

**FACULTY SENATE MEETING AGENDA**  
**Wednesday, March 29, 2017, 3 p.m.**  
**Holmes Student Center Sky Room**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

**III. APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES](#) OF THE FEBRUARY 22, 2017 FS MEETING**

**IV. PRESIDENT’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**V. ITEMS FOR FACULTY SENATE CONSIDERATION**

- A. Presentation of the Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy Award honoring Professor [Donna Munroe](#) – Page 4

**VI. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Conversation with President Doug Baker

[Dec. 22 Baker Report](#) – Pages 5-12

President Baker’s [response](#) to Steering Committee questions – Pages 13-20

Michael Haji-Sheikh’s [report](#) – Pages 21-32

President Baker’s [response](#) to additional questions – Pages 33-36

[Articles/Links](#) regarding votes of no confidence – Page 37

March 29 Faculty Senate [discussion guide](#)– Page 38-42

Discussion with Faculty Senate regarding potential resolutions or motions in response – **Faculty Senate members are requested to submit proposed resolutions or motions to Greg Long at [glong@niu.edu](mailto:glong@niu.edu) by noon Tuesday, March 28.**

- B. Program Prioritization – Matt Streb, Program Prioritization Liaison/Facilitator

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Proposed amendment to FS Bylaws, [Articles 2.3 and 2.4](#) – Page 43  
Clarification of election timeline and terms of service for Faculty Senate officers  
**FIRST READING**

- B. University Professionals of Illinois “Teach Out,” April 27 – Paul Stoddard

## **IX. REPORTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

- A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – report
- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report  
Cathy Doederlein, Greg Long, Holly Nicholson,  
Rebecca Shortridge, Kendall Thu, Leanne VandeCreek

## **X. REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee – Katy Jaekel, Chair – no report
- B. Academic Affairs Committee – John Novak, Chair – no report
- C. Economic Status of the Profession Committee – Paul Stoddard, Chair – no report
- D. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Rebecca Hunt, Liaison/Spokesperson – report
  - 1. Letter of acceptance of nomination for President of Faculty Senate/  
Executive Secretary of University Council;  
Faculty Senate will vote at the April 26 meeting.
    - a. [Linda Saborío](#) – Pages 44-45
  - 2. Letters of self-nomination for Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor.  
Faculty Senate will vote at the April 26 meeting.
    - a. [David Valentiner](#) – Pages 46-47
    - b. [Sarah McHone-Chase](#) – Page 48
    - c. [Christine Kiracofe](#) – Pages 49-50
    - d. [Hamid Bateni](#) – Page 51
    - e. [Kirk Miller](#) – Pages 52-53
    - f. [Jorge Jeria](#) – Pages 54-55
    - g. [Mark Van Wiene](#) – Pages 56-57
- E. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – Jimmie Manning, Liaison/Spokesperson – no report

## **XI. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

- A. United Faculty Alliance update – Virginia Naples, President

## **XII. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- B. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- C. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- D. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- E. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- F. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- G. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- H. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council Curriculum Committee
- J. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure

## **XIII. ADJOURNMENT**

February 14, 2017

**Re: Nomination for the 2017-2018 Bob Lane Faculty  
Advocacy Award**

Dear President Long and Fellow Faculty Senators,

It is my great pleasure and sorrow to nominate Donna Munroe, Ph.D., Professor, School of Nursing, for the 2017-2018 Bob Lane Faculty Advocacy Award. Donna completed her Ph.D. from the University of Southern California in 1988 with a focus on public administration and health policy. Dr. Munroe brought her passion for advocacy to Northern Illinois University in 2001.

Donna and I met in 2012 when I joined the faculty of the School of Nursing. I had the great fortune of having Donna as my mentor for the Academic Promotion and Tenure process at NIU.

Donna had an uncanny knowledge of the NIU Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. She also was an expert on the Personnel Policies and Procedures of the College of Health and Human Sciences and the Nursing and Health Studies. Donna carried a big black binder with these policies and procedures to every meeting she attended. Donna was unapologetic when politely, but firmly saying, "You can't do that because \_\_\_\_\_ policy!" when problematic changes were announced by leaders/administrators. When Donna spoke, people listened. She served on many committees and councils at the university, college, and school level.



Donna Munroe

Sadly, Donna died suddenly on January, 13, 2015 in Altgeld Hall while participating in a meeting of the University Council Personnel Committee. Donna literally gave her life advocating for the faculty of Northern Illinois University.

Sincerely,  
Laura Beamer  
Assistant Professor  
School of Nursing

**From:** Greg Long  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 19, 2017 9:53 AM  
**To:** Douglas Baker <ddbaker@niu.edu>  
**Cc:** Greg Long <glong@niu.edu>; Patricia Erickson <pje@niu.edu>  
**Subject:** Faculty Senate/University Council follow-up questions regarding the

January 19, 2017

To: Douglas Baker  
President

From: Greg Long  
Executive Secretary of University Council  
President of Faculty Senate

**RE:** Requested follow up on the December 22<sup>nd</sup> *Baker Report*

Several faculty and staff have contacted me regarding the December 22<sup>nd</sup> *Baker Report* titled, "Correcting Course--new policies enhance transparency." In reply, I asked these individuals to send questions and other relevant background information to me for distribution and discussion during yesterday's Senate and University Council steering committee meetings. The steering committee members had access to the aforementioned *Baker Report* as well as the two additional articles linked below. When we discussed this topic both committees appreciated your willingness to provide written answers to our questions.

As follow up, please send your replies to me by Tuesday January 24<sup>th</sup> to allow time for copying and distribution during the January 25<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting. These questions will also be discussed during the February 1<sup>st</sup> University Council meeting.

The questions the steering committees would like you to address include the following:

1. What procurement practices, employment decisions, and contractual arrangements were violated in 2013 and 2014?
2. What are the weaknesses in internal controls and which policies lack clarity?
3. What was the involvement of the President, Provost, and CFO in these matters?
4. Which employment policies have been revised and how?
5. What changes are being made, or have been made, to the whistleblower policy? Who is making the policy changes? Why is that relevant for the violations?
6. Why communicate problems to campus on the day immediately before winter break?
7. Ethically inspired leadership is one of the pillars of your administration. How will you work to rebuild trust?
8. The *Baker Report* comes after years of struggles for employees, including flat salaries and increased workloads. The employees left on campus are hard-working and dedicated to the mission of NIU, but are despairing. Why should they continue working at NIU?
9. The title of the *Baker Report* included the word transparency, however, the report was vague. How will this administration continue to work toward greater transparency?

Thank you for your attention to this request. Please let me know if you have any questions, comments, or requests. I would be happy to talk with you.

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**Baker Report: Correcting the Course**

<http://www.niutoday.info/2016/12/22/baker-report-correcting-course-new-policies-enhance-transparency/>

**President Baker says NIU violated employment agreement**

[http://northernstar.info/campus/president-baker-says-niu-violated-employment-agreement-issues-in/article\\_07459740-cd5d-11e6-8681-47f8823e4e6f.html](http://northernstar.info/campus/president-baker-says-niu-violated-employment-agreement-issues-in/article_07459740-cd5d-11e6-8681-47f8823e4e6f.html)

**Baker: Northern Illinois violated some employment rules in 2013, '14**

<http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2016/12/22/baker-northern-illinois-violated-some-employment-rules-in-2013-14/a9b849h/>



Northern Illinois University

# BAKER REPORT



December 22, 2016

## Correcting Course – new policies enhance transparency

I'm writing to you today to announce the conclusion of reviews into several complaints regarding procurement practices, employment decisions, and contractual arrangements that occurred in 2013-2014 when I first assumed the presidency and initiated plans to improve the physical campus. The allegations in these complaints have now been investigated, and I want to share the issues identified and what the Board of Trustees and I see as the way forward.

A major factor for both recruitment and retention is the attractiveness and functionality of our campus. Whether the campus fulfills the expectations of prospective students and those who influence their decisions was a question we intentionally posed in 2013. Feedback – particularly from students – indicated a desire for a much more vibrant social and academic campus core, similar to contemporary spaces at competing schools. Responding to this feedback, one of our goals became revitalizing our campus core. Importantly, we believed we should and could pursue this goal urgently.

Gilbert Hall renovations were nearly complete when I arrived, and the next steps in our residential renaissance included an assessment of improvements we could make to centrally-located Neptune Hall. Other projects that promised to alter the character and vibrancy of the center of campus included the renovation of Holmes Student Center, and limited institutional resources existed to substantially address this goal. Connecting the center of campus to the residence, recreation, and athletic complexes located on the west side of campus also emerged as an objective we could achieve at a remarkable pace by extending Lucinda Avenue – our campus' main thoroughfare. Finally, modest but impactful improvements to the landscape were pursued within a short timeframe.

While I am confident these strategic initiatives were right for NIU and calibrated closely to our essential priorities, our progress has not been without difficulty. Investigations have substantiated that in 2013 and 2014 there were weaknesses in internal controls, some

limited compliance violations, and lack of clarity of policies across multiple units. Investigation did not yield evidence of substandard work, but it did identify issues with administering certain employment, consulting, and capital works agreements. As leader of the university, I am ultimately accountable for these issues, and I take full responsibility for them. I also make a personal pledge to the university community that they will not re-occur. To this end, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, I have supported the development of new and revised policies intended to further public trust and confidence in university employment and contracting practices and actions. These include elimination of the “affiliate employee” classification as of January 1, 2016 and corrective actions related to some of those hired into such positions in 2013 and 2014. I have also instructed my cabinet to study and implement process improvements regarding consulting, design, and other contracting arrangements.

I am also personally committed to ensuring that our employees feel confident and secure in raising future questions or concerns, and seeking clarity on procedures and policies without fear of criticism or negative consequences. Specifically, we will offer additional staff training on this matter and have adopted an upgraded Whistleblower Policy which encourages reporting and more fully protects those who choose to make good-faith reports of any suspected legal and policy violations. To be clear, even when there is urgent need for change, it is critical that policies, procedures, and protocols must be observed.

As the university engages in ongoing process improvement, I earnestly expect that our actions will demonstrate this university’s commitment to proper conduct and prudent oversight. I welcome suggestions or ideas from the campus community and will report further as our process improvements are implemented.

Sincerely,



Doug Baker  
President

## President Baker says NIU violated employment agreement issues in 2013, '14

Leah Nicolini | News reporter Dec 28, 2016



Northern Star file photo

Faculty Senate President Greg Long (left) and President Doug Baker participate and in a Feb 3. University Council meeting in the Holmes Student Center, Sky Room.

**DeKALB** | President Doug Baker acknowledged NIU violated procurement practices, employment decisions and contractual arrangements in 2013 and 2014 after an investigation.

The violations were not stated in a Dec. 22 NIU Today article addressing the investigation. However, Baker mentions projects such as the renovation of the Holmes Student Center, extending Lucinda Avenue and Gilbert and Neptune Hall renovations, according to the article. He mentions “limited institutional resources” as a barrier to the residence halls and Holmes Student Center renovation projects.

“Investigations have substantiated that in 2013 and 2014 there were weaknesses in internal controls, some limited compliance violations and lack of clarity of policies across multiple units,” Baker wrote in the article. “Investigation did not yield evidence of substandard work, but it did identify issues with administering certain employment, consulting and capital works agreements.”

Baker’s resolution to the complaints is to eliminate the affiliate employee classification Sunday, upgrade the Whistleblower Policy to encourage more reporting and to take “corrective actions” pertaining to those hired into contractual positions in 2013 and 2014, according to the article.

The Board of Trustees reaffirmed its Whistleblower Policy in its report Dec. 15 stating the policy protects people who report unlawful conduct in “good faith” from retaliatory action but the protection does not extend to “knowingly false or fabricated reports.”

NIU will also study and modify the consulting, design and other contracting arrangement policies.

The Northern Star submitted a Freedom of Information Act today requesting more information on the results of the investigation.

Spokesperson Joe King declined to comment on the investigation, citing the article as NIU’s response.

## 2 Comments

**[Michael Haji-Sheikh](#)** ·

[Associate professor](#) at [Northern Illinois University](#)

It is time for him to leave. Ron Walters, Nancy Suttentfield, Jim Heid and others were brought on campus without following state law. When others objected, objected they were fired.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Jan 6, 2017 1:27pm](#)

**[Michael Haji-Sheikh](#)** ·

[Associate professor](#) at [Northern Illinois University](#)

Note - problems extended into 2016, too. The additional Lucinda money was part of this too.

[Like](#) · [Reply](#) · [Jan 6, 2017 1:29pm](#)

# Baker: Northern Illinois violated some employment rules in 2013, '14

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Published: Friday, Dec. 23, 2016 12:34 a.m. CST

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DeKALB – The president of Northern Illinois University admitted Thursday that state regulations governing employment and public improvements were violated early in his tenure at the school and pledged that they would not re-occur.

Douglas Baker, who took over as NIU's president in fall 2013, said that he took responsibility for the unidentified violations, which occurred at a time of transition where a state audit found [at least one consultant was improperly compensated](#) for travel from his home in Washington state to DeKalb.

“Investigations have substantiated that in 2013 and 2014 there were weaknesses in internal controls, some limited compliance violations, and lack of clarity of policies across multiple units,” Baker said in a statement posted on the NIU Today website. “Investigation did not yield evidence of substandard work, but it did identify issues with administering certain employment, consulting, and capital works agreements.”

The university's practices in hiring temporary employees has been the subject of a state investigation by the [Office of Executive Inspector General](#). The university's Executive Committee in November approved another \$15,000 for legal expenses for Baker in that investigation, raising the total allowable to \$165,000. Another \$20,000 was approved for legal fees for Baker in an internal controls investigation.

The university also recently settled a lawsuit brought by former NIU Police Chief Donald Grady for just more than \$1 million. Grady alleged that his civil rights had been violated when he was fired from his job in 2014.

Thursday was the last day of the semester at NIU, and documents showing the results of the investigations Baker referred to were not immediately available. The Daily Chronicle has submitted a Freedom of Information Act request seeking them.

In his post, Baker referenced plans and projects undertaken in the early years of his presidency, including improvements to the Neptune Hall dormitory, renovations at Holmes Student Center and the extension of Lucinda Avenue.

[The university is facing a federal lawsuit](#) from its former controller, Keith Jackson, who claims he was mistreated and forced out of the university. Jackson said he became a target after October 2013, when he refused to sign off on the way the university wanted to set up the hiring contract for former CFO Nancy Suttentfield.

“Mr. Jackson refused to do so on the basis that the contract required the approval of the board of trustees, and because processing the payments would have violated the Illinois procurement laws that required competitive bidding,” the lawsuit states.

Jackson claims he was asked by Suttentfield to quit – at Baker’s behest – in May 2014, and was placed on leave when he refused.

Ron Walters, a consultant hired in 2014 to help on the campus initiatives, was paid more than \$460,000 for about 18 months’ work. But he also was improperly reimbursed for more than \$30,000 in travel expenses, for which he billed the university, the state Auditor General’s office found.

Baker said the university has revised some of its employment policies in an effort to increase public trust. Specifically, Baker said there would be changes in employee classifications, and an “upgraded” whistleblower policy to protect employees who report any suspected legal and policy violations.

“To be clear, even when there is urgent need for change,” Baker wrote, “it is critical that policies, procedures, and protocols must be observed.”

In the past month, three cabinet-level administrators have announced they plan to leave the school: [Vice President and General Counsel Jerry Blakemore](#), [Vice President for Administration and Finance Alan Phillips](#) and Vice President for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management Eric Weldy.

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## MEMORANDUM

To: Faculty Senate

From: Doug Baker

Date: January 25, 2017

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Please find below answers to the questions posed by the faculty senate. I appreciate the opportunity to clarify these issues.

**1 What procurement practices, employment decisions, and contractual arrangements were violated in 2013 and 2014?**

The compliance issues primarily relate to the original hiring of Ron Walters and Nancy Suttentfield. These are issues I have previously spoken about to the University Council, NIU Town Halls, and local media.

Immediately prior to my beginning work at NIU the FBI, Housing and Urban Development, and Department of Education had searched the Police Department and collected computers and records. The leadership of the Department of Police and Public Safety had changed and the Vice President of Administration and Finance had taken a leave of absence in relation to the federal investigation. In addition, there were significant strategic, structural, and financial challenges related to student recruitment and retention, state support of public higher education, and pension obligations.

In this context and with other immediate challenges, my assessment was that it was important to engage someone with an outside perspective to work with the university and help create a strategic planning framework and quickly help us move forward. I discussed my intentions with the appropriate internal leaders assigned to assist me in the transition, and advised Board of Trustees leadership,

prior to moving forward with the hiring of Mr. Walters. Mr. Walters came to us with extensive experience as an organizational leader and turnaround specialist. He is someone I knew and trusted from his previous work at the University of Idaho. We had a professional relationship and counter to some rumors, we have no family relationship.

Further, I felt it was important to quickly hire someone with a strong financial background so that we could address critical budget issues. To that end, we worked with the Registry (a national organization that provides temporary leadership help for higher education). Again the Board was informed and several Trustees interviewed the candidates from the Registry. That process led to the hiring of Ms. Sutenfield as the Interim Vice President for Administration and Finance. She came to NIU with extensive experience having formerly served as the Chief Financial Officer at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Wake Forest, Case Western Reserve, and the Smithsonian Institution.

In making these staffing decisions I worked with NIU Vice Presidents with extensive experience at Illinois Public institutions who advised me on the process and requirements for hiring these two individuals. The advice I received and followed indicated that Mr. Walters, as well as Ms. Sutenfield, could be appropriately hired as Affiliate Employees. Further, advice was given, and taken, on how to reimburse their travel and lodging expenses.

Approximately a year later, a complaint was made over these hires. Ultimately, it was determined that the Affiliate Employee category and related travel and lodging expenses were not appropriately allocated. To address both present and prospective situations, the Affiliate Employee category was eliminated, travel expenses were recovered from Mr. Walters and appropriate adjustments were made to Mr. Walters and Ms. Sutenfield's taxable income statements.

2 What are the weaknesses in internal controls and which policies lack clarity?

These dealt with aforementioned use of the Affiliate Employee and travel reimbursement. Upon review from Administration and Finance, Human Resources, and Office of General Counsel it was determined that NIU defined and utilized the affiliate employee category differently than other Illinois public universities and therefore this category has subsequently been eliminated.

The Board has clarified its policies and role regarding procurement expenditures and oversight. Our travel policies have been revised and additional controls have been put in place. Further, the Human Resources Office has been reorganized and a new Senior Associate Vice President with significant Illinois public higher education experience has been hired. She continues to work on improving our hiring policies and procedures in addition to other areas of compliance.

All audit issues resulting from these weaknesses have been addressed and resolved in accordance with Auditor General guidelines. These additional procurement policies, procedures, and structures will ensure a higher level of oversight and control and serve to improve the efficiency, accuracy, and timeliness of procurement actions.

3 What was the involvement of the President, Provost, and CFO in these matters?

My role is noted above.

Dr. Alden was Provost at the time, but was not involved in the hiring of Ron Walters.

Current EVP and Provost Freeman and current CFO Phillips were not involved in the hiring of Mr. Walters.

Provost Alden and other senior leaders at the time were asked to interview the two CFO candidates in the fall of 2013.

CFO (VP for Administration and Finance) Sutenfield's hiring was in accordance with guidance by the then General Counsel and the Acting Vice President for Administration.

4 Which employment policies have been revised and how?

The Affiliate Employee rank has been eliminated. Board Regulations were amended pertaining to administrative approval of certain types of presidential decisions that may relate to employment and/or consulting, and adding new areas for Board approval and cost thresholds requiring Board approval for certain kinds of professional services and consulting (see Board measures adopted

June 18, 2015, to Board Regulations Section II . B.2

<http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionII.shtml#anchor803627> and Section V.B.2.  
<http://www.niu.edu/board/regs/sectionV.shtml#anchor1100473>.)

5 What changes are being made, or have been made, to the whistleblower policy? Who is making the policy changes? Why is that relevant for the violations?

The Board of Trustees adopted a new whistleblower policy at its December 15, 2016 meeting: <http://www.niu.edu/board/policies/index.shtml>. If there was any hesitancy of people in any manner to bring forward their concerns in the past, we want to ensure that this does not happen again. This new policy is relevant to all employees and situations and is aimed at ensuring that if anyone believes that something is not being done appropriately that they have a clear avenue through which to report any potential issues. Moreover, in addition to the December 22<sup>nd</sup> Baker Report, additional efforts to inform NIU employees of the new policy will continue in the spring, and become a regular part of employee training going forward.

6 Why communicate problems to campus on the day immediately before winter break?

The timing of the Baker Report was not good at the very end of the year and I apologize for that. However, the Board and I felt it was important to get the report out before the end of the calendar year. One of the reasons to send the letter at the end of December was to notify the university in a timely manner of this revised whistleblower policy, which, as noted above, was adopted by the Board on December 15, 2016. Further, it was important to the Board that I publicly acknowledge the efforts undertaken to address complaints and release the revised whistleblower policy in a timely manner and during the service of the Board members in position at the time. The Baker Report, due to its wide distribution that includes the university community, alumni, and many others, offered the most immediate means of reaching the widest audience.

7 Ethically inspired leadership is one of the pillars of your administration. How will you work to rebuild trust?

Part of being an ethically inspired leader is the ability to acknowledge mistakes, learn from them, and take corrective action which I have done. I continue to strongly believe in this pillar and am personally committed to ensuring that our employees feel confident and secure in raising future questions or concerns, and seeking clarity on procedures and policies without fear of criticism or negative consequences. We need to continue to build a culture that encourages concerns to be expressed at the beginning of processes to avoid problems.

At no time did I ever know of or intend for myself or any of my staff to violate any policies or procedures. In the cases of Mr. Walters and Ms. Sutenfield, when errors in policy and procedures were found, corrective actions were taken. The administrative team and I share that commitment and are working hard to ensure all of our policies are appropriately followed. One of the challenges that NIU has faced is that our policies have not been as easily accessible or, in some cases, as clear as they need to be to allow for easy compliance. To that end, we are working with the University Council, General Counsel, and Senior Cabinet members to develop a policy library and management structure for it. This will allow university members to easily access policies and practices, as well as identify potentially conflicting or ambiguous policies so that they can be addressed. I look forward to working with the University Council to implement the policy library and refine it over time.

8 The *Baker Report* comes after years of struggles for employees, including flat salaries and increased workloads. The employees left on campus are hard-working and dedicated to the mission of NIU, but are despairing. Why should they continue working at NIU?

These are clearly very challenging times in Illinois higher education and at NIU, but I am greatly encouraged by the way faculty and staff have worked proactively to ensure our viability. Below I detail a few examples of the steps we are taking to link our budget with mission, improve our recruitment, bolster student retention, and better allocate student scholarships and financial aid.

I am proud of and grateful for the hard work and sacrifices of the NIU faculty and staff. Through their efforts we have been able to manage through an unprecedented period of funding reduction (including a 71% cut in our state operating budget last year alone). To address these budget challenges, we have

had to significantly reduce spending (approximately \$50 million) in the last two and a half years. To do that we have had to freeze salaries, reduce hiring to fill open positions, restructure a number of areas, defer maintenance projects, etc.

Throughout this process we have focused on protecting our core mission. To help us be as strategic as possible in the allocation of our increasingly scarce resources, we undertook a Program Prioritization Process that was conducted with rigor and integrity, and that was inclusive of faculty, staff and students in accordance with shared governance. That process was undertaken prior to the dramatic state operating budget cuts last year, but the most recent fiscal challenges have underscored the need to allocate our revenues in the most strategic manner possible. A great deal of effort went into the design and implementation of the Program Prioritization Process. The outcomes from that process are insightful recommendations based on extensive data analysis and deliberations. I share the optimism exhibited by the two Program Prioritization Task Forces after they saw the amazing core strengths of NIU and the potential that is inherent to our university.

One of the key factors in stabilizing our finances and allowing us to fulfill our mission, is to turnaround our declining enrollments, an issue many of our state sister institutions are also facing. An initial step to address enrollment issues began in the fall of 2013 as we began planning for and implementing changes that would improve our student retention. Based on that planning and the good work of our faculty and staff, the freshman to sophomore retention rate has risen seven percent.

We have been working hard on recruitment in recent years as well. Admissions has undergone a dramatic transformation in building the infrastructure—in particular our Constituent Relations Management (CRM) system, which needed to be literally rebuilt from ground up to be more effective in recruiting first-year and transfer undergraduates. I recently integrated recruitment and marketing traditional and adult learners into our newly organized Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications division to improve alignment, strategy development and execution. Early signs for the success of this integration are encouraging.

Last year, an institutional aid task force took on the assessment of our extensive

and complex set of financial aid, waivers, and scholarships. Those resources are now catalogued in Academic Works that allows for easier access for students as well as the coordination among those providing the support. The more efficient allocations of institutional aid to students will positively affect our recruitment and retention over time (<http://niu.edu/scholarships/academicworks/index.shtml>).

In addition, the two-year budget log jam in Springfield is showing signs of forward movement. A set of bi-partisan bills to address most of the extant fiscal and policy issues were introduced in the state Senate during the lame-duck session two weeks ago. Not enough time existed in that two-day session for the bills to pass, but they have been reintroduced in the Senate and form the basis for a resolution.

As such, I think there are bright signs for NIU on many fronts. We are maintaining our financial health through a very difficult period. Our work to attract and retain more students is getting some traction, and we believe our state leaders will ultimately fund higher education on a more sustainable basis, as it is a proven driver of social and economic prosperity in a state that needs more of both. We have worked hard to position the university for growth and success as these challenges are resolved and believe we are making significant progress. As our enrollment and state operating budgets are stabilized, we will make faculty and staff compensation increases a top priority.

9 The title of the *Baker Report* included the word transparency, however, the report was vague. How will this administration continue to work toward greater transparency?

The Baker Report was not meant to be vague; however, it is not always possible to provide the level of detail some may wish to have when matters are the subject of formally registered complaints. Investigations of complaints often involve a need for confidentiality to protect the integrity of investigations, ensuring that all relevant persons cooperate fully and relevant materials are reviewed thoroughly, or as otherwise required under the law. Such realities often constrain what can be publicly shared. When that is the case, corrective actions and policy reforms can hopefully provide enough information for the university community to know that complaints have been taken seriously and there exists an earnest desire to prevent the recurrence of issues.

The December message was intended to notify the campus and wider community that the university undertook extensive efforts to identify and correct weaknesses in internal controls, some limited compliance violations, and lack of clarity of policies across multiple units. The message confirmed that such efforts were in response to complaints and that such complaints were taken seriously, resulting in corrective actions. Importantly, the message also confirmed that the revision of the whistleblower policy was an intentional action of the university to encourage good faith reporting of concerns as they arise in the normal course of business.

The leadership team and I have worked hard to be transparent in these challenging times. We have done that through meetings with colleges, university-wide town hall meetings, cabinet members being willing to attend and speak at the University Council, Faculty Senate, Operating Staff Council, Resource, Space and Budget Committee, etc. We have received positive feedback on these communication efforts.

Each of the last two summers, members of my cabinet and I have met with a broad set of chairs, directors, and other leaders from across the university. Our goal was to listen to their suggestions on how to better communicate, both up, down, and across the organizational structure. That feedback has been very helpful. We have taken those suggestions to heart and made adjustments to our publications, web pages, reports, town halls, and other meetings. Changes were made to content, frequency, detail, tone, and media. These communications issues are a regular part of cabinet meetings and a key consideration as we plan for and make changes. As a learning organization, we strive to continue to improve and make corrections as appropriate. I welcome your feedback and appreciate the opportunity to respond to these thoughtful questions.

Together Forward,

Doug

# The Case

To my colleagues,

Over the last three years Dr. Baker has shown an extreme disdain for the principles of accountability and oversight. I will try to bring much of this information to light for the Faculty Senate. Everything that he has done shows a lack of respect for the students, staff, faculty, and the oversight by the IBHE and Board of Trustees. The following is a list of issues that have been investigated or are being investigated or even should be investigated. The list goes as follows:

1. The hiring of Ron Walter without a legal search.<sup>1 2</sup>
  - (a) Paying him as an employee and treating him as a consultant.
  - (b) Lying about his employment status so both his travel and hotel could be compensated illegally.<sup>3</sup>
2. The hiring of Nancy Suttentfield without a legal search.<sup>4</sup>
  - (a) Moving foundation money to bypass the controller.
  - (b) Lying about her employment status so her travel and hotel could be compensated.
3. Firing Keith Jackson when he refused to sign off of the hiring of Nancy Suttentfield.<sup>5 6</sup>
4. The hiring of Magaly Rodriguez without legal search<sup>7</sup>
  - (a) Lying about her employment status so her travel and hotel could be compensated.
5. The hiring of Wally Pfeiffer without a legal search.<sup>8</sup>
6. NIU's illegitimate subcontract with Alvarez and Marsal.<sup>9</sup>
7. Pres. Baker using college credit card on wife's travel.<sup>10</sup>
8. Hiring of Keith Ickes without a contract.<sup>11</sup>
9. The formation of College Town Partners NFP without permission from the full BOT and the IBHE.<sup>12 13 14</sup>
10. The formation of College Town Partners LLC without permission from the full BOT and the IBHE.<sup>15 16 17</sup>
11. The hiring of Jim Heid of Urban Green to write the Bold Visions plan then illegally hiring him

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1 <http://www.citybarbs.com/2015/08/02/ron-walters-pay-arrangement-with-niu/>

2 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/index.php?s=niu+cronyism&print=print-search>

3 [http://northernstar.info/campus/niu-will-ask-walters-to-repay-k-that-was-improperly/article\\_fe448732-d95c-11e4-bcfe-e3c06d160a03.html](http://northernstar.info/campus/niu-will-ask-walters-to-repay-k-that-was-improperly/article_fe448732-d95c-11e4-bcfe-e3c06d160a03.html)

4 [http://www.wspynews.com/news/local/former-administrator-sues-northern-illinois-university/article\\_1dba7a02-6d11-11e5-abe8-0385bf7130b4.html](http://www.wspynews.com/news/local/former-administrator-sues-northern-illinois-university/article_1dba7a02-6d11-11e5-abe8-0385bf7130b4.html)

5 <http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2015/10/08/former-controller-suing-northern-illinois/acyiv90/>

6 <http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2016/12/22/baker-northern-illinois-violated-some-employment-rules-in-2013-14/a9b849h/>

7 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/12/nius-intentional-abuse-of-state-procurement-and-travel-rules/>

8 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/11/niu-presidents-on-going-oeig-investigation-part-3/>

9 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/05/nius-alvarez-was-paid-468000-and-produced-no-final-written-report/>

10 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/01/nius-pres-baker-using-college-credit-card-on-wifes-travel/>

11 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/01/niu-the-hiring-of-keith-ickes-as-consultant/>

12 <http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2014/05/27/niu-neighbors-question-plans-for-redevelopment-partnership/a2kefqz/>

13 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/10/nius-newest-trustee-tim-struthers-may-have-conflicts/>

14 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/09/northern-illinois-universitys-250000-donation-problems-part-1/>

15 <http://www.citybarbs.com/2016/03/16/college-town-partners-is-all-about-tif/>

16 <http://www.citybarbs.com/2014/08/12/latest-on-the-college-town-partners-foia-matter/>

17 <http://dekalbcountyonline.com/2014/08/college-town-partners-a-litmus-test-for-transparency/>

to do multiple contracts and sub-contracts. List of known contracts.<sup>18</sup>

- (a) Core campus contract.
  - (b) Stevens Hall
  - (c) Lucinda road
10. Bypassing the BOT and the IBHE to form a “super-university” in which Baker would become the president. Baker paid a consultant \$20,000 a month in early 2015 for work on this.
  11. Improperly contracting Knight E/A and faking “repair” of Lucinda Rd. I will include material that I sent to The OEIG.

Additionally Dr. Baker's lack of respect for oversight and the insight of others has lead to ill advised and wasteful spending – so here are some examples:

1. The electric carts called “The Puppies” or “**Huskie Tram – Phase I**” - these carts were purchased for \$100,000 to cart students all over campus and eventually downtown. They were electric with no heat and were illegal to be driven on the sidewalks in Illinois. The total funds allocated to the “Puppies” project were around \$450,000.<sup>19</sup> These Trams were discontinued due to the inability to drive them on sidewalks and poor ridership.
2. The bus cut-out on the east side otherwise called the HSC Transit plaza. This was budgeted at \$222,100. It was discontinued in 2014 due to students nearly getting hit by the buses. Several members of the city council, who knew why the buses were moved in the first place, were pressured and over-ruled at the city council meeting.<sup>20</sup>
3. The Douglas Hall demolition and Lucinda extension which cost in excess of \$4,500,000. This was done because the New Hall contract required that to build additional dorm rooms other dorms must be removed. The road construction was an expensive ruse.

## The History of Selected Events

This started from the very beginning when in the summer of 2013 Dr. Baker hired a close friend as a consultant. It was clear from the beginning that this was going to be a problem. According to the 2016 Edgar County Watchdog article “NIU Cronyism goes Unchecked”<sup>21</sup> Dr. Baker was aware that hiring Ron Walters and his other friends was problematic - In a Saturday, July 06, 2013 10:04:11 AM email from Walters to Dr. Wally Pfeiffer (who worked at the University of Idaho):

*I was well received, although **Doug has already gotten some flack for hiring his buddy right off the bat to come in under some lucrative consulting contract that wasn't put out for bid.** Has been warned that -this is Illinois politics - and it will come out under someone's freedom of information act request within a few weeks. **That hasn't stopped him from bringing me in and cutting me lose, but he does have to be a bit cautious.** So I've brought your name up and think it could happen a little further down the road, but he doesn't have an appetite for bringing on another at this early point.*

This shows a lack of respect for state rules and laws from the very beginning. The hiring of Ron

18 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/06/niu-the-scandals-continue-as-the-board-does-nothing/>

19 <https://webcourses.niu.edu/bbcswebdav/institution/Board/12-4-14/12-04-14-Board.pdf>

20 <http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2014/06/24/dekalb-fast-tracks-niu-bus-project/a331dj0/>

21 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/06/niu-admitted-cronyism-goes-unchecked/>

Walters was itself an issue<sup>22</sup> because violated the rules for hiring consultants. Additionally Walters was allowed to ghost time card (not work but still get paid) to “catch up” in his pay. I recommend reading an article in the Northern Star to familiarize yourselves to the issues about Mr. Walters travel<sup>23</sup> where he was allowed to commute from his home on Lopez Island in Washington State. Often Mr. Walters travel documents were hand carried to accounting and Mr. Walters was marked as a consultant – even after the administration moved him into salaried “affiliate employee”. This salaried “affiliate employee” category was mentioned in Dr. Baker's NIU Today<sup>24</sup> and was the category that was used to obscure Mr. Walters' bypassing of state regulations. According to the Watchdog article, Mr. Walters was never a real employee -

*“ In fact, Mr. Walters is not and never has been a University employee. Rather, he was engaged by the University to provide consulting services to NIU and he functioned as an independent contractor to NIU.”(emphasis ours). [The lawyer’s letter](#) validates all the previous points as proof that Mr. Walters was a consultant.”*

So the hiring and paying of Mr. Walters itself showed a clear lack of respect for the oversight process in the State of Illinois. Another demonstration of this lack of respect for the rules of the BOT and the IBHE was the Bold Visions project. Much of this project was outside of the scope of the University and was not approved by either the full BOT or the IBHE<sup>25 26</sup>.

In the Fall of 2013, Dr. Baker engaged the City of DeKalb in an exercise that lead to the formation of several questionable public private partnerships. These partnerships were called College Town Partners. These were formed using a model of incorporation that was pioneered at Ohio State University. Unfortunately for the two banks, the city, the university, and the private developer this was probably illegal and in the end it was terminated. From an article in the Daily-Chronicle<sup>27</sup> we get an insight in some of the relationships

*“An intense planning session the university held in late October spawned the partnership idea. The session included Jim Heid, a planner who was involved in redeveloping the area around Ohio State University. During the meeting, Heid suggested putting together the shell for a public-private partnership aimed at redevelopment. In December, “College Town Partners” was incorporated because the partners wanted to secure the name, Nicklas said.*

*Heid returned to NIU in January as part of the team that created the Bold Ideas Thesis, a document detailing potential changes for the NIU campus. At that point, the potential partners discussed the money that would be involved as well as bringing the ideas forward to NIU's Board of Trustees and the DeKalb City Council.”.*

This shows that the partnership idea was not brought to the full BOT. In later emails receive by using the Illinois Freedom of Information Act it was found out that only two members of the BOT had any prior knowledge. This begs the question – why no oversight? It was to prevent the public input process. The following is from the receipt for the work performed by another friend of Dr. Baker's mentioned in the article. This gentleman is named Jim Heid who is a graduate of the University of

22 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2016/02/another-example-of-cronyism-and-apparent-violation-of-state-rules-has-surfaced-at-niu-president-baker-paid-his-close-friend-479875-for-a-no-bid-contract/>

23 [http://northernstar.info/campus/consultant-ron-walters-paid-k-in-months-even-without-scheduled/article\\_792612f8-d6b6-11e4-a589-335cbac80a4a.html](http://northernstar.info/campus/consultant-ron-walters-paid-k-in-months-even-without-scheduled/article_792612f8-d6b6-11e4-a589-335cbac80a4a.html)

24 <http://www.niutoday.info/2016/12/22/baker-report-correcting-course-new-policies-enhance-transparency/>

25 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/10/nius-newest-trustee-tim-struthers-may-have-conflicts/>

26 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/11/niu-and-college-town-partners-part-2/>

27 <http://www.daily-chronicle.com/2014/05/27/niu-neighbors-question-plans-for-redevelopment-partnership/a2kefqz/>

Idaho and on the advisory board for their College of Art and Architecture. He has a company named Urban Green which has received numerous contracts and subcontracts from the University. Illinois has a rule about architects which limits the amount of money with out an RFQ to \$25,000 and also limits the ability of an architect who works on a master plan for a project to obtain follow on contracts. These individuals cannot work on contracts or subcontracts defined in the master plan. I will outline in a separate document what rules were violated in a specific instance. The Bold Visions plan was paid for by a local businessman by donating \$100,000 to the NIU Foundation. By looking at the listing of hours you can see that on January 21<sup>st</sup>, Jim Heid met with the CGS and Wills Burke and Kelsey. This meeting was to look at development plans outside of the University boundaries (College Town Partners, LLC). Additionally, Terry Foegler (retired President of Ohio Campus Partners) and Jeff Kingsbury (a real estate agent specializing in government housing) met with the City and University Village representatives. Both of the items were outside of the University's scope of business and required an approval from both the board and the IBHE. The law passed by the Illinois Legislature

**SUMMARY OF HOURS EXPENDED BY PARTICIPANT**

Jim Heid		
1-Dec	2.00	Next steps proposal and collaborator coordination emails
9-Dec	1.00	Draft agenda for January work session
16-Dec	1.25	Review background files, sort for Kingsbury/ Foegler, f/u questions
19-Dec	1.00	Team and client coordination, scope refinement, materials issued
8-Jan	3.00	Coordination call with Kingsbury, Cannon. Coordination with Nicklas on contract, Foegler on sch
8-Jan	1.00	Background document review and distillation. Contract and agenda coordination
9-Jan	2.50	Itinerary finalization, workshop agenda, background review, calls Foegler, Walters
10-Jan	1.50	Coordinating emails and follow up with team
12-Jan	3.18	Briefing book preparation, document review, workshop coordination issue materials
17-Jan	2.00	Follow up coordination and briefing book update
19-Jan	2.00	Travel and prep/ orientation
20-Jan	8.00	Site touring, base map review, orientation and kick off
21-Jan	12.00	Meet with facilities, meet with WBK, CGS. Develop concepts
22-Jan	12.00	Prepare draft presentation and concepts for testing
23-Jan	14.00	Final presentation preparation and concept refinement
24-Jan	8.00	Finalize presentation and deliver
26-Jan	2.00	Next steps memo and follow up actions with team
	<u>76.43</u>	
Joe Hruda		
20-Jan	8	Site tour and orientation
21-Jan	12	Facilities group meeting, site exploration
22-Jan	12	Refine concepts and draft concepts to Stakeholders and students
23-Jan	14	Final presentation preparation
24-Jan	6	Final presentation and delivery
	<u>52</u>	
Michael Cannon		
14-Jan	4	Base map development and document review
16-Jan	6	Project studies and pre-workshop concept development
17-Jan	4	Project studies and pre-workshop concept development
20-Jan	8	Site tour and orientation
21-Jan	12	Facilities group meeting, site exploration
22-Jan	12	Refine concepts and draft concepts to Stakeholders and students
23-Jan	14	Final presentation preparation
24-Jan	6	Final presentation and delivery
	<u>66</u>	
Terry Foegler		
22-Jan	8	Site tour and orientation
23-Jan	8	Meetings with City staff, U Villages research, final presentation preparation
24-Jan	6	Final presentation and delivery
	<u>22</u>	
Jeff Kingsbury		
16-Jan	3	Background research
22-Jan	2	Student review participation
23-Jan	8	Meetings with City staff, U Villages research, final presentation preparation
24-Jan	6	Final presentation and delivery
	<u>19</u>	

Figure 1. Bold Visions Task Sheet. Two people – Terry Foegler and Jeff Kingsbury spent time off campus working on convincing the owners of University Village to sell and doing due diligence.

The Northern Illinois Law states the following:

“110 ILCS 685/30-5)

*Sec. 30-5. Object. The object of Northern Illinois University is to offer such courses of instruction, conduct such research and offer such public services as are prescribed by the Board of Trustees of Northern Illinois University or its successor, subject to the provisions of Section 7 of the Board of Higher Education Act.*

(Source: P.A. 89-4, eff. 1-1-96.)”

It appears that Dr. Baker did not comply with this portion of the act when he sent consultants to work on these major projects.

The next important event was the hiring of **Nancy Suttentfield**. Ms.Suttentfield works for a consulting group called the Registry for College and University Presidents.<sup>28</sup> The issues mentioned herein are some of the supporting data for Keith Jackson's lawsuit against NIU.<sup>29</sup> I would like to discuss the single source Registry's/Suttentfield's contract itself, and assert that this contract may possibly be invalid or illegal in its entirety. A decision was made to hire an Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) shortly after Baker's arrival at the University as President on July 1, 2013. Contact was made with a representative of the Registry named Jerry Israel. State procurement rules for a non-architectural contract specify a \$20,000 threshold, a threshold upon which a professional service contract MUST be put to an open bid. The University did not issue a RFP (Request for Proposal) and therefore, there was no open bid on this contract as required by the state. After Israel had presented several candidates for the CFO position, the choice was made and a single contract was written with the parties involved being the University, the Registry, and, specifically Nancy Suttentfield. The first iteration of this contract had all payments to both the Registry and Suttentfield being paid by the University Accounts Payable (AP) department. This contract was declined for processing by both the University's co-director of the Procurement department and the Controller as it violated state procurement rules. I do not have a copy of this first version, however, both employees have confirmed their denial of the contract to the OEIG. The contract was reworked, apparently in January 2014 as evidenced in the emails below; payment terms were written so that the Registry portion of the contract could be paid out of Foundation funds, and Suttentfield paid through the NIU payroll system. This change appears to be a deliberate attempt to circumvent the state procurement rules for a consulting contract. Further, the scope of this contract had also apparently had been later changed unilaterally by NIU—without a revised contract. These changes are evidenced by the December 2013 payroll form which increased Suttentfield's salary retroactively to November 1, 2013 for “additional pay for increased duties” and the May 2014 payroll form which increased her salary effective June 1, 2014 for “salary adjustment per President Baker”. In addition, NIU—**USING A FOUNDATION ACCOUNT**—paid Suttentfield in the amount \$56,269.69 in June 2014 as simply “payment per President Baker”. Is it because a payment amount of this size, if made through the NIU's payroll using a NIU account, would attract state auditors attention? The total amount expended on this contract was \$512,906 for sixteen months, of which \$153,069 came from Foundation funds. A complaint has been made to the OEIG, confirmed as #14-01474, and also may be part of the massive investigation into NIU and its current administration. Please note that the contract, although with a stated effective date of November 1, 2013 was not signed/executed until January 30, 2014. (These documents are found in the attached file Suttentfield contract documents)

<sup>28</sup> <http://www.registryinterim.com/>

<sup>29</sup> [http://northernstar.info/campus/ex-controller-files-civil-suit-against-administration/article\\_c734aa8c-6d96-11e5-8e5f-8b8d5ad4d883.html](http://northernstar.info/campus/ex-controller-files-civil-suit-against-administration/article_c734aa8c-6d96-11e5-8e5f-8b8d5ad4d883.html)

The following excerpt from a December 9, 2013 email from Nancy Suttentfield to Jerry Blakemore, VP and General Counsel indicates there may have been questions regarding the contract's validity:

*Steve [Cunningham-then VP HR and Administration] and I were talking this morning and I learned that Illinois wishes NIU to nullify the interim CFO arrangement between NIU and the Registry. He said you would be talking to me about an arrangement as a temporary employee similar to the one for Ron Walter. I told Steve that I actually informed Doug [President Baker] at the onset of discussions that I am personally indifferent about how I get paid.*

Mr. Blakemore seems to confirm that this contract may have skirted state procurement rules as he writes in his December 23, 2014 email to Suttentfield:

*...Although I was not directly involved in the Registry negotiations I will certainly continue to make sure that the Presidents intention are fulfilled. No one saw any competition on your part and the whole intent of making a technical classification was to ensure that you are compensated in a timely manner. We accepted the substance of their contract (not employee) as a way of expediting your status with the University and were willing to do so rather than initiating a protective competitive process. I would never talk to Amy [Registry] but would not hesitate to do so if that would be helpful. **If she were supportive of a temporary employee status we could have avoided even the consideration of bidding and interesting enough if she could do it then what's the problem with us doing it.***

Finally, there is a (heated) email dated January 6, 2014 from Suttentfield to Baker regarding this contract:

*Jerry B [Blakemore] went on to say that he had also discussed the existing NIU contract with the Registry with the state procurement officer, because there was also an immediate need for a CFO. Jerry looked me in the face and said that the contract with the Registry was also not permitted under the state rules for the same reasons and "going to be a problem for us". The state officer had told Jerry that an interim CFO could be found via an RFP and would not have created any major delays. Jerry then went on to say that the contract with the Registry would be a problem for us when the state conducts (sic) the annual audit of our compliance with state rules regarding RFPs.*

Suttentfield further writes:

*Thus, Jerry and Steve asked me if I had any objection to being made an employee, to which I had always made it clear to the Registry that I was indifferent to whether I took the assignment as a contractor or a temporary employee. In addition, I made a point of telling them that the Registry should be notified of NIU's change in plans if they preferred to avoid the audit issues by making me a temp employee.*

And still further,

*I don't want to get into a dispute with Jerry B nor do I believe I created the problem with the Registry, But from where I sit this could have been avoided if Jerry had just called the Registry timely to alert them that the relationship needed to be re-worked, and if the Registry would pick up the phone rather than send more snarky emails without understanding that Illinois doesn't do things like other states.*

These email exchanges confirm that the validity of this contract between NIU and the Registry was in question.

Wally Pfeiffer was mentioned earlier in the discussion about Dr. Baker's attempts to go around the hiring rules at NIU. When Dr. Pfeiffer (a close friend of Dr. Baker and Mr. Walters) was working at personnel, he was given the assignment to help hire an Senior Associate Vice President for Human Resources. Dr. Pfeiffer was signed to a consulting contract effective March 31, 2014, through June 30, 2014, in the amount of \$19,999.99. This amount is significant as the state procurement rules stipulate a \$20,000 threshold for which a personal services contract must go out to open bid. As the contractual amount was under the threshold (by one cent), an open bid was not required. However, by the second invoice submitted by Dr. Pfeiffer, dated May 8, 2014, he had exceeded the contractual amount. To cover this overage, NIU amended the contract (but not effective until June 5, 2014), and issued a purchase order from the Foundation (dated June 6, 2014); this appears to be an attempt to circumvent state procurement rules as the total payment on this contract exceeded the \$20,000 threshold. This apparent violation of state procurement rules was reported to the OEIG under complaint 14-01530. Subsequently, however, the payment for the second invoice was reversed and Dr. Pfeiffer was placed on NIU's payroll for two cycles—notably, with the first payroll amount being exactly equal to the second invoice amount. Upon advice from the OEIG investigator, this was reported to the OEIG as a separate complaint and may be included in the massive investigation by the OEIG into NIU's administration. Further, these issues concerning Pfeiffer's contract has been publicly presented to the NIU Board of Trustees at the June 2015 meeting. Just like Dr. Baker, Dr. Pfeiffer went straight to hiring one of his friends, Sherry Cadeswan of Talence Group, for the search firm<sup>30</sup>. This company did not have the proper qualifications to contract in the State of Illinois and eventually their contract was canceled. This shows that Dr. Baker's example was causing pervasive disdain for the rules and regulations.

The next one is the **Super-University**. This project shows that there is a total disdain for the Board of Trustees and the IBHE. The following is an outline of the Super University written by the \$20,000 a month consultant – Craig Burkhardt. This money was supplied out of NIU Foundation funds. This is followed by a communication where John Butler is demanding to read this information. If Dr. Baker respected the oversight of the Board of Trustees then why did John Butler have to request this information. There is significantly more information in FOIA information that I have access to and I will put it together for you.

**From:** Burkhardt, Craig  
**To:** Douglas Baker; Michael Malone; Anne Kaplan  
**Subject:** NewUFactSheet  
**Date:** Wednesday, February 25, 2015 8:07:42 AM  
**Attachments:** NewUFactSheet.pdf

Dear Colleagues: Attached and pasted below is the fact sheet I will be using in low-key internal discussions with potential House sponsors. It includes our Senate Bill number I will also be meeting with Malone and Sevener (our NIU contract lobbyists) this morning to clue them in on the sponsor recruitment. I anticipate getting a lead Democrat in the House to co-sponsor with Pritchard, and will be guided by Malone in that regard. Fact sheets of this nature are never meant to be comprehensive – only guides to conversations. So, please do not be disappointed in the extreme summary nature of this. Remember, we are just “moving forward the conversation” that will lead to introduction of substantive legislation. Regards, Craig

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30 <http://edgarcountywatchdogs.com/2015/12/cronyism-and-procurement-violations-at-northern-illinois-university/>

**Support Senate Bill 1931**  
**New University Enabling Legislation**  
**Kotowski-Connelly**

An upcoming amendment to this shell bill would authorize voluntary combining of public State universities, community colleges and private universities into new higher education entities. While intended for Northern Illinois University and institutions potentially interested in combining into a new entity, the legislation would not be limited to that particular combination.

Governance

- Establish a New University statute;
- Authorize public State university, community college and private higher education governing boards to voluntarily combine into proposed new State universities;
- Authorize establishment of Governor-appointed boards for each new university, which would be representative of combining institutions;
- Authorize advisory sub-boards for each combining campus location;
- Exempt new universities from oversight of the Board of Higher Education or Community College Board in favor of intensified oversight by institution-specific inspectors general appointed by the State Auditor.

Finance

- Continue collecting current tuition, public revenues (state appropriations and local property taxes) and grants which fund combining institutions;
- Cap tuition and applicable local property tax rates;
- Increase auxiliary enterprise revenues;
- Combine private foundation activities;

Operation

- Operate academic, administrative and auxiliary departments on a university-wide basis to create operational savings. One English department, one purchasing department, one President.
- Exempt new universities from mandates as recommended in House Resolution 191 blue ribbon report.
- Require stringent cost-savings measures. Adopt sustainable business practices.

Program

- Authorize new universities to offer existing programming of combining institutions in sufficient market demand at any of its locations. This includes baccalaureate and graduate programming at former community college locations;
- Reallocate and right-size programming;
- Require new universities to offer low-tuition certificate, training and Associates Degree programming to residents of combining former community college districts;
- Allow registration of students accepted to a program in classes at any location of a new university. Require acceptance of course credits regardless of class location;
- Upgrade actual and perceived quality and value of programming.
- Build reputation for academic prowess, instructional competence, and service achievement superior to combining institutions. Retain Illinois students.
- Specifically target new university programming to address the skill set needs of Illinois employers, with emphasis on the region a new university serves.

**For Further Information Contact: Northern Illinois University Foundation**  
**Craig Burkhardt, Lobbyist, [cburkhardt@btlaw.com](mailto:cburkhardt@btlaw.com)**

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**From:** John Butler  
**To:** Douglas Baker; Jerry Blakemore  
**Cc:** "Marc Strauss"  
**Subject:** Legislation  
**Date:** Friday, February 27, 2015 3:35:04 PM

**ATTORNEY CLIENT COMMUNICATION / PRIVILEGED AND CONFIDENTIAL**

Doug and Jerry,

I wish to read the draft language of legislation being prepared by Craig Burkhardt or anyone else on behalf of NIU or the Foundation, in advance of its preparation by the Legislative Reference Bureau and posting by its respective sponsors in the Illinois House and Senate.

John

John R. Butler, Ph.D.

This communication and any accompanying document(s) are or may be confidential and privileged and protected by the attorney-client and/or attorney work product privileges. They are intended for the sole use of the addressee. If you receive this transmission in error, you are advised that any disclosure, copying, distribution, or the taking of any action in reliance upon the communication is strictly prohibited. Moreover, any such inadvertent disclosure shall not compromise or waive the attorney-client or attorney work product privilege as to this communication or otherwise. If you have received this communication in error, please delete the original message from your system and immediately contact me at the above telephone number or email address. Thank you

**The last selected piece is the OEIG complaint which I filed last Spring:**

To whom it may concern,

I have been concerned over the last couple of years about the way contracts over the Bold Visions (President Baker's initiatives) have been granted and funded. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Many of these contracts (some well over \$200K) were sole sourced with no RFQ's. One which had a RFQ and 14 proposals seems to actually have been rigged. What got my attention is the contract in Exhibit A. This contract (**Central Core Redevelopment Framework**) appears normal until you delve into the details. The following are deficiencies that I have found:

- The Contract was on a form that was dated 7/8/2015
- The V.P. Phillips signed the contract after the money was spent.
- V. P. Phillips signed the contract even though the contract was dated 11/10/2014 and V. P. Phillips didn't start at NIU until 3/2015.

This became a red flag for me. I then looked deeper into the contract. It appears that the prime contractor is only receiving \$12,000 of the approximately \$125,000 and Urban Green and Civitas are receiving the bulk of the contract. **Exhibit B** is the QBS document and **Exhibit C** is the posted RFQ. The problem with this contract also is that Mr. Heid of Urban Green had a no bid contract for architecture for the yearly maximum of \$24,999 as shown in **Exhibit D**. This contract was never negotiated or signed until Mr. Heid completed the work. He was then concerned (**Exhibit E page 40**) that he could not get paid for the **Exhibit D** contract and the **Exhibit A** contract along with the contract in **Exhibit F**. He then has a series of negotiations with the NIU legal department as shown in **Exhibit E**. I was also told by my anonymous source to look into Knight E/A' s Lucinda Rd Extension contract. The QBS document in **Exhibit G** does not show any competitive bidding for the contract and I could not find it either. The contract signed also shows that Urban Green is the subcontractor in the Lucinda extension also. The exchange in **Exhibit H** is a very interesting set of emails. The email between Mr. Ron Walters had Mr. Heid purposefully placed as a subcontractor on these projects to guaranty that their plans were implemented. This to me seems to be contract manipulation to make sure Mr. Walters friend got hired – I highlighted some key words.

*From: Ronald Walters*  
*To: [jim@urbangreen.net](mailto:jim@urbangreen.net)*

*Subject: Re: ULRC and Lucinda*  
*Date: Thursday, April 3, 2014 10:36:53 PM*

*That was not a gesture. Sometime back when I emailed you re Lucinda design **you** suggested that it be a requirement that the engineers bring you in. I made that clear to Bill and Jeff. But Jeff has a history of making the design his own... **So I made a big deal of this a few days ago, Doug agrees.** Left to their own it will not be done as envisioned. So , you need to insert yourself into the project. I doubt one 1 hour meeting will do it.*  
*Sent from my iPhone*

I also believe that Mr. Heid's company creatively crafted the RFQ's to allow him and him alone to be hired to direct the work. This is outlined in this particular email:

> > > [jim@urbangreen.net](mailto:jim@urbangreen.net)" <jim@urbangreen.net> 7/30/2014 3:50 PM > > >

*Bill-*

*Just to get the ball rolling here are some thoughts on potential agenda items for my time on site. Add as you like:*

- 1. Meet with procurement specialists to understand Holmes/ Neptune RFQ/P crafting and procedural requirements*
- 2. **Review/ discuss method for contracting, launching Core Area Framework Urban Design Study***
- 3. Summer projects update (either walk to see progress or meet with staff as needed to discuss any open issues)*
- 4. Update on AECOM master plan deliverable and how presentation went with President*
- 5. Update on Lucinda West/ extension and next steps*
- 6. Discuss potential approach to MLK design charrette with students in fall 2014*
- 7. Review any open items with City of DeKalb where I can assist with plans/ drawings*
- 8. Discuss potential fall/ spring projects priority list*
- 9. Outline potential fall project needs/ potential visit schedule*

**Jim Heid** /FASLA Founder  
**URBANGREEN** ®

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Blog : [www.chasingbetter.com](http://www.chasingbetter.com)

Web : [www.urbangreen.net](http://www.urbangreen.net)

I have highlighted item 2 for it outlines that Mr. Heid both set the rules for contracting the **Central Core Redevelopment Framework** in **Exhibit A** and also received the subcontract for the work which is in a direct conflict of interest for both himself and the University employees involved (such as Douglas Baker, Bill Nicklas and Ron Walters).

I have also included an assortment of documents that are also connected to the project. These documents include change orders, travel payouts, invoices and technical reports

File list of Exhibits:

- A. 2369 - Haji-Sheikh - Knight EA Inc FY15 redacted highlighted.pdf
- B. 2392 - Haji-Sheikh - QBS Selection Memo-Baker 102314.pdf
- C. 322425410\_rfq.pdf
- D. 2369 - Haji-Sheikh - Urban Green Redacted.pdf
- E. 0240\_001\_Redacted.pdf
- F. 2393 - Haji-Sheikh - Knight Engineers Architects Final Agreement 8-5-14.pdf
- G. 2393 - Haji-Sheikh - QBS Selection Recommendations Parking Lot.pdf
- H. Walters Heid Email.pdf

I really think this is way over the head of our local ethics officer. Many on campus believe he is compromised. At best, this is way to complicated for him and he is overwhelmed.

Michael Haji-Sheikh Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb Illinois  
Cell # 8155013186  
529 Park Avenue  
DeKalb  
Home # 8157874419

## Related Resources

2393 – Lucinda Ave Knight Engineers Architects Final Agreement 4-30-14

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2393-lucinda-ave-knight-engineers-architects-final-agreement-4-30-14.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2393-lucinda-ave-knight-engineers-architects-final-agreement-4-30-14.pdf)

2393 – Haji-Sheikh – QBS Selection Recommendations Parking Lot

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2393-qbs-selection-recommendations-parking-lot.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2393-qbs-selection-recommendations-parking-lot.pdf)

2392 – Haji-Sheikh – QBS Selection memo-Baker 102314

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2392-qbs-selection-memo-baker-102314.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2392-qbs-selection-memo-baker-102314.pdf)

2369 – Haji-Sheikh – UrbanGreen PO 152383 and contract – Redacted

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2369-urban-green-po-152383-and-contract-redacted.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-2369-urban-green-po-152383-and-contract-redacted.pdf)

0240\_001 Redacted(1)

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-0240-001-redacted1.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-0240-001-redacted1.pdf)

Walters Heid Email

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-walters-heid-email.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-walters-heid-email.pdf)

Pages from 0240\_001 Redacted Exhibit E

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-pages-from-0240-001-redacted-exhibit-e.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-pages-from-0240-001-redacted-exhibit-e.pdf)

Gmail – Did NIU Foundation get all of the relevant facts before

OR

[http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-gmail-did-niu-foundation-get-all-of-the-relevant-facts-before.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/reports/Misc/2016-2017/haji-sheikh-gmail-did-niu-foundation-get-all-of-the-relevant-facts-before.pdf)

## MEMORANDUM

To: NIU Faculty Senate

From: Doug Baker 

Date: February 22, 2017

Re: Responses to additional questions

---

In January, I received nine questions from the Faculty Senate seeking clarity and insight into the Baker Report I issued in December. I provided written responses to each question and they were shared at the January 25, 2017 meeting. At that same meeting, Dr. Haji-Sheikh presented a document raising his own concerns. Below are my responses, which include steps that have been taken over the last three years to improve and clarify related university policies and practices. Please note that in some cases I cannot respond, as there is related litigation in progress.

1. Ron Walters: Please see my January 25 memo to the Faculty Senate where this topic is addressed.
2. Nancy Suttentfield: Please see my January 25 memo to the Faculty Senate where this topic is addressed.
3. Keith Jackson: This matter is currently pending in court and we must let that legal process carry itself out. I am currently represented by the Office of the Illinois Attorney General in that case. As such, I am not at liberty to comment, other than to say that our version of events is different than what has been portrayed here.
4. Magaly Rodriguez: Ms. Rodriguez was originally hired in the fall 2013 as a consultant to work with senior leaders. That work was useful and subsequently some of the deans and vice presidents asked if they could use her services in their areas. She was hired under the understanding that the affiliate employment category was appropriate and her travel to campus was to be reimbursed. When it was subsequently found that her travel should not have been compensated, we requested and received reimbursement from her, which we addressed in a Feb. 10, 2016 Baker Report found here <http://www.niutoday.info/2016/02/10/clearing-the-air-on-travel/>.

A review of our policies and procedures was conducted. Clarifications of travel policies were put in place to allow easier navigation of common travel issues. For example, flowcharts were created to help employees determine when travel reimbursements are or are not appropriate and are accessible online at (<http://niu.edu/aps/travel/index.shtml>). Additionally, the affiliate employment category was eliminated.

5. **Wally Pfeiffer:** Mr. Pfeiffer was hired by Bill Nicklas, then Vice President for Administration who oversaw Human Resources, to appropriately fill a consulting contract. Mr. Pfeiffer was a long-time HR administrator and consultant brought in to help Mr. Nicklas and the NIU Human Resource managers examine their policies and practices. Counter to Dr. Haji-Sheikh's assertions, I had no relationship with Mr. Pfeiffer prior to him coming to NIU.
6. **Alvarez and Marsal Contract:** This matter is also part of the Jackson litigation mentioned earlier. Therefore, I am not at liberty to comment, other than to say that our version of events is different than what has been portrayed here. Again, we will need to let that case carry itself out through the legal process.
7. **Dr. Dana Stover:** University presidents and their spouses have a key role in donor cultivation that requires networking, attending events and occasionally travelling out of state to meet with donors. As such, my contract specifically outlines that travel for the benefit of the university will be reimbursed for both myself and my wife, Dr. Dana Stover.

During FY14 and FY15, my wife accompanied me on several trips to see donors and our airfare was incorrectly charged to a P-card when it should have instead been charged directly to my credit card and then reimbursed by the NIU Foundation. Through internal controls we caught this error, addressed it and made adjustments in early 2015. We also eliminated the use of the P-card for travel effective March 2015.

When allegations of intentional misuse were made in January 2016, I issued a Baker Report to set the record straight – addressing both the travel and the improvements made to ensure that administrative procedures for reimbursement were being followed: <http://www.niutoday.info/2016/02/10/clearing-the-air-on-travel/>

8. **Keith Ickes:** In 2013, my first semester as president, I felt the need for a trusted external expert to assess our controls, budget, and budgeting process to provide an unbiased assessment. I hired Mr. Ickes, former Executive Director of Budget and Planning at the University of Idaho, through appropriate steps to provide me with needed insights. His contract was for \$1750 plus expenses.
9. **College Town Partners:** NIU was approached during my first year at the university to see if there was a way to reinvigorate collaborative initiatives between the university and

the City of DeKalb. Discussions with Board leadership were held and a not-for-profit was considered to explore what might be possible. It did not require full board or IBHE approval during these exploratory stages. Ultimately, it was determined that this was not a project suitable for NIU.

10. College Town Partners: Answer above in #9.

11. Jim Heid: Upon investigating this matter last year, the university discovered that Mr. Heid had contributed to the drafting of a Request for Proposal (RFP) that his company eventually ended up being a subcontractor for on the final project. It was also discovered that the university did not have sufficient ways to identify this potential conflict and address it through the RFP process. The university took the following steps to correct this and prevent it from occurring in the future: the Procurement and Contract Management Department organizational structure was revised to be more effective; two Associate Directors with significant subject-matter expertise were hired; and an automated Purchase Order system was developed to replace the slower manual process. The end results are reduced time to complete a purchase order, improved accuracy, and better accountability.

The following are descriptions of the enhancements to policies, processes and procedures mentioned above:

- The Qualification Based Selection (QBS) process guidance has been enhanced.
  - Specialized expertise of new Associate Director of Contract Management
  - Ensuring we have enough cost data from the vendors to justify the prices they are charges for their services.
  - Revising contracts to mutual NIU-vendor benefits
- The University has added the following to the Procurement Services website:  
<http://www.niu.edu/procurement/>:
  - Allowable Procurement Communications  
<http://www.niu.edu/procurement/Procurement-Communications-Reporting.pdf>
  - Procurement Guidelines for RFPs and bids  
<http://www.niu.edu/procurement/Bid-Guidelines.pdf>
  - The Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative (IPHEC) has built a website that is linked to Procurement's site, under "IPHEC Contracts" on the sidebar.  
<http://www.iphec.org/awards>
- The Office of General Counsel has revised (and improved) its' contract procedures, which are undergoing revision now due to the Contract Management process changes. The current procedure, updated as of December, 2016 are here:  
[http://www.niu.edu/generalcounsel/procedures\\_forms/Contract-Procedures.pdf](http://www.niu.edu/generalcounsel/procedures_forms/Contract-Procedures.pdf)

12. (10 sic) Bypassing the BOT and IBHE: Discussions were held to see if there were any alternatives to structures to better serve our region and strengthen NIU. Such

exploratory conversations are appropriate within the scope of duties and responsibilities of the president. The Board was aware of these conversations and no IBHE approval was necessary to have such conversations.

13. (11 sic) Contracting and alleged “fake” repair of Lucinda: There were no improper construction issues with the Lucinda project. Contracting issues on the project, and the steps that the university has taken in response to those issues, are addressed in the response to number 11 above. This construction work was appropriately completed and the Lucinda extension has much improved cross-campus transit. The project was completed on time and within budget with appropriate bond funds.

As I’ve shared in previous communications, concerns are always taken seriously and when an error was made we corrected it or when clarity was needed, we made it a priority. We’ve been in a period of policy reform and as the faculty senate is aware, Greg Long is overseeing the creation of a policy library that will be practical and useful. Our goal for that initiative is to make policies transparent and easily accessible to all members of the NIU community. In that vein, the university has adopted its new Whistleblower Policy. I want to encourage people to speak up when they see things that don’t seem correct and to do it early on, so that the university can address those concerns before they become larger problems.

It is my hope now that we can continue to move forward and improve the university through efforts such as process re-engineering, collaborating and developing the strategies and resources necessary to position NIU for long-term success.

I appreciate the opportunity to respond and welcome your feedback.

## **Articles/links regarding votes of no confidence**

[What Confidence Should Boards Give No-Confidence Votes](#)

(Association of Governing Boards, 2012)

[Votes of no confidence proliferate but their impact seems minimal](#)

(Inside Higher Ed, 2013)

[No-Confidence Vote Database](#)

Sean McKinniss

## **Links from the American Association of University Professors**

[Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities](#) (2006)

[Faculty Communication with Governing Boards: Best Practices](#) (2014)

[Faculty Evaluation of Administrators](#) (N.D.)

March 23, 2017

Dear colleagues:

President Baker is scheduled to attend the March 29<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate meeting. He was invited to talk with the Senate in response to questions associated with the December 22, 2016 Baker Report titled, "[Correcting Course—new policies enhance transparency](#)." During the Senate's January and February meetings, the membership reviewed and discussed this article as well as materials shared by President Baker and Professor Haji-Sheikh. Links to these documents are included in the meeting agenda.

A portion of the February 22<sup>nd</sup> Senate meeting was used to brainstorm a list of questions and concerns in preparation for President Baker's appearance on March 29<sup>th</sup>. The unedited list is attached. On March 22, the Senate's Steering Committee met to review and refine the questions generated during the prior Senate meeting. Thematically, the questions fell into three groups. The first set of questions pertained to President Baker. They were included in a letter sent to him earlier today. A copy of this letter is attached.

The second set of questions focused on general information topics and included the following:

1. How long will President Baker be in the position?
2. When will the outcome of Office of Executive Inspector General (OEIG) investigations be known?
3. How many OEIG investigations are there?
4. What does a vote of no confidence mean?
5. Would a vote of no confidence now have an impact given the time remaining in his contract?
6. Does a vote of no confidence impact retirement benefits?
7. What is the cost of litigation?
8. What is the process for renewing the President's contract?

The third set of questions pertained to discussion points for the Senate including:

1. What are our options as a Faculty Senate?
2. Is this a trend or pattern of behavior we can accept?
3. If President Baker leaves, how will we make sure the next president knows what's expected?
4. How does this situation impact the public relations of the university?
5. Would a VONC send a strong message to the BOT?
6. How is NIU's reputation impacted?
7. How do we communicate concerns to the BOT?

From a process perspective, the Steering Committee recommended that the Senate discuss general information questions immediately following President Baker's presentation and meeting departure. Addressing these questions first will ensure a broad-based understanding of the issues before considering specific actions(s).

The Steering Committee recognizes that there are a variety of potential outcomes that may follow from this meeting. Given the nature and sensitivity of these issues, the committee requests that we follow Robert's Rules of Order and require any potential motions, resolutions, or similar statements be prepared in advance of the meeting and submitted to [glong@niu.edu](mailto:glong@niu.edu) no later than Tuesday March 28<sup>th</sup> at noon.

I look forward to your attendance and participation in next Wednesday's Faculty Senate meeting.

Sincerely,

Greg Long  
President, Faculty Senate  
Executive Secretary, University Council  
Northern Illinois University  
815-753-9306  
[glong@niu.edu](mailto:glong@niu.edu)

Is this a trend or a pattern of behavior that we can accept?

Why should we accept these answers in the disjointed way that they've been given?

How can we believe that we won't see this in the future?

Will we know about the OEIG investigations in a reasonable timeframe?

How many OEIG investigations are there?

Would a VONC now have an impact given his time in his contract?

Even if President Baker does retire, how will we make sure the next president knows what is expected?

What is the cost of litigation?

Does a VONC impact retirement benefits?

Why are we looking at non-NIU resource people to help us?

Question re per diem

How does this situation impact the public relations of the university?

How long will President Baker be in the position?

How can communication be improved (more transparent)?

Would a VONC send a strong message to the BOT?

How is NIU's reputation impacted?

Is more documentation available?

What does a VONC mean?

Even though President Baker's term is nearly completed, what is the expectation that a renewal contract will be offered?

Can President Baker decide to release information even if the OEIG doesn't?

Can we communicate a list of concerns to the BOT?

Should FS consider a VOC?

How does the perception of scandal impact the university's standing in the community?

What policies were in place at the time and how would a reasonable person interpreted those policies? A before/after picture.

More specificity on what clarifications were made. What made it difficult to follow those controls?

Is there any accountability that the president has when he decided to spend money to invite people to come and work here? Are procedures observed? If not, should procedures be observed?

Is it possible for the president to come and answer our questions live (not with prepared answers)?

Is there going to be a section about what other options we have as a FS?

We were working hard to build a positive community relationship. Now, 3-4 years later, where does he see that relationship?

What is the ethic or credo followed when releasing information and communicating with faculty?

Would it be more productive to speak with the BOT as opposed to speaking with the President?  
-----

The following three questions were submitted after the meeting:

What precipitated the need to tighten the whistle blower policy?

There is a well-documented national trend in higher education of administrative bloat, what is your plan to publically recognize this trend and deal with it at NIU?

Many faculty have doubts about the current administration's ability to lead given a series of mis-steps. Specifically, what can you do, if anything, to rebuild this confidence?



**Northern Illinois  
University**

*University Council  
and Faculty Senate*

March 23, 2017

DeKalb, Illinois 60115-2828  
815-753-1732  
Fax 815-753-8686  
universitycouncil@niu.edu  
www.niu.edu/u\_council/

Dear President Baker:

On behalf of the Faculty Senate, thank you for agreeing to talk with us during our March 29<sup>th</sup> meeting. In preparation for your appearance, the Senate developed a draft list of questions during our February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting. Yesterday, the Faculty Senate Steering Committee met to review and refine these questions. As you consider these questions, the Steering Committee asked that you structure your answers within the boarder contexts of:

- Hiring and personnel decisions
- Fiscal stewardship
- Board of Trustees' communication and approval expectations
- Disclosure concerns

Specific questions the Senate would like you to address include the following:

1. What policies were in place at the time you became President?
  - a. What was the challenge in interpreting those policies?
  - b. What advice was given and why was it incorrect?
  - c. How have the polices been changed to avoid any current and future problems?
2. Provide more specificity on what clarifications were made. What made it difficult to follow those controls?
3. How can communication be improved (more transparent)?
4. Describe what you are doing to build a positive community relationship. Now, 3-4 years later, where do you see that relationship?
5. What precipitated the need to tighten the whistle blower policy?
6. Many faculty have doubts about the current administration's ability to lead given a series of missteps. Specifically, what can you do, if anything, to rebuild this confidence?
7. How can you assure us that we won't see this type of behavior in the future?

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions about the upcoming meeting. I look forward to the discussion.

Sincerely,

Greg Long, Faculty Senate President  
Executive Secretary, University Council  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
815.753.9306

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Northern Illinois University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.

## Proposed amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws, Article 2.3 and 2.4

The proposed amendment is intended to:

1. Clarify that the Faculty Senate president's contract is 12 months;
2. Clarify the timeline for electing a Faculty Senate vice president and for appointing a Faculty Senate parliamentarian; and
3. Clarify the term of service of the Faculty Senate vice president and parliamentarian.

### FACULTY SENATE BYLAWS

#### ARTICLE 2: OFFICERS OF THE FACULTY SENATE

**2.1** The Executive Secretary of the University Council shall also serve as President of the Faculty Senate. The Executive Secretary is nominated by the Faculty Senate from the elected faculty members of the University Council and is elected by the University Council.

**2.1.1** The initial selection of candidates for the office of Executive Secretary of the University Council shall take place at the second spring semester meeting of the Faculty Senate. Any faculty senator may suggest or second the suggestion of a candidate. To be qualified to serve, the candidate must be an elected faculty member of the University Council for the current year and for the ensuing year.

**2.1.2** Suggested candidates for the office of Executive Secretary shall submit a letter of intent to be included with the agenda for the third and fourth (last) spring semester regularly scheduled meetings of the Faculty Senate.

**2.1.3** An election of the final candidate for nomination shall be conducted by secret ballot at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the normal academic year of the Faculty Senate. All faculty senators present may cast a ballot for the candidate. If there are more than two suggested candidates, the final nominee must receive a majority of the votes cast. If no candidate receives a majority, subsequent ballots will be taken removing the candidate receiving the fewest votes until a candidate is selected.

**2.2** The Faculty Senate shall elect from its voting members a vice president. The president of the Faculty Senate shall appoint a parliamentarian with the advice and consent of the Faculty Senate. The parliamentarian shall be a member of the faculty but need not be a voting member of the Faculty Senate.

**2.3** The election of ~~officers~~ *the vice president, and the consent of the parliamentarian appointment*, shall take place at the first Faculty Senate meeting of the academic year.

**2.4** *The term of office for the president shall begin July 1 and shall be for one year.* The term of office for ~~all officers~~ *the vice president and parliamentarian* shall begin August 16 and shall be for one year. ~~An officer~~ *The vice president and parliamentarian* may serve successive terms.



**Northern Illinois  
University**  
*Department of Foreign  
Languages and Literatures*

March 10, 2017

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www.niu.edu/forlangs

Dear fellow senators:

With full understanding of the significant responsibility of this position, I respectfully accept my nomination to be considered for Faculty Senate President / University Council Executive Secretary.

I understand that several of you may not know me, so I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you. This is my sixth year as the Director of Undergraduate Studies for the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. During my time as Director, I was charged with the task of writing the Spanish and French program prioritization reports and, two years earlier, my department's program review for the B.A. in both Spanish and French. In addition to the numerous other duties as Director of Undergraduate Studies for my department, I am also involved with several university-wide committees. Currently, I am completing the second year of my first term on University Council. Since being elected to University Council, I have been serving as the Chair of the University Affairs standing committee. Likewise, it is my second year serving on the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. In the past, I served on Faculty Senate, on a number of sub-committees for the Center for the Study of Women, Gender & Sexuality during the time of their merger with LGBT Studies, and on the Faculty Advisory Committee for the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies. From 2012-2013, I also served as a member on the Latino Resource Center Advisory Board where we focused on increasing Latino student enrollment and involvement on campus. As evidenced by my committee experience, I place great importance on working to improve diversity and inclusion at this university.

In regard to the position of Faculty Senate President / University Council Executive Secretary, I plan to continue to foster an environment of mutual respect and understanding with all my constituents and, as the Constitution states in regard to the purpose of Faculty Senate, "to promote the representation of faculty; to encourage active faculty participation; to discuss and recommend policies; and to promote the welfare of the faculty and the university." To accomplish these goals, I would invite faculty to share their ideas and concerns with me so that I may correctly represent your voices and build a strong consensus whenever possible. At times, I understand that it will be essential to respond to complex decisions, but I am willing to aptly step up, take a stand, and resolutely face those challenges.

We cannot deny that the university is facing unprecedented challenges. These "changing times," as I prefer to call them, are symptomatic of higher education as an institution

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being driven to respond to economic, political, and cultural transitions. As a result, faculty is witnessing a shift in how we teach, what we teach, when, and to whom. Further, we continue to face fiscal uncertainty with our state budget, which has resulted in the loss of tools necessary for our job coupled with numerous other budget reductions at department levels; enrollments have declined from five years ago (in part due to an outmigration of students from Illinois); and overall morale across campus is spiraling downward. Needless to say, this list is not conclusive.

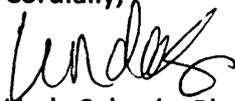
In light of these challenges, there are action steps that faculty can take to ensure that proper governance procedures, values, and opinions are shared across colleges and disciplines as well as with administration. A few of these steps I outline for you below:

- Continue the hard work put forth by Greg Long, Therese Arado, and the members of the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee in creating an easily accessible policy library
- Push for transparency in regard to the budget, program prioritization, enrollment management, and more
- Review and protect academic procedures and policies as deemed necessary
- Maintain open communication with the recently established faculty union to ensure faculty needs are heard and met

This list represents a small number of steps I plan to take to ensure inclusion among all members of the senate.

To conclude, I would like to express my gratitude for this nomination. If elected, I would welcome your input and invite you to speak directly with me about your concerns. I believe that any effective leader should be transparent and honest, and strive to create meaningful dialogue with others.

Cordially,



Linda Saborio, Ph.D.

Associate Professor of Spanish

Director of Undergraduate Studies

Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

[lsaborio@niu.edu](mailto:lsaborio@niu.edu)



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*Department of Psychology*

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February 27, 2017

Greg Long, PhD  
President of the Faculty Senate  
103 Altgeld Hall  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115

Dear Dr. Long and my colleagues in the Faculty Senate,

I am writing to declare my candidacy for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor. The financial problems at NIU have created change and uncertainty, and have the potential to contribute to unfair treatment of faculty and staff. I believe that I have the clarity and courage to stand up for academic freedom, tenure, and due process, and to protect the rights of faculty and staff. This letter describes my qualifications for this position, including my experience and knowledge, my relevant professional skills, and my approach to serving in this role.

Regarding my experience and knowledge, I am completing my 21<sup>st</sup> year as a faculty member in the Department of Psychology and currently hold the position of tenured Full Professor. I have served on many committees and held many offices within the department. A copy of my curriculum vita with a full list of my institutional service can be found at: <http://www.niu.edu/psyc/faculty/valentiner.shtml>. Most relevant to the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor position, I have served as a member and chair of my department's personnel committee; and as a member and chair of the department's policy and planning committee. I also served as a member of the Faculty Senate (2010-2012) and on its Economic Status of the Profession subcommittee, and as a member (2014-2016) and Secretary (2015-2016) of the College Council of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. During the past 20+ years, I have learned about many policies and procedures associated with personnel issues. In particular, I am very familiar with the tenure and promotion, appeals, and the committees and procedures that govern personnel decisions within the university and of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. As the Faculty and SPS Advisor, I will work hard to further develop my knowledge of the governance documents at NIU, including the Constitution and by-laws; the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual (APPM); The Employee Conduct, Accountability, and Ethics in the Workplace Manual; and the policies and procedures manuals of each of the colleges.

Regarding relevant professional skills, I am trained as a clinical psychologist and hold a professional license to practice clinical psychology in Illinois. My work at NIU has been primarily as a teacher, advisor, research mentor, and clinical supervisor in the area of clinical psychology. I specialize in working with worry, fear, phobias, panic, obsessions and compulsions, and post-trauma stress. Because most people using the service of the FSPSPA are experiencing anxiety and stress, I believe my training and

professional skills as a therapist will make me particularly effective in this role. I am prepared to listen to faculty and staff seeking assistance, help them understand and evaluate their options, and work with them to develop a plan to move forward. I also believe that I have the courage to be an effective advocate, should the need arise.

Regarding my approach, I will share three observations. First, the responsibilities of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor overlap somewhat with other positions within the university, most notably the Ombudsperson. In addition, as the faculty union develops we might see some new provisions for addressing grievances through the union. Whoever fills the role of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor will have to be able to work with those who hold other related positions. I look forward to developing a shared understanding to provide a variety of options for faculty and staff who need assistance.

Second, the services of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor have not always been well advertised. For many faculty and staff, access to the services of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor is likely to be of interest during specific times, such as when faculty are being reviewed for promotion and tenure, when reorganization of units leads to new assignments, and during periodic evaluation of staff. In addition to general advertisements of the services, I intend to provide periodic reminders to individuals during specific times, such as during the annual periods when appeals of tenure decisions are likely to be considered. The degree to which services are used is an important measure of success of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor, and one of my objectives will be to increase accessibility and utilization.

Third, the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor provides multiple services. Initially, the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor needs to be prepared to listen and to understand the concerns from the perspective of the faculty or staff member seeking services. This process might include providing emotional support, engaging in problem solving and developing strategies for moving forward. At other times, the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor may need to investigate options and provide information, facilitate meetings and mediate, or advocate for the faculty or staff member. Services are likely to improve if there is a recognition of the various roles that the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor plays, and deliberate attention to the development of the skills needed for each of these functions. I believe that I have the requisite abilities and a strong foundation for doing this work. Also, if elected, I promise to work hard, to solicit and be open to feedback, to be a strong advocate when a strong advocate is needed, and to serve to the best of my ability.

Please consider this my self-nomination for the Faculty and SPS Advisor position.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David P. Valentiner, PhD". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the typed name.

David P. Valentiner, PhD

Professor

Department of Psychology

Greg Long  
President of the Faculty Senate  
103 Altgeld Hall

March 15, 2017

Sarah McHone-Chase  
Head of User Services  
136 Founders Memorial Library

Dear Dr. Long,

I would like to nominate myself for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor.

I have served on both the Library's Library Council and Personnel Committee several terms, including chairing the latter committee, which involved explaining the personnel process to search candidates. Furthermore, I have served on both Faculty Senate for several years and University Council for this past year (2016-2017), which has included serving on UCPC. I currently chair Resources, Space, and Budgets, which has, among other things, given me a better understanding of program prioritization and how it is planned to be implemented. I have served on numerous faculty search committees at the library, including two at the administrator level. I am currently serving on the search committee for the Vice President for Administration and Finance. I feel that these experiences have given me in-depth knowledge of the personnel process here at the University and would make me a knowledgeable and capable Advisor.

In the Budget Guidance Letter produced by Resources, Space, and Budgets this year, one of our main emphases has been our recognized need for greater faculty input and greater collaboration with upper University administration. This is a goal that I will strive to work towards in any capacity that I am able.

In addition to the above, I have a strong service ethic in general and I am committed to the faculty and staff of this University. As a librarian, I care deeply about such values as diversity and intellectual freedom, as these are cornerstones of my profession (as articulated by the American Library Association). I incorporate these principles into my every day work. As a faculty member, I am a strong believer in shared governance. I am also eager to learn more about unionization and what that will mean for the faculty. I think that I can serve our Faculty and SPS Personnel well, and I would be honored to be chosen as the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor.

Thank you.

Sincerely,  
Sarah McHone-Chase

March 15, 2017

Dr. Long,

Please accept this letter of self-nomination for the position of Faculty and SPS personnel advisor. I am a full, tenured professor in the College of Education in the Department of Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations (LEPF). Additionally, I am an adjunct professor in the College of Law. My primary area of expertise is in Education Law and Policy, and thus the role of Personnel Advisor appeals to me on both a personal and academic level.

Article 9 of the Bylaws of Northern Illinois University outline the following responsibilities of the Personnel Advisor:

Advise Faculty and SPS members in the area of Personnel Policies and Procedures

I have served on LEPF's Department Personnel Committee (DPC) for 5 years, including 2 ½ years as the chair of the committee. Through my work with the DPC I have become very familiar with the administrative structure and operations of the University. In accordance with University policy, were I to be appointed as the Faculty and SPS personnel advisor, I would resign my position with the LEPF DPC.

Assist Faculty and SPS members experiencing difficulty or dissatisfaction with personnel decisions

In addition to my experience with the LEPF DPC, I also have what I believe to be a significant amount of relevant volunteer experience. For the past 2 ½ years I have served as a volunteer Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) to the Illinois 19<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court working with children involved in the state foster care system. Much of my work as a CASA involves assisting foster children and foster parents who are experiencing difficulty or dissatisfaction with the processes and procedures outlined by the state Department of Child and Family Services. While the foster care system is certainly very different from the personnel process at NIU, both of these roles involve reviewing state and institutional policies and procedures and finding answers for impacted parties. I believe that my skills as a CASA would be directly translatable and relevant to work as the Personnel Advisor.

Observe the workings of the personnel process and recommend needed changes or clarification

During my time on the LEPF DPC we worked, with the department, to revise the rubrics used for determining annual merit scores for Faculty Service Reports and tenure and promotion decisions. As a DPC member and chair I have worked with faculty members in the LEPF department to help them better understand the personnel process; this is something that I would enjoy being able to do on a University-wide basis.

Additionally, I served on the University Judicial Advisory Board from 2010-2013 which was tasked, in part, with reviewing NIU's compliance with Federal law. Finally, my extensive work with the National Education Law Association informs my currency of knowledge in the area of higher education personnel law.

Serve as a Grievance Officer when necessary

I am a trained legal mediator, having completed a 40 hour program in Mediation Skills Training through Northwestern University's School of Continuing Studies in 2013. I believe that my mediation skills would be valuable in carrying out the duties of Personnel Advisor.

Additionally, I served on (what was then known as) the University Class II Judicial board from 2005-2011, hearing student misconduct cases. This experience made me familiar with the administrative structures at NIU and gave me experience in serving as a hearing officer.

I myself have benefitted from guidance provided by previous Faculty and SPS Advisors in my work with the DPC and I know firsthand how important this position is. I believe that my professional and volunteer experiences have uniquely prepared me to serve my colleagues at NIU in the role of Faculty and SPS Advisor. Thank you very much for your consideration of my application.

Very sincerely yours,  
Dr. Christine Kiracofe  
Professor, Leadership, Educational Psychology and Foundations Department  
Northern Illinois University  
[ckiracofe@niu.edu](mailto:ckiracofe@niu.edu)

**From:** Hamid Bateni  
**Sent:** Tuesday, March 21, 2017 9:58 AM  
**To:** Greg Long  
**Subject:** Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor

Hi Greg,

I would like to self-nominate myself for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor. The following are my experiences that are relevant to this task:

- a- Serving on faculty senate since 2010
- b- Serving on college council since 2012
- c- Serving on UCPC for 4 years total

Please let me know if you would like to have further information.

Thanks

Hamid



March 21, 2017

Greg Long  
President of the Faculty Senate  
103 Altgeld Hall

Dear Professor Long,

I am writing to self-nominate for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor (FSPSPA). I am Chair in the Department of Sociology. I am nearing the end of my second term as Chair and am seeking an opportunity to continue serving the university and our faculty colleagues in the various personnel processes that exist at NIU. Personnel matters are among the most important policies affecting faculty and staff as members of the university. I am applying for the FSPSPA position because it is important for faculty to have a knowledgeable and helpful colleague in personnel matters, and I believe I can be effective in the post.

In my seven years as department chair and my 15 years as a faculty member and my three years before that as a Supportive Professional Staff member working in the Public Opinion Lab, I have gained substantial experience in many of the various personnel issues that are most common for faculty and SPS at NIU. As chair, I have overseen a department with 16 tenure-stream faculty members, 4-5 unionized instructors covered by the UPI's Collective Bargaining Agreement along with two Supportive Professional Staff persons and two civil service office support staff members. I became chair when my department was undergoing rapid demographic shifts; the department's junior, untenured, faculty members were a numerical majority among our faculty. The department possessed no full professors (though now we have promoted two and are in the process of another.) I have been successful in providing a steady hand in a time of rapid personnel change, I have helped craft department personnel policy, and I have been responsible for ensuring that policy and process are executed appropriately, with fairness and consistency.

To provide some detail about my familiarity with personnel processes at NIU and my experience with them, I will provide a list that outlines some of the chief personnel responsibilities I have experience with both as a faculty member and as a department chair. This list is not exhaustive, but still provides a sense of the breadth and depth of my familiarity with personnel policy and practice:

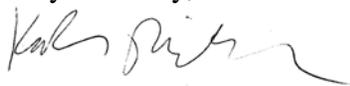
- Executed the tenure/promotion reviews of 10 tenure stream faculty
- Administered annual reviews for untenured faculty
- Executed annual merit reviews as department chair, merit committee chair, and merit committee member during my NIU career as a tenure-leave faculty member
- Overseen the department-level sabbatical review process, ranking and recommendations forwarded for College and UCPC review

- Facilitated two tenure-track joint appointment faculty hires. Worked to manage the organizational complexity of joint faculty positions as it relates to the personnel process. Includes negotiation and administration of Memoranda of Understanding between the jointly appointed faculty member, the Department of Sociology and our partner units as well as the College Dean.
- Followed the UPI Collective Bargaining Agreement process each year, including establishing personnel criteria within my department with consultation from instructors, managed workload and course assignments in the academic year and summer terms, conducted annual reviews, and worked to facilitate professional development opportunities.
- Conducted and wrote annual reviews for the Supportive Professional Staff persons in my unit: 1) Sociology's Undergraduate Academic Advisor & Assistant to the Chair, and 2) the Sociology Department Internship Program Coordinator (2011-2015) before the Internship position was re-located in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences office.
- Managed and facilitated multiple Family Medical Leave Act leaves covering different personnel issues.
- Experience with Stop the Tenure Clock Process in the context of FMLA
- Have worked with HRS on Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accommodation plans for employee(s) in my unit.
- Have been responsible for workload assignment and course scheduling in my department since 2010.
- Two tenure-track faculty retirements have taken place in my department since 2014.

As department chair I have been both an advocate for faculty in a variety of personnel processes as well as a steward of process, responsible for appropriately executing personnel policies, following relevant rules, and simultaneously educating faculty and staff about their rights and responsibilities within the personnel policy framework. I have worked with persons responsible for assisting with personnel issues in my College Dean's Office, the Provost's Office, the Ombudsperson, Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources, and Human Resources. I am knowledgeable about much of the relevant policy, and I am familiar with the ways that faculty, unit directors, department chairs, deans and other administrative officers are expected to act in their roles as outlined in personnel policy. This positions me to be especially effective as NIU's Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor. I hope you and the Faculty Senate agree.

I would be happy to discuss my interest and qualification in more detail at any point in your selection process. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about my candidacy.

Very sincerely,



Kirk Miller, PhD

Chair and Associate Professor of Sociology

[kmiller7@niu.edu](mailto:kmiller7@niu.edu) / 815-753-1194 (office) / 815-762-1166 (cell)

DeKalb, March 6, 2017



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY  
**College of Education**

Department of Counseling, Adult  
and Higher Education  
DeKalb, Illinois 60115-2896  
815-753-1448  
Fax 815-753-9309  
cahe@niu.edu

Professor, Greg Long  
President of the Faculty Senate  
103 Altgeld Hall  
Northern Illinois University

This is my letter of self-nomination for the position of Faculty and SPSS Personnel Advisor. I am applying to this position because I believe I have sufficient qualities to serve in the capacity of mediator and advocate for faculty and professional employees. In addition, I work at NIU for more than 27 years which provide me with ample experience and information on rules and regulation regarding faculty and staff.

I am currently tenured Professor in the Department of Counseling Adult and Higher Education (CAHE). I am also the faculty coordinator working alongside with Dr. Suzanne Degges-White our Department Chair. I am a member of the Department Personnel Committee and other committees in the department and the college. I have been a substitute member for the University Faculty Senate and College of Education Faculty Council. In all through these many years I accumulated a wealth of learning experiences and knowledge that help me in my work.

I came to NIU from Iowa State University where I was the Assistant Director for Minority Affairs and later the Director of the office for four and half years.

At NIU I was the interim Director of the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies for one-year, position that I held concurrently with my faculty position. This position gave me the opportunity to interact with my colleagues from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences on a number of issues from academic, financial to personal ones.

I was also named by then President J. LaTourette to participate in a panel to review the Northern Star the student campus newspaper which was seen by African American faculty and students as biased, not pluralistic and only informing on certain issues about campus activities, student organization and faculty. The chair of the panel was Prof. Harold Kafer then Dean of the College of Visual and Performing Arts. After about eight months of work it was considered that a number of changes should be instituted in the operation of the newspaper including a rotation for faculty adviser, and hiring African American faculty in the communications faculty.

Later with NIU President J. Peter I was named to a commission to re-create the two Latino Centers in more modern version of these centers for NIU vision of future but unfortunately no clear directives were given from which the panel dissolves later.

This is to say that even if I spent a good numbers of years at the faculty of adult and higher education I also reached to the university at large which gave me a good knowledge of the many experiences from faculty across campus.

I had a conversation with Professor, Toni Tollerud a previous holder of this position and with Professor Greg Long about that new challenges and changes coming in the near future with the advent of faculty

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unionization. A redefinition of faculty advocacy in terms of a union organization is possible. The current statutes and bylaws in which the university function for a long time may need to be adjusted to reflect changes which may require a new vision from the faculty and the university as an organization.

In all I am ready for the challenge in the terms of which the post is advertised and work for the latter part of my career helping faculty and professional staff to better understand, participate and be involved in a large institution such as Northern Illinois University.

I am available for questions or concerns at [jjeria@niu.edu](mailto:jjeria@niu.edu) and my personal phone number 815 508 3247

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jorge Jeria', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jorge Jeria Ph.D.  
Professor, Adult & Higher Education  
Program Coordinator  
Gabel Hall 201 G  
CAHE Department  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115  
e-mail [jjeria@niu.edu](mailto:jjeria@niu.edu)

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Northern Illinois University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution.



Northern Illinois  
University

21 March 2017

Professor Greg Long  
President, Faculty Senate  
Northern Illinois University

Dear Professor Long:

I am writing to enter my name in nomination for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor advertised recently in *NIU Today*. As a regular member of the English Department Council, a recent Director of Graduate Studies in English, and a frequent and highly engaged participant in university committees, I believe I have both the qualifications and the key skills to serve NIU and colleagues across our campus through this position.

Coming from a teaching-oriented institution in 2002, I arrived at Northern Illinois University enthused with the opportunity to serve at an institution that balanced research and teaching. Prior to earning promotion to full professor in 2010, I published a single-author monograph, an edited book, and a series of well-placed articles, along with winning a year-long National Endowment for the Humanities fellowship. I have remained active as a scholar since promotion, as well, with an additional single-author monograph and a forthcoming edited volume from Cambridge University Press to my credit.

Even while I have moved ahead as a researcher and have continued to explore my love of teaching at NIU, I have also discovered my gifts for professional service, and my colleagues have repeatedly looked to me to provide leadership and service. As a member of the English Department Council as an elected, voting member for four years (and then as an *ex officio* member as Director of Graduate Studies in English for an additional four years), I have been closely involved in the process of personnel evaluation at the departmental level for more than half of my time at Northern. This means, of course, that I have repeatedly been involved directly in the process of deliberating and voting on departmental candidates for tenure and promotion. More revealingly—and rewardingly—several departmental colleagues have spontaneously looked to me for information and advice about the tenure and promotion process. It is this kind of supportive and early engagement with the personnel process that I would particularly like to foster as the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor, believing that communication and problem-solving *before* the formal process of drawing up promotion documents are the best strategies to head off most personnel difficulties.

At the same time, I have frequently and successfully been involved in the creation of the promotion documents themselves. I know what strong cases for tenure and promotion look like, because I have helped to build them. The senior American literature specialist since 2012, I have been the lead author of the Part II documents—and the writer of the critical research report—for the tenure-and-promotion cases of three departmental colleagues, plus the promotion to full professor of one of

these colleagues. In this way, I have been the primary author (besides the candidate him or herself) in four separate cases advancing—with final, positive approval—through the entire chain of departmental, college, university, and board-of-trustees deliberation.

Throughout my years at NIU, I have been involved in a variety of university as well as departmental committees. Standing Committees on which I have been a member have included the University Coordinating Council, the Committee for the Improvement of Undergraduate Education, the Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee, the University Fellowship Committee, and the Graduate Council. I have also been chosen to serve on the National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Fellowship committee, the selection committee for the Director of the NIU Press, and the steering committee for the latest round of North Central accreditation for our university. In each of these committees, my work has been recognized for integrity, critical engagement, thorough preparation, and compassionate advocacy.

Partly because I have not had the privilege of serving on the University Senate, as Personnel Advisor I would certainly plan to attend both the Senate and SPS Council meetings regularly—as past Advisor Toni Tollerud reports doing in her publicly available Annual Reports. As advocated by Tollerud, I would seek to publicize widely the services provided by the office of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor, and to host information sessions to disseminate knowledge on the tenure-and-promotion process and other personnel matters. Again, my interest is in opening channels for communication early and often for tenure-line faculty and SPS colleagues, with the goal of distributing critical advice and information well before decisional points or moments of crisis.

I should say, finally, that I would not be applying for the position of Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor had I not had many positive experiences serving the English Department as Ph.D. job placement advisor and as Director of Graduate Studies. These jobs helped me cultivate, even discover, a range of interpersonal skills that will transfer well to the Advisor position. As job placement advisor, I helped Ph.D. students in their final years of study to prepare the most important professional documents of their lives. This, in effect, is what professors assembling their dossiers for tenure are also doing. It may well be what SPS colleagues developing a grievance case are doing. As Director of Graduate Studies in English, I assisted students with long-range planning; I supported students filing appeals for academic reinstatement (all of which were successful during my tenure); I listened sympathetically and helped students proceed through the appropriate steps for working out conflicts, or pursuing grievance procedures, with faculty or other students. I am familiar both with the need truly to listen, and with the need to follow the procedures that help to make NIU a great place to work, and to be a member of community.

I prize both the praise of colleagues who have expressed their admiration for my attention to detail, and the praise of colleagues who have stressed my *kindness* in interpersonal interactions. Both are traits that I feel confident I would carry with me to the office of the Faculty and SPS Personnel Advisor. Please let me know if you have any questions about my self-nomination. I would be happy to provide additional information or references upon request.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Van Wienen  
Professor of English