University and the region, as well as information about the Illinois Higher Education Public Agenda and the NEIU Presidential Task Force on the Millennium Student. Pappas conducted a series of focus groups and interviews to learn about the goals and aspirations of the various areas of the University and to get an understanding of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats, challenges, and values. From these focus groups, interviews and initial meetings with the Steering Committee, Pappas provided a planning framework, data compendium and analysis, and themes, and developed a draft for a revised mission statement, a new vision statement, and strategic goals and related action steps. The initial Pappas drafts were reviewed, discussed, and edited by more than 600 members of the University community. Numerous revisions were made to each document. The revised Mission Statement has been approved by the NEIU Board of Trustees. The Board has, as well, endorsed the entire Strategic Plan.

### Section III: The NEIU Strategic Plan

Strategic plans are founded on an institution's guiding statements—*Mission, Vision and Values*. These guiding statements are intended to provide direction for a fairly long time. By contrast, the activities—*Strategic Goals* and *Action Steps* as we have named them—are meant to provide direction only into the near future, perhaps five to seven years. They are more fluid and more specific, lending themselves to revision or completion as the University moves forward. The University has identified six Strategic Goals as the most critical objectives in meeting our Mission and achieving our Vision. These Goals, and the Action Steps accompanying each Goal, are being used to establish our work and budget priorities each year and will serve as the framework to determine the success of the University.

**Strategic Goal One: Student Success: Ensure student success from recruitment through graduation by creating a culture in which all members of the University community are engaged in attracting, educating, and graduating students who achieve the objectives for baccalaureate and graduate degrees.**

#### Action Steps

- 1.1: Develop, implement, and invest resources in a comprehensive enrollment management plan that engages the University community.
- 1.2: Build well-defined articulation agreements and foster strong relationships with community colleges and other colleges and universities to ensure clear transition pathways for transfer students.
- 1.3: Raise undergraduate and graduate student recruitment, retention, and graduation rates, including those for students from historically underrepresented groups, to specific University benchmarks and goals.
- 1.4: Create a system that provides intentional academic advising for all students across the University.
- 1.5: Improve coordination among student and academic support programs and services with a focus on quality, customer service, and intentional integration with the curriculum.

**Strategic Goal Two: Academic Excellence and Innovation: Develop an environment that supports curricular and pedagogical innovation aligned with the mission of the institution, the standards of the disciplines, student needs, and career and civic opportunities in a global society.**

#### Action Steps

- 2.1: Develop a Statement of Objectives for the Baccalaureate Degree and a Statement of Objectives for the Masters Degree at NEIU.

- 2.2: Review and revise general education based on national best practices and successful innovations at peer institutions.
- 2.3: Review and revise discipline specific curricula based on national best practices and workforce needs.
- 2.4: Support professional development opportunities for students through internships, international study, research, service learning, and career services.
- 2.5: Support and create interdisciplinary courses and programs based on best practices and institutional strengths.
- 2.6: Strengthen and integrate the University's academic offerings at CCICS, El Centro, and the University Center of Lake County through traditional and non-traditional means of program delivery.
- 2.7: Utilize diversity as a curricular/pedagogical dimension integrated with global and cultural studies and throughout the curriculum.
- 2.8: Establish technology-enriched curricula to include hybrid and online courses.
- 2.9: Focus on academic programs linked to regional economic development and workforce demands for the global society.

**Strategic Goal Three: *Urban Leadership*: Work collaboratively with educational, social service, governmental, and business institutions in Chicago and the region to build upon NEIU's tradition of community involvement.**

**Action Steps**

- 3.1: Improve preparation for higher education by working with K-12 schools.
- 3.2: Review and integrate the University's outreach and community service functions, with special emphasis on the unique programs provided by CTC, CCICS, and El Centro, to strengthen our community partnerships.
- 3.3: Encourage and support research projects that focus on such contemporary urban issues as education reform, immigration, economic development, and the environment.
- 3.4: Strive to make NEIU, as a designated Hispanic Serving Institution, an institution of choice for Latino students.
- 3.5: Develop a brand for NEIU that expresses pride and conveys the University's special attributes.
- 3.6: Implement a marketing and public relations plan to communicate the University brand to external and internal audiences.

**Strategic Goal Four: *Exemplary Faculty and Staff*: Invest in faculty and staff to make NEIU a world-class metropolitan university and an employer of choice.**

**Action Steps**

- 4.1: Build a culture of mutual respect and collegiality across the University and its multiple locations throughout Chicago.
- 4.2: Utilize innovative approaches to recruit and retain faculty and staff committed to student success.
- 4.3: Provide support systems and programs (including customer service training) that foster a positive work environment for all.
- 4.4: Increase collaboration and accountability across all units of the University.
- 4.5: Create a climate in which support for scholarship, professional development, and training is provided to faculty and staff based on best practices.

**Strategic Goal Five: Enhanced University Operations: Provide a supportive learning, teaching and working environment by improving operating productivity, physical infrastructure, and environmental sustainability.**

**Action Steps**

- 5.1: Streamline and redesign operational workflows and processes with the intent of improving service quality and productivity.
- 5.2: Add a residential life component consistent with the mission of the University.
- 5.3: Identify locations and develop facility plans for future student service centers, such as a cultural center and a "One Stop Shop."
- 5.4: Invest in technology infrastructure to support academic and operational goals.
- 5.5: Ensure that all classroom, laboratory, office, student, and support spaces are appropriate to accommodate current needs and long-term growth.
- 5.6: Establish environmental sustainability as a key element of NEIU's identity.
- 5.7: Ensure that the University community is safe and secure; that facilities and infrastructure, including technology and critical data, are protected; and that plans are in place to continuously monitor and enhance campus security and emergency preparedness.

**Strategic Goal Six: Fiscal Strength: Enhance the University's financial position by reducing reliance on state general funds and student tuition, diversifying revenue sources, and strengthening institutional relationships with federal, state, and local governments, and private sponsors.**

**Action Steps**

- 6.1: Support faculty and staff efforts to secure external funding that strengthens curricular, co-curricular and community development.

- 6.2: Strengthen advocacy efforts with federal, state, and local governments to secure new appropriations for the University.
- 6.3: Identify and capitalize on providing extended learning services.
- 6.4: Develop and implement the infrastructure for fundraising programs and alumni relations.
- 6.5: Increase corporate, foundation, and other philanthropic support to the University.
- 6.6: Increase private support from individuals (including faculty, staff, alumni, and others).

#### **Section IV: Strategic Planning Implementation**

How does our Strategic Plan integrate planning for academic programs (including assessment); the use, maintenance, and construction of physical facilities; and the human resources, student support services, and the financial resources needed to implement and sustain the Strategic Plan? As outlined in Section III, NEIU's Strategic Plan includes Six Strategic Goals with broad Action Steps for each. As we implement the Plan, we annually select specific activities under Action Steps for each Goal for our University-wide focus, a list we call the *NEIU Annual Work Plan*. To answer the question about integration of planning with each of these areas, we look to our Annual Work Plans to see how the choice of each area's activities was guided by the Strategic Plan. Below are some highlights of the 2009 Work Plan results and the 2010 Work Plan, along with some context for these activities. This section is divided into four areas of discussion: *physical facilities*, *human resources*, *student support services*, and *financial resources*.

#### **How do our physical facilities support our program needs according to our Strategic Plan?**

The University's Strategic Plan recognizes the recommendations of the Higher Learning Commission and includes specific action steps to "ensure that all classrooms, laboratory, office, student, and support spaces are appropriate to accommodate current needs and long-term growth." The Higher Learning Commission report also noted that "it appears that the campus has numerous individual facilities-related plans in place but does not have an overall campus facilities master plan." To that end, the University is currently undertaking a comprehensive space inventory and assessment that will form the basis for a long-term facilities master plan, including a utilities infrastructure master plan, which is scheduled for fiscal year 2011.

In addition to the undertaking in the University's Strategic Plan for a facilities master plan, many other facilities-related actions support the program needs identified in the Strategic Plan. Results of assessment and program reviews have suggested the need for additional laboratory and classroom space, as well as appropriate maintenance of such space. This

long-term need has been addressed in several ways; most significantly the University has developed several capital funding requests for new buildings.

The University historically placed a high priority on requesting state capital appropriations for maintaining and enhancing current space, usually at the expense of requesting new space. As enrollments increased, the University found itself with the least amount of non-residential space compared to the other Illinois public universities. As a result, the University set its highest capital priority as securing funding for a new Education Building. Approval for a capital funding project for this building was received this year.

With funding from the United States Department of Education, the University undertook conceptual planning for the Education Building concurrently with the development of a long-term plan for the south side of campus. This planning identified future building sites for four new buildings – the state-appropriated Education Building, a new Science Building, an additional Parking Facility, and a Student Residence Facility. (It should be noted that adding a student residential life component to campus is included in the Strategic Plan). This initial planning for the Education Building and the south side of campus also identified the need for a comprehensive assessment of the utility infrastructure needed to support these planned facilities. The comprehensive facilities master plan will build upon the work completed as part of the planning for the south side of campus.

Consultants hired to help the College of Business and Management move towards AACSB accreditation noted the importance of adequate classroom space as a key factor in the accreditation process. As a result, the Dean of the College and the Provost worked with Finance and Administration to develop and implement plans for the renovation of a building to house the College of Business and Management. Offices to accommodate a growing faculty to meet student need, and the need for meetings spaces, as well as classrooms, were determining factors in changing the original intent of the remodeling from support space to instructional space.

Several assessment and task force reports related to student writing motivated the formation of The Center for Academic Writing. Newly established on the fourth floor of the library, the 1,700 square foot center provides tutoring and mentoring support for students enrolled in writing-intensive courses. The facility has space to hold faculty workshops. A ten week course-design workshop for faculty who will teach writing-intensive courses is offered annually. The Center also houses faculty interest groups on scholarly writing. The Center was made possible through grant and university funds.

Technology improvements are another example of how assessment and program review inform the development of the Strategic Plan and results in action in the area of facilities. For example, the NCATE standards for accreditation of teacher education programs and the Illinois standards for teachers indicate the need for teacher education programs to include instruction in the use of technology. Moreover, the process of program review affirms that a variety of instructional technologies are needed to keep up-to-date with changes in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) disciplines and to support student learning. As part of program reviews and self-studies, both Art and Music faculty and reviewers noted the need for technologies to support instruction and the need for more “smart classrooms.” Finally, the trend toward greater use of supplemental instructional programs supported by technologies across the country has been noted through assessment in the Academic Development program. In response to these findings and to further the University’s goal of academic excellence and innovation, the University is nearing completion of the installation of appropriate instructional technology in every classroom at each University site.

The University also undertook a competitive hiring process to select an energy services company that is now in the process of completing a comprehensive investment grade energy audit to identify and recommend university-wide energy conservation measures, including those at the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies. The results of this audit and the implementation of recommended energy conservation measures address the strategic goal of enhanced operations and the specific strategic action step to establish environmental sustainability as a key element of NEIU’s identity.

The University secured funding and is taking steps to construct a Multicultural Center, a key component of recruiting and retaining a diverse student body and making NEIU an institution of choice for Latino students. And finally, the University is looking strategically at the use of its limited facilities and implementing schedule changes such as expanded weekend offerings and an adjustment to the activity hour (when classes are not scheduled so that our students can participate in co-curricular activities on campus) that will allow increased course scheduling during times when student demand is greatest and make more efficient and effective use of the facilities.

**How do our human resources support our program needs according to our Strategic Plan?**

When discussing human resources support for University programs, it should be made clear that our discussion of human resources refers to the totality of our faculty and staff efforts, not simply the efforts put forth by the Office of Human Resources.

In the Strategic Plan's Goal Four, Northeastern identified as one of the University's highest priorities to "invest in faculty and staff to make NEIU a world-class metropolitan university and an employer of choice." This goal is purposely placed after the first three goals – student success, academic excellence and innovation, and urban education – to demonstrate that the foundation of our first three strategic initiatives can only be accomplished through a dedicated, focused, effective, talented, and supported faculty and staff.

Investing in faculty and staff, as outlined in the Strategic Plan, will be accomplished by addressing the following five action steps:

- Build a culture of mutual respect and collegiality across the University and its multiple locations throughout Chicago
- Utilize innovative approaches to recruit and retain faculty and staff committed to student success
- Provide support systems and programs (including customer service training) that foster a positive work environment for all
- Increase collaboration and accountability across all units on campus
- Create a climate in which support for scholarship, professional development, and training is provided to faculty and staff based on best practices

As a result of the strategic planning, the University has focused and supported faculty and staff efforts in several key areas. First, a University-wide initiative began to improve services to both students and to University colleagues. "Great Service Matters" has become a multi-faceted initiative to encourage all faculty and staff to improve how they interact with and support student learning and success, how they provide better customer service, and how they support the work of their University colleagues. The Great Service Matters committee, made up of a cross-section of University faculty and staff, has helped to institutionalize the initiative so that professional development seminars and programs will be ongoing. The goal is to make sure that all University employees provide the best service, with the first priority being the recruitment and retention of students and improving their opportunities to succeed. In addition, the initiative is improving employee morale, as well as operational efficiency and effectiveness.

Another area where the University's human resources are supporting program needs according to the Strategic Plan is the creation of the Enrollment Planning Council. This council includes the three vice presidents, the deans of the four colleges (including the Graduate College), the executive director of Enrollment Services, director of Institutional Research, and the directors of the two off-site educational centers. The Council's goal is to improve student recruitment, retention

and success – the highest University priority. The Council members represent all instructional, instructional support, and administrative aspects of the University; implementation of Council initiatives becomes the responsibility of the area executives.

For example, the Council studied tuition waivers and determined that the allocation of waivers was not strategic and did not appropriately support student recruitment and retention initiatives. It was determined, at the Council level, to revise the allocation methodology to create dean and provost scholarship programs for both new freshmen and transfer students to recruit students with higher GPA's. Because this initiative came from the Council, it was incorporated into the budget process, it was conveyed to the departments that had traditional waiver levels reduced, and it was integrated into the scholarship and financial aid processes to appropriately handle the administrative aspects of the program.

Great Service Matters and the Enrollment Planning Council are two significant examples of how the University is strategically focusing and allocating human resources to address program needs. Additional examples of supporting human resources to meet program needs are the University's resource allocation decisions to increase the number of funded tenure track faculty positions (even with the current budget challenges); adopting the goal to bring all faculty and staff salaries to the median salary of peers; assuring that all new faculty and staff have appropriate technology on their first day of work; and implementing employee self-service so that employees on-line can change personal and paycheck deposit information. All of these human resources initiatives were the result of the Strategic Plan action steps.

**How do student support services support program needs according to the Strategic Plan?**

Our top Strategic Goal is to ensure student success from recruitment through graduation by creating a culture in which all members of the University community are engaged in attracting, educating, and graduating students who achieve the objectives for baccalaureate and graduate degrees. To this end, we have taken on a variety of activities to integrate student support services with program needs.

For example, we have improved and streamlined Financial Aid operations to reduce paperwork and better utilize technology; to reduce processing time for applications and generally improve customer service; and to better utilize financial aid as a recruitment and retention mechanism. We used the outside expertise of a consultant from Financial Aid Services, who assessed our financial aid services and helped us to develop an action plan to improve the financial aid awarding process, the work flow, and the handling of student files. Changes in this area included the

elimination of requirements that were more stringent than federal regulations, such as the practice of reviewing 100% of all FAFSA results. This change results in verification of only the 40% selected by the government for verification, freeing financial aid advisers to provide better service to students. A second major change was the elimination of the NEIU Financial Aid application, which mostly duplicated the FAFSA. This implementation was made possible by upgrading to a newer version of Banner Self-Service Financial Aid. There were several other improvements in the efficiency of the financial aid office: we identified and eliminated the printing of documents that are available online; we send more frequent letters to students reminding them to complete financial aid applications; and we created a new IT support position within Financial Aid dedicated to supporting the Banner system (replacing an Assistant Director who retired). Formal assessment is underway, but the bi-annual lines down the hall outside of the Financial Aid office are gone, and the number of student complaints about financial aid has dropped.

A more general example of how student support services are supporting program needs via the Strategic Plan is through the integration of two university divisions that are crucial to our students: Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. This direction was chosen in conjunction with Action Step 1.5, improving coordination among student and academic support programs and services with a focus on quality, customer service, and intentional integration with the curriculum. To that end, we are reviewing the organization of our Student Affairs division to strengthen integration with Academic Affairs (in areas such as orientation, first-year programs and service learning) in order to increase student engagement. Again turning to outside expertise, we brought in two consultants who reviewed the structure and operation of Student Affairs and submitted reports to the President. The President and Provost reviewed reports with the staff of the Student Affairs area. A search is currently underway for a new Vice President for Student Life, who will help us more closely align the work of the division of Student Affairs with the office of Academic Affairs.

**How do our finances support our program needs according to our Strategic Plan?**

Any discussion of University finances and financial support for our program needs must be prefaced with a few comments about the overall financial environment in which the University operates. The state of Illinois, as recently noted in the national press, is facing severe and structural financial issues. Revenues continue to decline and the pressure to cut financial support for state services, including higher education, increases each year. Illinois public higher education incurred significant budget reductions starting in fiscal year 2002. In recent years, financial support has been more stable, but remains significantly below the fiscal year 2002 funding level. In the current fiscal year 2010, public university

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funding in Illinois was held level only because of the influx of federal stimulus funding, which will not be available in next fiscal year 2011.

In addition, the University is under increasing pressure to control student costs. While the tuition rates at Northeastern are significantly below the average rates for Illinois public universities, the rate of increase at Northeastern has increased pressure to maintain more moderate rate increases.

Given that background, in the current fiscal year the University allocated its available discretionary funding to its highest priorities. The University increased the number of funded tenure track positions, supported competitive initiatives to enhance its role as a Hispanic Serving Institution, and supported its marketing campaign to increase student recruitment. In addition, the University provided non-recurring salary enhancements to non-negotiated staff and honored all collectively bargained salary agreements.

To fully involve campus constituencies in the planning and budgeting processes, the University reconstituted the University Planning and Budget Council (UPBC) to more fully integrate the various constituent representatives in the planning and budget process. The University President appointed a faculty representative to serve as chair of the UPBC for three years to assist with the changes to the UPBC and to provide continuity and direction to the Council. The UPBC is a fifteen person university-wide council with members from faculty, civil service, students, and administration, with each three-year membership determined by the governing councils of each group. The Council is responsible for advising the President on university planning and budgeting, in consonance with the University mission, vision, values, goals and strategic direction. The University Vice Presidents present to the Council each of their area's proposed Work Plan for the fiscal year under discussion, and the University President provides the Council with copies of state, IBHE, Board of Trustees, and University planning reports and budget documents. The Council uses these materials to communicate to their constituencies the administrative proposals, deliberates within its membership based on the feedback of each member's constituency, and produces budgetary and planning recommendations for the President.

One of the areas identified in the Strategic Plan as warranting an increased financial commitment is Institutional Advancement. Northeastern had a long history of underutilizing its fundraising capabilities and the Strategic Plan identified that area as one in need of additional investment. That investment has been leveraged into significant increases in giving. For the first time in the University's history, annual giving to the University has exceeded \$1.0 million. These fundraising successes are being translated into increased scholarship opportunities

for NEIU students, additional cultural activities on campus, and expanded facility improvements.

The Higher Learning Commission report also asked the University to review the reported high institutional support costs at the University. The University examined costs assigned to the institutional support function and, per discussions during the reaccreditation visit, reclassified the costs previously aggregated into institutional support that more appropriately should have been allocated to multiple functional categories. These costs included technology and health insurance costs. As a result of these adjustments, the University's institutional support costs are now in a more normal range.

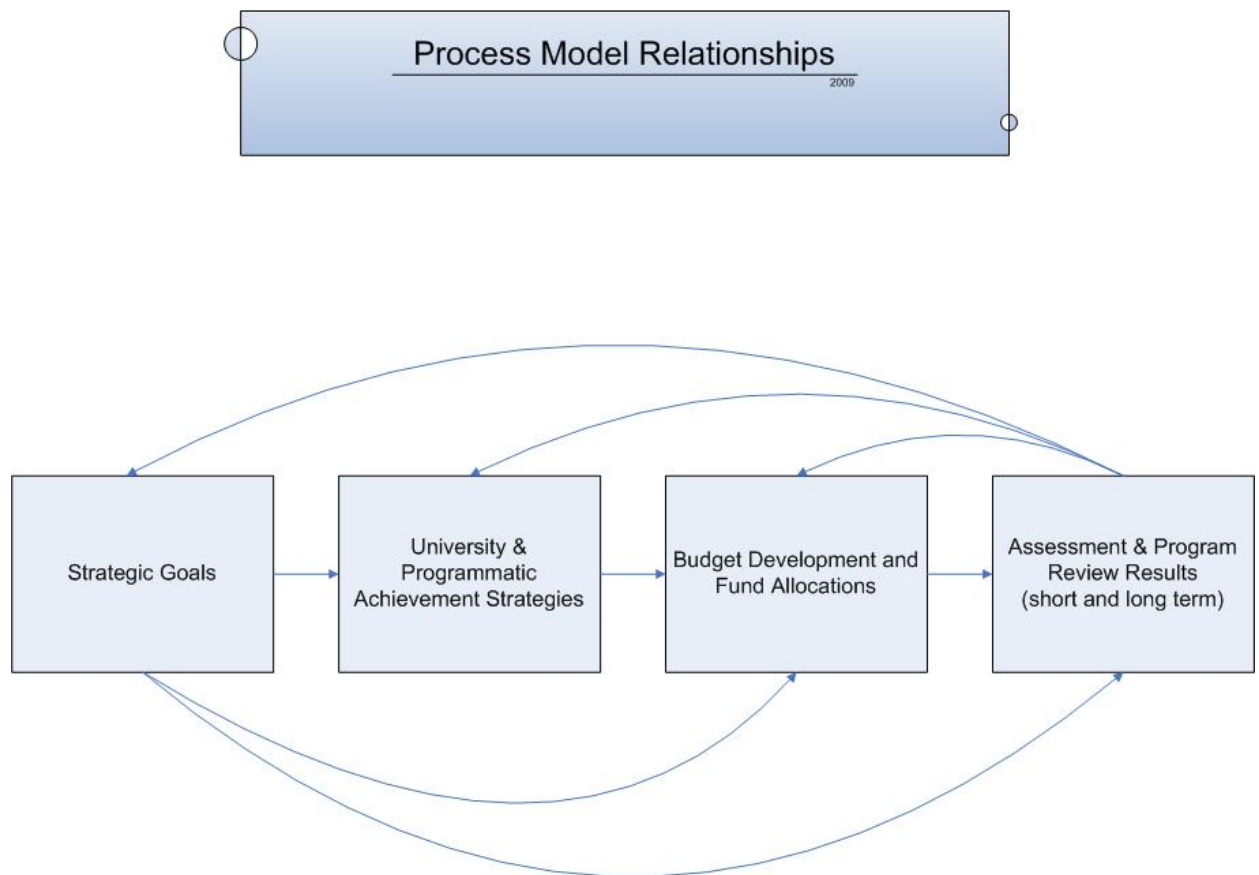
### **Section V: Assessment and Strategic Planning**

As we implement the Strategic Plan, university-wide assessment practices have informed our priorities. For example, the Office of Institutional Research has linked specific NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) data to the recently developed Baccalaureate Goals as benchmarks for assessing our progress on achieving these goals. Using NSSE generally, the University can see which strategic goals related to student satisfaction and engagement need to be prioritized. We will be administering the NSSE again in the Spring semester. We have also administered two Noel-Levitz instruments for assessing student outcomes: the Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Retention Management System - College Student Inventory. We administered the SSI in the Spring of 2005, and will administer it again this Spring. The RMS-CSI was administered by our Academic Advising office to incoming first-year students in order to identify at-risk students and help the University develop strategies for supporting these students. Based on the results of these assessment tools, in the Fall of 2009 we introduced the ConnectionsNow course for campus employees to improve customer service.

Action Step 1.3, under our first Strategic Goal (Student Success), connects outcomes assessment directly to strategic planning: *Raise undergraduate and graduate student recruitment, retention, and graduation rates, including those for students from historically underrepresented groups, to specific University benchmarks and goals.*

A key strategy of the University's Assessment Plan is the linkage between annual outcomes assessments, comprehensive program reviews, and accreditation activities which occur on a multi-year basis. Consider the figure below. Strategic Goals serve as a cornerstone for the relationships among strategic planning processes, programmatic achievement strategies, budget processes, and assessment. Strategic goals inform the University-wide and programmatic achievement strategies chosen, which are then supported by budget and fund allocations. The extent to which

these strategies are effective is determined through assessment. Outcomes assessment results are an important component of academic program review processes. In one case, program review identified one department's unsatisfactory assessment program, leading to University intervention in the form of the appointment of the Director of the Center for Teaching and Learning to work with the faculty in that department to develop a successful assessment program. Program review processes also serve to help the program uncover new opportunities for program development and improved student learning. Taken together, assessment and program review results help inform the development of strategic goals, budget and funding development.



We are further connecting specific best practices in outcomes assessment to strategic planning by identifying exemplary assessment programs and inviting these outstanding departments to make presentations to the President's Council. This year, the President's Council heard presentations on best practices in outcomes assessment by faculty from the master's program in business administration and faculty from the bachelor's program in political science on their exemplary assessment programs in their departments. Such presentations will be offered to faculty on an annual basis as examples of home-grown best practices.

**Section VI: Conclusion**

Northeastern Illinois University remains committed to operating with integrity to ensure fulfillment of our mission, through structures and processes that involve the board, administration, faculty, staff, and students. Our allocation of resources and our processes for evaluation and planning demonstrate our capacity to fulfill our mission, improve the quality of our education, and respond to future challenges and opportunities. The work that we have done in the process of developing our Strategic Plan and the work we continue to do to implement all aspects of the Strategic Plan underline our commitment to progress.

**II. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**B. FOLLOW-UP REPORT ON UNIVERSITY CONTRACTING**

**Overview**

At the February 2009 Board committee meeting, a report was presented which provided an overview of University efforts in attaining minority, female and disabled-owned contracting goals and a brief review of the increasingly stringent State of Illinois procurement requirements which is making it more difficult for vendors and contractors to bid on state business. This report provides an update of University performance in achieving these contracting goals, along with recent legislative changes that likely will impact the ability of businesses to contract with the State of Illinois.

**Purchases from Minority, Female, and Disabled-owned Businesses**

The State of Illinois established the Business Enterprise Program for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities (BEP) to promote the economic development of businesses owned by minorities, females, and persons with disabilities. The Business Enterprise for Minorities, Females, and Persons with Disabilities Act (30 ILCS 575/) became effective August 1994.

To comply with guidelines established by this program, the State of Illinois sets goals for all state agencies and public universities and specifically requires Northeastern to establish a goal of making at least 19 percent of all purchases of commodities, equipment, and contractual services, after allowable exemptions, from certified minority, females, and disabled-owned businesses. The certification takes place through the State of Illinois Department of Central Management Services (CMS). The program also recognizes other minority-owned business certifications made by the Illinois Department of Transportation, the Women's Business Development Council, and the Chicago Business Development Council.

These certifications are limited to firms whose minority ownership is at least 51 percent and control of management and daily business operations of the firm is by the minority owners. Without this or a comparable certification, a firm is not recognized by any state agency or university as a minority, female, or disabled-person owned business.

**University Efforts and Results to Increase Business Enterprise Program Participation**

Northeastern Illinois University, through the University Purchasing Department, is committed to attaining the goals established by CMS and submits two reports to the State CMS BEP Department each fiscal year. Those reports are the Fiscal Year Compliance Plan, which details the University's goals for the upcoming

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fiscal year, and the Fiscal Year Expenditure Report, which details the University's achievements relative to its goals for the past fiscal year.

State achievement data are available for fiscal years 2002 through 2009. During that period, the University's MAFBE participation goals averaged \$411,233 per year and our actual expenditures averaged \$746,240 per year. On average, the University exceeded its state MAFBE goal by \$335,007, or 81 percent.

In the most recent fiscal year 2009, the University exceeded its aggregate MAFBE goal, as outlined below:

<u>Vendor Category</u>	<u>Goal</u>	<u>Actual</u>
Female Non-Minority	\$219,429	\$ 44,277
Female Minority	73,143	139,464
Minority	121,905	287,745
<u>Disabled</u>	<u>48,762</u>	<u>70,780</u>
Total	\$463,239	\$542,265

Additionally, a contract in the amount of \$234,178 for the CCICS West Face Façade Repairs was awarded to a minority owned business which is certified with the City of Chicago, but not the State CMS BEP Department. Inclusion of this contract brings FY09 University MAFBE expenditures to a total amount of \$776,443.

**Expanding Support for MAFBE Businesses**

At the November 2008 Board committee meeting, it was recommended that the University extend its outreach efforts to further develop a diverse contractor base. The critical issues in expanding minority and disabled-owned participation in University contracts for goods and services include the development of an increased base of certified MAFBE suppliers and increasing University efforts to attract minority firms to do business with the University. The University has increased its effort to network with a broader base of minority-owned suppliers and target market specific bid opportunities to them.

Purchasing Department staff has also met directly with several minority contractor associations to discuss the University's desire to build continuing business relationships with their members and to use their services to further the distribution of University bid documents through their vendor networks. Discussions have been conducted with the Alliance of Business Leaders and Entrepreneurs, the Illinois Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and the Hispanic

American Contractors Industry Association. Notifications of bid opportunities are provided to these organizations.

**Vendor Certifications and Requirements for State of Illinois Bids and Contracts**

When estimated University expenditures for the purchase of goods or services meet the threshold that requires competitive bidding (\$20,000 for Professional and Artistic Services, \$50,000 for supplies or services, and \$70,000 for construction), a competitive bid must be advertised to the public via the Illinois Public Higher Education Procurement Bulletin. Per Procurement Rules, purchase contracts must be awarded only to the lowest cost responsible and responsive bidder whose bid meets the requirements and criteria set forth in the Invitation for Bids (specifications).

In addition to being the lowest cost responsible and responsive bidder meeting specifications, the bidder must also provide compliance certifications in order to meet various State of Illinois legislative mandates or commercial requirements (see list in Appendix A). In general, these requirements were adopted by the Illinois General Assembly to respond to a specific social issue. For example, vendors must certify that they pay prevailing wages, adhere to environmental requirements, and register with the State Board of Elections so that interested parties can track any political contributions from the contractor. Individually, these are appropriate and socially responsible certifications. However, in aggregate, these certifications hamper small, and it seems often minority vendors, from participating in the Illinois procurement process.

The recent passage of Senate Bill 51 during the spring 2009 legislative session amended the Procurement Code to require that bidders provide additional certifications with their bids. Effective July 1, 2010, bidders must demonstrate that they have registered with the Secretary of State and have been certified by receiving an Authority to do Business in Illinois. The cost of this certification application is a minimum of \$175, and then once certified, they must annually file a report and pay \$75 to keep their certification current. Subcontractors will also need to provide all certifications required under the Procurement Code, and every contractor and subcontractor with a multi-year contract or subcontract will be required to certify by July 1 of each fiscal year covered by the contract that it continues to satisfy the certification requirements of the Code.

Another standing certification requirement is that all bidders must provide an Illinois Department of Human Rights (IDHR) number with their bid or proposal. However, effective January 1, 2010, all bidders filing for, or renewing, an IDHR number will be charged a \$75 registration fee. Such registration will be valid for five years from the date of issuance. The addition of these mandatory application and renewal fees for certifications required with the submittal of bids presents a new challenge for bidders of State of Illinois work.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
FEBRUARY 11, 2010**

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This information is intended to provide perspective on the complexity of state bid documents and the challenges that bidders face in meeting these compliance requirements on a timely basis. Regardless of these challenges, Northeastern Illinois University has a very successful record in meeting its annual Minority, Female, and Disabled-owned Business Compliance Plan. The University is encouraged by the level of participation by minority, female, and disabled-owned businesses in University contracts and services and will continue to expand these outreach efforts.

**APPENDIX A  
STATE OF ILLINOIS CERTIFICATIONS  
REQUIRED TO BE INCLUDED IN ALL BIDS AND CONTRACTS**

The following certifications are required to be included in all bids and contracts:

Provides information to the University or Other State Agencies:

- Bidder Application Form
- Financial Interest and Potential Conflict of Interest Disclosures
- Registration with Illinois State Board of Elections
- Authority to do Business in Illinois - \$175 initial fee
- Illinois Department of Human Rights Certification - \$75 initial fee

Provides to NEIU at additional cost to the vendor:

- Certificates of Insurance
- Bid Bond

Vendor certifies that it will comply with the following legislative mandates:

- David-Bacon Act
- Record Retention Act
- Prevailing Wage Law
- No Contracts with the Government of Iran
- An Act Requiring Employment of Illinois Workers on Public Projects
- Submission of Certified Payrolls (820 ILCS 130/5)
- Contract Debt Certification
- Domestic Products Act
- Lead Poisoning Prevention Act
- Substance Abuse Prevention on Public Works Project Act
- Steel Products Procurement Act
- U.S. Export Administration Act
- P.A. 93-0307 prohibits purchase of foreign-made equipment produced through convict, forced or indentured labor
- Sarbanes-Oxley Act
- Environmental Protection Act
- Hiring of State Employees
- Bribery Conviction Clause
- Public Education Act (Loan Default)
- Child Labor Act
- Barred from Contracting, Bid Rigging, Bid Rotating Law
- Drug Free Workplace Act
- Workers Compensation Act
- Human Rights Act
- Equal Employment Opportunity Clause
- Successor Vendor Clause
- Illinois Information Technology Accessibility Act

**II. INFORMATION ITEM**

**C. UPDATE ON ENERGY PERFORMANCE AUDIT**

During this past year, the Northeastern Illinois University Board of Trustees received and discussed several reports on University efforts to reduce energy consumption and costs. At its June 11, 2009 meeting, the Board of Trustees approved the contract with NORESCO, an energy services company, to conduct an investment grade energy audit. The contract negotiations with NORESCO were completed and the energy audit began in September. Below is a summary of the work NORESCO has completed to date:

- Analyzed utility billing, usage, and supplier contracts
- Collected and analyzed building occupancy data and usage profiles
- Modeled baseline energy consumption patterns, using Department of Energy guidelines, and compared them to actual utility metered data
- Field measured equipment readings to establish existing baseline operating conditions
- Placed data loggers in key areas to determine trends in light fixture operating hours and HVAC system operation
- Requested trends for building automation readings
- Completed a survey of lighting fixtures throughout campus
- Completed a survey of restroom plumbing fixtures throughout campus
- Conducted a review of daily boiler and chiller logs

The work conducted by NORESCO during the investment grade energy audit will form the basis for the list of energy conservation measures and related pricing, savings, and potential vendors and subcontractors. This information should be presented to the University by the end of February, and the final energy audit is expected to be submitted the first week of March. Results of the energy audit, recommended energy conservation measures, and potential funding sources will be presented at the April Board of Trustees meeting.

Measures which reduce energy consumption are critically important to the University for two reasons. Most important, natural gas and electricity costs at Northeastern have increased 52 percent, or \$824,000, over the past four years and, without energy saving measures, these costs will continue to command an increasing share of our operating budget. Secondly, it is important that the University demonstrates to our students and the community that we are a good steward of our resources by reducing energy costs as well as a good citizen by protecting the environment.

**II. INFORMATION ITEMS**

**D. NOTIFICATIONS TO THE BOARD OF CERTAIN EXPENDITURES:**

**1. PURCHASES BETWEEN \$50,000 AND \$100,000**

Board of Trustees Regulations require that the President report to the Board purchases of at least \$50,000 but less than \$100,000, other than those exempt from Board approval (e.g., utilities). The following is a list of those purchases since the last Board meeting.

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Purchase Order Amount</u>
Franczek Radelet PC	Legal Services	\$85,000
BLDD Architects	Students Center for Science Engagement	\$80,500

**2. ERP RELATED EXPENDITURES**

At the April 6, 2006 meeting, the Board of Trustees resolved that "in order to facilitate the timely implementation of the ERP project, (the Board) delegates to the University President the authority to approve such expenditures and contracts directly related to the ERP project without prior approval and that the President will report to the Board on all such approved expenditures and contracts normally requiring Board approval at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees." Under this authority, the following contract has been approved and is reported to the Board as required.

Sungard Higher Education	Annual Banner Support	\$397,419
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**E. NEWS AND EVENTS**

**1. Jewel Box Series – Nov 20**

On Friday, November 20, the Jewel Box Series featured the woodwind ensemble Quintet Attacca. The music instructor and founder of the quintet, Collin Anderson, teaches bassoon at NEIU. Fellow colleagues, Rose Sperrazza (clarinet) and Christine Worthing (horn) joined the quintet to perform the Mozart Serenade for winds. The concert was broadcasted live on WFMT 98.7 FM, Chicago's classical radio station.

**2. White House Holiday Party – December 8**

On Tuesday, December 8, NEIU Music Professor and trumpet player, Travis Heath had the honor of performing with his Brass Roots Trio at a White House holiday party. White House intelligence enjoyed the Trio's latest CD, "American Impressions", so much that they requested a command performance.

Information about the Trio and their music can be found at [www.brassrootstrio.com](http://www.brassrootstrio.com) and at the Office of Cultural Events at NEIU.

**3. Academic Honors – December 10**

On Thursday, December 10, President Hahs and Provost Frank hosted the Academic Honors Reception for students who are graduates of August and December 2009 and earned a cumulative Grade Point Average of 3.5 to 4.0, or have met the criteria of the Honors Program. Edward Dykla gave greetings from the Board of Trustees. There were over 200 students, guests, faculty and staff in attendance.

**4. Student Life Distinguished Service Award Winner – December 11**

The Student Life Professional Development Committee chose its first Student Life Distinguished Service Award winner, Veronica Rodriguez, Assistant Director of Student Activities. The Distinguished Service Award recognizes administrators, faculty, and staff within Student Life who go above and beyond their basic job descriptions by providing superior service to students, co-workers and community members.

**5. Polish American Christmas Gala – December 12**

On Saturday, December 12, NEIU hosted the Polish American Christmas Gala Concert in the Auditorium. Anna Krysinski, the General Director of Polonia Ensemble started the evening with warm holiday greetings and was assisted by widely known Polish-American community representative Mark Dobrzycki as Master of Ceremonies. Over 400 attendees including Trustee Ed Dykla enjoyed the festive array of music, carols, song and dance of the Polish Roman Catholic

Union of America's (PRCUA) Polonia Ensemble. Academic Development was proud to co-sponsor such a wonderful event in the spirit of the Holiday Season. The evening festivities came to an end with final holiday wishes in Polish from the ensemble founder, Artistic Director and Choreographer, Celina Roznowska.

**6. Finals Week Late Night Breakfast and Study – December 15-16**

Student Activities, Student Union, and Sodexo worked together this past semester to provide an opportunity for students to study later at night in the Student Union. The Union, which normally closes at 10:30 pm, stayed open until 1:00 am for two evenings during finals. Sodexo kept the "grab and go" open late and provided a discounted rate breakfast for one night. Student Activities provided cookies, games, and stress relievers including Zumba and dance lessons.

**7. Holiday Reception – December 18**

The NEIU community gathered to celebrate the holidays on Friday, December 18. The NEIU Holiday Reception is a wonderful tradition that brings the University community together to celebrate all that has been accomplished throughout the year. President Hahs, her husband Billy and the Vice Presidents greeted over 400 guests.

**8. Jewel Box Series – December 18**

On Friday, December 18, the Jewel Box Series featured Ensemble Galilei, a group of six musicians who performed Celtic music and traditional carols. The concert was advertised on several radio stations - WFMT 98.7 FM, WXRT 93.1 FM and WBEZ 91.5 FM and was broadcasted live on WFMT 98.7 FM, Chicago's classical radio station.

**9. Commencement – December 19**

On Saturday, December 19, the University held the December 2009 Commencement Convocation. Two ceremonies were held in the Physical Education Complex. The morning ceremony was for students graduating from the Graduate College with concentrations in the Arts and Sciences, and Bachelor degrees from the College of Arts and Sciences and the Non-traditional Degree Program. The afternoon ceremony was for students graduating from the Graduate College with concentrations in the Business, Accounting and Education, and Bachelor degrees from the College of Business and Management and the College of Education. Carlos Azcoitia gave greetings from the Board of Trustees for the morning ceremony and Jin Lee gave the greetings from the Board of Trustees for the afternoon ceremony. Dr. Hamid Akbari, College of Business and Management, was presented with the Audrey Reynolds Distinguished Teaching Award. President Hahs gave the main address. There

were 662 graduates, and approximately 2500 guests and 110 faculty and staff participated in the ceremonies.

**10. Haitian Relief Effort at NEIU – January 2010**

Northeastern Illinois University launched a Haitian Relief Effort in collaboration with various departments across the University including the Justice Studies Department, Academic Development, NEIU's Student Government Association, Office of Student Activities, Office of Student Life, Sociology Department, and the Social Work Department. One hundred percent of the contributions to the Haitian Relief Fund at NEIU will go directly to supporting the humanitarian efforts in Haiti. Contributions will be donated to the American Red Cross—an official partner institution of NEIU.

**11. Ask Me Campaign – January 4-16**

The NEIU community served as ambassadors by wearing Ask Me buttons and answering student inquires to help new and returning students with questions and concerns at the start of the Spring Semester. In addition, Student Life staff hosted a week-long resource information table in Village Square from Monday, January 11 through Friday, January 16, with additional information tables at the Science Building, Ronald Williams Library, El Centro, and the Carruthers Center for Inner City Studies (CCICS). Over 400 students obtained information and asked questions about a wide range of issues via the information tables.

**12. N Alert – Emergency Communication System – January 11**

Northeastern Illinois University is pleased to announce a new Emergency Communication System - N Alert. The N Alert system sends University security and closure alerts through text messages, voicemails, and e-mails to members of the University community who sign up through NEIUport. Information about University closures due to weather will also be provided through this system. N Alert became active beginning on January 11, 2010.

**13. Noel-Levitz and NASPA Webinar — January 14**

The Office of Student Life sponsored its first online webinar series from the Noel-Levitz and NASPA (National Association of Student Personnel Administrators) program. The webinar, "E-Expectations of Today's College Students", examined what enrolled students want from their chosen institution's website and their preferences for communication with the institution. Participants learned what interactive tools, social networking tactics, web content, and e-communications strategies are most likely to keep students interested in their chosen school.

**14. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration – January 14**

NEIU's annual celebration honoring the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was held on Thursday, January 14. A keynote address "Driven by a Dream" was delivered by Kevin Powell, widely considered one of America's most important voices in these early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Powell is an activist, writer, public speaker, pop culture aficionado and, most recently, a 2008 Democratic candidate for Congress in Brooklyn, New York. NEIU's own Black Heritage gospel choir, drumming group Urban Sankofa, and the 120-voice choir from the Evangelical Christian School performed selections to honor Dr. King's legacy.

**15. Jewel Box Series – January 15**

On Friday, January 15, the Jewel Box Series featured violinist Minghuan Xu and pianist Winston Choi, as Duo Diorama. The musicians performed works by Debussy, Ravel, and Franck. The concert was advertised on several radio stations - WFMT 98.7 FM, WXRT 93.1 FM and WBEZ 91.5 FM and was broadcasted live on WFMT 98.7 FM, Chicago's classical radio station.

**16. Student Organization Networking Event – January 19**

On Tuesday, January 19, the Student Activities Office held their Student Organization Networking Event. The purpose of the event was to facilitate communication among club members in order to increase their knowledge about other student organizations, find ways to work with other groups to reduce funding constraints, co-sponsor events, address important causes at NEIU, and build connections/relationships.

**17. Student Organization Fair – January 20-21**

The 19<sup>th</sup> annual Spring Student Organization Fair was held in Village Square on January 20 and 21. Over 70 NEIU student clubs and organizations took advantage of the opportunity to recruit new members, and to showcase and market their events for the spring.

**18. Legislators' Breakfast - January 25**

On Monday, January 25, the President's Office of Government Relations hosted a Legislative Breakfast for NEIU. Among the legislators invited to attend were NEIU legislative district legislators, alumni, and other key elected officials. Legislators were briefed on state of University programs and the current financial status, in particular unpaid vouchers from the State of Illinois to NEIU. Legislators were asked for support of NEIU's FY2011 requests and release of capital funding appropriated in FY2010.

**19. The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual AANACA Conference – January 27-28**

The 14<sup>th</sup> Annual AANACA Conference (African, African American, Native American, Caribbean and the Americas Heritage Conference) with the theme "Building Global Justice: From Dialogue to Action" was held January 27-28, with presentations at CCICS, El Centro and the Bryn Mawr Campus. A keynote presentation was given by Stephen Kinzer on "UP FROM GENOCIDE: CAN RWANDA BECOME THE STAR OF AFRICA?" followed by a book signing of his 2010 release of 'A Thousand Hills' on Rwanda's rebirth. Other notable voices heard during the course of the Conference included Phil Ponce, host of WTTW's Chicago Tonight and Mary Mitchell, editorial board member and columnist, Chicago Sun-Times.

**20. Pathways to Success: Students of Color Retention Initiative –  
January 28**

On Thursday, January 28, the Pathways to Success: Students of Color Retention Initiative held its first meeting of the Spring 2010 semester. This initiative, which began in Fall 2009, is continuing its work via outreach to transfer students, adult learners, and general students who have self-identified as needing the support of peer students, faculty, and staff resources in navigating the college life experience at NEIU.

**21. Advisor Appreciation Reception – February 9**

On Tuesday, February 9, the Student Activities Office hosted a reception in honor of more than 70 student organization advisors who volunteer their time to mentor and guide student leaders, in turn enhancing the quality of campus life. The club advisors are an array of NEIU faculty, staff, and administrators.

**22. Soldier to Student Life Transition Roundtable – February 11**

On Thursday, February 11 the Soldier to Student Life Transition roundtable held its monthly meeting. This outreach initiative, in collaboration with the Student Veterans Club, Veteran Services and other federal Veteran resource programs, is designed to foster a sense of community among the active military and veteran student population and to help connect students with vital university resources as an assistive measure in student success and persistence.