The NEIU Board of Trustees Committees met as follows on June 12, 2014 in the Golden Eagles room at Northeastern Illinois University, 5500 N. St. Louis Ave. The President’s Report is incorporated herein by reference. Chair Azcoitia called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes
Chair Azcoitia said that hearing no corrections, the Committee Minutes from April 10, 2014 stand as written.

Executive Committee

Committee Members present: Carlos Azcoitia, Jin Lee, and Jonathan Stein
Committee Members absent: Omar Duque
Other Trustees Present: Bob Biggins, Barbara Fumo, Marvin Garcia, Darlene Ruscitti and Franklin Ortega

Action Item I.D. Approval of Amendment to Board of Trustees Regulations – Adoption of Amendment to University Governance Policy, page 26

The change entails substituting the word “University” for “campus,” in acknowledgment that Northeastern comprises four sites. Additionally, the amendment removes the qualifiers “academic” and “faculty government” from the duly constituted committees that may participate in the decision-making of the University generally. Finally, the amendment reserves, for the appropriate and duly constituted committees of faculty government, participation in decision-making over curriculum and academic affairs. The change in policy is an opportunity to enhance governance input. The request for a change in policy came from the University Advisory Council.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Committee Members present: Marvin Garcia, Barbara Fumo, Jin Lee, and Franklin Ortega
Committee Members absent: none
Other Trustees Present: Carlos Azcoitia, Ex-Officio; Bob Biggins, Darlene Ruscitti, and Jonathan Stein
University Liaison: Richard Helldobler

Review of President’s Report Items
Action Item I. B. Approval of the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Science, page 8

The Environmental Science program is designed to address enduring civic concerns and emerging economic opportunities. Environmental Science strives to understand the many interactions among the environment and its components, including both the impact of human activities on the environment and how the environment affects humans. The program will provide students with an interdisciplinary scientific framework for understanding the environment and making rational and informed decisions through hands-on laboratory, field, and analytical work.
Trustee Lee asked if the University has to invest in new faculty for this new program. President Hahs explained that since this is an interdisciplinary program the University does not need that investment right away. The University has the capacity within current faculty to launch the program. As the program grows, the University may hire new faculty.

Chair Azcoitia asked about student and faculty interest in the program and student employability as they complete the program. In terms of the job market, the US Department of Labor, federal, state, and local governments employ 44% of all environmental scientists and specialists. Job prospects are expected to be favorable, particularly for environmental health workers in state and local government. Internal surveys reveal that interest among NEIU students is very strong and they have been waiting for the University to complete the degree program. NEIU is developing an emerging reputation in the sciences for all kinds of students, but especially for our minority students.

Action Item I. C. Approval of Master’s of Social Work, page 14

Northeastern Illinois University presently offers a Bachelor’s Degree in Social Work (BSW), which was initially accredited in 1988. The program has grown significantly since its inception, and in the mid-1990s began to consider a MSW degree program. While the bachelor’s degree in social work prepares beginning level professionals as generalist social workers, the master’s degree prepares students for a broader range of practice, a higher level of professionalism, and more career opportunities. Thus, including a master’s degree program is a natural extension of professional preparation of workers for occupations in social work. Additionally, over 70% of the students that graduate from the BSW program at NEIU go on to pursue an MSW at other academic institutions. Thus, the MSW program at NEIU is projected to have a consistent number of students from the BSW program that would stay at NEIU to pursue their MSW.

Chair Azcoitia asked if there are any further accreditations. President Hahs explained that there is an additional accreditation needed for the master’s degree from the Counsel on Social Work Education (CSWE). The accreditation process is very precise; Hahs is confident Northeastern can reach every standard. The fact that Northeastern already has a high quality and long standing undergraduate degree program in Social Work will help the accreditation process.

Trustee Garcia is very excited about the Social Work program since he works in education with several small schools across the Chicagoland area. Some students need other types of support (e.g. social and emotional learning) besides academic support.

Trustee Lee asked about the course offerings in the Social Work program. Will there be courses related to the study of seniors or ethnic diversity, for example? President Hahs explained that there is not a degree concentration in either one of these ideas, but they are included within the foundation of baccalaureate learning and it will be enhanced at the master’s level.

Trustee Stein commended the person who created the chart on page 25 of the President’s Report. The chart describes nicely the income and expenses needed for the program from Year 2016 to Year 2020. This is the Provost’s model on how to communicate what is needed.
The University issued an RFP in order to contract with a qualified grant consulting firm to increase our ability to raise increased funding through grant sources. The University is seeking proposals to assist in the development of a strategic matrix for grant development and in the preparation of competitive grants for external funding. The contract is to be established with a qualified consulting firm with a strong track record to increase the number of major grant submissions and enhance the preparation and competitiveness of grants submitted for external funding through federal and private sources.

Trustee Lee asked several questions including the status of the selection of the final candidate, the price range, and success ratio. President Hahs explained that the University is expected to spend between $60K and $100K per year for two years and the final selection of the candidate has not yet taken place. At this time, the RFP process has not been completed. Updates will be provided at the September 2014.

Trustee Garcia introduced to the Board a document he created and distributed to each Board member and asked for feedback if there were any questions. The document provided an update on recruitment initiatives and answered the following questions: The status of our recruitment for next year, how close are we to our goal? The breakdown of enrollment in each college (undergraduate and graduate), are there targeted recruitment efforts by each college? Our top three feeder institutions as of this point in time. Have we seen any success in some of the adopted recruitment strategies?

Presentation: Retention Efforts and Strategies

Provost Helldobler introduced Barbara Sherry, executive director for Student Success and Retention, who presented a powerpoint presentation on Student Success and Retention. Topics of discussion included variables influencing retention, retention rates of first-time full-time undergraduate students, and ongoing retention initiatives.

Chair Azcoitia commented that the high school experience is very similar from freshman to sophomore as a predictor of graduation. There are two new indicators that will be used to assess retention and graduation, 1) a federal score card that will include retention and 2) the consortium on Chicago school research will track students who graduate from the Chicago Public Schools and attend universities statewide.

Trustee Garcia asked for more detail on the First Year Experience (FYE) program. Ms. Sherry explained that NEIU’s FYE program requires that all students take a designated FYE course. Students can choose a class from about 40 different areas, for example, African and African American Studies, Social Work, Earth Science, etc. The course combines college and life success skills - how to navigate the bureaucracy of a university with actual subject matter. The FYE course counts as a 3-credit general education class which is taught by a faculty member in a small classroom setting. Students are able to develop a relationship with the faculty member as well as the cohort of students in the class. Ms. Sherry is working with Academic Affairs and Student Affairs to combine and develop a comprehensive set of activities and programs for the entire first year. Trustee Garcia complimented Ms. Sherry on the presentation and added that he would like to engage Provost Helldobler and other administrators to think how community based agencies can play a role in retention.
Trustee Stein asked about the Mathematics requirement for graduation and its effect on retention. Ms. Sherry explained that Math is a course that students tend to shy away from. NEIU is addressing this issue in a couple of ways. First, NEIU is instituting a new Stretch Math course in fall 2014 at the El Centro campus which will combine developmental math with college level math. At the end of the year, students will earn college level math credit. Second, NEIU is introducing a new EMERGE math program in summer 2014 for approximately 75 new incoming freshmen. The EMERGE program will provide students with 3-weeks of intensive math instruction. The goal at the end of the program is to retest students who originally tested into math development to see if students can be placed in a higher math course in the fall.

Trustee Fumo asked if the University has a process in place to catch students before they dropout. Ms. Sherry explained that the Offices of Enrollment Services and Academic Affairs are reaching out to students to find why they are not registering. There is also an early alert program that will allow several departments across campus to intervene before students leave.

Buildings and Grounds Committee
Committee Members present: Barbara Fumo
Committee Members absent: Omar Duque, Chair
Other Trustees present: Carlos Azcoitia, Ex-Officio; Bob Biggins, Marvin Garcia, Jin Lee, Darlene Ruscitti, Jonathan Stein, and Franklin Ortega
University Liaisons: Michael Pierick and Nancy Medina

Items on agenda:
- Construction Report

CCICS Auditorium Construction Update: All final punch list items have been completed.

Education Building Update: The University selected the Design Firm, Smithgroup/JJR, through the Qualifications Based Selection Process. The Capital Development Board is finalizing the contract. Meanwhile, an internal verification of the 2008 Building Space Allocation Study has begun.

El Centro Building Update: Construction is progressing at the new El Centro Campus building. The first and second floors have the mechanical and plumbing completed. The electrical is 90% complete on the first and second floor and 35% complete on the third floor. Drywall and taping on the first and second floor are 85%-90% complete with primer being applied to various areas. The third floor has the mechanical systems 85% complete and the plumbing is 90% complete. Work is scheduled to be complete for Fall 2014 classes.

Infrastructure Expansion Update: The Phase 2 definitive A/E design work has begun. Fifty percent drawings are expected mid - June.

Roofing and Exterior Façade: The Capital Development Board released bids for the Library and the PE Building Roof and Wall repairs. CDB is in the process of awarding contracts for the Library project. The PE Building bids are due on May 21, 2014. Building H documents are complete and have been resubmitted to the Capital Development Board.

Finance Committee
Committee Members present: Bob Biggins, Darlene Ruscitti, and Jonathan Stein
Committee Members absent: Omar Duque, chair
Other Trustees present: Carlos Azcoitia, Ex-Officio; Barbara Fumo, Marvin Garcia, Jin Lee, and Franklin Ortega
University Liaisons: Michael Pierick and Robert Filipp

Items on agenda:
Review of President’s Report Items

  Action Item I. A. Approval of Preliminary FY 2015 University Operating Budget, page 1
  Action Item I. F. Approval for Adjustments to the Reserve Limits for non-Indentured Entities, page 29
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