Minutes of the
NIU Board of Trustees
Of Northern Illinois University
Ad Hoc Committee on Enrollment
April 14, 2016

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. by Chair Marc Strauss in the Board of Trustees Room, 315 Altgeld Hall. Recording Secretary Kathleen Carey conducted a roll call. Members present were Trustees Robert Boey, Robert Marshall, John Butler, Tim Struthers, James Zanayed and Committee Chair Marc Strauss. Also present were General Counsel Jerry Blakemore, Board Liaison Mike Mann, President Doug Baker, Executive Vice President and Provost Lisa Freeman, Vice President Al Phillips, Vice President Eric Weldy, Asst. Vice President Dani Rollins, Vice Provost Anne Birberick, Vice President Anne Kaplan, Dean of the Graduate School Brad Bond, Interim Vice President Harlan Teller, Director Abby Dean, and UAC Representatives Greg Long and Holly Nicholson.

2. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM AND APPROPRIATE NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

General Counsel Blakemore indicated the appropriate notification of the meeting has been provided pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Mr. Blakemore also advised that a quorum was present.

3. APPROVAL OF PROPOSED MEETING AGENDA

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Trustee Struthers so moved and Trustee Zanayed seconded. The motion was approved.

4. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 4, 2016

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to approve the minutes of February 4, 2016. Trustee Butler so moved and Trustee Zanayed seconded. The motion passed.

5. CHAIR'S COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Strauss welcomed the representatives of the University Advisory Council, Greg Long and Holly Nicholson.

Greg Long began, I just wanted to say that the University Council and our respective constituencies certainly support the recruitment and enrollment efforts that our Office of Admissions and Student Affairs and Enrollment Management are doing. I think that working in the right direction. I would also mention though as a consistent theme, looking at the faculty's role in the process of recruitment and retention and there are some struggles right now with salary and morale issues. As you will note when the brand student results are presented today, the NIU faculty and staff tend to have the least favorable impression of the university in terms of the group surveyed and we see that as a morale issue and something that we want to improve and seek your support.

Holly Nicholson echoed Greg's comments and added I also would like to let you know that the Operating Staff Council, after hearing the results of the brand survey, we had an Ad Hoc Employee Morale Committee which we have now made a standing committee and we are ready and willing to work with university marketing and any parts of the university who want to address this issue and recognizing that it's not just morale that would cause faculty and staff to have the least favorable impression of NIU but that is something that we can address and we're ready to do it. Thank you.

Chair Strauss responded, I appreciate your comments and I think we all look forward to the presentation on the brand study too. Before we prejudge our reactions, let's hold off until we get to that in the agenda.

6. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

7. UNIVERSITY REPORTS

Agenda Item 7.a. Enrollment Update

Chair Strauss began, let's move to the university report. We have four presenters and Dr. Weldy is going to start with historical trends and comparisons.

Vice President Weldy began, today you will hear from my colleagues regarding some of our most successful recruitment and retention initiatives currently in place to address our enrollment challenges. We are especially pleased to be able to speak for the first time regarding our graduate and off campus student initiatives. As you hear from my colleagues, one reoccurring them that you will notice is that many of the initiatives presented are done in collaboration with other departments and units across campus. This is intentional. We will see more of it as we move along. The data provided in the charts and graphs that were provided for you as a part of this presentation should be somewhat familiar to members of the Board. Therefore I will not take up your time going over them in detail, however, before I complete my remarks I will draw your attention to a few of the charts along with answering any immediate questions you may have for me along the way. The enrollment challenges we have faced as a university over the past several years have provided us and other institutions within the State of Illinois with a very daunting task. Therefore in order to remain competitive, we have all had to change our enrollment management strategies in order to attract and retain more students. In the past two and a half years enrollment management at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at NIU have undergone significant changes to put us in a better position to turn the tide. Today you will hear about a few of our most successful recruitment and retention initiatives, however there are also some new strategies or initiatives on the horizon that you may not be aware of. What I'll do is explain a couple of those initiatives that are in the pipeline. First of all, I'd like to talk about a new senior level position that is being created in the Office of the Provost. This person will be responsible for leading, initiating, and coordinating all NIU partnerships with community college partners throughout the State of Illinois. This position is very comprehensive position. One of the things that we have noticed is that there has been much activity on campus within the academic colleges, within Outreach, within Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and other areas as it relates to community colleges. This will give us an opportunity to centralize all of our activities and coordinate all of our activities. This position will facilitate the alignment of all NIU community college transfer partnership agreements. It will be responsible for developing and implementing data, gathering methods and systems for tracking and reporting on the success of our community college partnerships. That's one of the things I'm really excited about in regards to this new position. Because of this new initiative, we will be able to track from the standpoint of our successes. I think it's very important to be very strategic in these challenging enrollment times. It will also keep abreast of trends and research in transfer and articulation in the state and nationally. There is so much changing on a week by week basis and I think it's very important for us to be abreast of all of the changes and shifts that are occurring. Every time that I meet with many of my colleagues- every week sit down having discussions in regards to enrollment management, we're always talking about what we know others are doing and some of the surprises that are occurring. The second initiative, we are in the process of hiring three additional admission counselors who will serve as community college service coordinators. It has been quite evident that a greater or more visible presence is needed at our top community college feeders because recruitment at community colleges in Illinois is becoming increasingly more competitive. Other four year colleges and universities are requesting to increase the number of visits that they make to community colleges. Because of this high demand, community colleges have

begun limiting the number of visits that we are allowed to their colleges. This is very significant for us from the standpoint of taking advantage of many of our top feeders who would like to see us more on their campuses. This is a trend that we have seen from the standpoint of community colleges limiting the number of visits that four year institutions are making to their campuses. This falls in alignment with what we've been seeing at the high schools as well. The service coordinator position will be cross trained for doing admission work as well as 100 and 200 level advising at the community colleges. The service coordinators will rotate between two community colleges during the course of a week. They will provide office hours and services at each institution on specific days with specific hours and a specific office location. All of this will be done in addition to the regular visits that we conduct at those community colleges. During the past year or so in our communication and our work with some of the community colleges, they have been very open from the standpoint of wanting to see us have a stronger presence, a more visible presence. We're excited about this new opportunity. The service coordinators will provide a number of services as I noted. Students, perspective students, will get assistance completing their application process. They'll learn about academic and student support services available at NIU and discuss their transfer options. Although there is still much more work ahead of us, in the past two years we have already begun to see improvements in our undergraduate application yield rates, especially among our new transfers and in our undergraduate retention rates. What I want to do now is transition and kind of prepare for my other colleagues from the standpoint of giving their presentations. As we talk about some of our existing programs, as I noted, I want to highlight just some of the things that have occurred over the past two and a half years because there has been a lot of work done and you need to visibly see that needle move and so when we talk about improving enrollment, when we talk about improving retention rates and recruitment numbers it's not something that can be done overnight, it takes a lot of work. I just want to have an opportunity to show the Board with a few slides from the standpoint of some of these current initiatives that have been implemented that we've been at it for the past two and a half years what they've done and from the standpoint of moving the needle. A major of the request for us today was to focus on some of our transfer initiatives and so forth and so in my examples I want to show from the standpoint in regards to our new transfer students. This first slide that I'm showing you has to deal with new transfer applications yield rates. This slide shows the ratio of new transfers enrolled to applied from fall 1983 off the far left to fall 2015 today. In looking at this chart, if you look over to the far right 2015, roughly 38% of our new transfers who applied to NIU for fall 2015 enrolled. As you can see some of the ups and downs that really occur with transfer recruitment this kind of shows you in regards to the direction that we're heading in at the moment. The second slide shows the ratio of new transfers enrolled to accepted from fall 1983 to fall 2015. In this particular slide 55% of new transfers who were accepted to NIU for fall 2015 enrolled. If you see in the far right 55% and you just can kind of see over the past couple of decades or so from the standpoint of where we are and where we are now and the direction that we're heading. I think that having this visual is good for all of us here to get a sense of where we are.

Chair Strauss remarked, it's heartening to see that the arrow is headed up in these slides, but there's something about the context that's still lacking. How does this compare to what we would consider as a peer? I know that there's some imprecision and defining of peer, but I'm not entirely confident that I can compare this to determine whether or not we're at a level that's acceptable or we still have work to do.

Vice President Weldy responded, I believe that from the standpoint of nationally the percentages are a bit higher than we are currently, but I also know that from the standpoint, as long as I'm seeing progress, I know that there is still obviously work to be done but I think that you make a very valid point. We'll be happy as well to pull some of those numbers for future meeting if you'd like as well to show those.

Chair Strauss continued, I think it would be interesting to look at that and I do understand from our prior conversations that some of the data that would be ideal to have is not readily accessible or available at all. I think the key for us is to determine how we compare to those places that are doing better than we are. It seems as if it's easier to get the data for other publics within the State of Illinois, but from our prior conversations, it also seems that where we are losing the opportunity to serves students. We're doing it maybe to community colleges or maybe to colleges both public and private in other states. I think finding that relevant comparison would be particularly useful. I think you know why we're losing students to those other places so that we have an opportunity to see what we can do about it.

Vice President Weldy responded, yes and we have actually started gathering some of that data as well. Like I said, I do look forward at a future point to have an opportunity to share that information.

President Baker added, when Vice President Weldy started his conversation he noted two big structural changes that we're making. One to have a coordinating person to be the hub for all of our community college relationships and that person will have relationships to both the Provost and to enrollment. Also that we're hiring three recruiters to be placed on six community college campuses having two campuses under authority. That's really the outcome of a series of interviews that we've been having with community colleges over the last year and a half or so. Eric and Lisa, Ann, others and I have had dinner with 60 people at Elgin, for example, that were NIU alum that work at Elgin and places like that. What we found was, in some cases, we're not articulating the way we need to articulate. In other cases they said you're just not here enough. We don't see you enough so you don't have a big enough footprint. The outcome was we really need to articulate much better and we need a hub person to do that, so that's what we're hiring for, that kind of activity. Then second, on the big campuses we need to be there more and we need to compete. They would tell us other schools are here more and they get more of the students because they showed up. I think while comparison, and I agree I want those numbers, we do know what some of the levers are and that we think we can pull and make a difference here. I complement Eric, and the Provost as well, for taking those on.

Vice President Weldy continued, the last slide that I want to share with you deals with undergraduate retention rates. This particular slide shows our retention rate. If you look at the blue line at the top it shows our retention rates of new freshmen cohorts' percentage and at the top here first and second rates increased 6 percentage points in the past two years from 66% to 72%. I know that we're all very familiar with this change, this progress within the past couple of years, but I also think that it's a good point to kind of see it visually particularly as we talk about a lot of these initiatives that have proven to be very successful for us in moving the needle. It just doesn't happen on its own. There's a lot of work that goes behind it within the academic colleges and within the other areas on campus. So I wanted to be able to visually show that. Without further ado what we'd like to do is focus on some of our recruitment initiatives and then we'll move over to our other areas.

Chair Strauss asked about the yield rate based on applications. The number looks very small as a percentage. I'm wondering whether there are some phenomena that have led to increases in the number of applications. If there's some way to be able to sort through what is the real effectiveness of the work that we're doing. Often we'll talk about where do we stand on applications at points in the year and it appears that there are many factors than the influence whether or not those applications move through the funnel that we've talked about.

Vice President Weldy responded yes. Dani will talk about some of this from the standpoint of the changes that we have made with our processing to move the applications much more quickly through our process, and so there's been significant change with that and will focus on that a little bit for you.

Trustee Struthers asked, on the new freshmen and transfer enrollment chart, the red line which would be the new freshmen enrolled number is not trending up, and is continuing to go down, it looks to be the lowest number in the last 20 years. I'm interested in an absolute equation, the blue line is less in number and is flattening out but we're choosing to focus on the transfers or the new hires, the new resources, I'm interested with that strategy versus the down trending redline which is an high or absolute number compared to the two.

Vice President Weldy continued, I think Dani can speak a little bit from the standpoint of our recruitments effort on the freshmen side.

Dani Rollins began, I would say some of the other slides that we didn't specifically highlight tell you the story of the state in general. The state is doing us no favors and so we are really struggling to bring that number up. Again it takes time and we're doing the best we can with the resources we have available

and we're making changes to the infrastructure so that we can be a stronger institution in responding to those external challenges, but I share your concerns.

Trustee Struthers responded, but we did reference though the additional resources allocated towards the transfer side and I did not hear any conversation around resources allocated to the new freshmen side.

Vice President Weldy responded, one of the things that we've done with new freshmen is that we've hired a recruiter who is in the south/central part of Illinois, within the Peoria area, so having a stronger presence there. Now we have visited many of those schools in Peoria and Champaign and some of these other areas, but this will give us an opportunity to have someone who's on the ground on a daily basis and I think this is very important. I've been paying attention from the standpoint of the viewpoint that many of those schools have in regards to NIU. I don't think that they know a lot about us. There was a time when we did have a stronger presence there and so we've been basically reintroducing ourselves to those institutions.

Dani Rollins added, as you know there was a lot of turnover in admissions and I think that hurt us as well.

Trustee Struthers remarked, I'll reserve comments later for more of a general reflection on that but before we moved off the charts I just wanted to reference that difference.

Trustee Marshall asked, with our residency rule for freshmen, do we have a correlation that ties it into the retention going upward?

Vice President Weldy responded, from the standpoint of students being on campus and living in the residence halls, yes I think that we've shown the results show that students do progress at a higher rate.

Dani Rollins added, Dr. Birberick will be speaking about retention after the recruitment presentation, so she might be able to speak to that a little bit as well.

President Baker added, Trustee Struthers I want to comment on your kind of question about freshmen versus transfer students and why we put some emphasis on transfer students. You'll see in Dani's presentation we've done a lot in her shop on the freshmen and there's a lot that's going on in the colleges that we're not talking about today, but we can cover it at a later date. There are two big tide surges pushing us away on freshmen. One is the state budget. Across the state applications and confirmations are going down with advisors and parents and legislators saying leave the state, go to school somewhere else. That's a big riptide right now that's going on in the state. The other is we've got a state demography of flat to declining high school enrollments. So we're really working on market share and we're working on market share relative to our in state partners, but surrounding states that have vacuum cleaners on Illinois right now taking kids out at extraordinary rates; and faculty and staff I might say. We've got a big tide there. Transfer students tend to be more place bound and there are a lot of them. You can just think of the big community colleges near us. Our friends at Kishwaukee and Wabaunsee are great feeder schools, but we've got DuPage, Elgin and Harper within forty minutes of us that have over 70,000 students on those campuses. There are places where we really need to concentrate and we think we can take advantage there because of some of our geographical competitive advantages and our long standing linkages. As we've gone out and looked at those schools there are some things we can do here to make a difference in a significant way. I think that's why the presentation Eric had focused on those a little bit more, but I don't want the fact that he didn't mentioned those make you think we haven't done an enormous amount and Dani will present what we're doing in Admissions and in the colleges.

Dani Rollins continued, the first couple of slides I have are in response to previous conversations asking for a bit more specificity on the recruitment and enrollment responsibilities for the Office of Undergraduate Admissions. I've included there some definitions in accordance with attachment 3 for additional definitions on that first slide and attachment 4 for an overview of the file process respectively.

I wanted the Board to be able to see that. The graph is a visual representation of fall 2015 undergraduate enrolled students by type and you'll be hearing more about some of those populations from my colleagues here today as well. Just to give sort of a framework there. On the next slide one of our biggest victories has been reducing the application processing time and the notification time. As you might remember just over a year ago, it took us about four to six weeks to process and application and then to reach out to the student with their decision. Now we are down to about one to two business days on average from the time a file is completed until the decision notification goes out to the student. We've been able to hire seven more processors to get us there; and again that's for freshmen and transfer as well. We are still down from historic levels but we've gotten some really talented staff and I think we're doing a lot with them so that's a huge improvement in a short amount of time. We've also standardized the transfer admission process by doing away with what was historically called the transfer wait list. It wasn't really a true wait list but under the old practice transfer students with 60 or more transferrable units a 2.0 GPA and in good standing would be automatically admitted to the university. Students with less than 60 units but the same grade point average and in good standing, we would actually reach out to them and solicit a personal statement and that wait for that statement and send them on to college review. When we looked at the numbers we figured out that the transfer students on the "wait list" most of them weren't even completing their files they were going somewhere else because in their mind they were in good standing, they had a 2.0 and associates degree would be conferred a 2.0 but we were asking for essentially an extra step. We've been able to admit additional transfer students just from that one procedural change. I actually have some updated numbers here from what's on the slide. Since we incorporated that change on March 1st, we've admitted another 104 transfer students for fall and 50 of them have confirmed. We've also added another call-a-thon to the spring semester and so we're doing three total in the past we would do two. We've got another one coming up and as part of that call-a-thon we reached out to 2,600, we've made 2,600 calls and our faculty and college partners have been very helpful with that effort so I want to thank them publically for that. We've also made contact with over 2,500 individuals, and that could be students, that could be parents, that could be spouses, but we've actually spoken to over 2,500 people which again I think is good progress. And just from those call-a-thons alone we've confirmed 308 students. On the next slide another major change that we've made to this recruitment cycle has been adding application workshops to all of our on campus recruitment events. We get really great feedback about our events. There's a lot of energy and we sort of want to capitalize on that energy that the students are feeling and the parents are feeling about the college search process and give them the opportunity to apply and to submit their application while their actually on campus with us. We open up computer labs as part of those large events and allow them to do that. Of course we won't know the full picture of efficacy until the census state but I wanted to give some preliminary application and confirmation numbers for our events by type. While you're looking at those numbers I would also say it's important to remember that not all open house attendees are 2016 prospects or applicants. They would be prospects for any term, they could really be anywhere in the funnel and of course not all applicants are admissible and then able to confirm as well. But of those attendees who are eligible to apply for the upcoming fall term, 73% of them applied on or after the event. We also hosted admitted student days as part of our continued efforts to recruit all the way up to and through orientation. The numbers, as you'll see, are a little bit lower for admitted student days, but students may attend five or six of these kinds of days especially freshmen when they're comparison shopping so we don't want to assume that just because a student is admitted, that they're locked into attending NIU. We really can't even assume that at orientation. As you might remember, last year we had about 200 students who attended orientation both freshmen and transfer who then did not go on to enroll at the university. Our recruitment cycle has increased. It's much longer and it's much, much, more competitive especially in the Illinois market. The next slide. Another successful initiative this year was the high school counselor appreciation day on March 4th. You'll hear later from University Marketing about the importance of sort of word of mouth marketing or word of mouth recommendations from key influencers and that's something that we really wanted to improve upon. It had been about three years since NIU had engaged in any of this sort of relationship cultivation for high school counselors and that is the best practice. We were fortunate enough to get a grant from the foundation and we have also got a little bit of money left over which almost ever happens, and so we're going to do this again in the fall and invite more high school counselors and really try to capitalize on this momentum and keep that going. The next slide sort of goes over our pre and post survey results and we asked specific questions about their perceptions of

NIU's affordability, their perceptions of safety, their just general overall impressions of NIU and then we offered two specific professional development sessions, so they got three hours of continuing education credit for attending this event. I just wanted to highlight on the pre and post survey slide, a couple of our concerns internally you can see we made some great headway with; the perception of NIUs campus safety actually went up quite a bit and just their overall positive impression of NIU went up quite a bit as well. We offered two specific professional development sessions on the changes to the FASFA that are coming in October and just how prepared they felt to advise their students and their families on that and you can see that went way up as well so they were very grateful for that professional development and we did the same thing for Illinois' transition to the SAT. We had some great feedback. They brought their families, we treated them to a men's basketball game. We put them up at a hotel overnight, there were drink tickets, and it was fantastic. They had a great time and they all left really, really happy. We're really pleased with that outcome. The last thing I wanted to go over today before we take questions is just sort of some general improvement projects. Again these would be both for freshmen and transfer students, but again it's just all about that conversation we've had before about making sure that we're a solid institution, that our infrastructures are as they should be and that we're sort of sweeping in front of our own front door so that we've in a better position to respond to those external challenges and we're sort of controlling those things that we can control. We've implemented and expanded master inquiry forms so that we can ask more meaningful information from students earlier in the process. I've included some examples there about interest in on-line courses and first generation, living learning communities, all of those things. Several of those questions weren't asked until the application and we do a lot of work to recruit students and even get them to the point of applications so we really wanted to back that up. As we continue to build our communication plans particularly when we acquire new names, we're going to drive them to this application form and ask them to give us more information and then we'll be able to report on these things, we'll be able to push out specific communications relative to their interests and I think that will help us a lot with accuracy and communication and showing them that we know more about them sooner in the process. We're also continuing our efforts to centralize communication for recruitment campaigns as well and again the academic colleges have been fantastic. We've been meeting with them and really just sort of explaining the collaboration and how that can work and what we can do for them and what they can do for us and at what point it makes sense to insert them into the communication process and so I've just included some examples here of departments that we were already meeting with and already working with on that endeavor. Finally, I also wanted to make sure the Board knew because I know I've talked about it before, we have hired a CRM analyst and I've talked about that with you several times, that took a little while. He just started on Monday so that will help us immensely to have someone full time dedicated to that system who can really oversee our data integrity efforts and help with communications and marketing. I'm going back to train him after this meeting.

Trustee Struthers commented, the counselor event seemed great, but I think I hear a lot of these things and it seems obvious that they would have been done a long time ago and should be part of a steady diet of what we're doing. Do you see that as a tactic today or is that part of a sustainable strategy, part of a larger umbrella strategy going forward to make sure that we have a steady diet of touches there?

Dani Rollins answered, yes, that's part of our sustainable strategy. We received a $20,000 grant from the Foundation, of course we won't always have $20,000 to spend on one event and we are fortunate enough to have a little money left over so we're asking for an extension on that grant so that we can do it again, but we can scale those kinds of things back and do smaller events and keep that momentum going. I'd like to see us do that once a semester.

Trustee Struthers added, I'd love to see that resource allocation from the Foundation I think again this is priority number one and the more energy and effort and focus we can have on it and allocation of resources to attract and retain qualified students is huge.

Vice President Weldy indicated next speaker would be Dr. Anne Birberick.

Vice Provost Birberick began we appreciate the interest and the opportunity to be able to share with you this morning some of the retention strategies that we've been engaged in that have a particularly high

correlation to student success here at NIU. I'm going to start with the slide that Eric's already showing you what the retention is now. Eric referenced the six percentage point uptick and I want to add on to that by saying that in large part one of the things that can account for this uptick is that retention and student success under President Baker's administration has become a university wide focus. We have begun a culture shift here at NIU where we think about our students not in terms of my students or his or her students, but as our students and we've taken ownership of that and that has manifested itself in various ways. There have been multiple retention summits. There have been leadership conferences and then there was the whole series of Bold Futures workshops and those all contributed to changing the culture here at NIU and I think that we are seeing the results of that culture shift. There is a strategy behind how we approach retention and as this slide indicates there are two key points where attrition is the highest for students. It's during that transition between the second and third semester, so along the Y axis on the bottom, those numbers those are semesters; first and second, second to third. And then the other point of attrition has to do if students don't graduate in four years. NIU pushes for a four year graduation rate. We report out for IPED six year graduation rates, but that's not what we're about. We're about students graduating in four years. That's the message we send to students and you'll see that as we walk through some of the retention data. Just to show you that the pattern is the same for both native students and transfer students. The one difference is that with transfer students if they have not graduated, sometime around two to two and a half then you see the pattern of attrition go up. So they follow the same patterns just slightly different time frames. Because year one is crucial, it is a year on which we focus many of our retention strategies. I'm just highlighting a couple here on this page. They have shown strong correlation to student success and persistence. Some of you are familiar with the MAP-Works survey; some of you are not, so I'll just briefly explain what it is. You have in your packet a series of attachments and so there's one that goes in much greater depth about MAP-Works. It is a survey. It is a series of three surveys they launched through the course of the academic year; two in the fall and one in the spring. Students answer a series of questions. The questions focus on academic habits, socio and emotional attachments in making the transition to the university environment. Students get a copy of their survey results so that allows them a moment of self-reflection where they can see if their perception of how they're doing aligns with reality or not. For example a student might perceive that he or she is performing particularly well, but in answering the survey has indicated in the survey that they've missed several classes, they haven't turned in homework assignments, they haven't taken advantage of tutoring and so on, so what they get is a hand out that says you are at risk or here are some behaviors that you need to reconsider. In addition to the students seeing the survey; faculty, staff, counselors, and advisors also get a printout and that allows them to reach out to the students who are at risk or in jeopardy and make sure that those students go to the proper resources that will provide support for them to be successful. We have compared statistically we use data to drive our decision making. We have compared students who have participated in MAP-Works with those who have not and we have seen that those who participate have higher fall to spring retention, higher fall to fall retention, a higher GPA, and that we are also able to provide strategic intervention for those students. And again, the handout has a great deal of information about that. University 101 and 201 is a one credit, 11 week course. 101 is for native students. 201 is for transfer students. Again you have a handout that explains the course and some of the data that we have learned from it. The course serves a double purpose. It continues that transition from either high school or community college into NIU's environment. At the same time we have redesigned the course so it focuses much more on elements related to skills. It's more academically focused. We have created greater integration and coordination with all the sections of the course. We offer about 90 sections a semester. It's only offered in the fall. Now we have asked that all sections have five common elements. One of them being students enrolled in the course must take the MAP-Works survey and they must participate in the common reading experience. If you look at the data on the handout you'll see that students who take UNIV101 versus those who don't persist at a higher percentage from semester to semester and that persistence continues throughout their entire academic career. With the redesign version in fall of 2015, we've seen a higher percentage. So we're hopeful that that higher percentage will persist as well. The last intervention that I'm going to talk about focus primarily on year one, and again you have another attachment related to that as well. It has to do with the early alert program. We partner with the academic colleges. We identify a series of courses that are particularly challenging for new students and the faculty who teach these course work with us to identify students who have high absenteeism or are struggling in the class. We reach out to those students and

we make sure that they get connected to the appropriate resources for those courses. As I indicated we have multiple retention strategies. Those that I just referenced focused primarily on year one, but we have other strategies that start in year one and continue all the way through to graduation in four years. The first of these is we create for all the students four year degree paths. We show them how to graduate in four years, the sequence of courses that they need to take to walk across that stage four years from now. Those degree paths are updated every spring and reflect whatever new curricular changes have taken place. We are involved with the Educational Advisory Board, Student Success Collaborative and you have a two page hand out about that that goes into great detail. The collaborative serves a dual purpose. One, it provides us with a predictive model platform that the different colleges can access. Not just simply advising offices, but deans, department chairs, etcetera, to track where there are sticking points for students in their particular program. The platform also provides us with a way to do an integrated campus advising. We're moving into a new version of the platform called student success collaborative campus. That will launch this summer, July or August, and that will provide enhanced communication with students. Not just simply e-mails, but the ability to text students about matters. It will allow students to make appointments electronically. It will also provide an integrated shared note taking platform for all the college advising offices and the relevant student support services. So we're going to be better integrated and we're going to be better coordinated than we have been in the past. We want you to graduate in four years and if you look like you're not going to do that and you're considering not re-enrolling, we come after you so to speak. The non-enrollment report which you also have is our efforts to contact students who are eligible to enroll. They've not been academically dismissed, but they have not yet enrolled. So we do come after you. We call you, we e-mail you, and contact you multiple times in multiple ways. Again, as in all of these initiatives, these are collaborative initiatives, everybody on NIU's campus works to keeping students here and making sure that they graduate in four years. So you have the non-enrollment campaign handout as well. What I'd like to do is close by talking about the educational experience at NIU. I think that people underestimate, perhaps, the great retention power that getting an NIU education has for our students. Over the last several years we've done a major curricular redesign to make education at NIU an integrated experience. We have brought together a new revised general education program, we've talked about how that connects with coursework in the major, and also about the learning that goes on outside the classroom in co-curricular activities. At the foundation for our new program which we call PLUS, Progressive Learning in Undergraduate Studies, is something called high impact practices, the acronym for that is HIPS and NIU is clearly a hippy institution in that respect. What are high impact practices? Well they're highly interactive, they're experiential, and about application of knowledge not just simply about consumption of knowledge. They foster deeper learning and they really promote greater synthesis in integration among the entire student experience. Here are examples of HIPS. NIU offers all of them on campus, they're not just only offered in the classroom, but again they can be co-curricular as well. What we wanted to do is we wanted to see if HIPS really made a difference in terms of retention. As I said we are data driven in our decision making and we look at the kind of affect that our retention strategies have and if they're not working we don't pursue them. I need do a shout out here to Chris Parker in the Office of Assessment because he's the one that drove this study, but we asked ourselves do HIPS affect student retention. And we have discovered that the answer is yes and this slide demonstrates it. If you remember the previous slide about when are the peak times that students have for attrition, remember that's semesters two and three and if they're native students and they're not out around semester eight, attrition goes up. So this model follows that, but what it shows is that if you do one HIP there's not much change, but if you do two HIPs you'll see that attrition drops. Attrition drops even more if you do three, even more if you do four, even more if you do five and there's barely no attrition at all if a student in engaged. I believe that one of the strengths that NIU has is the education that it offers its students and the fact that the education is really grounded on experiential learning and deep learning.

Chair Strauss asked, about that data. It's interesting and I'm glad that we're doing some follow-up, but I'm also interested in whether there are characteristics about the students that are positively correlated with the success of the HIP intervention. For instance, are those students who come from a higher socioeconomic background more likely to participate in these programs, or are they predisposed to have a better outcome from these interventions? Have we done any work to be able to take a look at factors like that to determine what has an impact, or another might be the high school grade point average or

test score? We have some people who are more predisposed to participate or to benefit from these.

Vice Provost Birberick responded, good question and thank you for asking that. When Chris Parker did his study he controlled for that and what we discovered is that HIPs benefit all students; ACT, high school GPA, etcetera don't factor in to the benefit of HIPS.

Chair Strauss added, my further question is that while it's commendable that we've had this increase in retention rate and thanks to everybody who has participated in getting that resolved. I'm again without some context to know where we should be at measured against pure institutions. Can you shed any light on what we ought to expect for retention rates at various points?

Vice President Birberick responded, I don't have data with me at this particular moment, but if that's a question along with the lines that you've asked related to benchmarking with other institutions in terms of recruitment, we'd be happy to look into that and share that at a later date.

Chair Strauss replied, I'd be interested in looking at it. It doesn't diminish the result that we have been able to attain over the last couple of years. It's commendable and we wouldn't expect to continue to see improvement at the same rate, but it's gratifying to see that we're accomplishing some increase year over year. I certainly hope that that continues.

Trustee Struthers noted, this an impressive report. Your work is extraordinarily important to our situation. If you would be so kind to give me some context as to kind of how long you've been in your role or how long this role has existed or how long we've been doing this what appears to be pretty focused concentrated significant effort on retention?

Vice Provost Birberick responded, let me start with me first and the question related to that. I'm currently in my fifth year as Vice Provost of Undergraduate Academic Affairs. Some of these efforts began before I assumed this office. I will say that one of the things that has taken place in the last couple of years is that we have had strategies but they haven't been utilized. So you can have the best strategy in the world and many of the strategies we have are proven nationwide, we're very much on par with what other universities nationwide have done in terms of improving their retention, but if they're not used it doesn't do you any good. And so one of the things that has happened in the last couple of years is with this cultural change at NIU everyone has started to use the tools and the strategies available and I think that's one of the things that we're seeing.

Trustee Struthers asked, with respect to alignment, by your title I guess you would report up to Lisa, is that right?

Vice Provost Birberick responded, that is correct.

Trustee Struthers asked, would that be common or are there some universities that would roll up through enrollment management in this whole retention kind of focus?

Vice Provost responded, it's a common practice to report up to the Provost. My role is Undergraduate Academic Affairs so it's pretty much all things undergraduate and student success and making sure that the students complete a program in four years and in doing so that they have meaningful learning experiences both inside and outside the classroom would be very much in keeping with Academic Affairs and reporting to the Provost.

Trustee Struthers added, it's must broader than retention obviously, just given the headwinds that we have right now it seems to have dominated now your time and attention probably more so to make sure that absolutely that experience is as good as it can possibly get and we're going at the first crack in the armor that we're making sure we're contacting that potential student.

Vice Provost Birberick noted, it's all inter-related and it's all connected. Everything feeds in to everything

else, so I wouldn't say there's a sense of dominance one way or another because it's all tied into on facet of the overall experience.

Provost Freeman noted, it's a core function of pretty much every person.

Trustee Boey added, I should have asked this question when Dani was here, and Eric you and I have briefly discussed this. I attended orientation over five years ago and it was not a good experience. That day stays with me. It was a day where the first day of attendance of the freshmen with their parents and the Holmes Student Center on the main floor, it was overly crowded, nobody knows what was happening and the parents were absolutely in complete disarray as to what to expect. I really felt bad for them. I was in disarray because I didn't know what was happening either and you would think I would know a thing or two about it and I don't. So I wanted to share that experience with you and make sure we do something about the location because the first impression of NIU is all there on that floor and it was not good.

Vice President Weldy responded, I definitely agree with you and that was a couple of years ago and much has changed in regards to our orientation program. As you know we've gone from a one-day program to a two-day program. We give our students and their families two full days to learn more about our university community, to interact with our faculty, to interact with our current student body as well. Much has changed over that and if you would like, I definitely have the evaluations to show the improvements that have been made. Also from the standpoint of our orientation, our yield rates have improved. As Dani noted before, we're recruiting up through orientation and past orientation and so happy to share those things with you and the feedback that we've gotten.

Provost Freeman added, one of the things that pleases me so much about our enhanced orientation, is the full integrated partnership in planning and conducting orientation that now occurs between Academic Affairs and Student Affairs. Abbey Wolfman the Orientation Director sits with the Dean's Council, we talk about which faculty we should highlight at orientation, we talk about the schedule, we talk about from the standpoint of parents and students, where do we want them when to see the best of the NIU experience; and we're so appreciative of that partnership and so happy with the results and the impact on students.

Vice President Weldy responded, yes and we utilize that time too to promote our academic support programs. In fact Ann and I we just had a meeting what yesterday in regards to summer orientation and changes, tweaks that we're making to make sure that our students are fully aware of the academic support programs such as UNIV201 for the transfer orientation days. We also have enhanced our students and families knowledge of the DeKalb community, we started doing bus tours of the City of DeKalb and we identified individuals from the city, the mayor, the chief, and so forth to help with doing tours. That really kind of shows that we are a community, that we're just not a campus community on an island by ourselves, but that we are part of the community and we welcome them, new perspective students and families, we welcome them together when they come and visit campus.

Trustee Butler noted, we have, in the past, identified certain liabilities or things that the students who came to campus in the process of considering Northern noticed which caused them concern or caused their parent's concern, in the past we've noted the quality of the residence halls, we've tried to be honest about where the students might be staying and not only show the best settings and so forth. Have we uncovered any new issues that come up since those conversations say six years ago?

Vice President Weldy responded, I think that we've spent our time really addressing certain issues. It really kind of depends on the families and what's the main issue during that time. But I will tell you in the past going on three years now, I've had fewer kind of complaints that come across my desk in regards to something that someone may see on campus and so forth; and obviously we know from the standpoint of what areas on campus we need to make improvements, and so what we've done is we've really strategically kind of pinpointed those areas that we felt that we could do an uplift in a sense, or makeover in a sense, in order to help improve them, but also we've been talking about short term and

long term, where we want to be and where we want to go. That's goes into other discussion whether you're talking about the residence halls or other areas on campus.

President Baker added, as might be suspected the major question we're getting is about the state's support for higher education; MAP funding or operating dollars for the system of the state. That's much in the mind of families right now.

Vice President Weldy noted that completes our undergraduate report. Next we will have Dr. Brad Bond to talk about our graduate student initiatives.

Dean Bond began, I am elated to have the opportunity to talk a few minutes today about graduate education, in particularly about graduate recruitment and retention. I can well imagine that we may not be able to get through all of your questions because of time or format, but rest assured that any interested Board of Trustees either single or in pairs who would like to come and talk with me and Dr. Freeman we'll be happy to arrange that to get as deep in this business as you want to go. As we start to talk about graduate education I would ask that you bear a couple salient facts in mind. First of all graduate students constitute 25 percent of the student body here at NIU. That is not an insignificant minority. In institutional classifications systems have 25 percent of a student body as graduate students' causes us to stand out. There are about 50 public institutions in the United States that have comprehensive balanced approach to undergraduate education and this level of graduate coexistence. We're one of those 50 publics. We are unique in this. The second thing that I would ask that you recall as we talk is that there are key distinctions between the undergraduate and the graduate admission processes. Undergraduate admission decision making tends to be centralized. At the graduate level, admission decisions happens at a local level. Why is that? This is a practice in graduate education across the country. It's a practice really for four reasons. The working assumption is that faculty in the departments can best assess preparation of applicants to succeed in a particular curriculum. There's also an assumption that faculty and the departments can best assess whether a student's objectives can be met in a particular program. There's also the assumption that faculty at the local level can best determine capacity to work with graduate students in the intensive way the graduate education takes place, balance the demands for teaching at the undergraduate level, placements in internships, and other things. Additionally, applicants are conditioned. Applicants to graduate school are conditioned to think about this topic of fit. They expect to be assessed in this way. They want programs that fit their objectives. They want to be able to find faculty and course work that will help them achieve those objectives, so this topic of fit and the assessment of it which happens at the local level is very much <germane>. This different approach to admissions has a very distinct effect and that distinct effect is reflected in retention. At the graduate level here at NIU, the two-year retention rate is 90 percent. That's a consistent number across time. Nonetheless we do not take retention for granted. Once a semester closes, once we've posted degrees, we begin communicating with students who are eligible to enroll but are not. We communicate with departments as we get close to a semester, help us out, get the students enrolled; and we continue to communicate with students throughout the drop/add period. Now I now that in any given semester, and you can know this too if you look at the numbers, that more than 10 percent of graduate students, degree seeking graduate students, do not return. They're not here. Several years ago I started tracking to understand what those numbers really were to find out what the semester to semester retention rate was. It's about 85 to 88 percent. It fluctuates just that little bit. If we start digging a little bit deeper we find out that there is a 5 percent stop out rate. In other words in any given semester to semester retention study, there's about 5 percent of the graduate students who are not taking classes that semester who will return the next semester. So we started surveying those students who were eligible to return but not there and asking them quite simply "what's up?" And what they told us is what we would really expect to happening with adults, life. They're having children, children, they're planning marriages, they're buying houses, they're dealing with changed work schedules, they have a sick parent or spouse or child. My favorite response of all time on the survey was the student told us that her daughter's hockey coach quit so she took over the chore and she was coming back in the summer. These are adults that we're dealing with. They have very discreet programs they're attempting to complete, and yes sometimes life intrudes, but in the end they're coming back. The one place where retention and time to degree at NIU is a bit of a concern is at the doctoral level, particularly at the PhD and EDD level. Not professional

doctoral programs. Those programs are tight. Those students stay together as a cohort and they finish pretty much on time. In PhD and EDD programs, particularly in the Humanities and Education we do see some retention issues. This is part of a national trend. It's part of a national conversation. We are attempting to address it in some ways. Let me tell you a couple things that we're doing. And yes we starting doing these things for retention purposes, but they have a much broader applicability as well. First all about a year and a half ago we remodeled a shop within the graduate school, it's the Thesis and Dissertation Office. That's the office that has traditionally stepped in at the tail end of a student's career and intruded the thesis and dissertation process. Because of some shifts in personnel, I asked that office to re-conceptualize itself as an educational office and to become much more involved with students at the front end of the writing process to engage not at the tail end, but at the front end so that we can help student's devise strategies to get them through their capstone projects. This has been part of an ongoing effort that we do cooperatively to oh gosh for five years now with the writing center. We run a dissertation boot camp every summer. It's have a very good success rate. Just this spring we've morphed that into a writing group project. It's called write time, right place, so every two weeks this group of students comes together and writes on their projects, their capstone projects. They hold each other accountable and it looks like we're having some success there. The second bit if retention work that once again does have other applications too, is in the development of career professional training opportunities for graduate students. For the past several years we have worked on this project. We will launch it in a very robust and obvious fashion this fall. We are to a point where we're able to do that now. This career and professional development opportunities for graduate students designed yes as a way to show them light at the end of the tunnel, but also to prepare them from a multitude of career tracks as they finish their degrees. Just to sum up on the retention efforts of the graduate school, our overarching rate is quite good. Nonetheless we do work on it. We do not take it for granted and we are doing a couple things now and we'll do more in the future to do so. I want to draw your attention to that final bullet on the left hand side of your screen, the 18 percent graduate students being international. In the fall of 2015 we had about 850 international graduate students on campus. That does constitute about 18 percent of the total. I think you have data in your packet that suggest that number is high. It's a higher percentage than it has been in the past with 16 percent in fall of '14, 15 percent the year before. It's typically been about 12 percent. This number is running high and I do want to point that out because it merits a little bit of explanation and it offers a transition for us to talk more about the recruitment process. The observed increase in international student enrollment is largely concentrated, largely not exclusively, concentrated in a couple programs, a couple academic programs. I'll tell you the story of two of those programs and how it's very purposefully – increased international enrollment has very purposefully happened. In one of those programs they made an effort three years ago to re-conceptualize the program. They made some curricular programs and they also went through the bureaucratic process of changing their CIP code from a business code into a science technology engineering and mathematics code, a STEM code. They did that quite purposefully. The department did in order to appeal to international students. Now why is that STEM designation important to international students? When international students finish a degree, they are allowed by federal regulation to spend 12 months on what's called OPT, post completion OPT. It's a paid internship. If you graduate in a STEM discipline you don't get 12 months of OPT, you get 27 months. Now recent change in homeland security regulations makes that 36 months. It is very advantageous for international student to finish in a STEM designated field so that they can get the longer experience post completion in the US. The department made that very conscious decision to pursue and international market by changing its designation. The second department that I'll point to is one that has very purposefully over the past three years used its international faculty to recruit back home. They have seen a lot of success. Two years ago in fact the department came to us and said hey we're meeting a lot of students who are really good, is there a way that we can do on the spot admissions. So we developed a process for them to do a tentative, on the spot, admission process. That's doubled their enrollment. That doubling has been exclusively in international enrollment. Those two examples point to the way that little curricular changes for example and very purposeful efforts to engage with students by the faculty can help on the recruitment side. I do want to emphasize that the graduate school plays a role in prospect development through name buys, through appearances at fairs and other recruitment events, through advertising. We also play a role in communicating with perspective students and applicants throughout the application funnel. But there comes a time with graduate students very early on when they do not want to talk to the graduate school

and when they do not need to. They need to talk to faculty and program directors where they intend to be admitted. Remember that we admit graduate students we are not admitting them to the university. They are being admitted to a very specific program, very specific program. Now that does not relieve the graduate school responsibility for developing prospects for communicating with them. So about this time last year we started looking at a redesign of our graduate school web page. I have a little bit of data up if you'll reserve this for members of the Board of Trustees the rest of you have it in a graduate council packet that went out. We worked on a redesign to make the graduate school webpage much more outward facing. Our objective in doing that was to turn it into an over recruiting tool. So I'm passing around four images that were generated out of Google Analytics and these images are for – they capture data for the period late October to late February. A couple things I'll point out, on the graduate school we took almost 100,000 web hits during that roughly three and a half month period. That's about 10 percent of all hits on NIU web pages. If you look at the 90 plus thousand unique hits that we had on the website, you'll see that about 75 percent of those were hits that originated in the United States. That other 25 percent were scattered from IP addresses around the world with the great bulk of those coming from India. The second page on the analytical materials shows the distribution of website hits by US state. If you look at that you should not necessarily be surprised that we're seeing a lot of hits in Illinois, but there are also some other surprising states perhaps, California and Texas really stand out in those numbers. The third and fourth pages are clicks, unique clicks on departmental websites that are hosted at the graduate school. That will tell you a little bit about what programs our perspective students are looking at. At the same time we launched this new website, we learned that our long tenured graduate school recruiter was retiring. He left us in about a month or so after that. We are in the process now of rebalancing our recruitment process to include many more high-tech touches without losing sight of our high touch successes. We are working on that. We should have someone in place very soon to assume that primary recruitment role and we hope to actually hire a secondary recruiter for the first time, a second recruiter, excuse me. I've got a couple of other things that I'll point to as we looked at data and thinking about how we change our approach to recruitment, we looked at data from the past two application cycles and we found that about 75 percent of our applicants are actually residing in the state of Illinois when they applied. That doesn't necessarily surprise me. What did surprise me is that 60 percent of the applicants over a two year period had been out of college or university for at least a year when they applied. And this is across programs. It's not just in the professional programs where we see that trend, it's also in the heavy research programs. This changes the way we need to think about who we're recruiting. We can't find those students on college campuses. We have to find much more aggressive and intrusive ways to identify those students. We've got ideas. We know how to do it. We need the personnel right now to be able to execute. Let me sum up real quick by saying that in the graduate school the recruitment effort particularly is a very collaborative one. We work with Marketing and Communication, we work a lot with departments, and we work a lot with undergraduate admissions. Dani has been very helpful in opening up our access to the CRM that undergraduate admission has the minion over and we're very much appreciative of that. I want to conclude with a little bit of forecasting that we'll reiterate some things that have already been said. Usually by early to mid-May I would be able to tell you pretty accurately what our enrollment numbers in the graduate level will look like in the fall. I'm not going to be able to do that this year I don't think. I have too much anecdotal evidence that indicates that both domestic and international students are going to shy away because of the budget impasse. The evidence is starting to mount. This is going to affect our enrollment in the fall. It doesn't mean that we've stopped working. We're not throwing up our hands, but the evidence is starting to mount.

Chair Strauss commented, thank you for the background. We haven't had a presentation previously on the graduate enrollment and retention strategies that were being employed. So this is good background for us. I guess I have two questions to start with and then we'll see what else my colleagues have. If your voice holds out great and if not I'm confident we'll return to this topic based on the questions. First, given the background information that this is driven by capacity that exists within a department and then finding a match with students, how do you judge the current inventory of capacity? Are we handling as many graduate students as we're capable of handling with the current instructional capabilities that we have or is there still room to admit additional graduates?

Dean Bond responded, I would say that we're doing the best that we possibly can. I really believe that. There are probably one or two here and there where we could add and it's not the departments are planning, but I think we are pretty much at capacity.

Chair Strauss asked, given that there are some differences in the recruitment process between the graduate and the undergraduate programs, it still would seem that there are some best practices particularly regarding more traditional marketing type approaches that we've devoted some resources to understanding within the undergraduate programs, are there appropriate channels to share that information and is it your judgment that you're taking advantage of them?

Dean Bond responded, yes, I think we are. As I said, Dani's been a very collaborative partner. Marketing and Communications have been very helpful as well. We are going to see much more collaboration in the very near term too. We've got to figure out for example how to deal in graduate school, how to deal with this new community college because there's going to be similar marketing strategies and market segments that are going to overlap. We're going to have to have those conversations. The efforts that outreach will have with business-to-business marketing are also a place where we'll have some overlap in collaboration.

Trustee Butler commented, on a preliminary level, I wanted to first thank you for the information on the Thesis and Dissertation Office. I don't believe my colleagues are aware that they don't just simply flip through these very enthusiastic and we must assume very, very smart people read word for word each of these documents don't they which is really an extraordinary feat. I know that didn't happen where I received my PhD and so I think it's an unusual resource that we should continue to maintain for the purposes of quality. I wondered if you felt as though you had the proper resources to develop a kind of different and alternative marketing presence on line for graduate programs because I would think a fit was the major question for a perspective graduate student that the on line presence for a graduate program might need to be more dynamic in terms of perhaps even videos, podcasts of some kind, samples of lectures from prominent faculty and this sort. Do you think that you have the proper resources? Am I wrong about that assumption?

Dean Bond responded, no you're not wrong at all about the assumption and do we have the proper resources? Probably not. We certainly do not have the personnel to be able to do this so we have to work with Marketing and Communications and other offices and that's perfectly fitting, it's a good use of resources. We could probably be helped in that effort with some more resources so that we could afford to do it, but we don't do as much aggressive online marketing. It's quite expensive. If you know how that works you can rack up a bill very quickly, a significant bill.

Trustee Butler added, particularly if you have to create videos or place on line particular recordings, etc.

Dean Bond continued, we could do those things in a static environment that's true, but the sort of aggressive marketing that I'm thinking about, it can be rather expensive. You can very quickly mount a significant bill.

Trustee Zanayed asked, just to clarify before my actual question, on your first slide, the 25 percent NIU enrollment that was of overall enrollment?
Dean Bond responded, overall enrollment, yes sir.

Trustee Zanayed continued, so my actual question is do you have any data on how many students are finishing their undergrad at NIU and then going on to the master's program?

Dean Bond responded, I probably should have been prepared to answer that question. I'll give you a ball park, roughly about 20 percent. Roughly about 20 percent of the enrolled graduate students had an undergraduate degree at NIU. That number has actually increased over the past six or seven years.

Trustee Boey noted, I heard you say that you're at capacity in enrollment.

Dean Bond responded, I would say that generally departments are at capacity.

Trustee Boey asked, and where are the barriers? Physical space or faculty?

Dean Bond responded, it's about faculty. Not so much physical space. Now there are places where physical space could be improved undoubtedly or enlarged.

Trustee Boey noted, but faculty is the main issue?

Dean Bond continued, primarily. Dr. Freeman just mentioned the word stipend. For graduate assistants our stipend rates are not competitive. It's a significant institution investment to raise stipends.

Trustee Struthers commented, you mentioned the 25 percent NIU enrollment in the grad school and you mentioned that that's an anomaly across the country, give me some perspective. Is that like maybe 10 percent of the publics or 20 percent, 5?

Dean Bond responded, how many public institutions are there in the country? If we run a match through the Carnegie Foundation classification system and we look for institutions that have balanced undergraduate programs and a high co-existence of graduates, there are fifty. We are one.

Provost Freeman added, I can't give you actual numbers, but when we look at the institutions we identify as peers either in our IPEDs data set or in the MAC, we are unusual in having that balance of broad liberal education in our undergraduate mission and as significant fraction of graduate programs across the university. Other institutions tend to be, if they have a similar fraction of graduate and undergraduate they tend to be more vocational or professional, so we are unique in this area among our peers and probably among a quarter of the universities overall in the larger public universe, not more than that.

Trustee Struthers asked, how does that change in a sense, and we'll talk about this in the branding study, but just the complexion of our university as it relates to our competitiveness and our ability of attracting more students with capacity limitations etc., etc. Is it a goal to increase that to 30 percent? Is that a worthwhile goal or should we be dialing it down? Would we like to see that number jump up more and is the market out there?

Dean Bond responded, I would, because this is what we're working for.

Provost Freeman added, dialing back on our graduate programs it would have a tremendous impact on our undergraduate programs based on the data that Vice Provost Birberick showed you. The high impact practices that we're able to offer students, the research experiences which are among the most effective retention tools that we have can only occur because we have faculty who are qualified to conduct funded research programs, nationally respected research programs, and because we have graduate students that serve as peers to those students in the laboratories and studios and field experiences, so trying to dial back on our graduate experience would actually decrease the value proposition of our undergraduate experience significantly and actually hurt our retention.

Trustee Struthers responded, my question is actually just the opposite. It seems very obvious sitting here that this is an area where we may have a competitive advantage and there are students that are out there and we're not funding it. You say you don't have the personnel necessary to execute the strategy. Again as I look back, that's great, wonderful, I wish it was two years ago. Then of course on that capacity with respect to instructors, that's the other piece that I look at John Butler's memo of two years ago set out with the respect to the targets of the primaries of this committee, I'll just read these out loud, the university level strategic plans for goals for the recruitment and retention; budgetary changes necessary to support the recruitment and retention initiatives and I would think this would be one; capital expenses necessary to support recruitment and retention initiatives; and the fourth very important systems of recognition or reward for faculty and staff related to the recruitment and retention of

activities. All those just seem to be so really, really focused. I just want to make sure – this is a great report and I think you put out some challenges to us. We very, very much want to support the growth of your program.

Trustee Butler added, my question stems off of that, it's a question of say we'll call it faculty enthusiasm. In light of the state impasse situation and the overall issues of morale and the need to maintain a healthy graduate faculty, are you experiencing any signs of a loss of enthusiasm for graduate mentorship, teaching of graduate courses and related to that question are there structural changes reward and regard changes that you believe could be put in place both simple and complex that might enhance the enthusiasm of faculty who want to participate in graduate education?

Dean Bond responded, I don't have any evidence of lack of enthusiasm from faculty about teaching graduate students, mentoring graduate students. It's really a privilege to be able to do that. It's a significant enough privilege that in my home department I've been very clear to them that I will not rob the regular faculty member of that privilege. They need to have that opportunity. I'm happy to teach and help where I can, but I don't want that primary responsibility. It really is its own reward in some ways. Having said that, we have launched recently a mentoring award that we will hopefully be presenting the first ones will be presented at the fall 2016 commencement. The provost's office has helped seed that. It's something we've talked about for years and years and these times having that sort of recognition is important. It's not much. We're going to be able to recognize on an annual basis a couple graduate faculty members for their mentoring and there's a nomination process, the call just went out. It's not much but it's something.

Chair Strauss continued, again I appreciate that we were able to start this conversation. The relationships here are complex and there are financial considerations as well which this committee is not going to explore, but I think we have to be mindful of the costs associated with graduate education as well and so I hope that this is a conversation that we'll be able to continue in several forums with regard to the admission and retention portion of it. I think we've had some questions today that may be would call for some additional information and we would be grateful to receive that the next time that we get together and I hope other committees maybe can take up some of the other implications that come from the comments that you made today. Thank you again. Are we ready to move on to our off campus update now?

Vice President Weldy responded, yes, finally we have Dr. Anne Kaplan.

Vice President Kaplan began, it's been a while since I've made a presentation to this Board. Some of you might have been in your trustee roles in 2011 which is when President Peter's asked for a progress report on the division we now call Outreach Engagement and Regional Development which he had established ten years earlier. I didn't talk a lot at that time about off campus teaching, but I did note that in the 50's and 60's NIU offered the state's most extensive array of off-campus credit programming and had created a College of Continuing Education to manage programs and services aimed at meeting the needs of the expanding population in our service region. In the intervening decades we eliminated that college, distributed most of the program staff to the academic colleges, put the back office functions like registration, scheduling, marketing, on-line course development under a director and built the facilities in Rockford, Naperville, and Hoffman Estates. It was discussions at the national level regarding the public role of public universities that prompted President Peters to recentralize those functions in 2001 thereby providing the university with the organizational means to coordinate and focus its various outreach engagement and regional development activities. And one of those initiatives was the facilitation and delivery of off campus and on line programs. So I welcome the opportunity to give you a brief overview this morning on where we are and where we'd like to be. It's difficult to describe NIU's off campus program without a map, but if I had a map of the region NIU claims to serve it would cover the area north of 80, south of the Wisconsin state line, east of the Mississippi, and west of Lake Michigan or at least I294. It would have 19 dots for the community colleges located in the region but outside the city of Chicago, and it would show the seven two year programs which make up the Chicago City College system, all of the state's largest community colleges. Some as the president says with enrollments larger

that NIU's are located in this area that we have always thought of as our region. These very well equipped colleges have many high caliber programs especially in the health fields and with local taking authority they have had the financial support to build and maintain elaborate state of the art labs and facilities. They are significant competitors for our freshmen and sophomore program. If I had an interactive map, I would add in the many small private institutions, the proprietary institutions, the technical schools, the suburban campuses of several of Illinois' other four year public universities and the growing number of institutions from neighboring states. The end result of those additions would be a blob of color between Lake Michigan and I59 delineating one of the most heavily served and heavily recruited areas in the country. There is nowhere near this kind of competition in the western half of NIU's service region, but then there are nowhere near as many people either. This would be serious competition in the best of times, but of course as you know this is not the best of times. The National Student Clearing House reports that college enrollments have continued to decline and this is the fourth year in a row in which there are fewer students enrolled in undergraduate programs than the year before. Perhaps even more significant, the change in funding patterns for higher education, reduced state support, followed by increasing in student tuition is driving student debt nationwide towards the one and a half trillion level. That is of course unsustainable at the national level, but it is unmanageable by individual students who are understandably looking for the cheapest, quickest, credential they can get. Already struggling to maintain our historic market share in a decreasing market we are at the same time facing increasing competition from lower cost providers among our sister institutions from community colleges, from out of state public institutions offering compelling deals to Illinois students and from for profit providers of short term certificates. Is there any good news in this scenario? We are at the tail end of the boomer generation, born in 1957 – 64. They have held 11.8 different jobs before they were 48. That pattern continues to increase with each generation and it is new jobs even promotions and advancement which require lifelong continuing and professional education and that is the major force behind our off campus and on line education effort. In a region of three million adults with some post-secondary credentials but less than a bachelor's degree, that is the market I think we cannot afford to ignore. Nationally, in a relatively brief quarter of a century, much of the university level teaching and learning has moved off campus and on line. Classes that are not totally in line are often blended between on line and face-to-face work. Ray Schroder who is the Associate Vice Chancellor on Online Learning the University of Illinois at Springfield and also the director of the Center for Online Leadership at the National Association of Continuing and Online Education, reports that one-third of UIS students are learning online, mostly part-time, nearly all employed with an average age of 34. About 80 percent of those adult learners persist in their degree program to completion. Our own regional student's demographics mirror those reported by UIS. Even in non-degree and non-credit courses, traditional institutions still enjoy a competitive advantage with respect to recognition and credibility. When reviewing a candidate's resume a potential employer is more likely to value a course from a well-recognized university than from a learning content service provider. How we can capitalize on those trends? Research by the Educational Advisory Board suggests that the most important considerations for adult online learners are the ROI on specific college majors, convenience and flexibility of offering financial assistance and affordability, and the academic reputations and outcomes of the institution. Again, our surveys mirror those national results. Market demand analysis by national firms show that adult learners prefer to enroll in online education offered by a public university within 100 miles of where they live and work. Theoretically, NIU ought to be able to trump Arizona State of Penn State with the right programs priced at competitive rates. In addition to the right programs and the right prices, adult learners are attracted to continued professional and online education units that demonstrate an institutional commitment to their success. How do institutions demonstrate that commitment? These would be the best practices in online and adult education. They acknowledge the experience adults bring to their classes and they use teaching methods which take account of that experience. They give credit for prior learning; for example, for military training for certifications and technical fields. They provide services when adults need them and can access them not on schedules developed for on-campus based students. They offer stackable credentials. They provide easy entry to programs and the university such as a one-stop semester guest application. They offer programs that meet the competition and format delivery and flexibility and price. They are sensitive to time to completion as a critical element in adult friendly programs. They offer programs with multiple start dates and accelerated schedules. They focused on outcomes not seek times. They offer scholarships and financial aid for adult part-time students and they

provide one contact, one stop shop sorts of answers to basic questions and a concierge sort of person who will confer with other people on campus to get the necessary answers. We have made some progress on many of those points. We can certainly make more. We have hired a director of Corporate Sales and we're in the process of hiring one or more staff to work with that person on selling contract programs to area business. Our e-learning services unit has scheduled 66 courses for online development over next year. The vast majority of those courses are part of full-time online programs which appeal to adult learners who seek additional credentials. In fact enrollment in online and blended courses in 2000 was six. This year it's 6,485. So we are moving along here. We are now a subscriber to Quality Matters, that is the institution is a subscribe to Quality Matters, which is an internationally recognized research based faculty lead organization of 700 institutions that work together to identify best practices in online student experience. Our outreach are working with Vice President Birberick to respond to the need for a university policy on credit for experience and prior learning. We have now an off campus student support specialist parallel to support specialists connected to each of the academic programs. We survey our off campus and on line students regularly to identify aspects of their experiences with us which we could improve. We support online and off campus programs with customized, automated and segmented promotional strategies to bring NIU offerings to an audience whose locations, status, and interests are varied and unpredictable. You can't find them. They're out there all over the place. The Center for Governmental Studies which is part of this division has access to the most current publically available workforce data in the state. So CGS can produce immerging jobs reports showing the top employers, skills, and occupations by industry subsector, by region, by county, or by community college district. That information can help students and graduates think about future career opportunities and it can help faculty talk to students about career related aspects of their programs. And finally the rapid growth in the number of online and off campus versions of on campus programs has generated a collaborative effort between outreach staff, registration and records and admissions to seek ways to earlier and more consistently identify students opting for different programs in different delivery modes. That will increase our accuracy in reporting and tracking student preferences in growing those markets and in delivering needed support services to off campus and on line students. So what do we hope to accomplish in the next year? With a corporate sales force in place and continuing improvement in the economy, we anticipate significant growth in contract programs with regional businesses. If we can retain our instructional design staff, not a small issue, that's a very competitive set of people in a market in which there is a lot of demand; but if we can hold on to everybody we expect to develop an additional 60 to 70 online courses and we're working with the provost's office to develop processes that will provide academic departments with ongoing information on workforce data relevant to their programs. We have, as an institution, a long history of providing the region with continuing and professional education through both credit and non-credit programs. In the past five years we've made real progress in moving from face-to-face course delivery to a much greater reliance on online and blended programs. We are catching up in our ability to provide academic programs to regional businesses and we are well positioned to maximize our ability to make good use of regionally significant workforce date. The appeal of this region to multiple competitors represents a significant challenge, but I think this is our region to lose. Most regional universities and heaven knows most regional universities in Illinois would be happy to change places with us. I would be pleased to respond to questions about where we are. I would say that over the past 15 years we're seeing a significant increase in undergraduate programs off campus; we're seeing a real shift in the percentage of programs that are on-line or on-line and partially face-to-face as opposed to totally face-to-face. We have sustained our enrollment during a period of economic challenges particularly for education which has always had a big, College of Education, which has always had a big off-campus program and has been particularly hard hit by financial issues affecting the public schools, but at the same time we have grown our programs in the health areas and in engineering and maintained our enrollment in business. That's about where we are.

Chair Strauss commented, I want to thank you for your presentation. It's really thought provoking. One of the things that the committee has heard is you've attended most if not all of the prior meetings that this committee has held, has focused on two things. One is the nuts and bolts of the admissions process and programs for retention, and the other is an effort to be able to take a look structurally at areas where there are opportunities. There have been a number of questions about the appropriateness and then the level of support required to be able to maintain on-line and other methods of course delivery.

Some of the presentations that we've had before have focused on efforts that can be made to centralize certain portions of the assets and you've apparently lived through both the decentralization and the recentralization of assets. I think that there's also been some comment about how these programs, if they're to be successfully deployed, would need to have approaches to some of those back office functions that would differ from what happens on campus. Today, because we're running late and although Trustee Butler has indicated that he doesn't have a problem with me running late because I don't think he's going do anything in his committee today anyway, is that we maybe set the ground work for some future conversation that we can have and certainly entertain some other questions, but that we would profit from understanding contextually what the potential is, how that might be structured, and then see if we can relate that back to some of the conversations that we've had previously about which of these services and the blocking and tackling part we could help facilitate. I think answering those two questions would materially assist us in being able to determine what board level actions might be appropriate depending on recommendations that we get from the administration and the relative focus. But I don't believe that the Board has a clear sense as to what the potential is for things in this area. Today you may have some general comments and then maybe we could return to flesh out some of those details at a future occasion.

Vice President Kaplan added, I think it's an interesting and overdue conversation. It's changed a great deal. I can say from my own experience which is now fairly lengthy, that for a very sizable portion of the time which I have been at NIU, our location in the region has been in many ways our major asset. The development of online coursework has shaken that up a bit in that here we are in what is a really marvelous region from an industry and business point of view, this is I like to tell people, one of four global regions on the US if you measure it by the amount of GDP that it depends on overseas involvement. If you were a regional institution, how much better can you get than to be in this kind of region? Well of course as the region has developed and as the online opportunities have developed, everybody else wants to be here too in terms of recruiting students and in the current budget climate in the state of Illinois, our ability to compete is really significantly undermined because almost anybody can offer a better deal in terms of sustainability right now. We've had to juggle with a kind of rethink of whether being where we are is a good thing or not such a good thing. I continue to think it is a good thing, but you often ask about peer institutions and I've had a lot of conversation with colleagues in national organizations where I've said find me a peer institution. How many four year public universities can you come up with that are surrounding by 26 community colleges? Not just any old community colleges, but 26 really good community colleges and several community colleges that are at the top of the national rankings. That's a kind of competition that most institutions like this don't have. Most institution like this have one, maybe two, community colleges in the region they think of as their own. We have 26. And those community colleges over the last ten years are so in an effort to serve the very students we're talking about, try to get more and more students to them because their students typically are place bound, they're lower income, they can't afford to go off to school, and so the community, if I were a community college president, I'd do that too. I'd try to bring in more upper division programs. The more they do that the more they compete with us. This has been an arm wrestling issue on this campus and I think it's going to continue to be. But I do think, if fact I'm sure, that this administration's efforts to reach out to these community colleges and to reestablish really proactive relations is incredibly important. I mean we go to a place I think where we sort of took them for granted. I mean we were the four year university students from community colleges in this region would come here. They always have come here. We just sort of settled in and waited for them to turn up. When that began to change, I don't think we were quite ready for it, but I think we've turned that corner and I think we're making real changes there.

Chair Strauss noted, the case today was for the use of this area and our off campus facilities as places where we could consider offering programs that are different than programs that are offered on our campus. That they're true centers to be used for the delivery of maybe not traditional degree granting programs, but where we would have an opportunity to be able to provide courses that would be able to afford people credentials that maybe could be stacked in one way or another and result in some different outcome. I think it would be interesting to hear what that business model looks like and what resources might be required in order to make that successful. We obviously have a large investment in brick and

mortar and we have some things that are being delivered at those campuses, but the question is how to appropriately organize. And then for this committee the question is what lessons do we have from the admissions processes that we've put in place for more traditional students that we can carry over to take a look at a different type of student than we're currently making an effort to recruit and how do those systems and processes maybe work backwards as well. There may be things that could be learned from offering those services to a different type of student that may be insightful about how it is that we market to students that we're currently trying to attract.

Vice President Kaplan responded, right and what kinds of programs. As Dean Bond was saying, particularly at the graduate level these are students who come and go. I tend to cringe when I am faced with a retention questions because that suggests that retention and time to do (inaudible coughing in background) is sort of the most important thing. It isn't necessarily with this population. They tend to come and go in response to changes in whatever is going on in the occupations they're in. For them to come in, for many people, to come in take two or three courses, get a promotion, and get on with it. That's a success. It's not a degree completion. It looks in some kinds of majors as not a success for us, it's a success for them.

Chair Strauss added, so like most things, it's about defining success. I think that's a conversation that we should continue.

Vice President Kaplan noted, I would welcome that. If there are other kinds of information that would be useful, I would be glad to provide it, or try to provide it.

Trustee Boey asked, what is the definition of unique students?

Vice President Kaplan answered, it just means that when we're counting, a student who takes one class is a student. If a student takes two classes, it's still one student. We're just trying to figure out how many individuals. If you look at those percentages or if you divided them up, most students taking off-campus courses take one and a half course. Some students manage two classes; many students just take one. Almost nobody takes three. That's a killer. If you're going to class after you've been at work and before you put the kids to bed, I mean really, that's about all you can manage.

Trustee Butler asked, my question goes back to the question of centralization that Trustee Strauss was speaking about. There's an impression I'm gathering that the operations of off campus programming is somehow separated from the undergraduate recruitment and retention efforts that Ms. Rollins was speaking about and Dr. Weldy was speaking about. Am I wrong or is there sort of separate recruitment operation within your division for these programs?

Vice President Kaplan noted, our idea of recruitment is more about promoting programs than it is about recruiting students. The kinds of students who are interested in the programs we get off campus are seeking the program more than the university itself. And so what happens is they tend to, it's like a lot of other things we buy these days, you Google electric toothbrushes, you don't Google Phillips or Oral B, you see what's out there and if they've got what you want that's where then you want to go wherever it is. That's what students taking these classes tend to do. They Google MBA and then they get a bunch of MBA programs that line out. We have found that some students will, if they know the university, will ask if the university has some particular program at a site next to them. If the answer is no they'll ask more questions, I mean if the answer is yes, they'll ask more questions. If the answer is no, they move on. It's also the case that you know if you're doing, at least in the past this may be changing, but if you're doing undergraduate admissions, you go to where students who are ready for undergraduate work are. You go to high schools, you go to community colleges. If you're recruiting the kinds of students we would be recruiting, they could be anywhere. They're working someplace. They're not all working in the same place. We sometimes with certain kinds of programs recruit by purchasing occupational association list like the Illinois Nurses Association or something like that.

Trustee Butler noted, but you do that work in your division.

Vice President Kaplan responded, we do that work, but everybody is admitted through Admissions or through the Graduate School at the graduate level.

Trustee Struthers commented, I echoing Marc and John's comments impressive and interesting report for sure. My mind immediately goes to the highest level of this that we are in the business of attracting and attaining students and that is our business and the environment has changed dramatically in all kinds of ways that we don't need to talk about, but I think about at the highest level when I get back to John's memo of a couple years ago, university led strategic plans and goals for recruitment and retention and I do think this university wide in this idea that the broad umbrella for graduate students, international students, undergraduate students, off campus students, online students, etc. Then I think about marketing, the definition of marketing or the inner pinning's product place, price and promotion and in the centralization of that surely comes to my mind. So as I think about these pieces and parts we've talked about today, I'm eager to roll that up one notch higher again about where can we given the competitive landscape, the old SWOT analysis right, strength, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, internal and external forces and marketing, product, place, price and promotion, how do we then attack where our biggest opportunities are. That's my broad thinking on it and one specific challenge to you and I surely don't expect an answer now, but would be what strategic key measures or metrics can you provide yourself and or us to start to shape our strategies and when you get data in a concise form if that data is the environment, that data is the potential, the data is our strength, whatever it might be that would lead us to conclusions maybe as to where we should be going with this emerging opportunity. Well done. Thank you.

President Baker noted, just reflecting on a few of these and to underscore a couple things Anne talked about with the adult market, let's assume there's 7 million people between here and Lake Michigan and let's assume that we don't have half a billion dollars to give Harlan to market for us, which is maybe what you'd need to get really your name out there. There may be other ways to do it. So Anne has hired somebody in the last year to really do business-to-business marketing to recruit business and their employees rather than lots of individuals. You might be able to go make a sale of a program so to speak to one business and get 25, 30, 50, 100 students. That might be a lot easier than going and getting 100 students individually through mass marketing or something. So I want to complement Anne for taking that on and he's been working hard the last well this academic year basically problem sensing and opportunity sensing and seeing where's our competition, where are some of the organizations and he has a few leads now that make us think this is an area where we really need to invest. There's some opportunity here. So Anne mentioned we're hiring a second person in that area really to go full board on this. I'm encouraged by that. And then in the facilities that Trustee Strauss mentioned and in Academic Affairs worked hard in the last year to put together a program at Hoffman Estates in business and we're pulling a 2 plus 2 program, we've signed agreements with five, now six community colleges, soon to be six community colleges, to funnel them into the Hoffman Estates campus as kind of a central location close to them so they don't have to come here. That's a nice way to use that facility to get economies a scale to get enough students from all those to have a critical mass to have a program there and then we've talked a lot about our Rockford program where we're doing on the Rock Valley campus and engineering baccalaureate master's program. I think those are all examples of trying to use distant locations and partnering with community colleges as well as businesses to meet needs. A lot of opportunity here.

Chair Strauss responded, thanks again for your presentation and I hope we will have some follow up at our next session on this general topic.

Agenda Item 7.b. Brand Survey Update

Abby Dean began, thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Board, we appreciate that. We've been through the numbers with each one of the trustees and the specific numbers about the brand perception study that was fielding in October so we, as a management team, went through those and chose eight insights that we felt were most actionable, as well as most important for the university to take action on immediately. What we've done is presented those along with the implications and the actions. I'll go

through those quickly, but please do stop me with questions throughout. Our first is there's a substantial misalignment between the attributes that are important to student's decision on college, what they rate NIU highly for, and what we're most known for. What this means is that we're communicating with a fragmented voice. We're not taking into consideration, we're not communicating clearly about who we are, what we offer, and what the NIU experience is all about. That presents a very major issue when we're talking about our brand and our reputation. So the action steps that we're recommending is to centralize and automate all perspective student communications. This is important because it will help provide the important information at the specific time the student needs it and in a way that is consistent with all the rest of the communications they should be receiving. I should mention that that is in progress with the Office of Admissions. We are working with departments specifically to centralize those. We're working with departments and colleges to help them create their own narratives based on the brand platform so that we're speaking consistently about who we are within the realm of each one of the departments or colleges. We're also enhancing communication about staff and faculty accomplishments; reputation, overall academic reputation and specific reputation of each of the majors is very important to a student search and we're not communicating enough about those. So communicating about the faculty within those programs, the faculty they'll be able to work with, will, we believe, substantially increase the reputation of each. Then moving toward full compliance with the marketing and communications clearing house. There's a clearing house that's set forth to vet all communications that go to 50 or more people. That's help again to make sure that the narrative is similar, that the tone is what we need and not an institutional tone, but a more personal tone.

Vice President Teller added on the marketing clearing house, this is something that predates me. The compliance with that has been relatively uneven across divisions, colleges, and units. We have done a number of things to try to make that compliance a little more user friendly and more advisory and more interactive and I think that hopefully that will foster better compliance across the university. It's very important that, given how fragmented our communications is across the university, there be some central point where brand communications comes to and is reviewed by the people who are extensively the steward of our brand.

Chair Strauss asked, as we've had presentations over the last several meetings, it's apparent that we have some portion of this process that's housed in Undergraduate Admissions. We also have pieces that are present in the CHANCE Program, international, graduate and off campus. I'm curious as to whether the brand study segmented responses based on people who were potential participants in each one of those streams that are at the top of the funnel or whether we have everybody aggregated together?

Abby Dean responded, the numbers that we looked at had everyone aggregated together. We're still working on appending the data so that we can break it out by department and college. I'm uncertain if we have the data to be able to break it out by CHANCE or traditional Admission, but we should be able to segment to some extent. I would add that is the first omnibus survey like this and so we have had a lot of learning opportunities through it and certainly will amend our processes next time.

Chair Strauss added, obviously I've been thrilled because I think this is the base level work that we need to do, so I'm not being critical of the work but I want to make sure that I understand it because I think one of the challenges that we have to be able to analyze ultimately is what portion of this needs to be centralized and can have a common message, and what portion of it needs to be separate. Because we've heard about unique needs of some of these streams that happen at the top of the funnel, and while you need undoubtedly to be able to have a single logo and a graphic representation, there may be some overarching communications strategies that you want to emphasize that are also going to be unique needs for each one of these markets. We will have to figure that out, but operationally you're going to have to figure out what gets done in a central manner and what gets distributed.

Vice President Teller responded, the thought ran through my head actually when Tim talked about the four P's. We're called University Marketing, we're actually University Marketing and Communications. When you look at the four P's we're not really involved in price, we're not involved in place, we're not involved in product, and we are promoting that product. We're involved in promotion. The issue then

becomes can you centralize all of those things and I think thus far our answer to that would be no given the fact that we have very different kinds of populations with very different needs. If you look specifically at promotion at the communications piece of the overall marketing mix, could you centralize that? Yes, you could centralize it. It might be easier because communications is an overlay to everything that we do in terms of trying to build our brand and reputation and ultimately has a halo effect over all of our enrollment. You have to kind of parse this out a little bit. The overall marketing of the three P's is different than the marketing communications represented by this fourth P, promotion, so that would be one thing. The second thing is that I don't think it's necessarily an issue of centralization versus decentralization, I think it's an issue of alignment versus misalignment. There are a lot of different organizational structures that you can employ in order to achieve alignment. I think the important thing is insuring that the culture and that the people are aligned because any kind of organizational structure can work or not work. A lot of that depends on culture, it depends on people, and it depends on your institutional memory and things like that. What we try to do with regard to both marketing and communications because I see this a little bit differently as different buckets, its reputation and its brand. The first thing we needed to do as a divisional organization is to get our own house in order and get fully aligned with the university mission which was not the case when I got here. A lot of the work that we've done over the last year has been organizational structure and putting the right people in the right spots and working together to have a commonality of mission as a division. That really was phase one. Phase two is what we're all about right now. The brand study is really the predicate for this phase two which is to achieve alignment. I can't definitely tell you today what the best structure is. I do think that we are too fragmented and that there needs to be some way of aligning our resources particularly given how scarce they are, in a way that's more compelling, that's more aligned, and that creates the kind of narrative consistency that Abby is talking about.

Chair Strauss added, I think that's a good observation and I'd be interested to see how that spins out. You're undoubted right, that there are a number of structures that could produce the desired result. The conduct that I think that I would be interested in seeing us promote, is that we have a facility that allows for sharing of whatever the best practices wind up being and people will have to figure out how to adapt it to their needs in some way.

Vice President Teller responded, absolutely and to that point a lot of the work that we've been doing in this kind of phase two strategy is less mandating and more tutoring, training, providing templates, making it easier for communicators and marketers around the university of engage with us.

Trustee Struthers asked for clarification. In terms of communicators and marketers, can you give me a feel for how many of those would be in your department and how many of those would be scattered throughout the university reporting to others?

Vice President Teller responded, if you look at and we're doing this now, we're actually going through the advertising inventory. If you look at the advertising inventory we've done over the last two years, we've looked at paid media by department, by college versus by university which is us, roughly it's been about 60/40 between us and the rest of the university. Then when you look at the 40 to 45 percent, what is at the college and unit and division level, it's really spread extremely thin. I think the biggest net buyer of advertising in one of the colleges and divisions is the MBA program by a long shot. If you look at actual FTE's, we're at about 35 FTE's right now in the division. When I got here we had a bid bucket of people in an area, a big group of people in an area called media services which was largely tech people that provided technical services either for smart classrooms, and for the video board at the convo center; very highly technical, very professional people. In looking at the organizational mission of our division, we decided that that really was not an appropriate place for those people to be. For one thing, I couldn't add any value as a leader to those people. For another thing, our divisional mission was really around content. The imagining of it, the creating of it, the generating of it, the distribution of it, the socialization of it, the leveraging of it, etc. etc. It is all about content with a capital C. About 30 of those people went largely to Brent Coryell's organization. We've had an echo move of several people who are moving over there now. On an apples to apples basis, it's very difficult to quantify, but I started out with about 60 to 65 people, I'm down to about 35 now which includes a couple of strategic hires that we're looking to

make. Brad Hoey several years ago, before I got here, was involved looking at every person who had some kind of communications in their title. Not necessarily people that were 100 percent communicators, but one of the things to be mindful of here and may create such a challenge here at the university, is that a lot of the people that have communications part of their portfolio, it is a small part of their portfolio or half of their portfolio, etc. We do not have a lot of what I would call hard core, full time communications professionals that have been in that kind of discipline during the course of their careers. Be that as it may, at the time that Brad did the study, we had roughly about 82 people handling communications is some way shape or form.

Trustee Struthers asked, head count or FTE for the 82?

Vice President Teller responded, head count. It would be probably 55 or 60 if you use that as an analog. Fast forward to today, you know there's people that have come in and out. College of Education at one time had an eight person college relations group which was largely communications oriented. It's down to about two now. So if you look at overall I would say charitable would be 50 percent of the FTE's on campus. The pockets of communicators and marketers elsewhere around campus are largely in Intercollegiate Athletics, in Advancement, in Outreach. Those are the three significant buckets. Interestingly enough, at the college level we are really thin. In general we have one FTE, maybe two, if that across seven colleges, 85 programs, 85 majors over a 100 programs.

President Baker added, can you talked about alignment and cultural transformation. One of the tools you've used is the University Marketing Council and I don't know if everybody knows about that.

Vice President Teller responded, my predecessor put together a University Marketing Communications Council and I believe the goal was to get people around the university who had communications or marketing portfolios speaking to each other, creating some sense of teamwork and commonality and information sharing. I think it was a laudable goal. I think the execution has been less than great. I would put myself in that as well. When I got here it was largely assumed University Marketing has a bunch of stuff we want to tell you about and we're going to tell you what to do. I tried to make it more collaborative and interactive. We've had pockets of success with that. I've actually decided with my staff, after kind of having this marinate a little bit and being at a number of these meetings, we're going to put that group on hiatus and try to re-imagine what that group should be. There's some other universities who do some things that I think are very creative that we may want to move toward that kind of model. I think what's important at this point is that what I've done with that group is we've created work teams around specific initiatives, issues, or disciplines. So we have a marketing and social media committee which Abby runs and Taylor Hayden our manager of social media, co-manages which is a very engaged group. We have a web collaboration group that Rachel Xidis under Jennice O'Brien's direction runs and does an extremely capable job of bringing a virtual web team across the university together to deal with web conversion issues. We're also going through a process of reengineering effort on web conversion which I think is important. Then the third committee we have is the internal communications committee to the point that a number of people have made. We do have a moral issue I think. I would say we would like to have our staff and faculty better aligned with what we're trying to do in terms of prosecuting our brand mission. The internal communications committee is tasked with coming up with collaborative tactics and strategies on that. I would say that those groups have been to a greater or lesser extent successful, but they're not where we need them to be and the university is not where it needs to be both in terms of the depth of talent that we have across the university in these positions.

Abby Dean added, insight number two is that our current undergraduate students, that's the most highly on most attributes than any other audience that we surveyed. What this tells us is that there's a really strong opportunity to use peer-to-peer communications to enhance the prospective student's image of NIU as well as the need to focus our communications on the NIU experience using student testimonials. We've got a variety of different channels, methods, and ways to gather that information as well as use it. We try to use student quotes and voice in every publication that we produce. We're looking at the possibility of shifting the site in terms of what we've got on our home page to something that's more recruitment focused and by a student voice not our own administrative voice. Then raising the

prominence of those channels so providing more – going after more content and making those more visible to perspective students, and then matching alumni from specific high schools to enhance the outreach of those. You can see in the material which of those actions are already underway. The third insight is that NIU is known for different attributes by different stakeholders which are not aligned with the decision drivers for each of the audiences. I believe this speaks directly to the point that each audience has a different method and a different strategy is required for each audience and that's what this bares out. As a marketer, as a communicator, that is what we're adept at and knowing. I think what's important is that we have different strategies and we speak to the different attributes that are most important to each of the segments, but that we do it through the lens of the university's narrative and mission. To go back to the implications of insight three, we need to focus on bell weather programs that have national reputations that can help us create a halo effort for the university. Speaking of the two highest motivators for the first time perspective student, as well as the transfer students, its overall academic reputation and program specific reputation. To put our communications behind those bell weather programs will not only help raise the prominence of those programs but it also helps raise the prominence of the entire university and then achieve better alignment between our messaging and key decision drivers. We are working with our institutional communications group to heavy up our communications about those bell weather programs and to give it more leverage in all channels. Accelerating the development of digital marketing campaigns for specific programs. Digital marketing is by far the largest growing purchased media option for universities, it's also the best way to reach not only a mass audience, but a very specific audience that no other media allows and so we are putting a lot of our resources behind that and actually looking for a position that would report to me that works specifically in digital marketing day in day out. That requires a lot of time, attention. You've got to stay on it 24 hours a day almost so we will be shoring that up. Then increasing outreach to first line communicators with perspective students which providing those who are working with perspective students. I think that we all know that there are a lot of us; faculty, staff, everyone. We all have a part to play in recruitment and to help provide specific talking points that will start sounding the same, feeling the same, and is going to build reputation and build our brand. Build a consistency that our constituents can trust. Insight number four, parents are far more concerned about non-academic factors than academic factors. The top five things they want to know about are affordability, the value of the education, safety, and the fact that the student can get a position after they graduate. They don't want the student moving back home in the basement. Again, we need to make sure that we're addressing those issues for parents specifically. So building reassurance messaging about the safety of campus and insuring that we all speak consistently about it. If we have consistent messages that every single person at the university can speak to, that will build trust again in the fact that this is a safe campus. We need to step up media in traditional channels as well. While digital is really going to be where we can find our students, traditional media is still by and large where we can find the parents and the other influencers. While we'll step up those traditional channels, as we progress through generations, digital will start coming on more effectively for parents as well. Then there's an opportunity to engage parents in their role as influencers and gate keepers in the decision-making process. Again we're talking about key reassurance messages about safety which is already in progress; the access to media targeted to interest and concerns of parents and we're in progress there too; revising information on the parent specific pages of admission site as well as any other site that we know that parents access so that we're speaking to those top decision drivers. Continuing effort to engage parents and give them a voice in connecting with the university throughout that decision-making process; and then developing communication channels for parents that will give them practical advice that helps them and their student cope with college. Not only positioning ourselves as a partner in that decision-making process, but then positioning ourselves as a partner in educating their student and getting them into a job career. Insight number five is word of mouth. Dani did speak very briefly to this, that word of mouth is more important to our perspective students than a typical student. Unfortunately, those conversations aren't going very well right now. We need to improve our communications with influencers, most notably parents, alumni, and guidance counselors. As Dani said, Admissions is already doing some really great work there and we will be meeting to discuss that strategy specific to each one of those influenced groups and then executing that as a collective group of communicators. We need to enhance our peer-to-peer communications and mobilize current students more fully in those peer communications. I think there's also an opportunity to engage parents who are very happy with their students experience here and we'll be looking at ways that

we can do that as well. We'll be developing and implanting influencer campaigns for each of the segments. There's high school and community college counselors, each one of those will be a different campaign and needing a different message as well as parents and families. We can't forget that transfers and post traditional students, we can't just think that we can communicate with parents alone, we're communicating with whole families. To better engage NIU's staff and faculty and to enlist everyone as brand ambassadors in the effort and that speaks again to the issue of morale and how we view ourselves as a university as one collective group of people, a community. In addition, to celebrate faculty and staff's impact on student's lives. We've got campaigns and we've really tried to increase that by the "ask me, I can help" campaign and when we hear these stories of people making an enormous impact on student's lives and we just need to do a better job of socializing those stories because they're there every day and we need to get those stories out better. Also, the "applaud a colleague program" which is really just recently I was sent the e-mail that somebody had nominated our staff. Applaud a colleague is an opportunity to applaud someone you work with at the university for any reason really. We've been working on it really hard and to have that e-mail come that somebody had recognized our staff was really – it was interesting to be able to see the effect of that and it certainly made me feel better and I'm certain that continuing that process will help bolster the morale. Insight number six, faculty and staff have the least favorable impression and I think we've heard this a lot. The implications are that we need to ramp up campus communications focusing on strategy as well as celebration of faculty. I think it's really important to look at both so there's the lower numbers for faculty and staff, but then our highest numbers are coming from undergraduate students. I think it's important to reflect on that and the fact that while faculty and staff may not feel really great right now, they're showing up every day, they're making a difference in the lives of students and it's showing in those numbers for the students. I think that we need to in times where we are facing very difficult situations, it's important to reflect upon that and give credit where credit is due there.

President Baker asked, Abby can I comment on that real quick? The last couple of weeks a number of us around the table have been at my house in the evening with our early career faculty. We've had a series of large roundtable discussion in the living room and we really felt like it was important to have the early career faculty, pre-tenured faculty, have the opportunity to engage with the senior leadership of the university in these challenging times. This is the next generation. These are the people that are going to take us – they are going to become associate and full professors at the university and really be the next 20 years of success here. They're vulnerable. They hear what's going on in the state and they don't know if this is a place that they should stay. Is the state going to support them or not? So we really felt like we need to spend time with them. After we've had those meetings, after each one, I've gotten a number of e-mails saying I slept well tonight, thank you. I really enjoyed hearing from the other vice presidents about what the university is doing at the state level but also to support us. I think some of those kinds of hands on activities with our faculty and staff are going to be really important to show them that this is a great institution, it's a great state. It's got a lot of political problems right now but we're going to get past those and we're going to have a very bright future.

Provost Freeman added, one of the things that's really struck me from a communications standpoint in the sessions is that these early career faculty are of a different generation than the boomers that were described earlier. The generation that President Baker and I belong too, many of our trustees as well I believe. This next generation is not shy, even at this stage as vulnerable, non-tenured, faculty of asking tough questions, sharing obstacles, but they never complain without offering a solution. I think one of the great opportunities for this institution, as well as for Marketing and Communication, is to provide the right portal for us to hear their suggestions and act on them. I think that the work we've done in that area is important, but we need to do more because that level of employee engagement will help us retain their talent, but it will also help make us a better institution.

Abby Dean remarked, that's a great suggestion. The final implication if we assume that there's a correlation between the way we feel about ourselves as faculty and staff and the way students feel about us, increasing our morale will increase the feedback we get from our students as well. We're building campus communication strategy that will inform on issues relative to the large gaps that we're seeing, incorporate feel good stories to be shared across multiple channels, and provide consistent and timely

information. Lisa to your point, we'll add to that an easy portal for feedback as well; better levers that the Applaud a Colleagues and Ask Me I Can Help campaigns; connect focus groups. We have quantitative data and now we need qualitative data to really dig into the issues. What are the factors that are leading to these and how can we work against those. Continue building communications to campus first line supervisors.

Vice President Teller added, which is a work in progress. When I got here we embarked on a very aggressive communications effort on campus to pay off on President Baker's commitment to transparency. We initiated regular town hall meetings and we've done first line supervisor meetings, meetings with department chairs, presidential professors; now we've got the outreach to the tenured faculty. We've been working very hard at that. Our big challenge with regard to internal communications is to get to that first line and to equip people and have them be comfortable that they're not only getting communications that they need, but they're also comfortable in passing that communications down through the ranks. I think that's a challenge that I think continues to be out there that we're trying to work on.

Abby Dean continued, the 7th insight is that NIU's attributes were ranked stronger or weaker by prospects at different stages at the funnel which mean that not only to we need to have a certain strategy for each segment, but we need to be very mindful of how and what we communicate at what stage of the funnel, of the recruitment funnel; both in terms of consistency, timing, and what we're communicating to them throughout the funnel communications. So again centralizing all recruitment communications and streams insuring a consistent tone and messaging, I think that's really important. We're working with admissions so that anything that comes through the clearinghouse that we see we send to admissions to make sure that, and I should say anything that comes through the clearinghouse that is recruitment related because all sorts of communications come through there, but anything that's recruitment related we send over to the admissions staff to make sure that they understand what's happening as well as timing. It does not send a good message when we have different communications coming at the same time, maybe they're not aligning in terms of tone or message. Maybe they even have different places of contact if you have questions and so centralizing that would help make those recruitment communications more effective. Revamping the admitted student package is also in progress. Admissions is doing that. That would be the packet that students receive when they are admitted to the university. We've been witnessing some anomalies where students will receive a housing contract before an admitted letter and I think we can all understand that that would not be the best welcome to a university. There are lots of other things. I don't want to call out just one specific, but to be able to centralize these things and know when something is hitting a student is imperative to this communications process. Creating more precision in our communications, calibrating our message the appropriate phase of the enrollment funnel and again working specifically in admissions making sure that those communications jive with what we need to be talking about. Then rounding our admitted student communications and encourage them to enroll. As Dani mentioned, we can't count, just because somebody is admitted doesn't mean they're enrolling. Just because somebody came to an orientation does not mean they're enrolling. So we can't count a student as a student, until about the 10th day. So we're recruiting up until that 10th day and then I would say ever after because of retention. It's not so much there's a beginning and an end, it's just a different phase of these communications. And finally, the eighth insight, undergraduate alumni perceptions of NIU lagged current undergraduate students meaning those who received a bachelor's degree from the university and are now alumni are lagging behind our current undergraduate students. So the implications there are undergraduate alumni are possibly unaware of the current student opportunities. We didn't receive

a high score for engaged learning opportunities and I think that we have a stellar offering of those and so to better communicate and inform our alumni basis is going to be critical. Again, they will serve as brand ambassadors for us, they will recommend the university, they will do some of this work for us that we need them to do if we communicate with them and equip them with the information they need. Younger undergraduate alumni graduated into a very challenging job market. That goes back at least and decade. Their perceptions of an NIU degree or marketability might be different because of the job market that they have faced. Given potential alumni's influencers and parents or families of potential students, there's

a critical need to raise key attribute scores or awareness there. We'll work with the alumni relations team. This is not in progress yet. There's a lot here I'm sure you can see and we have a very small staff so we're doing this piece by piece and moving things along as quickly as we can, but neither do we want to spread ourselves too thinly and not do a correct job on any one of these action steps. We'll work with alumni relations to educate current alumni based on lagging attributes. Also, pairing a grad alumni with a grad student will help both networking and talking through some of those issues. Host alumni focus groups with career services to assess. You know our alumni are also out there hiring students and so some of these might be feedback on what they're seeing from our current students, so to have a focus group with those alumni in our career services to assess what they're seeing, where we can help maybe better prepare students for job interviews or what opportunity are there, and then build employer communications program that demonstrates a positive employer experience with NIU grads.

Trustee Struthers added, I have one specific question and then maybe a more general comment. Towards the end we talked a lot about alumni and their perception sort of thing. It seems to me, anecdotally, that the perception of alums going back say beyond say 10 or 15 years ago would be pretty positive. Say folks that are now maybe 40 to 60 years old had a really good experience at Northern and there's a lot of successful people out in the Chicagoland area. I'm not aware of anything we've done specifically, and who also have children who are entering kind of college age or making that decision, I'm not aware of any specific programs we've had to go after the legacy, family kind of opportunities. Are we doing that? Is that something that we talked about and again you take all this marketing data you put it in there, it seems like there can be something there.

Vice President Weldy responded, yes, we do have a legacy scholarship, it's small, but one thing that we're finding out is obviously for many years and it continues today that we attract first generation college students. But what we're finding now is that what they're doing is they're sending their children off to other institutions and not necessarily to NIU. How can we address that issue? I think there are probably a number of ways, but one way that we've been starting is looking at getting alumni involved in the recruitment aspect and so Dani has put together a wonderful program. We've actually had Trustee Marshall go out and do some recruiting with one of our admissions staff members, but I do think that the more that we involve our alumni in our recruitment efforts I think that will help turn the tide because they will in a sense have to learn more about what we're doing today versus what we did 10, 15, 20 years ago when they were here.

Trustee Struthers responded, thank you. The other comment would be general. This is really good work. I realize it's a very, very complex initiative to try to wrap it up, but I think you've done a really nice job getting it to eight insights and then the fact that they're followed up with implications and more importantly actions, so you might have maybe 50 action steps here. I think the trick then is somehow again, measure yourself on the things that we are actually getting done and is there kind of a gold standard of these. Will we follow these five or six principles and every single thing we do and stay really disciplined to those principles? I think of Doug's report that goes out to the masses, to all the alumni and that sort of thing would that be connected? Would our web page every single day, our tweets, and this alignment with the colleges and that sort of thing; I think the key is just to continue to tighten it up and I would also advocate for, in really simple terms, there are dotted lines and solid lines with respect to alignment, and I think in these times, given the enormous headwinds that we have, all the pressure around the State of Illinois, the migration of high school seniors and that sort of thing leaving the state, we just have to double down on all of our efforts to attract the kids. I think, therefore, in that case the outbound marketing and communications effort that would trump more things. So whenever there's a question I think the idea of solid lines going to marketing and solid lines going to whatever enrollment management sort of thing would just really have heavy, heavy emphasis. I think I see a lot, a lot of progress that's for sure. It seems like we're doing the right stuff and pulling it together and I realize there's been a time of sorting stuff out and now is where the fly wheel is starting to go. This is a big part. Thank you.

8. OTHER MATTERS

Chair Strauss continued, I want to collapse the next two items together, discussion of other matters and our next meeting date. I think this has been a productive meeting and I hope in short order we'll be able to continue our conversation. We have some questions that were raised particularly in the discussion of graduate and off campus updates, but I think we could continue something akin to the structure that we looked at today where we had other reports. The missing items that we haven't yet touched based on is the CHANCE Program and International. I think given that we've had some discussion about those two areas as part of previous presentations from Eric, it would be good for us to make sure that we have a fundamental base of information as to what's happening in those two areas. We've recognized the significant contributors at the top of the funnel. After we have our next meeting maybe we can start to hone in on potential areas that may be appropriate for Board action. That ultimately goal of what this committee was supposed to be charged with taking a look at. Of course if our conversation surfaces additional needs for information and I'd be happy to have the committee continue to pursue that. It's a dynamic environment in which we're operating and we could well have other things that would develop that would influence the taste of that work. As we've done in the past, and after we finish with the Ad Hoc Committee on Governance today, perhaps we can work on setting the next date where we could do both of these committees again together.

9. NEXT MEETING DATE

The date of the next meeting with be determined at a later time.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Strauss asked for a motion to adjourn. Trustee Struthers so moved and Trustee Zanayed seconded. The motion was approved. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Carey
Recording Secretary

In compliance with Illinois Open Meetings Act 5 ILCS 120/1, et seq, a verbatim record of all Northern Illinois University Board of Trustees meetings is maintained by the Board Recording Secretary and is available for review upon request. The minutes contained herein represent a true and accurate summary of the Board proceedings.