President’s Program
Prioritization Progress Report

June 28, 2018
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Dear University Community:

NIU initiated Program Prioritization during academic year 2014-15 to pursue important and ambitious goals. These included: aligning our budget and mission to better serve our students, faculty, staff and region; increasing the overall quality and efficiency of our academic and administrative programs; advancing a culture of data-informed decision-making, assessment and continuous improvement; and meeting the expectations of the Higher Learning Commission and our Board of Trustees. Together, we’ve worked hard to achieve these outcomes, and, clearly, NIU is better positioned for long-term success as a result. Thank you for all that you have done to support Program Prioritization and advance NIU.

Reflecting on the work accomplished over the past four years, I am impressed and inspired. NIU has benefited significantly from Program Prioritization, despite the overlap of this process with the Illinois budget impasse. Program Prioritization informed the university’s responses to the unprecedented fiscal challenges experienced since 2016, helping us be strategic in allocating our limited resources and influencing allocation of about $25 million. Moreover, Program Prioritization results extend beyond budgeting to our organizational structure and culture—how we operate, collaborate and communicate, internally and externally.

Examples of Program Prioritization’s impacts have been documented previously in the May 2016 Academic and Administrative task force reports, and the Progress Reports issued by the then-president and then-executive vice president and provost in November 2016 and May 2017. This final report is divided into four major sections. The first provides a summary of Program Prioritization Accomplishments and Impacts, covering the past two years. This is followed by three sections that focus on the activities of the past year: an update on the university response to the Academic Affairs Action Plan, status reports on the nine complex conversations that were incomplete at the time of the last progress report and a series of divisional reports providing an update on programs requiring follow-up since the May 2017 report.

Although this is the final President’s Program Prioritization Progress Report, our work on behalf of the university is not finished. As noted in previous updates, there is no definitive moment when all of the work catalyzed by Program Prioritization will be complete, and no single document that will capture all of the outcomes.

Our Board of Trustees’ priorities call for NIU to leverage the strategic planning, operational thinking and recommendations borne out of Program Prioritization not only to guide resource allocation and budget development, but also to align future investments with our values and aspirations. Accordingly, one of this year’s presidential goals speaks to ensuring that continuous improvement activities identified through the Program Prioritization process are being institutionalized in ways that allow progress to be tracked and new improvement activities to be identified. To this end, we are considering appropriate options for integrating key attributes of Program Prioritization—such as transparency, collaboration, accountability and data-informed decision-making—into the processes used at NIU to assess programs and allocate resources.
We will always be looking for ways to use our resources more effectively to support student success, academic excellence and civic engagement. Moving forward together, our strategies will incorporate positive lessons learned from this first iteration of Program Prioritization at NIU.

Go Huskies!

Dr. Lisa C. Freeman
Acting President
Program Prioritization Accomplishments and Impacts

Program Prioritization has been a significant feature in NIU’s landscape for the past four years, commencing with planning and preparation in Fall 2014, proceeding with narrative construction, task force evaluation, and action planning in 2015-16, and culminating in implementation which started in 2016 and has continued to today. The various sections of this report detail the impacts of that activity, organizing the information in various ways. This section examines the impacts thematically, considering in turn financial impacts, structural/organizational impacts, and impacts on process, priorities and culture. Curricular changes are discussed in detail in the next section.

Financial Impacts

Program Prioritization was designed to align the university resources with mission. As such, it is to be expected that financial impacts would be an important outcome of the process.

While Program Prioritization occurred at a moment of significant budget uncertainty, the commitment to carry out the effort was made well before the onset of the State budget impasse. Further, while some institutions have conducted exercises such as Program Prioritization with an explicit budget target assigned, NIU’s implementation focused on a qualitative and comparative statement on where best to align resources, rather than providing a guideline for specific budget reductions.

At the same time, the hard reality of the past several years has been that budget reductions have been necessary. Program Prioritization provided valuable insights into the opportunities for executing reductions in ways that would best protect the institutional mission and values. It has also guided targets for investment, but out of necessity, those have been more limited. While it was deeply unfortunate that the financial status of NIU and the State of Illinois did not allow for more enhancements, it is still clear that Program Prioritization played a significant role in informing the difficult budget decisions that needed to be made over the past several years.

Before looking at the larger issue of the extent to which Program Prioritization shaped budget reductions, reallocations or enhancements, a brief exploration of the costs associated with the process are in order. The direct costs of Program Prioritization are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning &amp; Preparation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Impressions Conference (11 participants):</td>
<td>$29,924</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prioritizing Academic Programs and Services book (100 copies)</td>
<td>$2,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Prioritization Plus data system</td>
<td>$49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• NIU Data Support Team</td>
<td>$9,218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Faculty Development Workshops</td>
<td>$4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• External Panel Workshop</td>
<td>$10,230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• College/Unit Workshops</td>
<td>$6,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trainer</td>
<td>$11,110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Task Force member support (42 members) $161,551
• Task Force member training, supplies, material support $2,518
Response & Implementation no direct cost
Total $287,196

It is useful to summarize these direct costs in terms of internal expenses vs. external expenses. Internal expenses, particularly stipends to most of the faculty and staff who served on the two task forces, dominate the project expenses. The single-most significant external expense was the purchase of the data system used for managing the project and capturing the task force evaluations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of PP Direct Costs</th>
<th>Internal</th>
<th>External</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>$9,218</td>
<td>$81,619</td>
<td>$90,837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narrative Development</td>
<td>$10,950</td>
<td>$10,230</td>
<td>$21,180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task Force Review</td>
<td>$164,069</td>
<td>$11,110</td>
<td>$175,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$184,237</td>
<td>$102,959</td>
<td>$287,196</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The impact of this investment can be measured in many ways, as this report and previous progress reports have sought to document. The most direct measure is to assess the extent to which Program Prioritization has impacted NIU’s budget. At the end of calendar year 2017, all division leads reported on the extent to which Program Prioritization had impacted investments of new funds into their division, internal reallocation of funds within the division, or reduction of funding to their division. They were also asked to assess the extent of Program Prioritization’s influence, from “direct cause” to “strongly influenced” to “minimally influenced.”

Examples of budget actions directly stemming from Program Prioritization include the elimination of charge-backs by Creative Support Services and the elimination of positions resulting from the consolidation of multiple units into the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Actions strongly influenced by Program Prioritization, but not directly stemming from the task force recommendations and subsequent action plans, include a substantial increase in the marketing/advertising budget and the investment in gift officers for all of the colleges. Actions that were in alignment with Program Prioritization, but largely motivated by other forces, primarily expense reduction, include the implementation of AnywherePrints or various position eliminations that were primarily motivated by budget reductions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Financial Impact of Program Prioritization through Dec. 2017</th>
<th>Direct cause</th>
<th>Strongly Influenced</th>
<th>Minimally Influenced</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhancement</td>
<td>$ 2.0 M</td>
<td>$ 1.5 M</td>
<td>$ 0.2 M</td>
<td>$ 3.7 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal Reallocation</td>
<td>$2.5 M</td>
<td>$1.2 M</td>
<td>$0.6 M</td>
<td>$4.3 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>--------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction</td>
<td>$4.7 M</td>
<td>$1.6 M</td>
<td>$1.8 M</td>
<td>$8.1 M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>$9.2 M</td>
<td>$4.3 M</td>
<td>$2.6 M</td>
<td>$16.1 M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even if the budget actions identified as “minimally influenced” are set aside, the one-time investment of $287,000 in the Program Prioritization process produced at least $13.5 million in financial impact, which can be seen as a multiplier effect of nearly 50:1.

It should be noted that in this comparison we are focusing on direct financial effects, both in considering costs and impacts. That is, when looking at the cost of the program, we have not factored in the “opportunity cost” of faculty and staff time spent planning efforts or in developing program narratives. We are focusing instead on actual expenditures associated with the planning and implementation of Program Prioritization activities. Likewise, when considering the financial impacts, we are considering direct impacts involving funds reduced, reallocated or added to units, and are not considering the indirect or potential financial impacts, such as the possible enhancement in tuition and fee revenues that might come from changes that promote enrollment growth.

The role of Program Prioritization in shaping financial impact has been particularly evident in faculty hiring. Building on the task force reports, then-Executive Vice President & Provost Lisa Freeman and then-Chief Financial Officer Alan Phillips agreed that approximately 60 faculty positions would be authorized, to be searched for during FY17 and brought onboard in Fall 2017. Some were carried over to the following cycle, and additional searches were authorized for Fall 2018. Between the two hiring cycles, a total of 93 tenure/tenure-track faculty positions were authorized, representing a commitment of $8.2M in faculty salaries and approximately $2M in startup expenditures. This funding commitment is distinct from the $16.1M cited above. Program Prioritization further influenced this important process by guiding the allocation of positions to specific departments and programs. This allocation process is explored in depth in Update on Academic Task Force on Page 15.

**Structural Changes**

NIU’s execution of Program Prioritization was comprehensive in that we reviewed the entire university’s operations, not just academic programs. That inclusive analysis revealed the potential to strengthen the university through organizational restructuring. Discussions regarding such opportunities were continued through the creation of numerous “complex conversations” that targeted areas in which multiple units performed similar functions. Not all of the complex conversations produced structural changes; not all of the structural changes that emerged were the result of complex conversations. However, it is clear that Program Prioritization has catalyzed significant structural changes across the university. These changes have presented opportunities to promote synergy and collaboration; decrease duplication and dilution of resources; increase efficiency and effectiveness; and make service more obvious and accessible to students and
employees. Some have been explored in detail in previous progress reports; others are detailed in the Complex Conversations and Division Reports sections. Here we provide a summary of the most important structural changes, including unit realignments and position eliminations.

- Enrollment Management, Marketing & Communications formed (see May 2017 report)
  - Built around existing division of Marketing & Communication
  - Enrollment Management transferred from Student Affairs
  - Student Financial Aid & Scholarship Office consolidated
  - Marketing staff transferred from Outreach
  - Created dotted-line reports for three college communications officers
- Student Affairs reporting line to executive vice president & provost (see May 2017 report)
  - Position of Vice President for Student Affairs & Enrollment Management eliminated
  - Cultural Centers (Asian-American Center, Center for Black Studies, Latino Resource Center, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center) transferred to Office of Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
  - Career Services transferred to the Office of Undergraduate Studies
- Information Technology reporting line to chief financial officer and vice president of administration & finance (see Information Technology, pg. 92)
  - Position of Vice President for Information Technology eliminated
  - Review of IT customer support staffing still underway
- Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion strengthened (see and Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, pg. 69, Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance pg. 87, Advocacy Services, pg. 117)
  - Cultural Centers (Asian-American Center, Center for Black Studies, Latino Resource Center, Gender and Sexuality Resource Center) transferred from Student Affairs
  - Affirmative Action and related training functions transferred from Human Resource Services
- Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance re-organized (see Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance, pg. 87)
  - Labor Relations reporting directly to senior associate vice president for human resource Services
  - Investigations incorporated into new Office of Ethics and Compliance
  - Title IX continues to report directly to the executive vice president & provost
  - Affirmative Action and related Training incorporated into the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, reporting to the chief diversity officer
  - Training Collaborative in development to better coordinate education, awareness and prevention efforts across divisions
  - Position of associate vice president for affirmative action and employee and labor relations eliminated
- Office of Ethics and Compliance established (see Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance, pg. 87)
  - Investigations staff transferred from Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance
  - Home for ethics officer
• Home for new policy librarian

• Office of Institutional Effectiveness established (see May 2017 report)
  o Consolidation of Accreditation, Assessment, Institutional Research, Academic
    Decision Support and director of Testing Services and Academic Affairs Research
    Support
  o Position of associate vice provost eliminated

• Units reporting to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies reorganized as Office of
  Undergraduate Studies (see Academic Advising, pg. 38, and Retention, pg. 48)
  o Career Services transferred from Student Affairs
  o Community College Partnerships transferred from OERD
  o Office of Student Academic Success eliminated
  o Reporting lines within the office revised to focus the role of vice provost for
    undergraduate studies more on collaborations, both internal and external

• Online & Off-Campus Programs responsibility transferred to Academic Affairs (see
  Online/Off Campus Course Delivery)
  o All instructional design staff in eLearning who support for-credit course offerings
    merged with Faculty Development & Instructional Design (FD&ID)
  o Director of FD&ID charged as executive director of extended learning with
    providing oversight of online & off-campus degree program

• Campus Child Care merged with Child Development Laboratory (see Child Development
  Lab, pg.53, and Campus Childcare Services, pg. 118)

Changes in Process, Priorities or Collaboration

In addition to its impacts on budget, curriculum and organizational structure, Program
Prioritization has improved the ways in which we operate. Some of these changes are visible in
the processes of individual units and in the ways that units collaborate with each other. While a
number of changes are explicitly described in this section, survey data suggests that the culture
changes are more pervasive than just these examples. A summary of the survey results concludes
this section.

• Budget Process
  Among the most important changes associated with Program Prioritization is in the budget
  process. Budget development has evolved significantly in the past few years in response to
  a variety of factors: the shared governance commitment to creating a more inclusive and
  transparent budget process; the need for structures to support decisions about Program
  Prioritization implementation; the need to manage the State of Illinois budget impasse and
  other budget challenges; and changes in the university leadership that spurred new
  evaluations of the budget process.

To fully implement Program Prioritization, it became clear that the university needed a
more systematic approach to align our budget with the university’s mission and strategic
priorities. In addition, NIU leadership recognized that our priorities would be advanced
most effectively if that approach engaged significant participation from members of the
university community. Collaboration and consultation were founding principles of
Program Prioritization. Moreover, NIU’s Resource, Space and Budget Committee had
expressed interest in playing a more active role in developing budget plans and priorities. For these reasons, Program Prioritization was a significant influence on the redesign of the university’s budget process, as described below.

The Budget Guiding Principles presented to the Board of Trustees in 2014 identified the Chief Financial Officer and the Executive Vice President & Provost as jointly responsible for making budgetary recommendations that are both academically responsive and fiscally responsible. The Executive Budget Committee (EBC) was created to provide them with support and advice in those decisions. As part of that role, the EBC was charged with making recommendations to the CFO and EVP&P about budget awards for programs recommended for enhancement. The EVP/P, CFO and EBC were also asked to solicit feedback from the Resource, Space and Budget (RSB) Committee and the Academic Planning Council, before finalizing their recommendations to the President.

In addition to identifying opportunities for investment, Program Prioritization illuminated aspects of the university budgeting process that required modification to accommodate changing student expectations, and the evolving role technology on our campuses and in our society. Specific examples include

- Ending charge-backs (i.e. processes where one unit charged another for services rendered) for IT functions such as WIFI, ethernet connections, servers and digital storage.
- Ending charge-backs for the professional services provided by Creative Services.
- Restructuring the distribution of orientation fee revenue.
- Restructuring funding for online and off-campus course development and delivery.

In each case the restructuring surfaced needs to ensure adequate permanent central funding. This scenario of essential functions that did not have structured funding sources became known as Unfunded Requirements (UFR’s). The EBC responsibilities expanded to include evaluating UFR’s and making recommendations to the CFO and EVP&P on priorities for their funding. This activity continued through FY17 and FY18, targeting investment opportunities to fund growth and to address large-scale, ongoing structural gaps, such as base funding to allow the elimination of charge-backs.

At the request of the president, the EBC assumed responsibility in FY18, not only for guiding annual budget development, but also for identifying and acting on opportunities for process improvement. For example, the EBC has recommended discontinuing the UFR process as a separate, recurring activity, and instead addressing emerging needs through the annual budget process. The EBC is also working to reengineer the annual budget process to be more transparent and more collaborative. Accordingly, the process deployed for the construction of the FY19 budget made financial data more available to the divisions and provided a formal opportunity for the RSB and APC to comment on budget proposals.

Throughout this evolution of the EBC’s role, Program Prioritization has had a continued influence on our budgeting priorities. Initially, the EBC developed a budget rubric for evaluating UFRs that drew directly from the Program Prioritization criteria adopted by
university community. As the budget process has evolved, the specific rubrics have also changed, but the underlying values drawn from the Program Prioritization criteria have continued to shape short and long-term budget goals.

- **Process Changes in Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications**
  As was noted above, one of the most significant structural changes catalyzed by Program Prioritization was the creation of the Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communication (EMMC). The impact was not limited to that structural change, as virtually every component of EMMC has undergone some transformation in the past year and a half.

  First, three of the six teams that make up the division went through process reengineering in an effort to improve the efficiency of the operations and the effectiveness of their services. These include: University Marketing & Creative Services, Scholarship and Financial Aid, Web and Internal Communications.

  In addition, the university’s spending on advertising has been increased and consolidated. EMMC has hired a staff member to guide advertising and has contracted with a media buying firm to increase the impact and efficiency of our advertising. As a result, a substantial fraction of NIU’s total advertising budget has been consolidated into EMMC, and the units which maintain independent advertising budgets have increased their coordination with EMMC.

  Finally, the Office of Admissions, the Scholarship and Financial Aid Office and Orientation & Family Connections have worked with CHANCE on an important collaborative process, Advancing Culturally Competent Admissions Processes, described next.

- **Advancing Culturally Competent Admissions Process (ACCAP)**
  The Administrative Task Force noted in broad terms the chance to achieve greater synergies in student recruiting. From that broader conversation, two complementary opportunities emerged: the opportunity to strengthen the cultural sensitivity of our admissions and onboarding processes for new undergraduates; and the opportunity to better align the work of the Admissions, Financial Aid and Orientation offices with the parallel services provided by the CHANCE program. This led to the creation of the ACCAP team. Working through the past two academic years, teams from the four units have sought ways to create inclusive and culturally relevant experiences for all students, and to better align the business practices and processes of the four units. Three working groups addressed Financial Aid & Scholarships, Orientation, and Recruiting & Processing. Their work has led to substantial realignment of efforts, ranging from a merger of orientation programs to developing more culturally-competent advising and financial aid staffs. Details on their work can be found in the update on the ESP/CHANCE program, pg. 58.

- **Office of General Counsel Focus**
The Administrative Task Force noted that the Office of General Counsel (OGC) had an unusually large number of distinct programs (10) for the size of the office (11 employees). The division was called on to focus on its core functions of legal advice, and reduce or eliminate peripheral activities such as serving on university committees, and providing guidance related to state ethics and procurement mandates. In some cases, this has meant discontinuing non-essential efforts, such as sitting on search committees; in other cases, primary responsibility for issues such as ethics and procurement has been transferred to other units, with OGC focusing its involvement on those aspects that require legal advice.

- **Community Engagement**
  As described in Community Relations on page 40.

- **Student Experience Team Collaboration**
  Student-facing units in Student Affairs, the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and the Office of Undergraduate Studies have come together under the umbrella of the Student Experience Team to increase their positive impact on our students. Some specific areas of collaboration include the alignment of programming within OSEEL and SILD, and the coordination of Themed Learning Communities and Living/Learning Communities. The SET team has also been charged with addressing the presidential goal on student engagement and satisfaction.

- **University Libraries and Law Library Collaboration**
  While not accepting the recommendation of the Administrative Task Force to merge the Law Library with the University Libraries, the libraries have responded by increasing their collaboration. As indicated in the May 2017 progress report, the Law Library and University Libraries identified a variety of opportunities for collaboration. They have made significant progress on that list, implementing most of the recommended collaborative efforts:
  
  - Monthly joint administrative meetings with management teams.
  - Collection development (Interdisciplinary Titles/Oxford + Cambridge University Press).
  - Institutional repository development (Huskie Commons).
  - LibGuides Research Guide expansion and coordination for better marketing of shared resources.
  - Shared Lexis E-book Collections and LexisNexis Academic for undergraduates and alumni to support current and recent NIU graduates.
  - Interdisciplinary resource-sharing and collaborative collection building (e.g., environmental law, health law, business law, etc.).
  - Referral of tours and instructional sessions (when appropriate).
  - Innovation in Cataloging and Resource Discovery (for electronic resources and developing links/access points to resources within our shared catalog).
  - Cost sharing an online library reference platform called “Library H3lp.”
  - Joint production of special collections and marketing displays of shared interest.
Referral of gift books to Founders Memorial Library (when they will be more highly used elsewhere).
- Regular evaluation of shared databases/negotiation of pricing to save overall cost(s).
- Communication by management teams on a biannual basis about new databases and cancellations to ensure the best allocation of resources and optimal collaboration.
- Meeting and troubleshooting regularly with IT/libraries (“Information team”) to ensure that all of our databases are accessible and functional (and to facilitate resolution of off-campus/on-campus access issues).

Assessment and Survey Findings

There has been a multi-faceted assessment process for Program Prioritization, which has in turn been used for multiple purposes. The elements that have gone in to the assessment of Program Prioritization include:

- Accounting of direct costs of Program Prioritization execution, including both internal and external expenditures;
- Focus groups with process participants;
- Survey of program narrative authors/unit leaders and program narrative approvers/division leaders on perceived impact;
- Survey of division leaders on action steps and financial/operational impact of those actions.

All of these elements have contributed to the posted, formal progress reports, and to multiple other reporting venues such as the periodic updates presented to the Faculty Senate, the Board of Trustees, the NIU Foundation Board, the Illinois Board of Higher Education, the Illinois State Legislature Higher Education Working Group and the Higher Learning Commission. Communicating across this broad spectrum of stakeholders, Program Prioritization has provided a consistent, guiding narrative built around the theme of aligning resources with mission, good stewardship of university resources.

The goal of Program Prioritization was not to effect a one-time change in resource allocation, but rather to change permanently the ways in which the university leadership and the university community approach decisions about the allocation of available resources. And, there is evidence that Program Prioritization inspired and accelerated such cultural change. For example, after the task force recommendations were issued in Spring 2016, an evaluation team gathered information from college and divisional leaders, and academic and administrative program authors, with the goal of measuring their perceptions about Program Prioritization and its impacts.

The evaluation team developed and then deployed surveys to evaluate the perceptions of Program Prioritization’s impacts at the program, college/divisional and institutional levels. The quantitative and qualitative data collected by surveying program authors and college/divisional leaders were analyzed to identify the perceived impacts of Program Prioritization on their programs, their units
and the university. Notably, significant percentages of respondents reported strong agreement or moderate agreement that Program Prioritization influenced them in the following ways:

Influences on Academic Programs
- Creating, modifying, eliminating curricular programs (60%)
- Increased faculty participation in student recruitment & retention (66%)
- Increased engagement with alumni (67%)
- Increased data-informed decision making (63%)

Influences on Administrative Programs
- Increased collaboration with other units (85%)
- Increased data-informed decision making (75%)
- Increased resource sharing with other units (76%)
- Provided new training opportunities (43%)
- Automated processes (35%)

The impacts described in this section and the following sections are evidence of the extent to which the community has embraced the opportunity to be more intentional and data-informed about the usage of institutional resources. These outcomes demonstrate a strong and growing commitment to our mission, to accountability, and to continuous improvement across the dedicated and resilient university community.
Update on Academic Task Force

Introduction

Program Prioritization has provided a solid foundation for planning our future and for ensuring that the university remains strong, student-centered, research-focused and engaged. The task force reports suggested opportunities for NIU to direct our limited resources toward our institutional priorities. They also offered guidance for continuing data-informed analyses of programs and for integrating prioritization into the university’s regular planning, budget and assessment activities.

The Academic Affairs Action Plan released in November predicted that the faculty hires and curricular changes inspired by Program Prioritization would move forward against a backdrop of fiscal uncertainty, and, in fact, that has occurred. An update on those activities is provided. In addition, this report highlights work that is occurring in the colleges and across the university that has been informed by Program Prioritization.

Program Prioritization and Recruitment of New Faculty Members

Since the Academic Task Force report was released in May 2016, the recommendations that flowed from the task force reports and college/unit action plans have strongly influenced one of the university’s most critical decisions: the hiring and retention of faculty. In the two subsequent hiring cycles (recruiting during FY17 for faculty to join in Fall 2017 and recruiting during FY18 for faculty to join in Fall 2018), a total of 93 distinct faculty searches have been authorized. Fifty-eight positions were authorized in the first cycle. Of those 58 authorizations, 44 were successful in 2017; the remaining 14 were carried over to the second cycle. An additional 35 searches were authorized for Fall 2018. The results of the two years of hiring that have been informed by Program Prioritization are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hiring Cycle</th>
<th>Authorized</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Failed/OnGoing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 17</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 18</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A list of the positions searched and filled in the Fall 2017 cycle can be found in the May 2017 progress report. The list of positions authorized and filled in the current cycle is found in the following table. Note that 14 of the positions authorized for Fall 18 were re-authorizations of failed or postponed searches from the previous cycle. In some cases, there was a decision to repurpose a position in the process, to meet a greater need.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Hiring Authorizations for Fall 2018</th>
<th>Searches Authorized</th>
<th>Searches Completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CBUS</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountancy</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department</td>
<td>1st Year</td>
<td>2nd Year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oper Mgmt &amp; Info Sys</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Office (Associate Deans)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEDU</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum &amp; Instruction Chair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinesiology &amp; Physical Educ</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEET</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering Chair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial &amp; Systems Eng</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering Chair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHHS</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health &amp; Comm Disorders</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allied Health &amp; Comm Disorders Assoc. Chair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Studies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Studies Chair</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAS</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry &amp; Biochemistry</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Science</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign Language &amp; Literature</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology/Environmental Studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Administration</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVPA</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art and Design</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>26</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Throughout the decision making that enabled those search authorizations, a variety of factors were considered. The categorization of the program(s) served by position was paramount, but not exclusive, in determining where to allocate hiring. Other considerations that were brought to bear included new enrollment opportunities, spouse/partner accommodations and accreditation risks.

To measure the extent to which Program Prioritization has shaped faculty hiring decisions and the faculty profile overall, an analysis of faculty hiring authorizations has been conducted. We wanted to understand how faculty hiring authorizations and changes in faculty strength in the past two years match against Program Prioritization categories. We considered faculty positions authorized for Fall 2017 and Fall 2018, and also considered the change in faculty FTE from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017. These represent the opportunities for change since the release of the task force reports and subsequent action plans in 2016.

To match faculty hiring against Program Prioritization categories, some alignment of the data was needed. Program Prioritization worked at the level of individual degrees; units contain multiple units; faculty hiring occurs somewhere in between. For example, the single unit of Kinesiology and Physical Education contains six degree programs (B.S.Ed. in Physical Education; M.S.Ed. in Kinesiology and Physical Education; B.S. in Kinesiology; B.S. in Sport Management; M.S. in Sport Management; B.S. in Athletic Training) which can be aligned into three faculty groups (Athletic Training; Kinesiology/Physical Education; Sport Management). In other settings, entities at this middle level might be referred to as “programs,” but in this context, to avoid confusion, we will refer to these as “program groupings.” It is at this level that faculty hiring can be tracked.

The 140 academic degree programs and centers fell into 78 program groupings. Some program groupings contained programs that were all placed in the same Program Prioritization category (for example, the three programs in the Kinesiology/Physical Education grouping were all placed by the CEDU action plan in “enhance”), but some groupings contained mixed programs with mixed results (for example, one of the Sport Management programs was targeted for “enhance” and one for “sustain”). This led to the identification of new set of categorizations for program groupings:

- Positive: All of the programs in the grouping were recommended for enhancement.
- Mixed Positive: A mixture of programs recommended for enhancement and programs recommended for sustain.
- Neutral: Either all of the programs were recommended for “sustain,” or a mixture of positive and negative recommendations essentially balanced out.
- Mixed Negative: A mixture of programs recommended for reduction or possible elimination, and programs recommended for sustain.
- Negative: All of the programs in the grouping were recommended for reduction or possible elimination.

With the program groupings established and categorized, the number of positions authorized for Fall 2017 or Fall 2018 for each program grouping was established, and the change in faculty FTE from Fall 2016 to Fall 2017 was established. The former measures the intent of Program
Prioritization to direct resources; the latter captures the net of faculty arrivals, unsuccessful searches and departures (planned and unplanned), and shows to some measure the inevitable near-term lag in realizing staffing intentions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Grouping Categories</th>
<th># of Program Groupings</th>
<th>FY17 Faculty FTE</th>
<th># Hires Approved</th>
<th>% Hires Approved</th>
<th>Approvals per Faculty FTE</th>
<th>Change in Faculty FTE</th>
<th>% Change in Faculty FTE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>62.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Negative</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>-2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>107.66</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed Positive</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>190.25</td>
<td>51.5</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27.1%</td>
<td>5.25</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>78</strong></td>
<td><strong>641.41</strong></td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>14.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>13.25</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.1%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are a number of observations that can be drawn from this information:

- With more than 75 percent of the hiring approvals directed at program groupings at the “positive” or “mixed positive” end of the spectrum, it is clear that Program Prioritization has significantly influenced the direction of faculty hiring.
- That an authorization of approximately 60 positions for Fall 2017 produced a change in faculty FTE of 13.25 speaks both to the lag in filling positions (44 of the 58 were filled) and the ever-present reality of departures and retirements. At the same time, it is noteworthy that the balance of new hires and departures resulted in an increase in the faculty FTE for program groupings at the positive end of the spectrum and a decrease for program groupings at the negative end of the spectrum.
- The other measures shown reinforce that these changes were not coincidental. While NIU’s faculty FTE strength is disproportionately found in program groupings at the positive end of the spectrum, the authorizations favored the positive end of the spectrum by a significantly greater amount (75 percent of the authorizations against 60 percent of the faculty FTE).
- The data shows that Program Prioritization strongly influenced hiring, but did not fully define it. There were eight hiring approvals that were directed to program groupings evaluated as “negative” or “mixed negative.” Among these eight approvals were an authorization for a department chair, a joint appointment with a program targeted for enhancement; a spousal accommodation for a program targeted for enhancement; a hire to protect against loss of accreditation; and a hire to support an interdisciplinary program targeted for “sustain.”
Program Prioritization will continue to inform faculty hiring. As the evaluations made in FY16, based on data from FY15, become more distant in time, the specific Program Prioritization categorizations that emerged from the task force recommendations and subsequent action plans will serve us less well as a guide for specific hiring decisions. However, the criteria-driven and data-informed approaches that were developed through consultation and integral to Program Prioritization will continue to inform the hiring authorization process.

Program Prioritization and Curricular Innovation

One of the most important impacts of Program Prioritization has been the stimulus it has provided to curricular innovation. This has included the creation of new programs; significant restructuring of programs; and the deletion of programs. This effort by the colleges and units has addressed most of the recommendations identified in the Academic Task Force report but, importantly, has gone beyond those specific recommendations to embrace new opportunities for fulfilling NIU’s educational mission.

Looking first at the specific recommendations of the Academic Task Force, there were recommendations on programs to be considered for transformation, programs to be considered for possible elimination, and new program proposals. The status to date on those program is summarized in the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transform</th>
<th>Eliminate</th>
<th>New Programs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>45 Academic Programs</td>
<td>41 Academic Programs</td>
<td>4 Academic Programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 10 have taken significant action</td>
<td>• 10 have been eliminated</td>
<td>• 1 has been implemented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 28 have action in progress</td>
<td>• 16 are in process of elimination</td>
<td>• 3 are in progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 7 have not taken action</td>
<td>• 13 not scheduled for elimination; some have transformation underway instead</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 2 scheduled for additional review</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition to the 26 programs placed in “Review for Possible Elimination” that are on track for elimination, there are an additional five programs placed in the Reduce category, for which the units opted in their action plans to eliminate the programs, rather than reduce them. The complete list of programs in these three categories, and their current status, are listed below.

Forty-five programs were recommended for transformation. Of these:

Ten have taken significant action to transform:
Twenty-eight have made significant action in process toward transformation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>B.A./B.S. in Geography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. in Electrical Engineering</td>
<td>B.S. in Physics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Biomedical Engineering</td>
<td>M.A. in Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in Public Health</td>
<td>M.S.Ed. in Counseling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master of Public Health</td>
<td>M.S.Ed. in Educational Research and Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Health Education</td>
<td>Ed.D. in Adult and Higher Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gerontology Area</td>
<td>Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. in Chemistry</td>
<td>M.S.Ed. in Educational Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in Adolescence</td>
<td>B.S.Ed. in Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Professional Communication</td>
<td>Certificate in Museum Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A./B.S. in Economics</td>
<td>M.S. in Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A. in Economics</td>
<td>B.A. in Art History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. in Economics</td>
<td>UNIV 101/201 (FYSE) and UNIV 105 (UNIVLIB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A. in German</td>
<td>College Learning Enhancement Program in CEDU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Seven have no obvious progress of significant action in process for transformation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Business Innovation and Entrepreneurship</td>
<td>Minor in Global Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Sustainable Engineering</td>
<td>B.A. in Music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in Geographic Information Systems</td>
<td>Certificate in Technical Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificate in Mobile Programming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Forty-one programs were recommended review and possible elimination. Of these:

Ten have been eliminated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UBUS 310/UBUS 311</td>
<td>M.S.Ed. in Foundations of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. in Family and Consumer Sciences</td>
<td>Master of Science in Teaching (within CHHS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S.Ed. in Health Education</td>
<td>B.S. in Technology Minors including:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.A. in French</td>
<td>- Minor in Nuclear Engineering Tech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minor in Public Administration</td>
<td>Minor in Aviation Mgmt. Tech.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S.Ed. in Elementary Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant Molecular Biology Center</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fifteen are in the process of being eliminated:

- Minor in Italian
- Minor in Urban Studies
- Certificate in Service Management
- Certificate in CAD/CAM Development, Simulation and Fabrication
- Certificates in Homeland Security (both undergraduate and graduate)
- Certificate in Applied Mechanics
- Certificate in Thermal, Fluid, and Energy Systems
- Certificate in Vibration, Robots, and Control Systems
- Certificate in Healthcare Policy and Management
- Certificate of Religious Studies
- Certificate in Professional Teaching Practices
- LEED Certificates (graduate level)
- Certificate in Philosophy of Education
- Certificate in Foundations of Education and Educational Studies (undergraduate)
- Certificate in Interdisciplinary Study of Language and Literacy

Fourteen will not be eliminated and, in most cases, significant new action is underway:

- Certificate in Entrepreneurship
- Certificate in Managerial Leadership
- Certificate in Strategic Marketing
- Certificate in Nanotechnology
- Certificate in Quality Control of Manufacturing Processes
- Minor in Deafness Rehabilitation
- Certificate in Asian American Studies
- Certificate in Education in English Language Arts
- Minor in Comparative Literature
- Certificate in Foreign Language and Instructional Technology
- Certificate in German Language, Literature, and Culture
- B.S. in Applied Management
- M.S.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction
- Center for Secondary Science and Mathematics Education

Two are scheduled for additional review:

- Certificate in Health Education
- Certificates in Technology

Four new academic programs were recommended for creation:

The Doctor of Nursing Practice has been created. The remaining three are in progress:

- M.S./Ph.D. in Data Science
- B.S. in Statistics
○ B.S. in Health Information Management

Forty programs were recommended as candidates for reduction in resources. Of these five have had obvious and significant changes:

1. The Center for Biochemical and Biophysical Studies has been eliminated.
2. The Institute for Nanoscience, Engineering and Technology has been eliminated.
3. The B.A in French has deleted an emphasis in Translation and Business French
4. The B.S. in Athletic Training is transitioning to an M.S. program.
5. The M.A. in Art has added a specialization: Art History Teaching at the Two-Year College Level.

Many of the programs just noted in the Transform, Reduce or Eliminate Categories were minors, certificates or more specialized academic programs. The curricular innovation process catalyzed by Program Prioritization has also had a significant impact on the university’s degree programs. Those that were approved in 2016-17 were detailed in the May 2017 progress report. Those that were approved in 2017-18 are detailed in the table below, while others remain in progress.
### Academic Year 2017 – 18 Curricular Changes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Undergraduate</th>
<th>Additions</th>
<th>Deletions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in Biomedical Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.A. in French</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in English</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.A. in German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in Mechatronics Engineering</td>
<td></td>
<td>B.A. in Spanish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.S. in Sport Management</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bachelor of General Studies (B.G.S.) within the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.A. in World Languages and Cultures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emphases</strong></td>
<td>Emphasis in German Studies within the B.A. in World Languages and Cultures</td>
<td>Emphasis in Language and Literature within the B.A. in German</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasis in Spanish and Hispanic Studies within the B.A. in World Languages and Cultures</td>
<td>Emphasis in Translation and Business German within the B.A. in German</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Graduate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Degrees</strong></td>
<td>M.S. in Data Analytics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. in Digital Marketing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.S. in Health Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ph.D. in Computer Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specializations</strong></td>
<td>Specialization in Clinical Mental Health Counseling within the M.S.Ed. in Counseling</td>
<td>Specialization in Early Childhood Special Education within the M.S.Ed. in Special Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialization in School Counseling within the M.S.Ed. in Counseling</td>
<td>Specialization in Art Education within the Ed.D. in Curriculum and Instruction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*At NIU, subdivisions of undergraduate programs are called emphases.

**At NIU, subdivisions of graduate programs are called specializations.

It is worth noting that these changes to degree program go beyond the scope of direct responses to the Academic Task Force recommendations. For example, while the Academic Task Force signaled concerns about the French and German degree programs within the Department of Foreign Languages & Literature, it was the departmental faculty who took the initiative to reimagine the department as a Department of World Languages and Cultures and to transform the
separate degrees in French, German and Spanish into a single degree program in World Languages and Cultures. Similarly, the transformation of the emphases in biomedical engineering and mechatronics engineering into separate degree programs were the result of faculty initiatives within the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology.

The spirit of curricular innovation also carried through to the creation of new degree programs not contemplated at the time of the Academic Task Force’s work, such as the Master of Science in Data Analytics and the Master of Science in Digital Marketing. However, these new programs are very much in the spirit of Program Prioritization and exemplars of one of the project’s most important outcomes: an ongoing, conscious alignment of our resources, including our curricular resources, with our mission.

For our curricular offerings, this ongoing alignment has meant the adjustment of our programs to the needs, interests and learning styles of our students. Across the action plans of the colleges, several themes emerge as essential elements of this ongoing curricular innovation. There are innovations focused on content; and there are innovations focused on new modalities and partnerships.

Developing New Content

Across the colleges, there are ongoing efforts to align our programs with student needs. Those that have reached completion have been described above and in last year’s report. Efforts to create and transform programs include:

New Programs

- **Cross-College: B.S. and M.S. in Data Sciences**
  The Data Sciences Working Group has been working on developing a curricular proposal for B.S. and M.S. degrees in Data Sciences. This program will be an interdisciplinary degree program centered on Computer Sciences (CSCI) and Statistics (STAT), but incorporating data sciences courses from departments across the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, College of Business and College of Education. The proposal is in development and will be submitted to the CLAS Curriculum Committee in Fall 2018.

- **CEDU: M.S. in Athletic Training**
  Per mandate by the accrediting body in athletic training – the Commission on Accreditation of Athletic Training Education – the bachelor’s degree will no longer be considered the entry-level credential into the field but rather a new pre-professional master’s degree will become the requirement. Consequently, the existing B.S. in Athletic Training is being phased out, and a new pre-professional master’s degree in Athletic Training will begin admitting students into this new degree program in the summer of 2019. As part of this new master’s degree in Athletic Training, a 3+2 accelerated program (3 = bachelor’s in Kinesiology and + 2 = master’s in Athletic Training) has been proposed and advanced in the NIU curricular system as a recruitment and enrollment enhancement endeavor as well as a retention initiative.
• **CEDU: Ph.D. in Kinesiology and Physical Education**
  New courses have been put forth into the curricular process for a proposed Ph.D.

• **CEDU: B.S. in Special and Early Education**
  SEED is developing a non-teacher licensure bachelor’s level program in Blind Rehabilitation and also in Special Education.

• **CEET: Ph.D. Programs**
  Three Ph.D. programs, in Electrical Engineering, Industrial and Systems Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering are under exploration and in the planning stages. Each program will be closely tied with regional industry through a novel Industrial Fellows Program (IFP), and it is envisioned that each Ph.D. program will work in synergy with the others through the IFP. A focus group of corporate executives is being convened to engage industry in the development and structuring of the IFP.

• **CHHS: M.S. in Health Sciences**
  The M.S. in Health Sciences will be a 30-credit hour graduate program designed to meet the needs of students from many different health-related fields who seek graduate degrees to advance their careers. A program of this breadth reflects the rising importance of interdisciplinary study in health careers. This program offers an option for students who don’t want a disciplinary program that often has greater credit hour requirements or a less flexible course plan to meet accreditation standards. For example, this could be good for Registered Dieticians also wanting graduate degrees. The program was designed to be offered in an efficient manner by using some current coursework that has capacity in the structured core and required electives, which emphasizes the synergy with existing programs. Also, 15 credits of the required program of courses will be selected by students to meet their individualized learning goals, such as by taking courses in a concentrated area or existing graduate certificate.

• **CLAS: B.S. in Statistics**
  The proposed creation of a separate Department of Statistics and Actuarial Sciences is currently on track for approval and inclusion in the Fall 2019 catalog. The corresponding curricular proposal outlines two B.S. degree programs in Statistics (STAT) and Actuarial Sciences (ACSC), and also offers minors in each area. The new department has also proposed the creation of nine new courses to support the degree program. The complete curricular proposal has been forwarded to the CLAS Curriculum Committee for review in Fall 2018.

• **CLAW: Master of Jurisprudence**
  The College of Law has begun exploration of a Master of Jurisprudence (M.J.) degree that would complement its existing Doctor of Jurisprudence (J.D.) degree. The M.J. would not prepare students to practice law and would not lead to the bar examination. Rather, it would provide beneficial opportunities for professionals who work in compliance or regulatory environments, labor relations, contracts etc. with a deeper understanding of the law. An important element of the exploration of the M.J. degree would be the development of online offerings, some of which would have the potential to crossover into the J.D. program.
• **CVPA: Creative Path**
  The Creative Path is an innovative effort to provide opportunities for students with a passion for the arts to develop that passion into competencies that can lead to success in any major. It will enroll first-year students in teams of 20 in two studio courses that introduce the tools of art and then apply those tools to making art, with a focus on collaboration and community engagement. Students will be immersed in group-learning—doing and making—to develop skills and artistic vision. Students will also be engaged in learning opportunities in reading, writing, communication and math to launch them into their college career. The first cohort of 20 (visual art) will be enrolled in the TLC this fall. EMMC and CVPA have committed $10,000 to provide $500 completion awards for students who complete the path.

Revisions of Existing Programs

• **CBUS: Data Analytics**
  Several College of Business departments have integrated data analytics/science into degree program curricula through courses, specializations, certificates, minors and degree programs in 2017-2018. The Baccalaureate Council approved some for inclusion in the 2018-2019 catalog, and others are pending approval for inclusion in the 2019-2020 catalog.
  A summary of the most significant data analytics additions includes:
  o **Programs**: One graduate program focusing entirely on data science was added; one graduate program including data science courses was added.
  o **Minors**: One data science for business minor was added.
  o **Certificates**: Two undergraduate and two graduate data science certificates of study were added. Two undergraduate degree programs require MS Office Specialist Excel Certification.
  o **Specializations/Program of Study**: One undergraduate specialization in data science for business was added. Two graduate data science specializations and one graduate data science program of study were added.
  o **Courses**: Eight graduate courses covering data science were added; two existing data science courses were revised.
  o **CEDU: M.S.Ed. in Educational Psychology**
  The program is redesigning the curricula to emphasize learning science and cognition as a program predicated on the core foundation of learning, culture and motivation. The program is also developing a curricular plan to deliver a blended online degree program along with pursuing professional development in terms of faculty teaching and learning in an online degree program environment. The program is embedding an international student/professional-to-professional engagement component with Uruguay as part of the curriculum of study.

• **CEET: Senior Design**
  New Senior Design sequences in Electrical Engineering and in Mechanical Engineering will be introduced in the fall of 2018 that will engage students in an in-depth, academic-
year-long design experience. In addition, Electrical and Mechanical Engineering have combined their respective Senior Design courses to enable the departments to create interdisciplinary teams with much more ease than prior years. The new format will also allow students to tackle larger and more complex problems and to have more time to accomplish the work.

- **CEET: ABET Student Learning Outcomes**
  The programs in Electrical Engineering, Industrial and Systems Engineering and Mechanical Engineering are working toward adopting the new Student Learning Outcomes established by ABET. Mechanical Engineering has adopted the new ABET criteria and has worked this past semester to establish a protocol to evaluate these metrics in a more efficient manner. The other departments are following suit.

- **CHHS: Accelerated Pathways**
  CHHS is implementing accelerated programs in Rehabilitation and Disability Services (B.S.) to Rehabilitation Counseling (M.S.) and Public Health (B.S.) to the Public Health graduate degree (M.P.H). The aim is to recruit and retain well-qualified undergraduate students to NIU and to increase undergraduate and graduate student numbers.

- **CHHS: B.S. Health Sciences**
  This program was revised to improve student success and preparation for health-related occupations with enhanced knowledge and skills development to meet health and human/social services labor demand. The program provides students with a stronger foundation through general education and health science-based curriculum with a focus on health care leadership skills, financial principles, management strategies and standards to improve patient care and career advancement for health/human services. Aims of the revision were to reverse the enrollment trends and retention gaps for students seeking admission to competitive majors and to retain links between the growing Rehabilitation programs (undergraduate Rehabilitation and Disability Services and graduate Rehabilitation Counseling (M.S.) and the Health Sciences majors.

- **CLAW: Accelerated Pathways**
  In addition to existing 3+3 programs with Political Science, Sociology and Engineering, the College of Law has recently approved new 3+3 programs with World Languages & Cultures, History, Art History and English. All of these allow an NIU undergraduate to overlap the last year of their undergraduate studies with the first year of law school.

- **CVPA: B.F.A. in Music**
  The School of Music is working toward a new program in Recording Arts that should be approved in the fall of 2018 for a Fall 2019 initial cohort.

### New Modalities and Curricular Partnerships

An important trend in the curricular development has been that we have not just focused on new content but on diversifying our modalities of delivery to achieve our curricular goals. This includes a renewed attention to online programming, and also includes partnerships with school districts,
community colleges and international partners. A sampling of some of the initiatives underway includes:

**Online & Off-Campus Offerings**

Growing out of the Online & Off-Campus complex conversation, there has been a targeted effort to strengthen and expand NIU’s offerings in these arenas. Some specific efforts include:

- **Program Marketing**
  Fourteen existing online and off-campus degree programs were targeted in FY18 for enhanced marketing efforts.
  - **CBUS**
    - Master of Accountancy (MAC - Naperville)
    - Master of Financial Risk Management
  - **CEDU**
    - BSAM with emphasis in Instructional Technology, Training and Evaluation
    - Master of Educational Research and Evaluation
    - M.S.Ed. in School Business Management
    - Ed.D. in Adult and Higher Education (Community College Leadership Program)
  - **CEET**
    - Master of Industrial Management
    - Master of Engineering Management
  - **CHHS**
    - B.S. in Health Sciences
    - Doctor of Nursing Practice
    - Master of Public Health
  - **CLAS**
    - Certificates in Geographic Information Analysis and Geographic Information Systems
    - B.A./B.S. in Political Science degree completion
    - Graduate Certificate in Public Management

- **CBUS: B.S. in Marketing Online Degree Completion Program**
  The final two years of the undergraduate Marketing program (300- and 400-level courses) are offered online. Enrollment numbers are still low, but there is some student interest in the program. The online Marketing courses are very popular for all students, including DeKalb campus students, and course sections are quickly filled to capacity.

- **CBUS: Hoffman Estates Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) Program**
  This BSBA program, which is a combination of evening and online courses, began in Fall 2017. One course is offered Tuesday evening and one is offered Thursday evening. It is designed as a part-time program with face-to-face courses, with online courses added for
students wanting a full-time program. Nine students are currently enrolled. Promotional materials for the new program are currently being developed with assistance from EMMC. The possibility of offering the entire Business Administration program online will be explored.

- **CEET: B.S. in Applied Manufacturing Technology and M.S. in Industrial Management**
  The Department of Engineering Technology is planning to upgrade many online classes for its two online degree programs, the B.S. in Applied Manufacturing Technology (BSAMT) and the M.S. in Industrial Management (IM), and is currently planning to enhance marketing effort for both of these programs. The Department of Engineering Technology might develop a new online emphasis area in Applied Electrical Engineering Technology, which would be in a similar format to the existing online B.S. in Applied Manufacturing Technology (BSAMT) program. This will be done in consultation with regional community colleges, as was done for the BSAMT program.

- **CLAS: Online General Education Module**
  The creation of online general education and foundational courses is currently under development. The foundational courses in the First-Year Composition Program (ENGL 103/203) are scheduled for delivery by Fall 2018 and Spring 2019, respectively. MATH 101 is scheduled for delivery in Fall 2019. In total, 20 courses distributed across nine academic units will be developed and delivered during the first year of this two-year rollout (Fall 2018 to Fall 2019). Half of these courses (10) support the GIS/GIA and MPA certificate programs, two support the POLS degree completion, and the remainder (eight) support the general education and/or the BGS programs. All will be available in the future to support other undergraduate degree completion programs and enable the delivery of complete online undergraduate degrees.

**Community Colleges and School District Partnerships**

Strong partnerships with community colleges continue to be integral to NIU’s educational mission. Those partnerships take a number of forms, from course articulations and curricular alignments to guaranteed pathways agreements to innovative degree completion programs. Partnerships with school districts are often mediated through community colleges as well, but the growing interest in opportunities for dual-credit agreements is motivating direct dialogue between NIU and school districts.

- **Dell Seamless Transfer Pathway Design Challenge with Harper College and District 211**
  NIU, Harper College and District 211 formed a team, one of four chosen nationally, to participate in the Seamless Transfer Pathways Design Challenge. This is a structured, student-centered, design-innovation process led by the Education Design Lab made possible by a grant from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation. Teams are progressing through a four-stage innovative process to design, implement and scale “seamless transfer
“pathway” solutions to dramatically improve transfer and graduation rates for community college students aspiring to attain a four-year degree by 30 points or more. The challenge includes a rigorous evaluation component to help participating institutions track outcomes through the pilot year and over an additional five-year period.

NIU’s team has proposed an ambitious yet feasible proposal to reduce the time and cost of earning a baccalaureate degree for students in the Northwest suburbs of Chicago, with a six-year goal of producing a 30 percent increase in the number of students who earn bachelor’s degrees after completing community college.

The collaborative pilot plan will prepare District 211 students with tools needed to attain Harper A.S. degrees and transfer into Northern Illinois University to earn B.S. business degrees, thereby reducing the cost and time to graduation, by reducing traditional gateway obstacles. This will be achieved by connecting students to high-touch, coordinated advising and aligning course curriculum across the three institutions. The pilot will engage work teams around curriculum, advising and marketing to create a communication plan for all constituency groups. After the initial pilot, the goal is to scale to other programs and additional school districts.

- **CBUS & CLAS: Undergraduate Degree Completion Programs offered through the Harper College University Center**
  The Harper College University Center provides the setting for a collaboration between Harper College and NIU to offer structured pathways for students to co-curricular collaborations to complete full NIU undergraduate degrees on-site at Harper College. The initial partnerships are in Computer Science, Marketing and Psychology. Students will complete the first two years coursework through Harper College courses, then complete the third and fourth years through NIU courses offered at Harper College's campus (with some offered online). The program will begin in the 2018-19 academic year.

- **CEDU: Multiple Pathway Agreements**
  Units are exploring a variety of ways to create transfer agreements with community college partners. Some examples include
  - **Kinesiology (B.S.)** is developing 2+2 programs with Waubonsee Community College and Rock Valley College.
  - **Educational Technology, Research and Assessment (BSAM)** is developing a degree completion articulation agreement with the College of Lake County.
  - **Department of Special and Early Education (B.S.Ed.)** is developing 2+2 program planning, as well as a 2+2.5 program, with community colleges.

- **CEET: Engineering Pathways with Wheaton College**
  While curricular pathways are typically established with two-year institutions, CEET is in discussion with a four-year institution for a guaranteed transfer agreement. Wheaton College does not offer engineering degrees, and is seeking to construct a pathway for its students that allows them to begin their studies at Wheaton College and transfer to NIU to complete an engineering undergraduate degree.
• **CHHS: Nursing with Kishwaukee College**
  After many years of planning, a pilot program is being implemented in Fall 2018 whereby selected nursing students at Kishwaukee Community College will be dual-enrolled in NIU’s Nursing program. The aim is to encourage earlier completion of the B.S. in Nursing and to increase enrollment at NIU.

• **CHHS: Hospitality and Tourism Management (HTM) Dual Credit**
  The HTM faculty have engaged in a number of activities designed to establish linkages with high school programs. For the past two years, HTM faculty have served as mentors for the Kishwaukee Education Consortium Pro-Start team competition at the Illinois Restaurant Educational Foundation’s Pro-Start Competition and have been involved in marketing the program at the Illinois Pro-Start competition, convened at McCormick Place in Chicago. This has provided exposure for the HTM program to students from dozens of high schools across Illinois. HTM faculty have also hosted campus visits for students from Chicago Vocational High School in Chicago and a burger cook-off event for students enrolled in high schools served by the Valley Education for Employment System (Fox River Valley high schools). HTM faculty continue to explore the possibility of dual-credit offerings in local high schools as well as proficiency credit awarded on the basis of high school students completing the industry standard Pro-Start curriculum in their local high schools. The aim of these efforts is to increase enrollment in the HTM program.

• **CLAS: Mathematics Dual Credit Training with Districts 211 and 214**
  NIU is in negotiations with Districts 211 and 214 for delivery of mathematics courses on site at Harper College. These are cohort agreements with the school districts directly, but held on-site at Harper. Negotiations are still underway, but an agreement will likely include the offering of a two-course sequence for faculty who already hold M.A. degrees from other institutions to get them up to Harper standards to teach dual-credit classes transferable to Harper. The agreement could also include offering a M.S. program in Mathematical Sciences, but it is unclear if there are enough students to make this idea economically viable.

• **CVPA: Co-Curricular Collaborations**
  CVPA is particularly well-positioned to pursue co-curricular opportunities with community colleges, which can lack the infrastructure needed to afford those opportunities to their students.
  - CVPA is exploring ways to provide co-curricular opportunities in band, instrumental study, performance and art show invitational to students at Kishwaukee College, as well as creating paths to enter the B.A. program in the School of Art and Design.
  - The School of Art and Design has created an art exhibit and competition for community colleges. The goal is to expand this to include an arts festival hosted at NIU, involving each of the CVPA schools.
  - The School of Music is exploring both student and faculty exchanges in music ensembles and jazz groups, playing together both at NIU and at the community colleges.
• **CVPA: Pathway Agreements**
  The College has aggressive plans to provide 2+2 agreements with our B.A. programs in Theatre, Art and with the proposed Recording Arts degree.

**International Partnerships**

Our international curricular partnerships are also taking a number of different forms. We have partnered with ELS to station NIU recruiting staff in China and are exploring further collaborations with ELS to enhance international recruiting. In addition to these university-wide projects, there are numerous efforts at the college and unit level. The most popular form of partnership continues to be grounded in pathway agreements that provide guaranteed articulation agreements. Some of these include dual-degree commitments that allow students to use their combined credits from the two institutions to received degrees from both. A particularly strong example of this is the international MBA program.

• **CBUS: Accounting**
  - Asia University (Taiwan): 2+2 program with Accounting.

• **CBUS: Global MBA Program**
  - Foreign Trade University (FTU) (Hanoi Vietnam): 4+1 program signed with the Global MBA Program.
  - Harbin Institute of Technology (HIT) (Harbin China): MBA Degree Program offered in China in partnership with HIT (Launching Fall 2018).
  - University of Tetovo (Tetovo, Macedonia): MBA Degree Program offered in Tetovo Macedonia in partnership with the University of Tetovo. Just received the Macedonian Government approval to offer the degree.
  - Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management (LBSIM) (Delhi India): 4+1 Program signed with the Global MBA Program.
  - Externado University (Bogota Colombia): 3+1.5 Program signed with Marketing. Exploring MBA Degree Program offering in Bogota Colombia.

• **CBUS: Four-Country International MBA Program**
  NIU’s Global MBA program has joined an alliance of four universities around the world to provide students the opportunity to study at multiple institutions and earn credentials from all of them:
  - An NIU MBA degree in the USA.
  - An MBA or Master of International Management Degree at SRH Hochschule in Berlin, Germany.
  - A Certificate of Finance or Economics from Southwestern University of Finance and Economics in Chengdu, China.
  - A Certificate of Business Management from Sapienza University in Rome, Italy.
• **CBUS: Marketing**
  - Zhejiang Wanli University (ZWU) (Ningbo China): 2+2 and 3+1 programs with Marketing and Management. ZWU sent five students to the COB this past semester.
  - University for Business and Technology (UBT) (Pristina Kosovo): Exploring a 3+1.5 program with Marketing. Currently discussing curriculum and contract.

• **CEET: Industrial and Systems Engineering**
  - Universidad de La Sabana (ULS) (Chia, Columbia) 5+1.5 program, earning an undergraduate degree from ULS and M.S. in ISYE from NIU. The two institutions also cooperate on a study abroad program.
  - AMRITA University (Coimbatore, India) Negotiations are underway to create a dualdegree program that shares credits earned at the two institutions, to confer a master’s degree in ISYE from NIU and a master’s degree in manufacturing from AMRITA.
  - Kumaraguru College of Technology (KCT) (Coimbatore, India) Negotiations are underway to create a 2+2 undergraduate dual-degree program. A draft will be completed and circulated in the summer of 2018.
  - PSG College of Technology (Coimbatore, India). Negotiations are underway to create a dual-degree program that shares credits earned at the two institutions to confer a master’s degree in ISYE from NIU and a master’s degree from PSG. Similar discussions are underway with Electrical Engineering and Mechanical Engineering.

**CLAS: Political Science**
Plans are in development for a 3+2 program involving three years of a B.A. program at Thammasat and two years of an M.A. program at NIU, with students receiving B.A. degrees from Thammasat and M.A. degrees from NIU in Political Science. Organized under the auspices of the School of Public and Global Affairs (Political Science and Public Administration) and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies. A Level 2 agreement is with NIU Legal for approval, and Scot Schraufnagel will visit Thammasat this summer for final negotiations. The first cohort of perhaps five students would begin at NIU in the fall of 2019.

**CLAS: Southeast Asian Studies**
The Center for Southeast Asian Studies at National Chengchi University, Taiwan and NIU entered into a new partnership in 2018. Currently, an important pivot is happening in Asian studies as premier sites of knowledge production on Asia are emerging in Asia and National Chengchi University is a key player in that arena. Known as the training school for Taiwan’s diplomatic corps, National Chengchi University of Taiwan is motivated to respond to the People’s Republic of China’s expanding influence in Southeast Asia and has allocated substantial time and resource to that end. Partly through CSEAS support this June, Tharaphi Than is teaching an intensive Burmese course at NCU and Jui-Ching Wang will be there in residence. We will emerge this summer with an MOU and a blueprint for ongoing curricular cooperation. Finally, NCU has agree to pay for and host a YSEALI follow-on event in Taiwan for CSEAS and our alums with U.S. Department of State approval.
CVPA: Visual Communication
The School of Art and Design is developing a 2+2 agreement in Visual Communication with the INT Institute of Design (Shanghai, Chongqing).

Equity Gap

The Academic Task Force report cited the need to address the graduation and persistence rates of underrepresented groups, and this has been the focus of intentional effort for the past several years. The university took an important step before then when NIU was chosen in Fall 2015 as one of 16 institutions nationally to participate in the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) Equity Academy. Following the Academy, the university began a critical assessment of institutional barriers, policies, practices and pedagogies that can impede success for all students. In Spring 2016, NIU began using disaggregated data to identify academic equity gaps among students from underserved populations.\(^1\) Equity gaps were calculated for every course offered on campus over the last five years, fall-to-fall retention rates over the same period, and four- and six-year graduation rates among the following student populations: males, females, Hispanics, African-American, Whites, Asians, students with disabilities and “others,” which included Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and those who did not self-identify with a specific population. These actionable data were disseminated to each undergraduate college, followed by facilitated sessions that explained the data to faculty and administrators. These data provided a crucial, concrete basis—rather than anecdotes and assumptions—for discussions about unequal outcomes among discrete student populations.

Using this data, the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI), in cooperation with the Office of Undergraduate Affairs, charged each college with creating an Equity Team with a dean-appointed team leader to develop a college action plan to address academic equity and issues surrounding inclusion and access. In Spring 2017, each team used course, persistence and completion equity data to explore current policies and practices that potentially undermine equal academic outcomes; inventoried existing successful academic supports; engaged students to understand their successes and challenges, hosted faculty and staff meetings focused on current best practices for academic support; and developed an equity plan for each college.

As a result of this work, the campus is vastly more attuned to issues surrounding equity and inclusion for underrepresented students and is much more eager and willing to take on the challenges of creating academic equity for all students.

Plans were compiled and submitted with an executive summary with university-wide recommendations to the president and provost in Fall 2017. The university-wide recommendations and each college’s equity plan offers a multi-pronged approach to ensure equal outcomes for all students. These plans align with the Board of Trustees-approved presidential goals, which require NIU to “finalize equity goals and strategies to increase four- and six-year graduation rates.” This public declaration to achieve equal outcomes for all NIU students demonstrates the university’s

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1 An equity gap occurs when a subset of a population performs below the average for the population as a whole:

Example:  
Class average = 70% “C” or higher  
Males average = 60% “C” or higher  
60% - 70% = -10% equity gap
commitment to inclusive excellence and academic equity, and supports the Program Prioritization recommendation to improve graduation and persistence rates for underserved students.

One of the central issues raised by the report was the distinction between equity-mindedness and deficit-mindedness in approaching student outcomes. Deficit-mindedness tends to assign responsibility for unequal achievement rates among underserved students to deficiencies in the students themselves. In contrast, equity-mindedness tends to accept personal and institutional responsibility for the success of the students we serve, and seeks to adjust practices as needed to achieve the goals of retention and graduation. In light of this framework, the report identified action areas large and small that the NIU community can undertake to close our achievement gap:

- Explore the wide-ranging impact gateway courses have on underserved students’ access to numerous majors, minors and certificates and can ultimately limit their professional options and career paths.
- Address the complexity that students face in balancing work, family and school, and its impact on academic performance.
- Create a faculty-led Equity Academy that would be charged with developing a comprehensive professional development initiative focused on culturally responsive pedagogy that will be available for all faculty, existing instructors and Graduate Teaching Assistants, and will be required for all new hires.
- Increase the interaction between students and faculty, especially in the first year.
- Actively recruit and retain more faculty of color, especially in tenure-track positions, and address existing inequities in current hiring and retention practices.
- Examine the academic and financial impact of NIU’s add/drop policies.

These recommendations were submitted to the president and provost in Fall 2017 and will be presented to the deans to begin implementation. ADEI has sought, and will continue to seek, external funding to support this important work.

In addition to the Equity Plan recommendations the college-level equity teams, ADEI, the Provost’s Office and partners across campus have been working to advance equity and inclusion. Some of the specific action areas include:

- The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology has enhanced use of “5-Minute Solutions” videos to reinforce learning in courses with historically high failure rates.
- The College of Engineering and Engineering Technology and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences have each introduced training programs for their graduate assistants on culturally responsive teaching, equity and inclusion.
- For the past three years, Dr. Janice Hamlet, director of College Diversity and Inclusion Programs in CLAS, has organized a Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) workshop for students participating in the Diversifying Faculty in Illinois program. This year’s PFF conference attracted more than 50 DFI fellows from across the state, and secured sponsorship from the state-level DFI office.
- The Advancing Culturally Competent Admissions Processes (ACCAP) collaboration between CHANCE, Orientation & Family Connections, Admissions and Financial Aid has helped to create a culturally competent orientation experience for all entering undergraduates, and to address disparities in the handling of orientation experiences.
In FY19, Affirmative Action, Equity and Compliance will transition from Human Resource Services to Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, allowing for a greater focus on proactive steps to diversify NIU’s workforce, and particularly our faculty. Coupled with this transition, Academic Affairs and ADEI are developing active means to change practices and support recruitment and retention of underrepresented faculty and staff.

A working group drawn from Academic Affairs, EMMC and Student Affairs is examining issues of student debt and how best to manage the related policy issues.

Multiple steps have been taken to strengthen the culturally related minors and certificates, including: successfully conducting a national search for a director for the Center for Latino and Latin American Studies; providing a tenured faculty member as associate director of the Center for Black Studies, to support the Black Studies minor and courses; providing a tenured faculty member to lead the Asian American Studies Certificate and strengthening the relationship between that program and the Asian American Resource Center.

ADEI, in partnership with the Office of Research and Innovation Programs, has launched the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion post-doctoral/post-graduate fellows program to begin to enhance faculty diversity.

ADEI, in partnership with OSEEL, launched the Research, Engagement, Academic Diversity (READ) mini-grant program for faculty/staff and students interested in conducting research on topics related to social justice and diversity, and social innovation or social entrepreneurship projects with a particular focus on social and cultural issues. Three grants have been awarded to date.

In FY18, the president and a group of administrators joined other Illinois institutions in the Presidents for Latino Student Success, which engaged Illinois public institutions in identifying best practices to retain and graduate Latino students.

In June of 2017, the president joined the CEO Action for Diversity and Inclusion initiative, in partnership with PwC and the College of Business, to commit to educating our community more about implicit bias. These efforts has provided opportunities for NIU to provide implicit bias training for search committees and students.

Significant work remains to be done. To respond to the Board of Trustees’ presidential goal, the board will be presented by August 2018 with quantitative measures of achievement gap baseline values and goals. As noted above, equity team recommendations will be presented to the Council of Deans to begin implementation. The transition of Affirmative Action to ADEI will afford new opportunities to improve efforts to diversify our faculty and staff.

Conclusion

What has produced tangible and important results for the university? The work and self-reflection of the academic units in composing their Program Prioritization reports. The steadfast effort of the Academic Task Force in analyzing those reports and categorizing the programs. The seriousness with the colleges and units engaged the report and produced action plans.
This discussion has highlighted three of the ways in which all of this effort has catalyzed the alignment of our resources with our mission: it has strongly influenced faculty hiring decisions; it has spurred an impressive effort at curricular innovation; and it has joined with other lines of effort to enhance our commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

All of this would be a significant accomplishment at any time. To have done so during a period of maximum uncertainty in the future of the university is particularly impressive. It is a tribute to the faculty, staff and leadership of colleges and units within Academic Affairs that they have provided so substantial a response to Program Prioritization during the past two years. As those efforts carry forward, we can look forward to the results of those efforts providing a stronger, more engaging and better aligned environment for all members of the academic community, students, faculty and staff, to fulfill their goals.
Complex Conversations

The complex conversations have proven to be an important element of NIU’s implementation of Program Prioritization. One of the conversations – institutional effectiveness – achieved early success and was completed by the time of the May 2017 progress report. Updates on the other nine conversations are provided here.

Academic Advising

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The Administrative Task force raised concerns about the disparate advising models and student-to-adviser ratios among the colleges. Additionally, the task force noted the need to strengthen institutional training and professional development of academic advisers, improve coordination of the varying types of advising software used, and prioritize funding to advising programs that are most understaffed. Several enhancements to academic advising have already taken place as a result of the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) report evaluating the university’s advising efforts, including implementing the Student Success Collaboration Campus, a predictive analytic platform that will improve communication between advisers and make it easier to identify academically at-risk students. However, the NACADA report was silent on the structure of advising.

A working group comprised of two advising deans, an associate dean for undergraduate affairs, a professional adviser, a chair, a student, and several faculty has been charged with reviewing the advising structure in the various colleges and the Academic Advising Center. Specifically, the group has been charged with articulating “one or more optimal undergraduate academic advising structures for all student populations at NIU, taking into account the needs and perspectives of students and other constituents and existing processes and structures.” The working group must address challenges, including variable quality in the training and delivery of advising services, unintentional redundancies, and inconsistent communication. The group’s report is due by 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The advising working group was charged with assuring a high-quality advising experience for all students across campus. Some of the group’s recommendations were modified, some remain under consideration, and some are being enacted. The vice provost of Undergraduate Academic Affairs will oversee the implementation process, ensuring completion of initiatives currently in progress as well as continued action on recommendations under review.

The role and membership of the Advising Council will be expanded to include representation from units that collaborate with advising. In this way, the council will reflect the NACADA recommendation of an inclusive council, will be positioned to promote professional development opportunities and will lead the development of training materials for the advising community. The council will work collaboratively with units across the university on these initiatives. In addition, the council will continue to develop a mechanism to recognize and reward excellent advising.
Academic advisors will play a crucial role to identify academically at-risk students using SSC Campus. An advising director will sit on the Retention Council [see Retention update, Page 48] and serve as the point person for this advising/retention initiative. With the expanded role of the Advising Council and new Retention Council, the advising retention group will be dissolved to eliminate redundancy.

A strategy for increasing the number of professional advisors is under development; however, additional work is needed to clarify the university’s needs and to identify appropriate resources.

**June 2018 Report:** A hiring plan has been provided to the provost, identifying eight professional advising positions. Four positions have been authorized and either have been filled or are moving through the hiring process: a pre-professional advisor, a director of SSC Campus, and two new advising positions in the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology. The latter two are enabled by the college’s differential tuition funding. Four other positions await funding: three in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and one in the College of Health and Human Sciences. The positions in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences are intended to support the Department of Psychology, and to enable the deployment of a “meta-major”—or disciplinary—clustering model.

Without adding new positions to the Academic Advising Center, the staffing of the AAC has been stabilized by making temporary appointments permanent. At the same time, the staff of the AAC will be better leveraged by transferring to the AAC responsibility for undecided students in CLAS and CEET, as well as students in CEET who are in developmental mathematics. Discussions about the AAC advising CHANCE students should continue.

The Office of Student Academic Success has been discontinued. Staff have been redeployed to fill needs in other units, duplicative data and tracking systems have been discontinued, and responsibility for centralized functions has been reallocated.

SSC Campus is being used more systematically. There are several aspects to this. First, a basic metric of utilization is the number of advising reports logged in SSC Campus. In FY17, there were 14,609 reports logged; in FY18, this grew by more than 40 percent to 20,624 reports. Second, advisors are using SSC Campus more robustly to identify students most in need of intervention and to increase targeted outreach to students than in the previous year. Third, as part of a comprehensive retention and enrollment management strategy, the ACCESS tutoring center and the University Writing Center will fully implement the SSC Campus in Fall 2018 to schedule appointments and track outcomes.

Areas that remain in development include:

- Fully energizing and engaging an inclusive Advising Council.
- Creating training mechanisms, professional development opportunities and job tools to support the advising community in delivering high-quality developmental advising.
- Creating mechanisms for professional development for advisers, and for recognizing high-quality efforts from that team.
The challenges that remain are those of leadership and participation: Who is to be responsible for convening the effort? Who is to be responsible for designing the training? Who is to be responsible for delivering the training? Whose agreement is needed on the content of that training? Whose cooperation is needed to ensure that tutoring staff engage with the training? The incoming vice provost will play an important role in determining next steps.

**Community Relations**

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** NIU is committed to community engagement. The communities we interact with range from DeKalb to Chicago to Mandalay, but NIU’s relationship with our neighbors in DeKalb-Sycamore are especially important to us, and we engage with our home community in many ways. The Administrative Task Force was correct in noting that we do not have strategic alignment of those efforts, nor do we have a structure for coordinating them. This complex conversation is still emerging, with leadership from Marketing and Communications and Outreach, Engagement, and Regional Development (OERD). The group’s report is due by 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Vice Presidents Anne Kaplan and Harlan Teller have developed a framework for NIU to address its multi-faceted community relations. Their framework has identified the key stakeholder communities with whom NIU engages, such as alumni, the business community, educators, and has identified an NIU "stakeholder manager" for each of these communities. The NIU stakeholder managers will help to align NIU’s faculty, staff and student engagement activities with the needs and interests of the stakeholder communities. They will do so by sharing information and resources, assessing community needs, identifying success factors, aligning NIU engagement to those factors, and assessing effectiveness. They will also cultivate awareness of NIU’s community presence and help to celebrate our successes. The implementation of this framework is already underway.

**June 2018 Report:** Pilot implementation of the “stakeholder manager” model demonstrated that it was overly cumbersome and ineffective. As a result, a new organizational model was implemented in January 2018 to more effectively support community relations, and advance NIU’s goals as an anchor institution. The new organizational model assigned primary responsibility 1) to Melanie Magara, director of community communications, for management of community issues; and 2) to Jennifer Groce, director of community promotion, for community pride, promotion initiatives and local business enhancement opportunities. In this context, the President’s Office, represented by Chief of Staff Matt Streb, is the primary contact for university connections with DeKalb municipal government. Reporting directly to Matt Streb, Melanie Magara interacts as a matter of course with local municipal government, public safety agencies and media outlets. As director of Community Promotion, Jennifer Groce reports directly to Rena Cotsones, associate vice president for Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development. Jennifer is developing a strategic plan for community pride and promotion initiatives as well as business enhancement opportunities.
Conference and Event Services

Charge from November 2016 Report: The university hosts events of many shapes and sizes, to audiences both internal and external. Providing effective support for these events presents the university with an opportunity to enhance our reputation, increase visibility, more fully utilize space and facilities, and supplement revenues. A working group with contributors from nearly every division of NIU had been formed even before the task force report was released. Once it became clear that Conference and Event Services could be pursued separately from External Programming, the working group resumed their efforts, mapping out how to best coordinate a university-wide conference and event hosting structure, built around a central coordinating office. The group’s report is due by 5/15/17.

May 2017 Report: We have been studying how to more efficiently and effectively manage conference and event management. Currently, we have many wonderful NIU venues in DeKalb and at our four regional centers that are not marketed or managed in an integrated system. There appears to be a good deal of opportunity to enhance our visibility and revenue through a more strategic approach. To address these issues, I have concluded that NIU should organize its conference and event support services through a single unit, located in the Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development. I have therefore charged Vice President Anne Kaplan to take the lead on developing a more coherent strategy and structure, built around such a unit, and advancing the goals of revenue generation, reputation-building and student engagement. I have charged Vice President Kaplan to bring to completion and build on the planning work which has already taken place; create an operations plan and business plan; and develop a transition strategy for implementing the new structure.

June 2018 Report: During the 2017-18 academic year, a team of representatives from across the university engaged in process reengineering related to conference and event services. A final report was presented to Acting President Freeman at the end of April 2018. A plan for implementing the recommendations of the report will be finalized during the summer of 2018, with the expectation of a new Conference and Event Management framework in place by the fall of 2018. In the meantime, enhanced communication between relevant units already has begun paying dividends in streamlining processes and improving marketing efforts.

External Programs

Charge from November 2016 Report: One of the recommendations of the Administrative Task Force was to examine the way the university delivers non-credit activities that are primarily directed at off-campus audiences. This includes everything from music lessons to OSHA training to hosting conferences. I agree that there appears to be an opportunity to be more efficient, and to focus on those activities that most enhance the university. The task force recommended a single conversation to consider the full range of non-credit programming, but we have determined that it makes better sense to separate Conference and Event Services (which involves a focused set of issues, but is also distributed across almost all of NIU’s divisions) from the rest of External
Programming. The External Programming conversation is now proceeding independently, involving OERD, the Office of International Affairs, and those colleges that maintain External Programming offices (Education, Engineering & Engineering Technology, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Visual & Performing Arts). The group’s report is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The Division of Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development (OERD) will take responsibility for establishing a new NIU External Programs (EP) unit designed to extend and build on the campus’s existing outreach and engagement initiatives. This unit will bring together community- and external-engagement staff from across the university to offer programs, services and consultation for non-credit activities for learners of all ages; continuing professional education; and community initiatives that increase economic and social vitality. Within this sphere of non-credit programming, EP services will include needs assessment and analysis of marketing potential for new projects, planning and budgeting, marketing and sales support and project management. The proposed EP unit will be housed within OERD, with primary goals of revenue generation and faculty involvement, and valuable secondary goals of enrollment growth and reputation enhancement. I have charged Vice President Anne Kaplan with developing a plan that addresses cost-recovery and revenue sharing; promotes faculty engagement; and increases high-impact engagement with our communities. She will be working with the deans and other campus stakeholders to design a new unit that builds on current strengths and meets needs identified by stakeholders as it grows. I support the close alignment of external programming with Conference and Event Management, which will also be centrally organized within OERD.

**June 2018 Report:** As the Conference and Event Management reengineering process progressed, the overlap between this function and external programming became increasingly obvious. The conferences developed and/or managed by university staff are themselves “external programs,” and the external programs developed by university staff are all events that need to be managed. Successful conferences and external programs require careful and continuous market analysis, creative thinking about market needs, strategic marketing and a reputation for consistent customer service. External programs, whether conferences, continuing and professional education, summer camps or STEM cafes, are all designed to extend the reach of the university, respond to external dynamics, build new audiences, enhance the university’s reputation and contribute to its fiscal stability. With these goals in mind, staff in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ External Programming Office have moved into OERD (an organizational move that required no change in location). Staff responsible for the OSHA program, originally located in the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology, have moved to the Monat Building, where they can more easily interact with staff formerly associated with Liberal Arts and Sciences and ORED staff responsible for STEM programs and programs focused on municipal governments across the university’s service region. The remaining academic colleges do not have staff dedicated to non-credit programs. The external programming staff in OERD will provide the colleges with support for non-credit certificate programs, enrichment programs and professional development programs aimed at alums and relevant practitioners.
Because the division itself is undergoing significant changes in response to Program Prioritization recommendations, the relationship between the non-credit activities being centralized in OERD and the non-credit activities inherent in the division’s existing networks has yet to be fully worked out. Likewise, the business model, by which the OERD external programming office and the colleges partner, is still under development. A new divisional organization, built around strong central services and key regional networks, should be operational by Fall 2019.

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**IT Customer Support**

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** For quite a few years, the university has improvised its IT customer support, without a clear organization or strategic plan. In response to the Administrative Task Force’s call for a comprehensive review of IT support, a group of IT managers, drawn from across the university, has explored options, including desktop/laptop/mobile device support, and support for classroom technology. The group has provided a preliminary report to the Chief Information Officer, which has been shared with the IT community. IT units on campus have largely agreed to do the following in pursuit of better customer support: Shed infrastructure-related duties, such as maintaining servers, networks and storage, to focus more on customer service; Adopt a common work-tracking system so we can talk (and manage performance) across different IT departments more effectively; Participate in trainings on IT service best practices. Two-hundred seats of introductory training have already been provided. Intermediate training is next; Use automated tools to assist with desktop support. This is primarily a productivity aid through automation but also has the potential to provide faster or even real-time assistance for end-users by calling the service desk and allowing staff to take remote control of computers to aid in fixing the problems rather than waiting to dispatch techs to make office calls; Consolidate to a single help desk. While not all aspects of IT customer support have been resolved (e.g., classroom support needs to be addressed), the IT community is beginning to transition from planning to implementation, and looks to have the bulk of the work done by FY18. The group’s report is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The report on “Keys to IT Transformation” included a dozen individual recommendations, three of which were prioritized for action in the second half of FY17.

- Single Points of Contact. Having a single-person IT group represents risks and inequities between divisions and is, perhaps, the single largest contributor to the type of differential service and support noted by the task force. Initial work developed reports unique to each department or unit who maintains a single-person IT department. Analysis of those reports is now under way. A final recommendation will be produced regarding a new balance of IT centralization on campus. The group will complete this work by the end of FY17.

- Centralize servers and storage. The long-term necessity for NIU is to move much of our IT infrastructure to the cloud as a means of increasing both security of the applications and efficiency. The method for achieving this transition is to first centralize local server
and storage platforms to DoIT and, from there, move DoIT’s accumulated infrastructure to the cloud. In FY17, DoIT began training its staff to make this move, and established a four-year roadmap to complete that work. FY17 also included work with local IT units that run their own servers and storage infrastructure to move that to DoIT. The final notable accomplishment in FY17 was the approval to seek funding for a refresh of our institutional storage platforms. Without the new storage, it would not be possible to move local IT storage in DoIT. That new storage will be purchased in FY18 with centralization coming online gradually throughout that year.

- Centralize service desks. The move to centralize and consolidate service desk functions throughout the campus, like the move to centralize servers and storage, is closely related to another of the keys to transformation: let local IT groups perform those functions that they do best and that they were originally formed to do. Primarily, this is to provide unique, local functions that require specific knowledge of the interests and needs of individual faculty and staff members. DoIT, in turn, would take all functions which can be standardized and provided en masse. Centralization of service desks will occur in FY18. Preparatory work has been conducted: DoIT has a synthesis of cost-savings, preparation for centralization, security and application architecture that allow it to save money, improve security and centralize at the same time. The MultiFactor Authentication (MFA) solution that recently stopped our rash of phishing attacks will also be used to move to password self-service. The service desk will stop assisting with password self-service. Reassigning staff from nights and weekends, combined with the capacity gained from eliminating password reset work ($100,000 worth per year), will absorb all the work of other service desks on campus. This work will resume in FY18.

**June 2018 Report:** The progress on IT Customer Support has proceeded along different pathways than originally envisioned. The October 2016 “Keys to IT Transformation” report outlined a variety of steps which are at different stages of development: Some have been implemented, some are in progress and some require further consideration. More information about the changes can be found in the Division of Information Technology section of this report on Page 92.

Among those that have been successfully addressed are:

- Centralizing server hosting: essentially complete (see “Desktop and Device Support”)
- Centralizing storage hosting: essentially complete (see “Desktop and Device Support”)
- Centralizing provision of applications: continued progress (see “Application Development and Hosting”)

Those that are still in progress include:

- Establishing a centralized service desk: deferred; discussions continuing (see “Desktop and Device Support”)
- Eliminate single points of contact: deferred; discussions continuing (see “Desktop and Device Support”)

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Those that have been evaluated and assigned lower priorities include:

- Leverage SCCM: deferred (see “Software Licensing and Distribution”)
- Address needs of research computing: deferred (see “Research Computing Support”)

Finally, the issues that were surfaced in Keys to IT Transformation that have not been examined are:

- Invest in professional development: deferred
- Reimagine learning spaces, classrooms and labs: deferred (see “Desktop and Device Support”)

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**Online/Off Campus Course Delivery**

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** A working group from Academic Affairs and OERD is exploring options for how to structure the delivery of online and off-campus courses and programs, and is also exploring options for the financial models that go with those courses and programs. The group’s report is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The working group has delivered a comprehensive set of recommendations for action steps that would improve support for online and off-campus students and programs. Key recommendations involve creating strategic leadership for NIU’s online/off-campus programs in Academic Affairs; reconfiguring the core course development, program development, faculty development and logistical support functions, and housing them centrally in Academic Affairs; strengthening the services provided to online/off-campus students; and improving centralized marketing and recruiting efforts for these audiences. With the central responsibility for online/off-campus programs being located within Academic Affairs, I have charged Provost Freeman with creating an implementation plan based on the working group’s recommendations. Upon final review and approval of that implementation plan, implementation will take place during FY18.

The working group noted the need for a re-examination of the financial model for online and off-campus courses and programs. This was originally meant to be part of the working group’s report. However, it now appears that we will be better served by a comprehensive review of all of our tuition and fee structures, not just those for online and off-campus courses. Those financial issues will be addressed separately, and the current implementation plan will focus on the issues indicated above: strategy, marketing and delivery of support services.

**June 2018 Report:** Key recommendations involve creating strategic leadership for NIU’s online/off-campus programs in Academic Affairs; reconfiguring the core course development, program development, faculty development and logistical support functions, and housing them centrally in Academic Affairs; strengthening the services provided to online/off-campus students; and improving centralized marketing and recruiting efforts for these audiences.

Implementation plan development efforts began September 2017 with gathering information on current state of online and off-campus learning support at the university, including what is working
well and what improvements are needed. Meetings with senior leadership, deans, chairs, faculty and staff from across the university provided a breadth and depth of understanding from all perspectives of our strengths and areas for improvement, prompting further analysis of existing support and the development of a plan for centralizing support services where appropriate, as well as seeking opportunities for greater synergies with existing distributed services.

Listed below are a few notable highlights from the significant efforts have been devoted during the past year toward the creation and implementation of recommendations for bolstering online and off-campus credit programs.

**Financial Structure**
The core financial model remains under development, but important progress has been made.

- Recurring funding of $1 million annually was allocated to support this initiative. This funding is provided to support the creation of new online programs, upgrading existing programs, marketing and infrastructure support. In FY18, approximately $450,000 of funding was utilized focusing on program development and marketing:
  - $350,000 was spent on marketing campaigns for 14 programs across all the colleges.
  - $100,000 was spent on developing such online programs as BGS, GIS/GIA, MPA and the Gen. Ed bundle.
- Differential tuition is an important factor in online program development, with all online programs setting a locally determined differential tuition rate.
- Over the years, a complicated funding structure has evolved to support off-campus courses and programs, involving multiple fee structures, the Extension Reserve, contract courses, local funds and college/unit 02 funding. Work is under way to clarify and simplify this financial structure. As a first step, the Extension Reserve, an 02 fund dedicated to supporting instructional staffing of off-campus courses, has been transferred from OERD to Academic Affairs.

**Program Offerings**
- Harper College University Center will host three NIU undergraduate degree completion programs in computer science, marketing and psychology.
- The College of Education has expanded its off-campus cohorts in bilingual education.
- The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and College of Visual and Performing Arts are working with school districts in and around Harper College to give high school mathematics teachers and art teachers the credentials needed to deliver dual-credit courses.
- The Board of Trustees approved new online graduate programs in data analytics and digital marketing.
- Colleges have identified their leading programs; programs including MPA and BGS have agreed to “go online,” others are in various stages of preliminary discussions (37 new online courses in development for launch by Fall 2019).
- Several existing online programs with courses in need of updating, including RN-BS in Nursing, B.A. in Political Science, and GIS/GIA certificates, have begun redesigns (15 online courses in redesign for launch by Fall 2019).
- The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is developing a “general education bundle” of online courses that can be coupled with discipline-specific courses to create complete online undergraduate degree programs.

Logistics
- Academic Affairs has created a central support structure that fully integrates credit-bearing support services from eLearning into the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center. This unit will be under the supervision of an executive director who will serve as the university’s chief online learning officer, reporting directly to the executive vice president and provost.
- Work is under way to develop an “online campus” in MyNIU to properly identify online programs, control courses offered online, assess tuition/fees and prepare financial aid budgets at a more granular level, track and report students in the online programs and courses.
- Academic Affairs and OERD are working through realignment of responsibilities for off-campus course and program logistics.
- A course development/redesign cycle has been developed and a new online program proposal form has been piloted.
- Faculty Development and Instructional Design offered NIU’s first Online Teaching Symposium (June 1). This was a faculty-led event, with 80 faculty and staff in attendance, that showcased the achievements and shared the innovative practices of our outstanding faculty and instructors who have been teaching online.
- Faculty Development and Instructional Design is also offering a four-week online course design academy–online experience, guiding faculty through the first steps of designing their online course in preparation for beginning to work with an instructional designer (29 faculty to attend).
- NIU is continuing to implement Quality Matters online course quality standards as new online courses are being developed.

Marketing
- Colleges have identified existing online programs with the greatest capacity for growth.
- EMMC has developed, and is running, digital marketing campaigns for 14 online programs, consisting of landing pages for each of the programs connected to paid search, website display ads and targeted social media ads; email communications support every inquiry.
- Champions have been identified for each online program currently offered, and are responding to leads generated.
- EMMC is next developing a new website hub for online programs and related online student support services to launch June 2018, and is building new web landing pages for 20 online programs.
- Academic Affairs and EMMC are developing an RFP for outsourcing marketing and lead generation for online programs. The goal is to have the process in place for the Fall 2019 recruiting season.
Retention

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** Regarding retention efforts, the Administrative Task Force wrote: “What is lacking is a central strategy for how the university spends its retention money and energy. The university needs to ensure coordination and strategic distribution of resources to the different retention initiatives across campus. A centralized retention strategy could better develop programs for respective student populations (e.g., ethnically diverse students, first-generation college students, at-risk student populations.)”

A working group comprised of faculty, chairs, and supportive professional staff representing various units within the divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs has been charged with developing one or more optimal university-wide strategies for how the university spends its retention money and efforts. In developing the strategies, the working group should not only consider improving retention rates, but time to graduation as well. The group’s report is due 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The retention working group was charged with addressing the Administrative Task Force’s findings regarding the lack of a central retention strategy and the coordination of retention initiatives. The working group’s recommendations have evolved over time in response to the current fiscal constraints.

- A Retention Council comprised of relevant stakeholders from across the university community is being established. The council will develop a university-wide retention strategy that sets goals and key performance indicators, and that takes an action-oriented approach to the development, implementation and assessment of retention initiatives.
- The Office of Student Academic Success (OSAS) is being dissolved in accordance with the recommendation of the retention working group; however, there will not be a re-envisioned central retention office as that group suggested. After further inventorying and evaluating the programs under OSAS, it was determined that the remaining retention initiatives could reasonably be assumed by other units under the vice provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs. Accordingly, a central retention office will not be established at this time. The need for such an office will be reconsidered after one year.
- As part of NIU’s overall retention strategy, the capabilities of the Student Success Collaborative-Campus are being leveraged more fully, especially with respect to academically at-risk students. Map Works is being discontinued.

**June 2018 Report:** The proposed Retention Council has been subsumed into a Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Committee, co-chaired by the vice president of Enrollment Management, Marketing & Communications and the vice provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs, and drawing membership from the academic colleges (either the advising director or associate dean), as well as Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; Community College Relations; the Graduate School/International Programs; Online/Off-Campus Programs; Outreach; Student Affairs; and Undergraduate Admissions. The SEM Committee is charged with aligning
university initiatives and activities across colleges/schools and administrative units related to recruitment, retention and graduation. The committee is structured to provide strategic guidance and operational implementation of these initiatives and activities.

Likewise, the chief diversity officer, dean of students and vice provost for Undergraduate Academic Affairs have brought their staffs together with the intention of improving coordination and realizing potential synergies. This new collaborative structure is identified as the Student Experience Team (SET Team), because of their collective focus. As one instance of the SET Team’s work, the group is addressing the presidential goal of measuring and improving student engagement and satisfaction. They have completed a survey of the different tools used to measure engagement and satisfaction, are working to align use of those tools and are conducting a study to identify which engagement and retention activities have the most positive impact on retention and persistence to graduation.

Also relevant to this complex conversation, as described in the Academic Advising complex conversation report, OSAS has been discontinued, and use of SSC Campus is being expanded and systematized.

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**School Connections**

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The university engages with K-12 schools and school districts in multiple ways, through multiple units. Educator licensure programs are part of this, as are outreach programs, professional development, hosting centers (e.g., Illinois Report Card, Econ Illinois), and conducting research on K-12 teaching and learning. The conversation is charged with reviewing the ways in which we organize and deliver these functions, and identifying options for how to structure our efforts. In light of the university’s upcoming accreditation by the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), this conversation will move at a more deliberate pace, and will present its report by 12/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The School Connections working group has been formed under the guidance of Jenny Parker, associate vice provost for Educator Licensure and Preparation. The working group, consisting of representatives from all licensure programs, stakeholders with P-12 connections and preparation program placement coordinators, first met in December 2016. The group has taken advantage of the more deliberate pace to hold a series of retreats that have helped to build awareness of the many different units on campus that work with school districts and licensure as well as their perspectives and goals. Information from other Illinois public institutions of higher education has also been gathered and shared internally. The group is currently working on initial drafts of proposals to address the recommendations made in Program Prioritization and the charge statement.

**June 2018 Report:** The School Connections complex conversation was paced to await conclusion of the November 2017 accreditation site visit from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator
Preparation (CAEP). With the CAEP site visit completed, the School Connections report was submitted in January 2018. The report identified six action items:

1. Create the Professional Development Collaborative for School Excellence to consolidate and organize non-credit professional development for educators.
2. Keep placement services located within each of the licensing colleges and streamline communication between placement coordinators with a view to consolidating and centralizing certain placement processes and procedures. The current structure of the two university-wide coordinating councils can be re-visited to facilitate such meetings.
3. Maintain the coordination of Professional Development School (PDS) initiatives through UOELP and create a tiered system of PDS school involvement to allow for the tailoring of PDS agreements to meet the needs of individual programs.
4. Examine the options for a centralized assessment platform for initial and advanced licensure programs.
5. Audit the NIU website and all links related to P-12 connections and educator licensure for accuracy and consistency.
6. Launch a cohesive, consolidated marketing initiative focused on the strengths of the educator licensure programs at NIU.

All of these items have been endorsed for implementation. All of these items address, in one form or another, the need for collaboration that allows discipline-appropriate differentiation. The implementation efforts will require different levels of oversight and collaboration. Four groups charged with implementation of these recommendations have been formed. Three are led by the associate vice provost for Educator Licensure and Preparation, with the fourth drawing its leadership from the P-20 Center and licensure programs within Academic Affairs.

**Tutoring and Academic Support**

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The task force noted the need for better coordination of tutoring and academic support services. A working group comprised of faculty and staff with direct oversight of tutoring and academic support programs is reviewing how the university delivers its tutoring and academic support services as well as ways that both can be enhanced to promote academic success. The group’s report is due 12/15/16.

**May 2017 Report:** In its report, the Administrative Task Force noted the need to “better coordinate [academic support] services to eliminate duplication of services and possibly reduce administrative overhead.” This working group was charged with analyzing how the university delivers tutoring and academic support services and with making recommendations to improve the quality, breadth and efficiency in delivering those services.

The working group felt that there were few redundancies in tutoring and academic support and that there was a logical explanation when redundancies existed. For example, both the Department of Mathematical Sciences and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology (CEET)
offer tutoring for math courses, but the tutoring provided by CEET emphasizes the application of math in the context of engineering courses.

Neither substantial redundancy nor inefficiency was uncovered by the working group. The sense was that tutoring and academic services were generally effective. However, the working group members put forward the following recommendations that have already been implemented or are in the process of being implemented. These include creating a central landing page for tutoring and academic support services, offering developmental math courses on campus taught by NIU Math faculty and instructors, standardizing tutor and academic support training, and creating a standing tutoring and academic support services working group.

**June 2018 Report:** The central landing page is now live at [http://www.niu.edu/academics/tutoring/index.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/academics/tutoring/index.shtml), providing a comprehensive listing of tutoring resources available across the university, with detailed information about available resources and the means of accessing them. In its first year of existence, the site attracted 4,000 visits, with approximately half coming from on-campus.

As recommended, a project in developmental math was conducted in Fall 2017. The two pilot sections were offered at NIU and combined student audiences from MATH 109 and MATH 098. Instruction took advantage of the software used in the Math Emporium. The two pilot sections reported both an increase in the percentage of students earning a C or better in the course, and an increase in the percentage of students who progressed to another mathematics course and earned a C or better there. These preliminary results are encouraging; the effort will be repeated in Fall 2018, and might be expanded if evidence of success is confirmed.

The efforts to standardize training and to create a standing tutoring and academic support working group have proved less successful. The challenges are similar to those facing the advising council: Who is to be responsible for convening the effort? Who is to be responsible for designing the training? Who is to be responsible for delivering the training? Whose agreement is needed on the content of that training? Whose cooperation is needed to ensure that tutoring staff engage with the training? The incoming vice provost will play an important role in determining next steps.
Division Reports

Academic Affairs

Blackwell History of Education Museum

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program is a combination of two separate entities. They appear to have been combined as a function of administrative duties resulting from retirements, and not because of synergistic functions. The task force recommends that the Blackwell History of Education Museum and Research Collections, along with the One-Room Schoolhouse, receive appropriate museum curatorial oversight, and that the Learning Center continue to deliver its usual services.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the placement of this program in the Transform category. The Blackwell History of Education Museum and One-Room Schoolhouse perform a unique and valuable service, helping to link modern American education with its roots. I endorse the College of Education’s plan to provide additional support for that facility’s curator through establishment of an executive committee with appropriate subject matter expertise. In addition, I encourage the Blackwell Museum to increase its collaboration with campus and community libraries, museums, archives and historical organizations. I also support the college’s plan for ongoing program improvement in Learning Center operations and staffing.

**May 2017 Report:** Personnel are working to establish an executive committee with subject matter expertise to facilitate advanced collaborative activities on campus and in the community. Additionally, Blackwell Museum personnel have worked to increase their collaboration with other units, including the School of Art and Design to digitize several “Dick and Jane” book pages for an upcoming exhibit, and the campus STEAM group regarding K-12 pre-college outreach activities that might include the One-Room Schoolhouse.

**June 2018 Report:** The Blackwell Museum has responded to the Program Prioritization charge to appoint a faculty director/curator to establish an executive committee with appropriate subject matter expertise, and to increase collaboration with campus and communities units such as museums, libraries, archives and historical organizations.

The collaboration with university and community organizations has increased—as evidenced by the Blackwell Museum’s “University of Tetova Exhibit,” made possible by collaborations with the Center for Peace and Transcultural Communication, and the “Come, Look, See” exhibit featuring a collection of Dick and Jane books, made possible by collaborations with Creative Services. The Tetova Exhibit, the opening of which was featured in the *DeKalb Daily Chronicle*, has helped enhance the Blackwell’s profile across campus, with a number of classes from CLAS visiting the museum for the first time. A small display installed in the Holmes Student Center also has helped drive student traffic to the exhibit. Additional initiatives include participating in the DeKalb
County History Center’s “Local Lore 2018 Lecture Series” that will feature the One-Room Schoolhouse on September 8. Future activities include creating an accession and deaccession policy for the museum and continuing to organize the collection. A new exhibit focusing on writing is currently being planned for the 2018-19 academic year. The learning center continues to offer its usual services.

**Child Development Lab**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program provides high-quality childcare to the community and excellent educational experiences for students interested in early childhood development. It is an important program to attract and retain students, faculty and staff. The program has the potential to grow as demand for child care is great. Although the task force does not necessarily recommend merging this program with Campus Child Care, because their missions are different, the two entities should consider opportunities for synergies. The university should consider housing both in the same facility. The task force recommends enhancing the program by investigating the ability to expand the capacity of the facility and improving the physical space in which it is housed.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree that this high-quality program should be considered for enhancement. The lab provides a valuable service to the university and surrounding community by making available high-quality child care (it receives a four-star rating from the Illinois Department of Human Services) while also serving as an important teaching and research facility for those studying child development. The task force recommended exploring possible synergies with Campus Child Care to expand childcare services. I have asked these two units to deliver a proposal discussing ways to increase synergies or to merge the programs. That report is due by 3/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), an academic program in the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences, and Student Affairs have proposed merging the Child Development Laboratory (CDL) and Campus Child Care into one unit overseen by FACS beginning in Fall 2017. This merger would take place over a two-year period. This collaboration would expand the number of experiential learning opportunities for students studying child development in a modern facility; support continued growth in the number of students studying child development; provide additional space for research involving young children; and continue to perform the critical mission of providing high quality child care for members of the NIU community. Additionally, the number of children this new unit could accommodate would increase to meet high demand, specifically for infants and toddlers. The new entity will build on the award-winning (i.e. ExceleRate Illinois Gold Circle of Quality rated and ExceleRate Illinois Award of Excellence in Family and Community Engagement) strengths of both centers by emphasizing the importance of consistent learning environments for children and continued support for building relationships with families. The proposal will go to the Executive Budget Committee (EBC) for consideration.
June 2018 Report: The proposed merger between Campus Child Care and the Child Development Laboratory is moving ahead as planned. The merger created a new entity called the Child Development and Family Center (CDFC) as part of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS). Information Technology support already has been assumed by the College of Health and Human Sciences. The transitioning of “practicum classrooms” took place in mid-May 2018, with child development practicum students completing their required practicum experiences in the former Campus Child Care facility for the first time. Expanded infant care started at the CDFC beginning in mid-May 2018 as well. FACS will assume full fiduciary and operational responsibilities for the Child Development and Family Center beginning on July 1, 2018, along with re-alignment of both state licensing and national accreditation. Expanded infant and toddler care is anticipated to begin in August of 2018.

Collections and Technical Services

Task Force Recommendation: The services provided by this program are the lifeblood of a university. The ability of faculty and students to conduct research is threatened because the library’s collections budget has been reduced substantially. As a result, the program cannot support research appropriately without more resources. The task force strongly recommends that the library receive additional resources to provide research materials to support the needs of its patrons.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force that the services provided by this program are the lifeblood of the university, and that the program should be enhanced. A budget proposal to increase the ability to purchase books, journals, and other materials should be sent immediately to the Executive Budget Committee (EBC) and receive high priority.

May 2017 Report: While meaningful, ongoing enhancement has not occurred because of the current budget situation, the libraries have received a temporary influx of money from the Provost’s Office ($48,000). Although this temporary increase is helpful, Collections and Technical Services still remains underfunded. As such, a proposal for permanently enhancing the program’s budget should be considered by the EBC, and the program should continue to receive high priority.

June 2018 Report: Continuing budget limitations have prevented the university from providing a permanent increase to the collections budget, although the needs of this program will be evaluated continually.

College Offices

Task Force Recommendations:

CBUS College Office: This program appears to be functioning effectively with adequate resources.
CEDU College Office: This program appears to be functioning effectively with adequate resources.

CEET College Office: This program appears to be functioning effectively with adequate resources.

CHHS College Office: The program narrative states that the CHHS College Office’s “current structure leads to inefficiencies.” As a result, the program is in the process of being reorganized. The task force believes that this transformation should continue and be re-assessed at a future date.

CLAS College Office: This program appears to be functioning effectively with adequate resources.

College of Law Office: Given the size of the College of Law’s faculty, and the number of students it serves, the size of the office seems too large, especially when compared to other college offices and the number of faculty and students they serve.

CVPA College Office: This office is significantly understaffed, so much so that it has difficulty providing valuable services, such as IT support, donor development and communications to the College of Visual and Performing Arts. To adequately serve the students and faculty of this college, the university should consider either providing additional resources to the college or increasing the level of support to the college from partner departments across campus (e.g., IT, alumni support, marketing). As additional resources are provided, the college should work closely with the central offices providing the respective service to ensure that there is no duplication of services.

Charge from November 2016 Report: The college offices are not engaged directly in cross-divisional, complex conversations; however, each is examining its organizational structure to determine if there are opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness. I support a model under which college offices are staffed in a manner that not only allows for effective management of critical administrative functions related to teaching, learning, research, scholarship and artistry, but also supports strong collaborative efforts related to marketing and communications, alumni and donor relations. I recognize that the human capital and other resources required to achieve these objectives differ among the seven colleges because of differences in their size; the scope and breadth of the disciplines represented; the number and nature of the academic departments and degree programs; and the complexity of the demands imposed by external accreditors. However, I believe that a more thorough analysis of these functions across campus could yield substantial improvements for all. Executive Vice President and Provost Lisa Freeman encouraged the four new deans who joined us in 2016 to engage in strategic planning at the college level, and I want to respect their processes. Toward that end, Provost Freeman has requested that each academic dean revise the program narrative for his or her college office by 4/3/17, with the updates focused on the office resource requirements and an associated organizational chart. I will consider these updates in the context of the Program Prioritization task force recommendations and action plans, and I will indicate on or before 4/17/17 what actions I would like taken, along with the timeline over which I expect the actions to be completed.
May 2017 Report: In most cases, the college offices were placed in the sustain category. However, each dean took the opportunity to reassess the needs of his or her office and potentially reorganize. For example, although the overall head count of the College of Education’s office personnel is sustained, the office has redesigned the responsibilities of the associate deans to be more robust in nature. This has already resulted in more productivity in terms of academic support, research advancement and personnel management than in the past.

The college offices have worked hard to improve collaboration with other units on campus, in particular the NIU Foundation and the Division of Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications (EMMC). For example, as suggested by the Administrative Task Force, the College of Visual and Performing Arts hired a development officer and a communications/marketing specialist. Both will be shared with the NIU Foundation and EMMC. Similar collaborations have occurred in other colleges as well.

June 2018 Report:

CHHS College Office:

The focus of changes to the CHHS Office has been on advising, addressing both how advising is delivered and how programs are structured. The CHHS Office has made good progress consolidating academic advising in the college office from freshman to senior year for many majors.

For select programs with dedicated faculty advising, students are advised in the senior year (e.g., Fashion Merchandising and Hospitality and Tourism Management). For all programs, CHHS has initiatives in place to incorporate faculty career mentoring and collaboration between academic faculty and academic advisors. Beginning this fall, all programs will provide the degree-seeking option with limited retention and advisement to different emphases as appropriate. Finally, CHHS is transitioning away from any pre-majors that do not progress to degrees. One remains—the Pre-Family and Child Studies major—and changes to that major will be proposed in Fall 2018.

CLAW College Office:

The College of Law Office is comprised of a variety of administrative functions critical to the college’s operation. These functions include the office of the Dean and the two associate deans, records and registration, budget, alumni affairs, public relations, website maintenance, IT support, faculty support services, and support services for the College’s four legal clinics. The College Office was put into the “Reduce” category primarily because the size of the office seemed large when compared to the number of faculty and staff served by other college offices.

However, as noted in the college’s initial action plan, it is important to realize that there is no way to meaningfully “scale down” the functions or costs of a college office. In addition, many of the duties (and costs) that the Law College Office assumes are typically found at the department level.
in other colleges, so the Law College Office is essentially serving the combined functions of departmental offices as well as college offices.

Nevertheless, the college has made and continues to make efforts to reduce costs and make the college office more efficient. Immediately prior to Program Prioritization the college had eliminated two administrative positions falling within the office, and since Program Prioritization has left a third position vacant. To address that loss and seek greater efficiencies, the college is working more closely with the university web support and design team, is in the process of realigning a library position to assume some duties related to web management, and is continuing to work with university Marketing and Communications to help support and enhance our marketing initiatives.

CVPA College Office:

The CVPA office continues to evolve. Some operations at the School level will be more effectively executed at the college level, thus relieving school-level administrative assistants of certain tasks. This will allow school-level administrators to focus their work more strategically, aligned with school priorities. Significant progress on strengthening the college office has been made:

- Comm/Marketing hire dedicated to CVPA: Accomplished as of June 1, 2017, with split appointment 75% CVPA/25% EMMC.
- Evaluate efficacy of Box Office manager for the College: Modified and Accomplished. Extended contract with Vendini (ticketing service company). College office staff to coordinate staffing and implementation of School of Music ticketed events, with assistance from staff in the School of Music and School of Theatre and Dance.
- IT support: In discussion with new IT Director.
- Re-org of staff duties to more effectively align with college needs and staff talent: Accomplished. Anticipated retirements will create opportunity to further optimize the dean's office.

There will be a transition in the associate dean role in Summer 2018. The college intends to use this opportunity to refocus some of the associate dean’s tasks, particularly in curriculum development and innovation. In addition, the college is considering creating a half-time associate dean position, which tasks will focus on recruitment, retention, diversity/equity/inclusion, entrepreneurship and innovation.

ESP/ACCESS

Task Force Recommendation: The narrative provides evidence that effective tutoring increases student retention, and making an additional investment in this program will likely improve retention rates further. There is already high demand for the program’s services and it appears to be understaffed. Providing more resources will also allow the program to offer tutoring services
for additional courses. There are multiple units on campus providing tutoring services that should be consolidated into this program.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** This program is part of the Tutoring and Academic Support complex conversation. The program will be part of the new “Undergraduate College.”

**May 2017 Report:** To expand tutoring services, supplemental instruction (SI) will be provided for CHEM 210 and STAT 208. The SI program for CHEM 210 was cut last year as a result of budget reductions. Because this program supports pre-nursing and pre-physical therapy, it is important to reestablish it. The Division of Statistics has requested SI for STAT 208. There is clearly demand for such a service. For FY15, STAT courses comprised 12 percent (1,525 contacts) of our tutorial demand. MATH is the only area that comprised more at 39 percent. Also, to help assist with the increasing number of online students and students who are unable to meet in person for tutoring, ESP/ACCESS is piloting an on-line tutoring program in Fall 2017.

**June 2018 Report:** Supplemental instruction was added for STAT 208 beginning in Fall 2017 and for CHEM 210 beginning in Spring 2018. For both courses, supplemental instruction support was provided to all students who requested it. Assessment of the impact of this support will be carried out in Summer 2018.

An effort was made to pilot an online tutoring system. The pilot effort was not successful, and ACCESS has determined not to proceed with that product. Alternative tools for delivering online tutoring will be explored.

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**ESP/CHANCE**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program supports the university’s mission of serving first-generation college students from under-resourced high schools. However, some of the program’s students have had poor academic success rates. To transform, it needs to find ways to strengthen the academic performance of its students, better serve their needs and further assess the program’s impact on degree completion.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the Administrative Task Force’s placement of this program in the Transform category. Perhaps more than any other program on campus, CHANCE demonstrates NIU’s commitment to helping students maximize their potential. Over its nearly 50-year history, it has helped thousands of students who otherwise might not have had access to a college education build a better future – for themselves and our society.

I concur with the suggestion of the task force that CHANCE should explore ways to better serve students with particular focus on enhanced academic success and degree completion. I am encouraged by Academic Affairs’ commitment to adopting a more equity-minded approach to student success, which I believe will better support all students. I envision opportunities for CHANCE to move in this direction through closer collaboration with other units that report to the vice provost for Undergraduate Affairs.
I also endorse the ongoing process improvement project that involves CHANCE and Enrollment Management. As noted in that project proposal, I anticipate that operational enhancements to financial aid, orientation and recruitment-and-processing will be in place for the Fall 2018 admissions cycle.

**May 2017 Report:** The collaborative process improvement project involving CHANCE and Enrollment Management is entering the penultimate phase. The process has two goals: (1) advance culturally responsive practices and strengthen NIU’s commitment to students from diverse backgrounds; (2) optimize the integration of CHANCE admissions, financial aid and orientation. Three working groups – orientation, financial aid, recruitment and processing – were established, and each group has completed the measure and analyze phases of the process, reporting their findings to the steering committee. The groups are now entering the Improve phase, which is the step prior to implementation. The results of their work will benefit all enrolled and prospective students.

**June 2018 Report:** The Advancing Culturally Competent Admissions Processes (ACCAP) collaboration between CHANCE, Orientation & Family Connections, Admissions and Financial Aid advanced to the Improve phase in its process reengineering efforts. Each of the three working groups took substantive steps to provide CHANCE with equitable and updated technological resources needed to better support student recruitment, admissions and enrollment processes for all CHANCE students. Objectives for the Improve phase include:

**Financial Aid & Scholarships**

- Enhance accessibility of information and service to family members with a proactive and inclusive FERPA release process.
- Explore robust, secure messaging system to provide more customized and consumable information to students and families.
- Create cultural competency professional development plan for all Financial Aid and Scholarship staff.

**Orientation**

- Ensure CHANCE students take placement tests prior to orientation.
- Train all academic advisors in culturally responsive advising.
- Ensure CHANCE students receive orientation invitations for campus-wide orientation using Hobson’s Connect.
- Ensure CHANCE students register for orientation via MyNIU.
- Improve communications between CHANCE and Orientation & Family Connections.

**Recruiting & Processing**

- Create an inclusive and diverse communication and recruitment plan for recruitment of undergraduate students.
- Create a clear, consistent and informational communication plan for internal and external stakeholders.
- Implement recommendations for moving the CHANCE holistic review process fully into PeopleSoft and decommissioning of the CHANCE database.
- Utilize available technologies to assess effectiveness of recruitment and communication activities.
- Return to and sustain optimal staffing levels in CHANCE and Undergraduate Admissions in order to reach our recruitment and processing goals.
- Update all position descriptions and training opportunities to reflect our shared commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion.

The working groups have made significant progress towards these goals. In the process, important new collaborative relationships between CHANCE and Financial Aid and Orientation & Family Connections have developed and have been sustained. All departmental staff attended cultural competency training on May 22, 2018. This training focused on how to best meet the needs of first-generation and other underrepresented groups, regardless of how they are admitted and enroll at NIU through the traditional or CHANCE programs. These recommendations and relationships are the product of a yearlong process of significant team-building and collaboration that have taken place as part of the ACCAP process.

**Graduate School Admissions**

**Task Force Recommendation:** The processing of graduate student applications functions well, but the task force is less clear on the effectiveness of recruiting. Many departments are primarily responsible for recruiting students to their programs, although Graduate School Admissions might be more effective in recruiting students to some professional degree programs. Also, the task force feels that international students should be recruited through the international office, instead of through this program. Finally, the task force encourages the university to consider combining this program with law school admissions. Although the law school admissions process is unique, redundancies between these two programs might exist. The task force concurs with the plans to use customer relationship management (CRM) software for improved efficiency.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I do not support the recommendation that this program should be transformed by combining it with the College of Law admissions program. Recruitment of law students is distinctly different from recruitment in other graduate programs, and as such should remain separate. Moreover, I understand that graduate student recruitment at a doctoral university with high research activity requires collaboration. This teamwork must include graduate programs with professional networking reputations that attract students as well as graduate school initiatives that mine and capture prospective graduate students who reveal their interest in NIU.

I am aware that the Graduate School and the International Student and Faculty Office (ISFO) have traditionally cooperated in the recruitment of international students, and that any change in the current roles and responsibilities would require reallocation of resources associated with
application fees. As the American Council on Education (ACE) Internationalization Task Force is considering a variety of questions related to graduate student recruitment, I want to revisit this question in Spring 2017 after their report is available.

**May 2017 Report:** Most of the steps related to this program describe graduate recruitment functions. Admissions is part of a larger conversation about expansion of Hobson’s Connect, and the program is actively involved in moving graduate recruitment into the CRM. The timeline for completing that project is being established.

I have asked Dean Brad Bond to put forward a proposal that combines International Affairs and the Graduate School in one budgeted unit. That proposal should be largely in keeping with the work of the ACE Internationalization Task Force to date, The chief justifications for doing so are to ensure that recruitment activities for international students (whether undergraduate or graduate) are efficiently and effectively coordinated; and to turn over routine processing tasks for undergraduate international applications to international admissions staff in the graduate school, thereby freeing a highly skilled member of the staff to devote more attention to partnership and recruitment efforts. Additionally, the combination will eliminate, at least until the budget crisis is resolved, the need to hire a separate Senior International Officer. I am currently reviewing the proposal.

**June 2018 Report:** The process of placing International Affairs and the Graduate School into one budgetary unit has begun. The primary foci have been to leverage admission processing strengths in the Graduate School to assist with processing in International Admissions and to combine the two offices’ strengths in recruitment. Consequently, people have moved to facilitate collaboration in admissions processing, I-20 issuance and recruitment. A different workspace would better facilitate the collaboration and seamless servicing of incoming and current students, but the units are making do until that can be accomplished.

**International Affairs**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program is important in helping the university meet its commitment to globalization. This program has been without permanent leadership, and is waiting for a necessary operational review. As a result, the university has several fragmented international programs. This model does not serve the university well because it creates unnecessary inefficiencies and prevents a coherent strategy regarding international affairs from being developed. The task force strongly recommends transforming this program to strengthen existing global partnerships and to devote resources to creating additional partnerships.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with placing this program in the Transform category. The task force appropriately recognized that International Affairs is already undergoing a transformation, driven by the departure of two key leaders, and the opportunity to participate in a strategic planning exercise via the ACE-Internationalization Laboratory.
The NIU task force associated with ACE-Internationalization Laboratory is working through the process of re-envisioning International Affairs. A final report on this program will be issued in Spring 2017, after their report is available.

**May 2017 Report:** I have asked Dean Brad Bond to put forward a proposal that combines International Affairs and the Graduate School in one budgeted unit. That proposal should be largely in keeping with the work of the ACE Internationalization Task Force to date, The chief justifications for doing so are to ensure that recruitment activities for international students (whether undergraduate or graduate) are efficiently and effectively coordinated; and to turn over routine processing tasks for undergraduate international applications to international admissions staff in the graduate school, thereby freeing a highly skilled member of the staff to devote more attention to partnership and recruitment efforts. Additionally, the combination will eliminate, at least until the budget crisis is resolved, the need to hire a separate Senior International Officer. I am currently reviewing the proposal.

**June 2018 Report:** The process of placing International Affairs and the Graduate School into one budgetary unit has begun. The primary foci have been to leverage admission processing strengths in the Graduate School to assist with processing in International Admissions and to combine the two offices’ strengths in recruitment. Consequently, people have moved to facilitate collaboration in admissions processing, I-20 issuance and recruitment. A different workspace would better facilitate the collaboration and seamless servicing of incoming and current students, but the units are making do until that can be accomplished.

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**International Student and Faculty Office (ISFO)**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program is important to build the university’s international profile as a research institution with a global perspective and for recruitment purposes. The international student population at NIU has grown significantly, and this office should be given resources to adequately support that population and to help it continue to increase. The focus of the office must first be on compliance, so the program should explore its recommendation to automate visa processing. However, the program also has a key role to play in continuing to position NIU favorably in the growing international market.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with placement of this program in the Enhance category. The current three-person staff of ISFO is insufficient to carry out its work in the areas of compliance, acculturation, recruitment and admission. The ACE-Internationalization Task Force report is expected to make specific recommendations regarding the organizational structures and resources needed to adequately support admissions processing, recruitment and marketing, as well as international scholar and student services. A final report on this program will be issued in Spring 2017, after the ACE report is available.

Note that, based on my endorsement of the task force recommendation, the EBC has already considered and approved the allocation of additional resources for recruiting in China and forging partnership initiatives in that country.
**May 2017 Report:** ISFO currently provides student services related to visa compliance, acculturation, as well as recruitment and admissions. A proposal has been submitted to dissolve the ISFO, and to create two new units: International Student and Scholar Services (the visa compliance, acculturation shop) and International Marketing and Recruitment (admissions). International Marketing and Recruitment will function as an integrated unit with Graduate Admissions and with Graduate Marketing and Communications. It also calls for the hiring of another immigration specialist, moving the office staff to three professionals, instead of two. This proposal is in sync with the work of the ACE. I am currently reviewing the proposal.

**June 2018 Report:** Program Prioritization recommended ISFO be enhanced in recognition that it was severely understaffed. The program has been able to hire one additional immigration advisor. Adding just one person has allowed for better service to students, and more importantly, in an epoch in which *everything* related to international students and scholars (including employees) is in a state of flux, the additional person has helped to relieve workload so that the following tasks could be completed:

- The office has drafted a sponsorship policy (which needs to be vetted at a higher level);
- Staff have had more time to conduct research on changing policy and guidelines;
- The web team has assisted in a redesign of the office’s website;
- The office has offered more student programming;
- Staff have received a five-year (approximately $600,000) Fulbright Orientation grant;
- The office has begun working to develop online training modules for CPT/OPT workshops (rather than delivering them face-to-face 15 times a year); and
- We are close to implementing new batch processing software for visas and a host of other compliance related functions.

The office took an opportunity while launching the website to change its name to International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS).

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**Regional History Center/University Archives**

**Task Force Recommendation:** While the task force recognizes the importance of documenting the university’s history, and the regional outreach provided through this unit, it does not find the productivity data provided to be clear. Closer collaboration and coordination with the University Libraries overall might help this program improve its assessment practices and find budget efficiencies.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I endorse the recommendation of the task force to reduce this program. I do not support the automatic refill of vacant positions and the addition of new staff as outlined in the action plan. The program should explore closer collaboration and coordination with the University Libraries as a way of addressing the demand for services. If this is not helpful, then a reduced level of service should be considered. In addition, the unit might need to prioritize its acquisition, preservation and presentation of materials in the University Archives, Local Government Records and Regional Collections. That said, every effort should be made to ensure
that mandated service to the state is fulfilled at an acceptable level, and that the most valuable collections are maintained. I am also concerned about the amount of space that this program occupies, and would suggest exploring possibilities for collaborating with other units seeking specialized space (e.g., Museum Studies; CVPA; Elwood House) to determine if a shared solution would be possible through philanthropy or collaboration. I appreciate the challenges associated with creating and maintaining accessible digital archives, and encourage creative thinking about how the unit could address these needs through collaborative relationships with new or existing graduate programs in public history or archival studies. A report on the possibility of such collaborations is due to me by 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** This program is investigating the integration of the Regional History Center further within the organizational structure of the library by having the center directors report directly to the Collections, Technical Services and Digital Scholarship associate dean as a unit within Distinctive Collections. The center’s collaboration with on- and off-campus units are ongoing. Examples include loaning of materials for exhibits, providing expertise for oral history projects, co-sponsoring speaker events, providing workshops and bringing archives into elementary classrooms. Staff will also continue to look for new partnerships and collaborative projects.

The center is also working to address space concerns. The center and the Government Publications Department are exchanging storage space in the library basement to better utilize compact shelving. Center staff have also moved the artifacts collection, printing and mounting lab and collaborative/group teaching area into a smaller space to make room for the 71 North project. Investigations into off-site storage in combination with other campus units as well as units off-campus proved unsuccessful because of storage, access, and security concerns.

The center has worked to be more self-sustaining by securing external funding sources to cover its operating expenses, professional development and special projects.

**June 2018 Report:** Due to the resignation of the curator for rare books and special collections (RBSC) in August 2017, the curator position has been temporarily filled for the fall and spring semester, with a primary position housed in the Regional History Center (RHC). This stopgap measure has allowed for greater connection and collaboration between the RHC/University Archives and the RBSC. The curator position will be filled permanently during Summer 2018, and the position will be expected to continue a strong relationship with the RHC/University Archives. Space concerns were addressed during the Fall 2017 semester by consolidating and shifting collections for RHC/University Archives and Government Publications, resulting in more available space in the libraries’ compact shelving. University Libraries also has maintained a moratorium on adding to the RHC collections in order to avoid outgrowing the existing space. RHC/University Archives continues to offer strong programs and research opportunities to the students and faculty of NIU, while also performing outreach to the greater community.
Student Engagement and Experiential Learning

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program demonstrates high-value impact for students who participate in it. The programs discussed in this narrative appeal to high-achieving students, and thus serve a recruiting function. The task force recommends that the office identify any duplicative programming with other units on campus and work to coordinate efforts. Cost-savings realized from this coordination can be redirected to fund student involvement in the programming offered through OSEEL. Additionally, although the program should be applauded for the services it provides to high-achieving students, more programming needs to be directed at the student body as a whole.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** This program will be a part of the new “Undergraduate College.” I support the recommendation to eliminate the redundancy in leadership development and community service between this program and Student Life Services. I have instructed the heads of both programs to develop a realignment and reduction plan. A draft of the proposal is due to me by 1/15/17 with the execution to be in place before the end of the fiscal year (6/30/17).

**May 2017 Report:** The Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) and Student Life Services (SILD) developed a plan that will reduce redundancy and lead to program realignment. In terms of reducing redundancy, SILD is collaborating with other campus entities (e.g., College of Business, Honors Program) to improve the efficiency with which leadership programs are offered, and is developing a survey and focus groups to identify any potential service and volunteerism redundancies. Additionally, the Committee on Service and Service Learning will be reinstated to advise the university on community-based engaged learning; coordinate the university’s multiple programs involved in community engagement and service learning; recommend progressive changes that will advance the service-learning programs; and assist with the assessment and evaluation of the community engagement initiatives. In terms of realignment, the Huskie Alternative Breaks (HAB) program will now reside in OSEEL with an immediate goal of expanding the program and better establishing links to the curriculum, the Human Diversity requirement and NIU PLUS. SILD will take the lead on the programmatic efforts associated with the residence hall’s Leadership and Service Living-Learning Community connecting it to the Huskie Food Pantry (e.g., food insecurity) and to the Leadership Academy. As a campus partner, OSEEL will work with academic departments to connect courses to this community in Phase Two of the new “Learning Community” model, which merges existing Living Learning Communities and Themed Learning Communities.

**June 2018 Report:** As of Fall 2017, the Huskie Alternative Break (HAB) program has transitioned to OSEEL. OSEEL staff have been working with academic departments in CLAS (e.g., NNGO) to establish curricular connections to the HAB experiences. Staff are in the process of planning for the first two HAB experiences scheduled to occur in Spring 2019. The Leadership and Service LLC was discontinued due to low-enrollment and engagement after a detailed review of Living Learning Communities (as part of previous recommendations related to merging TLCs and LLCs). The establishment of the Committee on Service and Service-Learning has been put on hold until further notice. It is recommended that the development of this committee be revisited.
once budget considerations and organizational changes in units that may be associated with this committee are completed.

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**Study Abroad**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program offers students an opportunity to engage globally, and provides them with potentially life-changing educational experiences. Additionally, having a program that provides students with the ability to study abroad in one of dozens of countries can be a valuable resource in student recruitment. Prospective students and their parents expect universities to provide this kind of transformational education opportunity. Program costs make it impossible for some students to study abroad, so the university should invest more money in travel scholarships.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the recommendation to enhance this program. Consistent with that recommendation, travel scholarships for study abroad should be a fundraising priority. Overall costs of the programs must be lessened while the administrative costs passed on to students should be reduced as much as possible. Additionally, we must take full advantage of international partnerships to increase NIU students’ access to authentic and affordable study abroad programs.

**May 2017 Report:** Steps have been taken to reduce the costs of study abroad. Currently, there is a $460 administrative charge for study abroad programs. Effective in Fall 2017, the university is eliminating $100 of that charge by eliminating a supplemental insurance premium. Additionally, because of the new student health insurance policy, the university can reduce the cost of health insurance, because it is able to charge (for the first time) on a weekly rather than on a monthly basis. To date, no endowed scholarships for study abroad programs have been established, although one endowed scholarship was repurposed for the NIU at Oxford Program. Establishing endowed scholarships for study abroad will continue to be a main priority.

**June 2018 Report:** Study Abroad continues to engage in some cost containment work, which helps to stretch dollars, but the program does not have enough scholarship dollars to go far. The program has received permission to offer $2,000 scholarships. Those scholarships were offered to 1,350 freshmen who have not yet committed to NIU. The scholarships were intended to help expand the university’s base for Study Abroad over the next four years. At the time of this writing, it is too early to tell how successful the program has been. However, the project was implemented late and the university will continue the program in the fall.

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**Testing Services**

**Task Force Recommendation:** The program serves an essential function for the university. Although the program currently has high demand, the demand for the program will likely decline as more courses go online and as smaller sections of writing-intensive courses are added as part of
the new general education requirements. Additionally, the research and analysis component of the office is redundant from Academic Analysis and Reporting and Institutional Research.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I concur with the placement of this program in the Reduce category. A reduction plan is due by 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The program is exploring reallocating a staff member with human resources. Additionally, the director will devote 30 percent of his time to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

**June 2018 Report:** Testing Services has reduced its staff by one member. The director continues to devote 30 percent of his time to the Office of Institutional Effectiveness.

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**University Honors Program**

**Task Force Recommendation:** This program has the potential to increase enrollment as well as improve the academic profile of the institution. The program has several positive features, although it does not appear to receive adequate funding when compared to other peer institutions. Limited funding has restricted the program to serving more as a unit to track honors program requirements as opposed to providing a vibrant and engaging opportunity for honors students. In addition, there is a conflict for faculty who cannot teach dedicated honors courses because of the need for courses within their home departments. The task force recommends additional resources for the University Honors Program to increase honors programming and assist departments and faculty with offering honors courses.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree that this program should be considered for enhancement. The honors program is an integral part of attracting outstanding young scholars to the university, and we should take steps to increase support for such efforts. The new director of University Honors is developing a strategic plan that will include recommendations to increase the capacity of this program, which is due by 2/15/17. The program will be part of the new Undergraduate College.

**May 2017 Report:** The University Honors Program has proposed a new model where instead of lower-division, upper-division and university honors, students can earn the recognition of Honors Distinction or University Honors. To measure student progress, the proposed model uses a point-based system for tracking curricular and co-curricular requirements, in which students will have defined standards, as well as “electives” as they matriculate through the program. This proposed honors model provides a degree of flexibility so that, regardless of major(s) or student status (native or transfer), students have ample opportunity to become involved – and achieve success – through NIU Honors education. Additionally, the Honors Program recommends raising the minimum cumulative GPA requirement to graduate with honors to a 3.3 so that the program can more effectively promote a distinguished level of achievement for students and deliver on the promise of an enhanced learning experience for those who meet this prerequisite. Conversations
with various campus entities on the proposed model have started with the goal of implementing the new program by the 2018-2019 academic year.

**June 2018 Report:** The University Honors Program (UHP) has successfully gained formal approval to implement revised programmatic requirements, which will begin for new students in the 2018-19 academic year. Through a strategic planning process that involved students, faculty, alumni, honors staff and NIU administrators, UHP will now embed both curricular and co-curricular experiences through a points-based system. With this re-envisioning, students will now be able to seek honors recognition at two distinct levels: Full University Honors and Associate University Honors. At each level of achievement, students will have the opportunity to engage in honors coursework, Engage PLUS experiences, and also be afforded “elective(s)” to customize their honors experience based on their professional goals. In addition, to more effectively promote a distinguished level of achievement for students, the UHP minimum cumulative GPA will be increased from 3.20 to 3.30 for new students. All of these enhancements to the program will make attaining honors recognition more accessible to students at NIU. Specifically, the program has removed the dualistic requirement of maintaining both a cumulative and honors-only minimum GPA, the stipulation that an honors seminar must be completed outside of one’s major, and the sole reliance of course-based experiences to satisfy honors requirements that encumbers participation in the program for select academic programs at NIU.
Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Asian American Center

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Creating and maintaining an inclusive, diverse community is central to NIU’s mission and identity. The task force recommends transformation for many of the programs devoted to improving diversity and creating a more inclusive environment. In particular, the task force encourages these programs to develop a more cohesive campus-wide vision for supporting diversity and inclusivity. In addition, these programs should establish more robust and ongoing measures of quality and impact, which may require more collaboration among programs. The narrative for this program indicated a strong focus on recruiting and retaining international students, which duplicates the functions of the International Student and Faculty Office and does not appear to be necessary. It also focused more on student organizations rather than its specific services. This program also should examine ways in which it can support the retention of Asian-American students through developing stronger relationships with academic advising and other retention-focused offices.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I support the Administrative Task Force’s recommendation to transform our cultural centers and, as such, have moved these programs under the supervision of the chief diversity officer. In addition to being transformed, I believe this program should be enhanced. The space for the center was supposed to be temporary, and is unacceptable as a permanent location. A plan to move the center to a more suitable location must be in place by May 15, 2017. Additionally, the program is understaffed. The program’s request to hire an assistant director and an administrative assistant should be sent to the EBC for review.

**May 2017 Report:** In Spring 2017, the Asian American Resource Center (AARC) reconvened a task force originally established in 2002 to assess the needs of the AARC. This task force along with the Student Association voted unanimously to support the 2002 original proposal to renovate the AARC. The original proposal recommended a location for the Asian American Resource Center, Asian Studies Program, Center for Southeast Asian Studies and Center for Burma Studies to co-exist. The task force identified resource allocation deficiencies for the Asian American Resource Center in the following areas: annualized budget allocations/funding; facility; staffing structure; technology and equipment; furniture; program needs; and space. The task force is working with the vice president for Facilities Management to identify a more equitable “interim” and, eventually, a permanent location that meets the center’s existing cultural and functional needs. The interim location will include provisions to accommodate the relocation of an essential partner, the Asian Studies Program, and the proposal for a permanent plan will include the four departments listed above.

**June 2018 Report:** A new location for the Asian American Resource Center (AARC) has been secured near the center of campus. The AARC staff is working with facilities to finalize the plans for the move, which will take place Summer 2018. This new location addresses several concerns expressed by the Asian American student community, including:
Centralizing the AARC’s location to enhance the center’s visibility, provide new opportunities to collaborate with other nearby offices and cultural centers, and more equitably serve the Asian American community at NIU.

Enhancing functionality to provide programs and services related to recruitment and retention, academic success, advocacy, cultural education, student leadership development, and community building for the Asian American population the center is entrusted with engaging.

Complying with ADA accessibility, and also providing a space for students to gather in meaningful ways and share cultural traditions and meals inclusive of the many diverse Asian ethnicities at NIU.

Offering space for studying, preparing for group projects and presentations, conducting research and increasing collaboration with the Asian American Certificate program.

In addition to the new location, the AARC hired an office manager in March 2018 and was slated to begin a search for an Associate Director in July 2018.

Latino Resource Center

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: Creating and maintaining an inclusive, diverse community is central to NIU’s mission and identity. The task force recommends transformation for many of the programs devoted to improving diversity and creating a more inclusive environment. In particular, the task force encourages these programs to develop a more cohesive campus-wide vision for supporting diversity and inclusivity. In addition, these programs should establish more robust and ongoing measures of quality and impact, which may require more collaboration among programs. In terms of this program, the Latino Resource Center is important because of the rising Latino/Latina population. However, based on the narrative, this program does not appear to have a strong impact on the success rate of the students it serves, as seen through the decreasing number of degrees received by this population.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I support the Administrative Task Force’s recommendation to transform our cultural centers and, as such, have moved these programs under the supervision of the chief diversity officer. Given the growing Latino student population, the program’s request to hire an associate director and a program coordinator should be sent to the EBC for review.

May 2017 Report: The strategic plan for the Latino Resource Center (LRC) is responsive to the recommendation of the Administrative Task Force to enhance campus and community collaborative efforts; provide assessment of programs and activities; and contribute to successful retention and recruitment efforts. An additional goal is to enhance the engagement of alumni to provide revenue streams for the LRC. To date, two student cultural organizations (Supporting Opportunities for Latinos [SOL] and Latino Student Alliance [LSA]) have moved under the supervision of the director of the LRC as of Jan. 1, 2017. The center also is seeking strategic partnerships with middle schools and high schools to support academic excellence for Latino students. A review of staff and fiscal resources needed to support the LRC is under way to ensure the effectiveness of programs necessary to engage the growing NIU Latino student population and
the student groups aligned with the LRC. The report will be completed by the end of Summer 2017.

**June 2018 Report:** As NIU’s Latino population grows, the Latino Resource Center (LRC) will continue to develop and strengthen existing programs and services as well as review staff and fiscal resources needed to support this growing population. Since January 2017, the LRC has enhanced campus and community collaborative efforts, contributed to successful retention and recruitment efforts, and bolstered the engagement of alumni to provide revenue streams for the LRC. The center also is in the process of developing a comprehensive assessment plan aligned with the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion’s mission and goals, and additionally has been involved in the Presidents for Latino Student Success statewide program that highlights best practices for supporting the retention and graduation of Latino students. To date, the LRC has strengthened its mentoring programs and honor society for Latino undergraduates. Further, they have developed programs for Latino students interested in STEM and collaborated with the Parent University chapter for families in DeKalb and Sycamore. The LRC continues to establish strategic partnerships with middle and high schools to support recruitment and academic excellence for Latino students.
Administration & Finance

Accounts Payable

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: Although an essential function for the university, the narrative indicates demand for this program is down. In addition, the narrative states that this program has positions that could be reduced.

Charge from November 2016 Report: It appears that the unit has already taken steps to align itself with the task force recommendations. At the same time, the operations of the program remain a source of concern. I call on the program to develop performance metrics; a tracking system; and to examine opportunities for process reengineering. I would like to receive a detailed staffing and space utilization plan by 2/1/17.

May 2017 Report: The AP function has initiated internal discussions on strategies to improve efficiency. The success of those strategies is heavily influenced by the successful development and implementation of the Procure to Pay initiative. The first step of that automation process is to fully implement Procure to PO, which is planned for 2nd quarter of FY18. Once this step is complete, planning can begin on defining the process steps for the next phase of automation, which includes e-invoice and e-payment of vendors.

Staffing levels have remained relatively constant. There are seven work spaces dedicated to AP located in the center of the Accounting Department and a tracking system has been developed / implemented.

June 2018 Report: The AP function has initiated several process improvements to workflows that have increased efficiency and accuracy. Evidence of this fact is the elimination of exceptions that previously constituted a material audit finding. Further, the Procure to PO project is progressing nicely. System testing, previously delayed due to staffing transitions in AP, is now scheduled to begin in the first quarter of FY19, with a staggered rollout across the university thereafter. Further, new divisional leadership has requested simplifications to the approval process that will provide greater flexibility to university users. Once this system enhancement is fully functional, AP can initiate the final phase in development of Procure to Pay, which will involve coordination with DoIT.

Architectural and Engineering Services

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The task force recommends that the purpose of this office be examined. Most projects are contracted externally, and the architectural renderings and building plans are mostly digitized and easily accessible to the trades. It is not clear that this program is cost-effective based on the majority of the work being outsourced. A liaison role could be absorbed by another facilities department such as the Physical Plant.

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**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I disagree with the task force’s call for this program to be considered for elimination. The services provided by Architectural and Engineering Services are not easily distributed to other units. At the same time, I recognize the dissatisfaction that the university community feels toward the services provided by Architectural and Engineering Services. There are two areas where particular attention is needed:

- A comprehensive space survey is required to make informed plans and decisions. As part of this, efforts should be made to identify ways to reduce costs for off-campus space, by relocating functions back onto campus where possible.
- Advance efforts to improve client services and support for units in fulfilling their missions. My sense is that the leadership has been successfully moving the division in this direction, and I encourage continued progress.

I look for a written report by 12/15/16 on how these two initiatives will be undertaken.

**May 2017 Report:** This program is continuing to manage major repair and discretionary project priorities within the budgetary constraints experienced in FY17 and projected for FY18. Because the current FY18 budget is not supporting any major repair or discretionary investments for General Revenue operations, focus will be mostly directed at investments in facilities/infrastructure supporting auxiliary operations. All types of projects will continue to get vetted with divisional representatives at the Project Prioritization Forum. The resulting priorities will form the basis for where available funds can be directed should state funding or other revenue streams allow further investment. Unfunded requirements (UFR) requests are being submitted for major repairs and some level of discretionary spending should additional funds become available.

A dialogue has been underway to ensure that Architectural & Engineering Services and their campus clients have a shared understanding of client needs and service expectations for A&ES staff. I encourage ongoing assessment and continuous improvement of client services.

Space management will continue to be a deliberately managed issue where all in-leases will be reviewed annually to validate the continuing need for space and if space within existing university facilities can be made available to accommodate the requirement. Opportunities to assess moves within the campus to better facilitate consolidation of like functions or efficient utilization of space will continue, but funding to support the moves will be limited by the reduced FY18 budget plans. A complete space audit and related space use plan will need to be developed over time as budgeting and staffing allow. Such a plan will allow us to more effectively and efficiently use our spaces to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

**June 2018 Report:** The department is working with university stakeholders to ensure a balance exists between major repair investments to keep building systems functioning adequately and mission enhancement improvements designed to address new/changing priorities.

The space management function has now become a process within the services provided by Architectural & Engineering Services. Updates to the current inventory of space assignments are being completed as capacity allows. To enhance an overall awareness of space challenges and opportunities in the interim, the
space management function will be formalizing a process for leveraging a stakeholder team to assist in evaluating space demands and possible solutions.

To facilitate strategic management of space, leadership is working with the acting executive vice president and provost, the vice president for Administration and Finance and CFO, and the vice president for research to launch a Capital Budget and Space Planning Committee to request, assess and prioritize facility and space needs across the university. Information regarding this enhanced process will be communicated in Fall 2019.

**Budgeting**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The program narrative mentions the need to improve efficiencies, communication, and collaboration around budgeting with the rest of the campus. This could include cost and time savings through more comprehensive budgeting software. In addition, the narrative recommends developing a unified, long-range budget plan. The task force encourages these efforts to transform budget processes.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree that long-term reductions in Budgeting can only occur after a new, long-term budgeting process is in place. I understand the sense of urgency surrounding the Hyperion budget-planning software, but we need a clear cost-benefit analysis to justify this expenditure at this time, relative to the other short-term demands on our budget. Such an analysis is needed for the project to be assessed in the portfolio of funding options that will be reviewed by the EBC and me by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Analysis of NIU’s budgeting structure has revealed that significant preliminary work must be done before a new, long-term budgeting process can be implemented. This preliminary work will require a cross-campus effort to establish a common set of goals and high-level strategies for budgeting. Clearly establishing those principles will ensure that we purchase a budgeting software package right for our needs, and that we implement it in an efficient and effective way. Once we complete the search for a new Vice President for Administration and Finance, one of the charges to the Finance team will be to conduct this cross-campus planning, and then to develop new recommendations for implementation, including software, in light of that planning.

**June 2018 Report:** New leadership is redefining the role of the Division of Administration and Finance. Going forward, the division will devote less attention to determining whether individual expenditures are mission critical. Instead, it will focus on long-range analysis and planning for university resources—specifically finances, space and staffing. This will provide the president, provost and other NIU leadership with robust data that will inform planning decisions regarding how best to support NIU’s missions of teaching, research and artistry. The division will create a three-year budgeting and planning cycle that will enable the university to maximize opportunities and better navigate around obstacles. The division also will provide deans and vice presidents with information and management reporting tools to make resource decisions required to move the
university forward. These initiatives will include the intention to implement IT solutions as appropriate platforms are identified and the resources necessary to support them are developed.

**Building Maintenance**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Having comfortable working and learning physical environments is necessary for producing high quality, efficient work by our faculty, staff, and students. Presenting an attractive campus, that is well maintained, is essential for recruiting and retaining faculty, staff, and students. As important, these groups must be able to work in a safe environment. Many of the campuses’ buildings have suffered from years of neglect owing to deferred maintenance. The university cannot let its physical resources continue to deteriorate. The task force recommends that additional resources be contributed to building maintenance, prioritized so that those resources are dedicated to areas of greatest need.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to consider the program for enhancement. Safe and effective spaces are essential for all of the missions of the university. John Heckmann and his team are to be commended for their work in creating a comprehensive draft plan that outlines staffing, budgeting, projects, preventive maintenance, safety, and emergency response. Those elements of the action plan that can be implemented with existing resources should move forward; the rest should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** The Building Maintenance and Heating Plant programs are continuing to build deliberate preventive maintenance plans within the FM/CS work management system, which will allow specific tracking of maintenance activities and document overall demand for this critical investment requirement. As these plans are fully developed, annual work plans will be produced for each trade discipline and used to forecast specific staffing and resourcing requirements.

Unfortunately, budget restrictions for FY18 will require deferral of some preventive maintenance activities as skilled trade positions are being held vacant until more funds can be made available for maintenance investment. Current efforts are focused on curtailling preventive maintenance activities within reasonable risk tolerances. An unfunded requirements (UFR) request is being submitted for the reduced levels of maintenance being planned for FY18 should additional funding become available.

**June 2018 Report:** The Building Maintenance and Heating Plant programs have continued to formalize preventive maintenance tasks. To date, tasks have been developed for more than 3,000 individual building components and will continue through FY19. The resulting preventative maintenance records will provide for a more sophisticated tracking of complicated building systems and efficient planning of work activities to address the most critical requirements. Further, the university was successful in our effort to secure funding from the state to replace an aging and inefficient boiler. NIU continues to request additional funding to address life-safety priorities.

These two programs work collaboratively with the Architectural/Engineering Services and Environmental/Health & Safety programs to review work requests and prioritize requirements according
to system criticality, safety and mission impacts. Unfortunately, the backlog of deferred maintenance is expected to grow due to less-than-optimal maintenance/repair investment levels, but the process of prioritizing work requirements is helping to ensure available funds are spent on the most critical needs.

Building Services

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: This program appears to be adequately staffed. Although the level of quality differs from building to building, the overall quality level is positive. However, the task force strongly recommends that this program consider outsourcing as an option to deliver similar services, which could potentially save the university money. The task force is not able to ascertain how much savings will occur, and has some concerns about security issues if the program is outsourced, but believes the university should study the possibility.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force’s call for all of these programs to consider all options for reducing expenses, including the possibility of outsourcing some or all of their operations. I expect a preliminary description of options and their cost/benefit analysis by 2/1/17, to see which options should be seriously considered.

May 2017 Report: I have received and approved a plan to restructure the way Building Services organizes its services. Over the course of FY18, Building Services will move to a team approach, rather than having individual responsible for a building. The previous approach required most of the Building Services staff to be generalists, who could address all issues in a building. The new approach will allow individuals to focus more on specific tasks across multiple buildings. Organizations that have moved to this approach have found it to be more efficient, and Administration and Finance anticipates significant savings to flow from this new model. I agree that this represents a responsible alternative to the proposed outsourcing of Building Services.

June 2018 Report: Building Services has been operating under the new work method of team cleaning since May 2017. The implementation of this revised approach has demonstrated the potential to reduce costs by approximately 20 percent while maintaining appropriate cleaning standards. Due to the urgency for reducing costs, this transition had been implemented quicker than originally intended, and the Building Services staff has been aggressively working to adjust to lessons learned and address questions/concerns from the employees, union representatives and supported faculty/staff. The revised work method also is being applied to the Holmes Student Center as the cleaning function for this building was incorporated under this program as of April 2018.

The program also is working to incorporate improvements to the refuse and recycling contract to drive cost efficiency and waste stream reduction/diversion from landfills for the university. A new contract is in development and slated to begin services for FY19.
**Bursar**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This is an essential program that is performing efficiently and well.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to sustain. The action plan calls for various ways to make effective use of technology, including implementation of an online payment system, PeopleSoft Collection module and PeopleSoft e-bill module. These should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** The Bursar’s Office has seen departures since the program narrative was constructed in Fall 2015, which led to a revision of the unit’s implementation plan. Follow-up work in light of that revision has revealed unexpected needs and unexpected opportunities for improvement. The Bursar's office is revisiting its accounts receivable and collections processes, and is developing new process plans for these areas, as well as pursuing a new alignment of staff to ensure attention to important revenue-collection areas.

**June 2018 Report:** The Bursar’s Office has made tremendous progress since the last report. The office has seen significant turnover, but also has made several key hires, which stabilized the staff from an operational perspective. There also has been significant effort to redefine department workflows and leverage resources to increase the efficacy of external collections efforts. Department management expects these efforts will reduce the considerable accounts receivable balance. The collected funds will provide resources for the university that can be invested in revenue growth initiatives.

**Contracting Office**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program was recently created to have oversight over procurement contracts and appears to be an improvement to the process. The program seems to be adequately staffed and has appropriate resources.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** While Procurement Services was categorized as Transform and the Contracting Office as Sustain, the task force recommended that both are directed toward the common goal of improving contracting and procurement services. I agree with that direction. Plans have evolved since the narratives were composed last year. The action plan still calls for the contracting function to reside within a realigned Procurement office, but now no longer calls for a separate Contracting Office. This new configuration should be fully implemented, then assessed for operational effectiveness and efficiency. I expect a plan to accomplish this by 2/1/17, to be implemented by 7/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The Procurement Services Department has collaborated with the Office of the General Counsel to define the components of a fully integrated contract management function. This new function is approximately 75 percent developed, and is on schedule for full
implementation by 7/117. Further analysis of the appropriate workflow and organizational structure will be required as new systems are implemented.

**June 2018 Report:** The contracting function has been successfully integrated into the Procurement Services Department. Efforts to enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness, including key performance indicators, are ongoing.

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**Controller**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program provides an essential service and is performing well. In the future, and as resources become available, the university should consider hiring a tax accountant, as requested in the narrative.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to sustain. The action plan calls for a variety of routine actions, including a policy review, comprehensive review of activities subject to the Unrelated Business Income Tax (UBIT), and a fit-gap analysis. Those elements of the plan that can be implemented with existing resources should move forward; the rest of the action plan should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** A number of steps are underway in the Controller’s Office to strengthen and stabilize the unit in light of staff departures. Those steps include staff replacements and training, and improving control processes. The fit-gap analysis and review of UBIT activities have been deferred, but are still planned.

**June 2018 Report:** The Controller’s Office has made significant progress in redefining workflows, strengthening the control environment and hiring skilled workers in key leadership positions. Current efforts are focused on developing a platform that will effectively integrate management reporting across several departments. Management reporting priorities will be informed from the fit-gap analysis, as well as by conversations with faculty, staff and Trustees. These efforts will prove invaluable in the aspiration to enhance the financial infrastructure, which will strengthen the foundation for long-range business planning.

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**Environmental Health and Safety**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The task force notes some of the services mentioned in the narrative are being performed by outside vendors/contractors, therefore the staffing levels are not justified. In addition, the task force believes certain functions currently being performed are not essential, and therefore could be reduced or eliminated.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I concur with the task force’s placement of Environmental Health and Safety in Reduce. I expect a preliminary plan for reduction by 2/1/17.
May 2017 Report: A report concerning the options for reductions, and the additional risks being assumed by the university from those reductions, has been completed. I have accepted the reduction plan, which has been implemented.

June 2018 Report: The Environmental Health and Safety program currently is managing applicable environmental and safety issues for university administrative functions and is working to maintain compliance with applicable regulations, managing institutional risk/loss exposures and facilitating injury/property protection. The team coordinates closely with the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety to help ensure comprehensive oversight on environmental and safety issues for the entire university. This new and sustainable relationship between Environmental Health and Safety and the Office of Research Compliance, Integrity and Safety provides deliberate focus on environmental/safety issues for the administrative and academic missions of the university, and also benefits from leveraging each team’s areas of expertise and avoiding duplication of effort.

Grounds

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The overall appearance of the campus must be improved. However, there appear to be inefficiencies in this program. The university should consider outsourcing additional aspects of the program (e.g., snow removal) so that sufficient resources are available when needed, but overall staffing levels could be reduced.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force’s call for all of these programs to consider all options for reducing expenses, including the possibility of outsourcing some or all of their operations. I expect a preliminary description of options and their cost/benefit analysis by 2/1/17, to see which options should be seriously considered.

May 2017 Report: I have received and approved a plan for Grounds that will allow us to shift some costs off of General Revenues, to reduce staffing and to focus on the aspects of the campus that are most critical to us. Implementation of this plan will begin immediately.

June 2018 Report: The plan to operate this program with reduced staffing was implemented in late FY17 and into FY18. Grounds maintenance tasks were prioritized to focus on “front yard,” high-traffic areas, with less attention paid to back areas. The program operates on a minimal full-time staffing to adequately address year-round tasks and augments this capacity with contractor and seasonal staffing for higher winter and summer workload demands.

Heating Plant

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The heating plant is doing an excellent job maintaining an infrastructure that is seriously antiquated. Keeping campus buildings adequately temperature controlled is crucial for everyone on campus, especially given the wide range of temperature changes throughout the year. Resources to improve the heating plant infrastructure to make it more efficient and renew the equipment lifecycle must be a high priority.
**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to consider the program for enhancement. Safe and effective spaces are essential for all of the missions of the university. John Heckmann and his team are to be commended for their work in creating a comprehensive draft plan that outlines staffing, budgeting, projects, preventive maintenance, safety, and emergency response. Those elements of the action plan that can be implemented with existing resources should move forward; the rest should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** The Building Maintenance and Heating Plant programs are continuing to build deliberate preventive maintenance plans within the FM/CS work management system, which will allow specific tracking of maintenance activities and document overall demand for this critical investment requirement. As these plans are fully developed, annual work plans will be produced for each trade discipline and used to forecast specific staffing and resourcing requirements. Unfortunately, budget restrictions for FY18 will require deferral of some preventive maintenance activities as skilled trade positions are being held vacant until more funds can be made available for maintenance investment. Current efforts are focused on curtailing preventive maintenance activities within reasonable risk tolerances. An unfunded requirements (UFR) request is being submitted for the reduced levels of maintenance being planned for FY18 should additional funding become available.

**June 2018 Report:** The Building Maintenance and Heating Plant programs have continued to formalize preventive maintenance tasks, as previously indicated.

NIU received approval to replace, update and upgrade existing obsolete steam systems. The project includes replacing aging boilers, controls, valves and piping distribution systems. A new Heating Plant building will be constructed beginning in 2020 that will house new energy-efficient natural gas-fired steam boilers, controls, valves, and all related piping and equipment. The new facility will be located near the existing West Heating Plant and have enough steam capacity to replace all of the existing equipment currently housed in the East and West Heating Plants. The university was successful in our effort to secure funding from the state to replace an aging and inefficient boiler, and continues to request additional funding to address life-safety priorities.

**Materials Management**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** As more communication is done electronically, the need for traditional mail service declines. As a result, fewer resources are necessary for this program. There is also a decrease in demand for “in stock” supply items. Materials Management should seek additional exemptions through Central Management Services (CMS), which could help reduce the resources needed. It is important to note that other functions provided by this program (e.g., furniture repair, surplus pick up) should not be reduced. In fact, the task force recommends better utilization of existing surplus items.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** It appears that the unit already has begun implementing the steps recommended by the task force, with fewer resources devoted to mail delivery and stocking supplies. At the same time, the action plan doesn’t make it clear that the unit has fully aligned its staffing
with the changing work environment. I would like to receive a detailed staffing and space utilization plan by 12/15/16. The space plan should address whether some of the space now dedicated to the unit could be used to reduce NIU’s off-campus footprint.

**May 2017 Report:** The staffing analysis makes a credible case that there are ongoing efforts to adjust staffing to balance in light of changing demand. The space analysis indicates opportunities for reducing NIU’s off-campus storage expenses by repurposing some of the storage space in the building. The unit should move forward to put together a plan for restructuring storage, working with the units involved.

**June 2018 Report:** The program continues to evaluate changes for efficiency gains, which will lead to reduced staffing demands and repurposing of warehouse storage. We will further leverage an existing partnership with Office Depot to eliminate on-site stocking of office supplies in FY19. Currently, a variety of long-term, temporary storage requirements are being supported and approximately 35 percent of the warehouse storage capacity, representing about 5800 cubic feet of space, is available for alternate storage needs that would not require precise temperature or humidity controls. Efforts are under way to assess usage of off-campus storage and determine what could be relocated to campus.

Additional staffing efficiencies are being realized by reevaluating delivery schedules and inventory processes and consolidating material control functions for the physical plant maintenance operations.

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**Office of the Vice President for Administration and Finance**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program is functioning well, especially since its recent transformation. However, the program does appear to have some excess staff. The Office is actively investigating process reengineering and the task force believes that this investigation will enable a reduction in resources to occur.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The vice president’s office already has made some of the reductions recommended by the Administrative Task Force, and I do not believe further reductions are required. I am in partial agreement with the division’s plan to locate risk management and compliance in an Operations Office within the division. Risk management and compliance span virtually every division of the university, and no one division can own these broad issues. However, I agree that a Risk Management and Compliance Council is needed to pull expertise from across the university, that the council needs a convener who can organize efforts and lead accountability, and that the convener could come from this office. I would like to receive a draft of the proposal by 1/15/17, with the execution to be in place by 6/30/17.

**May 2017 Report:** An Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process has been constructed. The process involves an annual review cycle, which flows from risk identification to risk analysis, risk evaluation, risk mitigation plan development, mitigation resourcing and (as resources allow) risk mitigation. The outcomes from each year’s process, together with the identification of new issues, then inform the next year’s cycle. This process involves the “risk owners” (i.e. those involved in
the particular issue) together with a standing ERM committee. This team reviews risk information; assesses risk evaluation; helps identify cross-cutting risks; and reviews mitigation and control plans. The process also appropriately involves shared governance through the Resource, Space and Budget committee. All of this work is supported by a core ERM team. Subject to Board of Trustees approval, this process will begin to operate in FY18.

**June 2018 Report:** The inaugural Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) review cycle is in process, nearing completion of the mitigation phase, during which risk owners and their respective areas develop and, where possible, implement risk mitigation plans for the upcoming fiscal year.

Going forward, risk management efforts and associated compliance activities will be institutionalized as the ERM Program, reporting to the vice president for administration and finance and CFO and supported by the ERM Committee. The program will give ongoing support to ERM efforts, as well as associated compliance activities across university, and will continue to revise and improve the tools it uses for identification, assessment and communication of risk and mitigation activities. Further efforts to integrate ERM and compliance activities, including the launch of a Risk Management and Compliance Council, also are under way now that an ethics and compliance office has been established.

Lastly, following a retirement in this office, the decision has been made not to refill but rather to eliminate the associate vice president of process improvement and operational effectiveness position.

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**Parking Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Having adequate parking and an office that oversees that parking is important, but the program must improve its performance. The task force strongly recommends that this program utilize more technology to increase efficiencies. A mobile application for parking availability could be developed and more automation of payments and registration should be implemented. Making these changes will require costs upfront, but will likely save the university money in the long run.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation to transform. Campus parking needs require assessment and solutions that coordinate with bussing systems, and include bicycle and pedestrian mobility. The action plan also calls for process reengineering, reviewing communication policies and enforcement hours, and the use of technology to improve the customer experience. I expect a plan to address these issues by 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** This program has been going through a formal process reengineering review. A report on this overall assessment effort, and the changes being or considered for implementation, is in development. Many efficiency and effectiveness improvements have been undergoing implementation as they were identified and assessed as feasible/practical. These include improvements to online parking permit ordering and revised policies for parking space utilization.
June 2018 Report: All facets of the parking program were reviewed through a formal reengineering analysis process and entered a sustainment phase where future performance will be monitored. We have done an extensive review, and the noteworthy changes include the full implementation of online transactions and enhancement of electronic pay stations, which has reduced the need for in-person transactions at the Parking office. Additionally, parking space assessments have led to revised lot designations and increased options for student commuter parking. Changes for the visitor lot are being planned for FY19, which will reduce staffing costs. The Parking Committee has continued to play a key role in reviewing proposed improvements coming from the reengineering effort.

**Procurement Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Materials, equipment, supplies, and service contracts are necessary for university operation. Completing transactions with vendors requires a substantial number of approvals in the current structure. This program is already undergoing a long-needed transformation. The task force strongly recommends that this transformation continue, be fully implemented, and then assessed for operational effectiveness and efficiency.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** While Procurement Services was categorized as Transform and the Contracting Office as Sustain, the task force recommended that both are directed toward the common goal of improving contracting and procurement services. I agree with that direction. Plans have evolved since the narratives were composed last year. The action plan still calls for the contracting function to reside within a realigned Procurement office, but now no longer calls for a separate Contracting Office. This new configuration should be fully implemented, then assessed for operational effectiveness and efficiency. I expect a plan to accomplish this by 2/1/17, to be implemented by 7/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The Procurement Services Department has collaborated with the Office of the General Counsel to define the components of a fully integrated contract management function. This new function is approximately 75% developed and is on schedule for full implementation by 7/1/17.

**June 2018 Report:** The procurement function has successfully collaborated with the Office of General Counsel to integrate the components of a contract management function into department workflows. Department management continues its efforts to backfill key leadership positions and embrace campus feedback on opportunities to simplify processing. Progress continues on the implementation of Procure to PO, with testing scheduled to begin in FY19. In support of goals to enhance service delivery on campus, an updated website was launched in April 2018. Commonly requested forms and information on cooperative agreements are now available.
Risk Management

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program plays a crucial role on campus in managing liabilities and crisis management. A job this important requires more than a single employee to oversee the program. The task force supports transformation by cross-training other personnel so that knowledge and responsibility can be shared rather than managed by an individual. The university should continue to review all insurance levels to ensure that it is not over-insured in some areas and under-insured in others.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The vice president’s office already has made some of the reductions recommended by the Administrative Task Force, and I do not believe further reductions are required. I am in partial agreement with the division’s plan to locate risk management and compliance in an Operations Office within the division. Risk management and compliance span virtually every division of the university, and no one division can own these broad issues. However, I agree that a Risk Management and Compliance Council is needed to pull expertise from across the university, that the council needs a convener who can organize efforts and lead accountability, and that the convener could come from this office. I would like to receive a draft of the proposal by 1/15/17, with the execution to be in place by 6/30/17.

**May 2017 Report:** An Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) process has been constructed. The process involves an annual review cycle, which flows from risk identification to risk analysis, risk evaluation, risk mitigation plan development, mitigation resourcing and (as resources allow) risk mitigation. The outcomes from each year’s process, together with the identification of new issues, then inform the next year’s cycle. This process involves the “risk owners” (i.e. those involved in the particular issue) together with a standing ERM committee. This team reviews risk information; assesses risk evaluation; helps identify cross-cutting risks; and reviews mitigation and control plans. The process also appropriately involves shared governance through the Resource, Space and Budget committee. All of this work is supported by a core ERM team. Subject to Board of Trustees approval, this process will begin to operate in FY18.

**June 2018 Report:** The inaugural Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) review cycle is in process, nearing completion of the mitigation phase, during which risk owners and their respective areas develop and, where possible, implement risk mitigation plans for the upcoming fiscal year. The ERM annual report’s anticipated distribution date is Sept. 1, 2018, and will include a summary of the review process, updated risk register and briefing on mitigation plans. The ERM review cycle is facilitated by the core ERM team in collaboration with the ERM Committee consisting of 13 representatives spanning risks across 26 divisions and areas on campus.

Going forward, risk management efforts will be institutionalized as the ERM Program, reporting to the vice president for administration and finance and chief financial officer and supported by the ERM Committee. The program will give ongoing support to ERM efforts across campus and will continue to revise and improve the tools it uses for identification, assessment, and communication of risk and mitigation activities.
**Transportation**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The narrative for this program demonstrates that the NIU fleet of vehicles for department use is considerably older than those at other universities. In part, this is evidence of the cost-effective impact of the maintenance done in-house at NIU Transportation. Given the significant expense in owning, replacing, and maintaining a fleet of vehicles, the task force recommends investigating the services offered and whether a third-party fleet management system could be used for some services. The task force recommends that the program explore other sources of revenue for new and different-sized vehicles that more comfortably and efficiently serve the many outreach and student excursion programs at a more cost-effective scale.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s call for all of these programs to consider all options for reducing expenses, including the possibility of outsourcing some or all of their operations. I expect a preliminary description of options and their cost/benefit analysis by 2/1/17, to see which options should be seriously considered.

**May 2017 Report:** A final report for the Transportation program is about 80% complete. Preliminary analysis of this program shows that a planned sequence of utilizing vehicles for various purposes throughout a 12-year life is more cost effective than leasing. This multiple-use/life-cycle concept, along with a deliberate process for validating the best option for meeting transportation requirements (i.e. using NIU vehicle, commercial rental, or mileage reimbursement for private vehicle), will be the core of this program’s overall cost-reduction strategy.

**June 2018 Report:** The final report on the program has been completed and outlines a strategy of maintaining a fleet of university-owned vehicles that will be systematically repurposed as vehicles reach certain stages of age or condition. Newer vehicles predominantly will be targeted for long trips off campus or recruitment requirements where reliability/appearance is more important compared to on-campus uses. This approach has been determined to be the most cost effective when compared to other available options. The fleet size will be reduced as multiple vehicles will be traded in with each new vehicle purchase.
General Counsel

Ethics

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Although this program is state mandated, the program narrative does not justify that a fulltime employee is needed to be in compliance with the state statute.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** Since the Administrative Task Force report was written, new mandates from the state have led to an increased workload in this program. In addition, each public university is required under state law to have an ethics officer, who is designated by the president of the institution. As a result, I disagree with the task force’s recommendation to reduce. A new ethics officer will be hired, and the reporting relationship will be finalized upon the hire of a permanent General Counsel.

**May 2017:** The search for a new ethics officer is in progress with the anticipation that the position will be filled by July 1, 2017. The existing ethics officer will shift back to an open position in the GC office. These two steps should reduce overall costs for the office.

**June 2018:** The external search for a new ethics officer in 2017 failed to result in the hire of an acceptable candidate. At the request of the Board of Trustees, the position was reformulated as a compliance and ethics officer who will report directly to the president. Unfortunately, this search also failed in Spring 2018. As a result, modifications were made to the position description to create a more attractive opportunity, and an acting ethics and compliance officer was hired to begin July 1, 2018. This individual will establish a new ethics and compliance office that includes: the policy librarian; the director of investigations and the investigators responsible for performing equity compliance and administrative investigations; the information technology accessibility officer; and staffing to support compliance with the statutes that govern records and retention. A search for a permanent ethics and compliance officer will commence in Fall 2018.
Human Resource Services

Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Affirmative Action and Diversity Resources do not need to be housed under the same program. This program has already begun its transformation by refocusing on Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance functions. The task force believes that diversity resources for the campus, outside of affirmative-action-related compliance issues, should be coordinated by the new chief diversity officer.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation for transformation, and endorse the suggestion to refocus this program on guiding and enforcing the policies, procedures and laws that govern fairness, equality and related compliance for NIU. I am aware that this office is collaborating with the chief diversity officer to ensure adequate coordination of diversity resources during this transition, and I applaud these efforts. These transformations will allow AAEC to address the obligations associated with Title IX compliance as well as the collective bargaining negotiations and contract administration for NIU’s employee unions. I have asked the vice president for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management and the executive vice president/provost to work together to facilitate an external review of their reporting units that contribute to compliance with the various statutes and policies that govern the NIU response to sexual misconduct, including but not limited to Title IX, VAWA and IL law. The external review should be scheduled no later than 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The external review has been deferred for several reasons. The reorganization of Student Affairs under the Office of the Executive Vice President/Provost that includes Human Resource Services and Title IX has provided an opportunity for greater integration of services. There was a desire to allow these conversations to develop before inviting a review. The need to conduct the Campus Climate Survey, and to use those data to inform the university’s path forward, provides additional rationale for deferring the review until the university has incorporated the findings into its action plans. Finally, the current fiscal circumstances led to a decision to postpone incurring costs for consultants. As a result, the external review should be scheduled no later than the end of the 2017 calendar year.

**June 2018 Report:** Since the reorganization of Human Resources, Title IX and Student Affairs under the Executive vice president and provost, the discussion on advocacy services was expanded to include the advocacy needs for the newly launched bias incidents reporting in Fall 2016 through the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. In Fall 2017, the leadership of Student Affairs, Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Affirmative Action and Equity and Compliance and the Provost met to evaluate the current ways we manage cases across the institution that require any level of advocacy for students, faculty and staff regarding Title IX, student crisis management and bias incidents. Collaboration across divisions to support these functions has continued since.
In Spring 2018, the associate vice president for Affirmative Action & Equity Compliance announced her retirement. The decision was made to re-organize the components of AAEC, effective July 1, 2018:

- Labor Relations will report directly to senior associate vice president for Human Resource Services;
- Investigations will be incorporated into new Office of Ethics and Compliance;
- Title IX will continue to report directly to the executive vice president & provost;
- Affirmative Action and related training will be incorporated into the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity & Inclusion, reporting to the chief diversity officer;
- The position of Associate Vice President for Affirmative Action and Employee and Labor Relations will be eliminated.

This new alignment of roles and responsibilities will give each of these components a sharper focus, and will increase the opportunities for collaboration on the all-important goal of advancing diversity, equity and inclusion among all elements of NIU’s workforce.

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**Employee Assistance**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The task force feels that enhancing this program could boost employee performance and morale, and contribute to a positive culture across campus. Providing employees and managers with the tools, resources and training necessary to promote a healthy work environment could yield cost savings by reducing performance issues and employee turnover. Although this program is hiring a new director, it has long been under-resourced in relation to its importance.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to consider the program for enhancement. It is important to NIU that all employees are supported in their work, and the Employee Assistance Program is a key element of that support structure. The action plan includes the merger of HR Training with the Employee Assistance Program, and seeks an additional staff member for the employee assistance functions. Both of these action steps have been approved and are now being implemented.

**May 2017 Report:** HR Training has been consolidated with Employee Assistance. The staff position has been approved, and is in the process of being filled via a search process.

**June 2018 Report:** The services of Employee Assistance Program and Training were combined and rebranded as the Employee Assistance Program and Training Center. The program added resources for counseling services in April 2017, providing counseling, training and coaching to employees and their family members in response to high demand for these services.

The program has also developed and implemented a standardized training program for supervisors at NIU. The supervisor training program offers supervisors a guided and graduated training and coaching experience for their practice in leadership roles. The program is open to new and existing
supervisors as well as individuals who are seeking to be in such a role in the future. The program develops cohorts with the first priority being given to supervisors who have been in their position for less than two years. The training consists of a standardized orientation followed by a series of training and education experiences presented in a group format. Additionally, supervisors will participate in individual coaching sessions which address personal qualities and practice circumstances. Finally, supervisors will be offered support and mentoring through a panel of existing supervisors at NIU who offer tips, advice and support for their practice as supervisors. The program just completed a pilot project in April 2018 and will be fully launched by July 2018.

The Employee Assistance Program and Training Center is in the process of hiring an additional staff member who will specialize in offering education and career advisement and coaching to staff across the NIU campus.

**Employment**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The narrative for this program includes little evidence of program quality or productivity, and is primarily focused on compliance issues. While the task force acknowledges the requirement to maintain compliance vigilance, it also supports the program’s intent to automate the hiring process and manage positions online (online applicant tracking system), expand employee self-service functionality (PeopleSoft) and implement the online evaluation module (PeopleSoft). Every effort should be made to reduce the amount of manual paperwork processing in favor of electronic processing and automation.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** Evaluation of this program is still pending.

**May 2017 Report:** PeopleAdmin was launched March 1. HRS will continue to make minor tweaks with software developers at PeopleAdmin as needed, but the team reports no major issues while noting that the campus has been responding very positively to this new enterprise system. It is very helpful for departments to be able to log in and see exactly where their transactions are in the process of approval, and to be able to review and evaluate job applicants and record such information electronically. Job applicants are responding very positively as well.

**June 2018 Report:** HRS has continued to develop and refine electronic resources to support personnel processes. This includes ongoing refinements of PeopleAdmin and the PeopleSoft self-service functions, as well as developing a new onboarding system.

The PeopleAdmin system for processing positions and job applications has been in place for just over a year, and the system continues to evolve. We have experienced larger applicant pools, suggesting that the online system encourages applicants to apply. In the next six months or so, student employees and graduate assistants will be moved into the system, completely automating the hiring process and the ability for HRS to manage positions online. At the same time, HRS has made enhancements and refinements to the NIU PeopleAdmin workflow and functional/technical product (working with PeopleAdmin developers).
Additionally, HRS has expanded the employee self-service functionality in PeopleSoft and its MyNIU portal to include the capability to modify addresses, telephone numbers, email addresses, ethnicity, disability status, and veteran status. In late April, the ability for the employee to update their direct deposit and W-4 withholdings was introduced. HRS is also working on a way for employees to add or modify a preferred name in PeopleSoft, to complement the preferred name capacity that was added for students in 2017. As a result of budget and resource constraints, HRS has not yet been able to pursue the implementation of the online performance evaluation module in PeopleSoft.

Lastly, HRS has been working on a new electronic onboarding system that will allow employees to complete their hiring documents online as well as provide key resources to help them to become a Huskie. All of these projects, as well as the overall functioning of the university’s personnel processes, will continue to be refined based on campus feedback. As part of that feedback, a user group will be established in the coming year.

Insurance and Benefits

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: Although evidence of quality is not clear from the narrative, this program is essential for the university, and has adequate staffing.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force recommendation to sustain. The program is working well in a challenging environment to provide employees with needed services. The action plan calls for coordination with the state’s Department of Central Management Services to move access to services online. I support this effort, and encourage it to move forward.

May 2017 Report: The current Benefits Choice window will utilize the new electronic system implemented by CMS for making benefits selections. All of the state universities have worked with CMS on this long process; however, it is not clear how smoothly the implementation will occur. Our Benefits team is expecting to spend extensive time assisting employees with the system for the current Benefits Choice period.

June 2018 Report: HRS continues to work with Central Management Services (CMS) on the implementation of their online system. While the system was implemented by the state about a year and a half ago, both the university and its employees continue to have challenges, especially with timeliness and accuracy of data (this is a statewide problem). While one would expect that an online system would result in freeing resources to work on other initiatives, this implementation has resulted in the opposite as staff are spending more time with employees troubleshooting issues the online system has created.
Training

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The resources allocated to this program have limited its ability to provide adequate professional development programming. Recently, the lack of programming has been more problematic because budget cuts have made it difficult for employees to go to conferences for professional development. The program is particularly important for the advancement of staff without other professional development opportunities. The task force recommends additional resources devoted to Training to increase professional development opportunities for all staff, and to implement a more substantial on-boarding for new employees.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force recommendation to consider the program for enhancement. It is important to NIU that all employees are supported in the skills they need to perform their work well, and the HR Training office is a key element in helping employees fulfil their potential. The action plan includes the merger of HR Training with the Employee Assistance Program, and seeks an additional staff member for the training functions. This funding request should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** HR Training has been consolidated with Employee Assistance. The staff position has been approved, and is in the process of being filled via a search process.

**June 2018 Report:** The services of Employee Assistance Program and Training were combined and rebranded as the Employee Assistance Program and Training Center. The program added resources for counseling services in April 2017, providing counseling, training and coaching to employees and their family members in response to high demand for these services.

The program has also developed and implemented a standardized training program for supervisors at NIU. The supervisor training program offers supervisors a guided and graduated training and coaching experience for their practice in leadership roles. The program is open to new and existing supervisors as well as individuals who are seeking to be in such a role in the future. The program develops cohorts with the first priority being given to supervisors who have been in their position for less than two years. The training consists of a standardized orientation followed by a series of training and education experiences presented in a group format. Additionally, supervisors will participate in individual coaching sessions which address personal qualities and practice circumstances. Finally, supervisors will be offered support and mentoring through a panel of existing supervisors at NIU who offer tips, advice and support for their practice as supervisors. The program just completed a pilot project in April 2018 and will be fully launched by July 2018.

The Employee Assistance Program and Training Center is in the process of hiring an additional staff member who will specialize in offering education and career advisement and coaching to staff across the NIU campus.
Information Technology

Academic Technologies Support

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The core academic applications supported by this program are integral to the student learning experience. Blackboard Learn provides a rich, online learning environment with nearly universal usage by faculty and staff. Students expect—and demand—24/7 access to this learning environment. Providing a recurring source of funds for salaries, hardware, and annual software licensing could enhance this program.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree with the Administrative Task Force recommendation to enhance academic technology support. Systems such as Blackboard and Qualtrics are essential to our academic mission. The action plan calls for solidifying funding for Blackboard, Qualtrics and other academic software, and eliminating redundancies in video-conferencing software. Those elements of the action plan that can be implemented with existing resources should move forward; the rest of the action plan should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

May 2017 Report: Consolidating redundant video-conferencing software has already begun with reductions and removal of Polycom equipment and the removal of known instances of WebEx and GoToMeeting. Experimental systems that can handle the need for room-based video – not well-suited to being serviced by current versions of Skype – have been deployed and are under consideration within DoIT. The true consolidation, however, will occur in FY18 when DoIT will work with Faculty Development and Outreach to consider the question of selection between Blackboard Collaborate and Adobe Connect. The next tangible stage in this work will occur in June when DoIT meets for its annual goal-planning session. At that time, initial plans and specific SMART goals will be set for the DoIT senior leadership team.

June 2018 Report: With the ongoing restructuring of NIU’s online support for offering for-credit programs and the consolidation of eLearning with the Provost’s Office, the necessary conversations to address the possible duplication of existing web conferencing solutions (Blackboard Collaborate and Adobe Connect) is targeted for the Fall 2018 semester. At that time, DoIT will work with the Provost’s Office to gather a representative group of faculty and staff to evaluate the web conferencing solutions being used and to determine how to move forward with the most cost-effective solution that meets as many needs as possible.

Efforts to experiment with room-based video have been discontinued.

DoIT has also been focused on a major initiative that will provide cost-savings, enhanced support and additional functionality to our Blackboard Learn implementation. The migration of our self-hosted Blackboard Learn environment to the cloud was completed in May 2018. This enabled NIU to dedicate fewer hardware and software support resources that were required to perform upgrades
and maintenance. It also allowed NIU to take advantage of an updated user interface that is only available via the Blackboard cloud offering.

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**Application Development and Hosting**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The narrative describes an excess of customized applications being developed. The task force urges the campus to utilize more of the packaged platform software systems already available.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** For all three of these programs, I understand that the administrative task force is calling for long-term savings to the campus by restructuring our business practices and/or deployment of technology. I support those goals, and recognize that many of the opportunities for long-term savings require near-term investments. Therefore, all of these need to go to the EBC for prioritization against all of the university’s other budget needs. That will require cost/benefit analyses for each project. I would also urge that the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) and related governance structures be used to conduct a comprehensive portfolio review of all of the proposed DoIT activities, to ensure that there is realistic alignment between the projects recommended to the EBC and DoIT staff capacity to execute those projects. Finally, all of these activities imply refining the set of products available to the campus, whether it is apps, software, or communications. As choices are made, DoIT needs to ensure meaningful input from the university community. The IT governance structure is an important part of that, but it will also be important to hear from the faculty and staff directly impacted by the choices made.

**May 2017 Report:** The university supports approximately 100 commercial and custom-written applications that primarily serve individual departments. This suite has grown over the years without an overall strategy. DoIT is now moving toward refining the suite by shifting away from multiple separate products and toward increasing use of the functionality provided by a small number of enterprise applications. Throughout FY17, DoIT has been working with departments to validate the need for ongoing support for these applications, exiting the platforms where the need is no longer crucial. Where departments still need specific support, DoIT has helped departments migrate to existing platforms such as Office 365, Blackboard. At the time of this writing, the number of decommissioned applications number is nearing 20. The work to finish assessing the full inventory of nearly 80 small applications will continue through the end of FY17. Completing the decommission of any remaining applications slated for retirement will occur throughout FY18.

**June 2018 Report:** DoIT has continued the process of refining the suite of applications in this service area by working with departments across campus to further decommission applications that were slated for retirement in FY18. Continual reevaluation of the necessity of every application has now helped reduce the number of applications supported by this service area by more than 30 percent, from about 100 to about 70 applications. Continued rationalization, through the normal course of business, will become the new normal in the coming years.
desktop and media technologies services

administrative task force recommendation: it is important that faculty, staff, and students have access to highly-functioning computing resources. however, maintaining independent technology support units is creating unnecessary redundancies and increased costs. the task force calls for a systematic evaluation of all distributed it support functions, including both personal/desktop support and classroom/computer lab support. the current organization and cost of a distributed model due to lack of central funding creates an inconsistent allocation of it resources and support across the university. the task force does not have sufficient information or expertise to specify what configuration the university’s it support should have, but it recognizes that a transformation is required.

charge from november 2016 report: i support the task force recommendation for a comprehensive review of it customer support, and appreciate the leadership in organizing the complex conversation. the it managers have delivered a strong initial report. their good work needs to be continued, with specific implementation steps identified for their recommendations. in particular, the unresolved issues of classroom technology management need to be addressed. i would like to receive a draft plan on these remaining issues by 2/1/17.

may 2017 report: the report on keys to it transformation included a dozen individual recommendations, three of which were prioritized for action in the second half of fy17.

single points of contact. having a single-person it group represents risks and inequities between divisions and is, perhaps, the single largest contributor to the type of differential service and support noted by the task force. initial work developed reports unique to each department or unit who maintains a single-person it department. analysis of those reports is now under way. a final recommendation will be produced regarding a new balance of it centralization on campus. the group will complete this work by the end of fy17.

centralize servers and storage. the long-term necessity for niu is to move much of our it infrastructure to the cloud as a means of increasing both security of the applications and efficiency. the method for achieving this transition is to first centralize local server and storage platforms to doit and, from there, move doit’s accumulated infrastructure to the cloud. in fy17, doit began training its staff to make this move, and established a four-year roadmap to complete that work. fy17 also included work with local it units that run their own servers and storage infrastructure to move that to doit. the final notable accomplishment in fy17 was the approval to seek funding for a refresh of our institutional storage platforms. without the new storage, it would not be possible to move local it storage in doit. that new storage will be purchased in fy18 with centralization coming online gradually throughout that year.

centralize service desks. the move to centralize and consolidate service desk functions throughout the campus, like the move to centralize servers and storage, is closely related to another of the keys to transformation: let local it groups perform those functions that they do best and that they were originally formed to do. primarily, this is to provide unique, local functions that require
specific knowledge of the interests and needs of individual faculty and staff members. DoIT, in turn, would take all functions which can be standardized and provided *en masse*. Centralization of service desks will occur in FY18. Preparatory work has been conducted: DoIT has a synthesis of cost-savings, preparation for centralization, security and application architecture that allow it to save money, improve security and centralize at the same time. The MultiFactor Authentication (MFA) solution that recently stopped our rash of phishing attacks will also be used to move to password self-service. The service desk will stop assisting with password self-service. Reassigning staff from nights and weekends, combined with the capacity gained from eliminating password reset work ($100,000 worth per year), will absorb all the work of other service desks on campus. This work will resume in FY18.

**June 2018 Report:**

**Single Points of Contact.** Several units with single IT points of contact still exist, but discussions continue. While a number of structural options exist for managing this risk, the recent transition of the CIO (Coryell to Parks) will require a reengagement with campus stakeholders to settle on the best approach at NIU.

**Centralize servers and storage.** With recurring funding secured for enterprise storage in FY18, a project is underway to decommission the unsupported and dangerously out-of-date Novell infrastructure. Over the past year, DoIT and distributed IT worked together to ensure individual storage for campus users was migrated to OneDrive, a majority of which was complete by the end of May. Shared group drives will move to the newly purchased Isilon storage this summer and the final decommissioning should take place by September 2018. Server consolidation will then proceed as quickly as possible, with most of the moves being from physical to virtual servers and not merely physical servers from a distribution location to a DoIT-managed data center. These migrations in addition to DoIT’s FY19 budget changes and rate structure will reduce departmental file storage rates by 95 percent, reduce server-based unity storage rates by 46 percent, remove all junk fees from virtual server (VM) rates, institute fair billing practices across the whole NIU community, consolidate server and storage management, reduce the complexity associated with storage and data protection options, and lead the university toward more effective data protection practices through selective offerings at highly competitive rates all while retaining a financially sustainable model on new and supported equipment.

**Centralize service desks.** While we have not successfully centralized any service desks across campus, there have been a number of ongoing conversations to achieve that outcome, most actively between DoIT and Housing. Due to retirement, DoIT lost its Service Desk director in December 2017, and we are currently in a hiring process. All plans for consolidation are on hold until this person is hired.

**Smart Classroom Initiative.** The current version of Smart Classroom is dated and expensive to support. DoIT has begun evaluating options for a Smart Classroom 2.0 version that can be scaled depending on each classroom’s needs. In partnership with the Office of the Provost, DoIT will
develop a menu of scalable options to bring the campus’ Smart Classrooms up to a new configuration standard, over time, at a more affordable price.

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**Document and Print Management**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The university needs to reduce the quantity of documents moved around campus. In particular, the university must move to a more paperless system and develop a records management plan. Anywhere Printing does not seem to be working well (e.g., excessive wait times to fix printers) and should be reexamined. The university should consider moving Document Design Services to Creative Support Services to allow for more centralized design services and improve alignment with university branding standards.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the Administrative Task Force’s placement of this program in the Reduce category, and understand that this includes two different kinds of reduction. First, I appreciate and support the efforts underway to reduce printing across campus, including the steps indicated for OnBase and AnywherePrints. Second, we still need to look at the role of Document Services, which might include the possibility of outsourcing our print functions or the enhancement of this area to provide services to external clients and increase its net revenues. I would like to receive a preliminary report on the feasibility of these or other viable options by 2/1/17. This could include a comparison of comparable schools’ printing costs when using internal and external print shops.

**May 2017 Report:** Updates are available in each of the three main areas of this service.

The campus has certainly noticed the unmistakable movement to accelerate the adoption of centralized printing as a key form of cost-savings this year. Indeed, the Institutional Print Project has turned out to be the most significant and disruptive IT project within DoIT this year. Delivery, installation and activation of the new Anywhere Printers is complete, and the first few weeks of printer pickup are now complete. Some performance-tuning is happening with the print queue software because of the new load but, in all, the project is proceeding on plan. DoIT estimates that the university will exceed its $500,000 cost-savings target, and has multiple checkpoints established to validate the savings throughout FY18.

DoIT’s recently created Architecture Review Board has given guidance for the renewal of the OnBase environments, which will happen in stages over a period of months. The first has just been completed, setting us on track for improved development capabilities. FY18 will see the entire OnBase infrastructure rebuilt and upgraded to current versions. It will also see the integration of DocuSign and a return to developing custom workflow capabilities for non-PeopleSoft-oriented business processes.

Finally, the review and decision on future directions for high-speed printing delivered through Document Services is still pending. A full report is in near-final stage but has been postponed.
because of the Institutional Print Project. Further elaboration of the direction for that group will be completed by the end of FY18.

**June 2018 Report:**

**AnywherePrints:** As of May 2018, almost 2,500 individual printers have come out of service. A PowerBI report of printer pickups and exception levels is available at the project website (go.niu.edu/printproject). The current exception rate stands at 32 percent, surpassing the project goal of keeping the exception rate below 50 percent. The university has benefitted from AWP by increasing the overall reliability and quality of its printing fleet. In addition, all faculty and staff now have access to mobile printing options, free scanning, free faxing, better finishing options and, in many cases, higher quality paper.

The cost per page for student printing has been lowered substantially, with direct savings to students. Student prints cost 28 percent less for black and 60 percent less for color. Employee printing cost for those who were using AnywherePrinters before the project has fallen as well. The cost for black has fallen between 9 percent and 37 percent, depending on historic rates “locked in” for individual departments. The cost for color fell by slightly more than 50 percent.

Environmentally, the university has made tremendous strides. The printing industry knows that imposing any form of cost or inconvenience to printing causes volumes to drop substantially. The oft-used figure for this type of reduction in print is 30 percent. NIU has seen that in its student population, and then seen even greater levels of print reduction in its employee population. Annual print volume for FY18 is on target to come in 10 million pages fewer than our FY16 actual volume. Those 10 million unprinted pages represent more than 1,200 trees covering 23 acres. In fact, it is this behavioral change that has driven the greater-than-expected degree of cost-savings for NIU. While shared printers cost less to operate and maintain than individual printers, the cheapest page to print is the one you don’t print at all. Those always cost $0.00.

The AWP project estimated a reduction in print behavior of 30 percent, in line with industry averages. NIU is currently on track to see a behavioral reduction in printing of between 40 percent and 45 percent. That moves the estimated annual savings from around $700,000/year to $1.05 million per year. By contrast, the AWP project estimated a printer exception rate of 50 percent and is achieving a 32 percent exception rate. Pushing this exception rate down to 20 percent would increase our annual cost savings to slightly more than $1.1 million per year.

However unwanted the elimination of personal printers may have been, there is no denying that the combination of cheaper per-page costs and reduced print volume overall has led NIU to greater savings than our most optimistic forecasts, going from $500,000 in savings to more than $1 million. With positive financial results on top of an operationally stable AWP platform, DoIT considers the project to be a success relative to its goals.
**OnBase:** The OnBase team is at full staffing with an appropriately sized and architected environment. Plans for DocuSign have fallen through, and there is currently no effort to create a digital signatures initiative at NIU.

**Future of High Print:** A formal proposal for the future of print was developed and provided to the Office of the President in December 2017. Our operation has provided a reduced budget for several consecutive years. By using all of the previously mentioned strategies, we have provided the needed services to campus constituents, while coping with annual increases to cost of goods sold and contractual services. Yet we have not exhausted all possible avenues of change. As such, we have partnered with industry leaders to perform an in-depth evaluation of our operation.

This research and these adjustments have allowed us to continue to reduce staffing requirements through attrition. Additional labor cuts have contributed to eliminating redundant services, such as our delivery service. We are promoting deliveries via Materials Management’s services as they already visit buildings daily, allowing us to cut our vehicle fleet and thus further reduce the cost to our customers.

We have worked diligently to align our services with the needs locally and across a broader market. Reaching out to non-NIU organizations and non-profits groups, we are beginning to form partnerships with other entities that can utilize our services. Nearby community colleges that already have academic partnerships with NIU appear to benefit from some of the technology and automation employed to improve NIU work within their organizations. We feel sharing resources will sustain both parties during higher seasonal workloads.

While we have long offered printing and fabrication solutions to those affiliated with NIU, we are increasing our focus to external customer opportunities. We have launched an external web-to-print storefront for non-NIU business, working closely with Treasury Operations and the DoIT Information Security teams to ensure operational compliance. By employing our already created automated workflow management and print tools from our NIU website, we can offer reduced labor production that will offset the university’s contribution to print by increasing external revenue.

To help the university community eliminate unnecessary print, we utilize an impressive set of electronic document, workflow and forms tools. By shifting print to electronic, the university community has already reduced expenditures on forms and course materials by about $200,000.

We further look to manage print costs by employing a set of rules-based routing options that direct print to the most efficient and cost-effective devices, whether at AnywherePrinters or higher speed production devices. Users will be able to make informed decisions to help them control departmental costs.

With the changing needs of marketing to students, we have started the development of cross-media campaigning tools. These are intended to reduce print by first incorporating electronic contact.
methods, then to a small audience through print if needed. Many universities are seeing excellent returns on investment by initiating these tool sets.

We routinely perform market comparisons of our pricing; the data reveals we are between 31 to 35 percent lower in cost than local and online vendors.

Identity and Access Control

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The university must have secure identity management systems. This program is functioning well with adequate staffing levels.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I support the task force’s recommendation to sustain. The action plan calls for ongoing action to improve access and security for NIU’s systems, including a consolidated multi-factor authentication system. Those elements of the action plan that can be implemented with existing resources should move forward; the rest of the action plan should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** The plans to implement multifactor authentication (MFA) proceeded quickly with the student implementation accelerated in response to a concerted and prolonged phishing campaign originating in Nigeria. The implementation of MFA still requires some tuning as we are finding pockets of users who are (a) not asked to authenticate at all; (b) asked to authenticate too often; or (c) are found to be in unexpected segments of our network. Still, the overall implementation was a great success, immediately reducing compromised accounts from 270 per week to 0.

**June 2018 Report:** With MFA and Self-Service Password Reset in place, the Identity and Access Control service will continue to sustain and enhance functionality without additional expenses. A business case was submitted, approved and prioritized by both the PeopleSoft governance sub-committee and the IT Steering Committee to 1) achieve compliance with federal and state laws and regulations by creating consistent and automated processes to both create and terminate NIU employee and student access to NIU information systems; and 2) modernize and reduce the complexity of our identity management and access control technical architecture to remove unnecessary and duplicative costs; increase availability; reduce the support burden; and eliminate batch processing and duplicative source systems. The project will implement:

- An approved and consistent user-access provisioning process for students, employees and sponsored accounts;
- An approved and consistent access-termination process for students, employees and sponsored accounts that will satisfy federal and state laws and regulations while retaining the accounts and their records for the required time periods;
- A researched and approved simplification of NIU’s still-decentralized and overly complex authentication architecture; and
• Recommendations on moving forward with role-based and automated access creation and termination for NIU’s PeopleSoft systems: Finance, Human Resources and Student Administration.

Multimedia Production and Support

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The narrative suggests the program cannot be sustained without additional resources, and the task force does not see evidence that the program deserves more resources. If this program is required to be maintained because of the contract with ESPN3, then the program should be moved to – and funded by – the intercollegiate athletics department.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I support the Administrative Task Force recommendation to either eliminate or reduce general revenues funding for this program. I would like to see a firm plan by 12/15/16 for reduction or elimination of this program.

May 2017 Report: This has proven to be a particularly complex issue. The goals are to meet our contractual obligations while reducing support from university general revenues and increasing student involvement. A plan has been submitted, and discussion of that plan is under way.

June 2018 Report: Discussions at the level of the senior leadership began in earnest in the fall of 2017 and did not result in an elimination or outsourcing of this program. DoIT has, however, successfully worked to reduce the required funding through:

Reduction in Staff Costs: Currently, multimedia support for athletics and for academic activities are completely intertwined: staff split their time between both types of events, and the same equipment pool is used to service both types of events. This has resulted in efficiencies in costs and customer service. Where possible we have utilized student workers, and we are working with student interns to grow their skills and improve our own talent pool. We have been successful in supporting venues that are funded from off-campus without risking our commitments and support of university functions and athletic events. In turn, this has reduced the funding requirements from Intercollegiate Athletics by about $52,000/year. Finally, by reintroducing engineering support directly within the Multimedia Production group, we have faster technical response times and can utilize these skills/talents in support of other campus A/V infrastructure.

Reduction in Equipment Refresh Costs: As we watch changing technology, we are encouraged to see professional-level video equipment costs coming down over time. Due in part to the cost-saving measures stated above, we have been successful in dedicating some revenue to future equipment purchases. By reducing new equipment costs, and the equipment refresh needs from about $300,000/year to $100,000/year, we have reduced the financial burden of event support for Athletics.
Network Architecture and Support

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Comprehensive and working Wi-Fi coverage is essential on today’s college campuses. Students, faculty, staff, and guests expect access to Wi-Fi in their living and working environments. The task force acknowledges that the financial model that supports this program is flawed and in desperate need of repair. The task force strongly recommends that campus-wide Wi-Fi be a centralized commitment of the university thereby eliminating the chargeback model to programs.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the Administrative Task Force recommendations to positively transform NIU’s network infrastructure, and to create a new funding model to replace the chargeback structures. The action plan calls for a steady migration from a wired to wireless environment, and also calls for the elimination of the charge-back system for both. The new funding model should be delivered to me by the CIO and CFO by 2/15/17, and the new funding requests should now go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** Progress has been made on the restructuring of the funding model for DoIT’s services; more work remains to be done. The elimination of Wi-Fi chargebacks was completed in July 2016; however, more time will be needed for the campus to feel the benefits, and a long-term sustainable model has not yet fully evolved. The retirement of CFO Al Phillips precluded the completion of the funding model plan called for in the November 2016. As NIU recruits a new CFO, expected in the fall, one of his or her tasks will be to work with the CIO to complete this project.

Meanwhile, I have worked with DoIT and Administration and Finance to secure commitment of full funding for current Wi-Fi coverage. This will enable DoIT to replace wireless equipment that is now nearing its end of life. More importantly, the commitment to a stable source of equipment refresh, combined with careful design work in a representative sample of buildings and inspection of emerging wireless standards, has enabled DoIT to devise a plan by which it can fully cover all areas of campus with high-quality wireless coverage at no additional expense. Expansion of Wi-Fi coverage under this new design will be a key goal for DoIT for FY18 through FY20, at which time it expects the university to be at full coverage.

**June 2018 Report:**

**Wireless:** In FY18, DoIT received full and recurring funding to renew and enhance the wireless infrastructure at NIU without additional and continuing charges to individual units. Planned for seven years, the project used guiding principles laid down by the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) and representatives from the IT Planning Council (ITPC) to prioritize and approve the numbers of access points and buildings that would receive upgraded service each year. In FY19, we will implement a guest wireless portal that, when appropriate, will direct users to the authenticated wireless. This signals the beginnings of network level authentication at NIU.
**Wired:** Like the historic rates for servers and storage, campus rates for wired network ports were not originally derived from a total cost of ownership model; did not include adequate funds for capital refresh; but did include multiple exceptions that both under- and over-billed the service. In FY19, after receiving sufficient and recurring funding for enterprise infrastructure as well as a $1 million subsidy from broadband sales in the northern Illinois region, DoIT is now able to bring the accurate rate for wired network ports down to $11/month. This rate will be the same for computing labs (historically at $5.50/month) and for 1Gbps connections (historically at $160/month!). Currently, non-DoIT units collectively pay $171,744/year for 1Gbps connections. This will be reduced to $14,916/year: a savings of $156,828 annually. These non-DoIT savings are also not included in the hard dollar DoIT budget reductions mentioned in the Executive Summary. DoIT units, particularly the Systems and Storage team, will realize more than $90,000/year in savings.

**Network Security:** We are now on the third generation of security architecture and appliance to simplify design and management and to bring more advanced capabilities that allow us to create segmentation based on who you are and what device you have to meet regulation and best practices.

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**NIU Broadband Development Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program helps to support the university's mission of being a regional institution and is impressive, especially in terms of resources generated from grants. However, the task force believes that, given the external funding received by this program, it can remain strong with reduced university resources.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I support the Administrative Task Force recommendation that general revenues funding for Broadband Development Services should be reduced. I appreciate the DoIT action plan’s call for greater external support and that you have been pursuing those efforts in recent months. I would like to see a new action plan for reducing general revenues funding that identifies strategic pathways and a cost/benefit analysis by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The Broadband team has embraced the call, and has not only become self-sufficient but is now providing support to the rest of the division. Detailed cost analysis performed as part of the DoIT FY18 budget submission indicates that Broadband is now subsidizing the cost of networking at NIU by approximately $800,000 per year with every expectation that this amount will continue to increase. Keys to the turnaround are the expansion of the network into new markets; the development of new networking products; and the planned expansion of saleable products into the storage- and business-continuity planning spaces.

**June 2018 Report:** DoIT has embraced Program Prioritization’s recommendation and, in 2016, began to implement a strategy to diminish the university’s subsidy for Broadband Development by driving incremental revenue growth in the service. As a result, in FY17 DoIT generated approximately $1.9 million in external revenue from the Broadband Development Services program; likewise, in FY18, we are projected to generate $2.6 million in revenue, a 37 percent
year-over-year growth rate. In FY19, we are projecting $3 million in total external revenue, representing 15 percent year-over-year growth. As a result of this revenue growth, NIU no longer subsidizes Broadband; in fact, the Broadband Development Services team, as of FY19, actually subsidizes DoIT’s service portfolio (specifically the Campus Wired/WiFi service) to the tune of about $950,000 (FY19) annually.

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Research Computing Support

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** There is internal growth opportunity for this program, but the program needs to be better marketed so it can be used more widely. The program serves an important function, especially as big data analysis continues to grow. The task force does not believe that this program is essential to the functioning of the university, but the increasing emphasis on big data analysis convinced the task force that this program should be sustained.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I do not fully agree with the task force recommendation to sustain the program, as it appears that transformation of the program is in order. In particular, the research computing support program in DoIT and the Center for Research Computing and Data in RIPS should be better integrated. I would like to see a joint proposal by the Vice Presidents by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Research Computing Support represents a very small part of DoIT's budget, and transformation in this area has been a low priority. Given the many other issues DoIT has been addressing, no significant progress has been made here. I accept that prioritization of time and attention, while continuing to believe that transformation of our research computing support is desirable. I have therefore extended the deadline to Oct. 1, 2017, for a joint report from the vice presidents.

**June 2018 Report:** In 2017, the NIU Center for Research Computing and Data (CRCD) hired a part-time system administrator to assist supporting NIU’s High Performance Computing Cluster - Gaea, thus reducing DoIT’s support for the system. Following a recent review by external research computing experts, the CRCD is planning to refresh the hardware and hire a full-time director. This equipment upgrade and full-time director will complete the transformation of the unit, and will be better able to serve the changing research and data analytic needs. This will also better define and limit the requests on DoIT.

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Software Licensing and Distribution

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Although this program will eventually be able to be reduced, the way the campus purchases software needs to continue to change before the reduction takes place. The program must continue moving toward more automation, which will eventually allow the program to function with reduced resources.
**Charge from November 2016 Report:** For all three of these programs, I understand that the administrative task force is calling for long-term savings to the campus by restructuring our business practices and/or deployment of technology. I support those goals, and recognize that many of the opportunities for long-term savings require near-term investments. Therefore, all of these need to go to the EBC for prioritization against all of the university’s other budget needs. That will require cost/benefit analyses for each project. I would also urge that the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) and related governance structures be used to conduct a comprehensive portfolio review of all of the proposed DoIT activities, to ensure that there is realistic alignment between the projects recommended to the EBC and DoIT staff capacity to execute those projects. Finally, all of these activities imply refining the set of products available to the campus, whether it is apps, software, or communications. As choices are made, DoIT needs to ensure meaningful input from the university community. The IT governance structure is an important part of that, but it will also be important to hear from the faculty and staff directly impacted by the choices made.

**May 2017 Report:** More than 300 software packages move through DoIT to various parts of the university each year. The intent of the recommendations and action plans has been to move toward electronic purchasing, licensing and distribution as opposed to the more manual process currently employed. The initial vision called for integrating this with the chosen standard for desktop management, known as SCCM. Current staffing doesn’t allow DoIT to move forward with this solution at this time. It is possible that an alternate means of achieving the same end can be arranged through another technology, known as AnywhereApps, though with somewhat less benefit. DoIT’s determination of what can still be done in this area will happen in June at the division’s annual goal-setting retreat.

**June 2018 Report:** Due to the need to accomplish higher-priority Program Prioritization goals and the relatively low cost of maintaining this program ($36,000/year for DoIT’s full-time software clerk position), automation of software licensing via SCCM has been assigned a lower priority. Many single/limited distribution software titles have been referred back to the requesting department for purchase with their local P-cards rather than continuing a charge-back payment structure.

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**Voice Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Although some voice service system is still needed on campus, the demand for this service has declined substantially, in part due to the cost to departments to maintain phone lines. The current phone system is antiquated, and maintaining the equipment is expensive. The current model no longer appears to be sustainable. The task force strongly recommends that DoIT transform how voice services are implemented on the campus.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** For all three of these programs, I understand that the administrative task force is calling for long-term savings to the campus by restructuring our business practices and/or deployment of technology. I support those goals, and recognize that many of the opportunities for long-term savings require near-term investments. Therefore, all of
these need to go to the EBC for prioritization against all of the university’s other budget needs. That will require cost/benefit analyses for each project. I would also urge that the IT Steering Committee (ITSC) and related governance structures be used to conduct a comprehensive portfolio review of all of the proposed DoIT activities, to ensure that there is realistic alignment between the projects recommended to the EBC and DoIT staff capacity to execute those projects. Finally, all of these activities imply refining the set of products available to the campus, whether it is apps, software, or communications. As choices are made, DoIT needs to ensure meaningful input from the university community. The IT governance structure is an important part of that, but it will also be important to hear from the faculty and staff directly impacted by the choices made.

**May 2017 Report:** The university's phone system is out of date and in need of replacement. Both changes in technology and cost considerations have led us to conclude that a full phone-for-phone replacement is not appropriate. Instead, the university has drawn down 1,800 of 6,600 desk phones over a two-year period. FY17 saw the development, release and closure of an RFP for a new voice platform. At the time of this report, the 18 responses to the RFP are being read and scored.

**June 2018 Report:** During the final months of 2017, the RFP for a new telephony solution was completed and a final product decision made that would be an on-premises solution incorporating a strong technical architecture, a modern contact center solution and a five-year financing plan that would require no additional capital or operating expenses. All of this was predicated, however, upon reducing NIU’s phone count to about 3,000. This solution was formally presented to the IT Planning Council (ITPC), the Computing Facilities Advisory Council (CFAC) and the IT Steering Committee (ITSC). The ITSC spent between two and three months in discussion about the plan and approved it to go to the Board of Trustees in Spring 2018.

At the same time, a change in DoIT leadership and a new CFO reviewed the original requirements and decision-making factors, particularly reviewing the constraint of only 3,000 phone lines. The new leadership has determined that the initial RFP requirement of only 3,000 might not best serve the campus without a robust discussion and communication plan for rollout. Because of this, NIU leadership, with agreement from the state, agreed to cancel the RFP and proceed with procuring a new system via the Illinois Public Higher Education Cooperative contract. This will allow DoIT to right-size telephone service to best serve all constituents while also managing costs through a multi-year finance option. It remains DoIT’s plan to implement a new telephone solution in FY19.

The risk remains high – both in probability and impact – that a complete voice service outage could occur in the next 12 months. With all phone system parts only available (if available) on the grey/used market, equipment failures and subsequent repairs are lengthy and complex efforts. To mitigate this risk, DoIT must create a business continuity plan for a worst-case scenario that involves cell phones and third-party leased lines.
Intercollegiate Athletics

Sports Programs

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: The intercollegiate athletics department is encouraged to find ways to be more self-sustaining. If that is not possible, then the department should consider eliminating a male, non-revenue sport.

Charge from the November 2016 Report: While great benefits come with having a competitive, robust athletics department, the increasing costs of such a program are difficult to sustain, especially in the current budget climate. I agree with the task force that the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics needs to become more self-sustaining. I have asked the associate vice president/director of Intercollegiate Athletics to provide me with a plan to make the department more self-sustaining, including increasing revenue and possible budget cuts. Based on that report, a decision on whether to eliminate a male, non-revenue sport will be made by 5/15/17. While Intercollegiate Athletics continues to flesh out its financial plan, I will hold off on any additional decisions pertaining to individual programs.

May 2017 Report: As noted above, Intercollegiate Athletics has increased its revenue and reduced its spending in the last fiscal year. As a result, the division will not eliminate a sport at this time, but will continue to monitor the situation. However, the division is encouraged to continue to find ways to become even more self-sustaining. The recent announcement of the division’s “Campaign to Sustain” should help accomplish this goal.

June 2018 Report: The Division of Intercollegiate Athletics has continued its efforts to be more self-sustaining. The division supported a decrease in the student athletic fee of $0.30 per credit hour in FY19. Additionally, the department was asked to close budget gaps of $1 million in FY18 and $1.5 million in FY19. The following actions were taken to achieve those targets:

- Revenue Enhancements
  - Learfield Multi Media Rights Agreement: This agreement was executed prior to Program Prioritization, however, the revenue opportunities from this agreement have increased since FY15 and are expected to increase in each year of the 10-year agreement. Additionally, the agreement includes up to $100,000 of annual trade, which is being used to offset recurring department expenditures.
  - Victor E Ball Annual Event: This annual event, initially held during FY16, has collectively raised over $450,000. The event will continue to be held annually.
  - Vivature Agreement: This agreement was executed midway through FY17 and, based on guaranteed billing of athletic training services, provides guaranteed annual revenue.
  - Licensing Agreement: This agreement was renegotiated for FY18 and included a $40,000 signing bonus received in FY18, a guaranteed annual minimum payment and a greater percentage of royalties for use of NIU logos.
Sodexo Concessions/Catering Agreement: This agreement was renegotiated for FY17 and included increases in concession and catering commissions for outside entities, including a separate percentage on alcohol sales and an annual cash payment.

IMG/Learfield Ticket Solutions Agreement: A renegotiated agreement with IMG/Learfield Ticket Solutions for FY18 achieved a more transparent revenue share and contractual commitment to maintain appropriate sales personnel throughout the life of the agreement.

Game Guarantee: The football program increased its commitment to “buy” games by adding an away competition at Florida State during FY19. Florida State paid this game guarantee in three installments beginning in FY17, and the revenue has been instrumental in assisting with the recent university cash-flow demands.

Premium Area Donations: The addition of premium options available for fans at football, men’s basketball and women’s basketball games has increased premium area donations in each year since FY15.

Expense/Program Reductions

- All Department: Reduced operating budgets within multiple administrative units; suspended one-time funding initiative for programs meeting certain benchmarks; suspended student-athlete nutritional meal program; reduced all administrative cell phone stipends to minimum allowed by institutional policy; reduced support for sport program student managers.
- Cheerleading: Reduced operating support of cheerleading program, including elimination of part-time staff member.
- Convocation Center: Reduced Convocation Center/Event Operations management staff by two full-time SPS positions.
- Convocation Center: Reduced Food/Beverage staff by one full-time operating staff position as a result of outsourcing Concession/Catering to Sodexo.
- Camps: Moved all financial transactions for sports camps to a third-party service, Jump Forward, to increase compliance efforts and reduce overhead to institutional departments.
- Information Technology: Although not part of Intercollegiate Athletics’ Program Prioritization review or recommendations, the department signed an agreement with DoIT to centralize information technology into the campus-wide desktop support services unit.
- Athletic Training Services: Although not part of this unit’s Program Prioritization recommendations, suspended hiring one full-time SPS position and re-assigned sport program to head athletic trainer.
- Procurement/Finance: Restructured and reduced staffing by one full-time operating staff member and one graduate assistant; moved p-card administrative functions to sport programs and administrative units.

The following are ongoing revenue efforts and expense reallocations/reductions that the department plans to implement during FY19 and beyond:
- **Apparel**: Renegotiate Adidas apparel agreement to include expense reductions and revenue enhancements within new five-year agreement.

- **Naming Rights**: Review opportunities for Convocation Center naming rights to increase overall department revenue opportunities and exposure for the Convocation Center.

- **Game-Day Revenue**: Execute agreement for third-party management of 50/50 raffle to increase potential and accountability of this revenue stream.

- **Game Guarantee**: Men’s Basketball will play an additional game guarantee for FY19 and possibly beyond the next fiscal year.

- **NCAA New Revenue**: Realization of the NCAA value-based revenue will occur in FY20. This revenue stream is a national distribution that is based on a number of metrics including academic progress and graduation success rates. Continued commitment to both areas will pay off in this distribution model.

- **All Department**: Review of opportunities to outsource operations to align business needs with efficiencies.
Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development

Office of the VP for Outreach, Engagement and Regional Development

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: This office serves an important part of the university’s mission to serve the region, but there appears to be little logic to the programs that fall under it. Some of the office’s operations are also handled by colleges (e.g., external programs) and there seems to be some administrative redundancy with a large number of senior administrators. While the delivery of online or adult for-credit courses was once seen as an ancillary task, this has changed over time, and the task force believes that this division is no longer the appropriate division to provide oversight for adult, regional, and online degree programs. These should be treated as core elements to the university's academic mission. This office has great potential and the task force believes the transformation of the organizational structure of the office will identify inefficiencies and better promote programs that fall under it.

Charge from November 2016 Report: This is still in progress and I have asked Vice President Kaplan for a draft proposal by 2/1/17.

May 2017 Report: Vice President Kaplan submitted a proposal as requested, articulating a streamlined vision for the division and increased integration with other divisions. Ongoing discussion has been somewhat overtaken by events as the division absorbs the impact of budget cuts on itself as well as on potentially related units. The creation of three new units within OERD—Conference and Event Management, External Programs, and Community Relations—adds additional uncertainties such as reassignment of personnel from other divisions, financial models for distribution of revenues and increased involvement of, and support for, NIU faculty, staff and students. Discussions are continuing as the development process proceeds.

June 2018 Report: Multiple transformation activities have taken place within OERD during the past year, thus positioning the division to lead the university’s regional outreach and engagement mission with greater efficiency, increased revenue generation and expanded faculty involvement. To this end, OERD is also providing institutional leadership to enhance partnerships and expand specialized networks to involve more faculty in regional activities.

In addition, after several months of planning, OERD is preparing to launch in Summer 2018 a centralized Conference and Event Management unit (CEM) that will coordinate business management of rentable on-campus and off-campus facilities. The central CEM unit will standardize policies and procedures, oversee a consolidated sales force and deliver targeted marketing for all facilities, ensuring a more consistent client experience and an enhanced and trackable revenue stream.

Roll-out of these new initiatives will occur over the summer.
Oversight for online course delivery has been moved to the Division of Academic Affairs, and is addressed in the Complex Conversation section of this report.

**WNIU/WNIJ, NIRIS**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program provides excellent regional exposure for the university, but it is difficult to tell from the narrative how much the program relies on university funding. As with the intercollegiate athletics department, the task force encourages this program to find ways to become more self-sustaining. The program may need to engage in additional fundraising given the declining federal support for public radio.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The division and station need to develop a plan to modify the station’s relationship to the university. Outcomes may include reduced reliance on appropriated funds through a combination of decreased expenditures, increased sponsorships and fund-raising and the possible development of a media collaborative and deeper synergy with relevant academic units on campus. I understand that developing options will require feasibility evaluations and planning to execute. I look for a feasibility study and recommendation on the preferred option by March 1, 2017, with implementation to begin by July 1, 2017.

**May 2017 Report:** The plan submitted by the division and the station calls for a mix of approaches aimed at addressing the primary Program Prioritization concerns of connectedness across campus and sustainability. Increased revenue through fundraising efforts has helped to offset a reduction in appropriated funds, though to maximize these efforts, NPR will need appropriate development staff for FY18. Further efficiencies have been made through expenditure reductions across NPR operations.

Discussions involving a media convergence center have been under way for some time. Those discussions grew in intensity this semester, with the radio station, the Northern Star and the Northern Television Center establishing an NIU News Media Collaborative that creates greater student integration across platforms. NPR has established Public Radio 101 to aid in training and skill development for students each semester. Students are now part of the fabric of WNIJ news with appropriate guidance from veteran journalists. The project is enriching their student experience while diversifying NPR’s coverage.

Beyond journalism, NPR is working with relevant NU units to bring NIU “content” to the general public. This includes broadcasting student and faculty recitals; conducting interviews and programming with top student ensembles; and supporting the promotion of campus-wide events through PSA, community calendars, daily almanacs and feature stories. Further collaborations have developed with university-licensed stations across the state to increase local reporting capacity while implementing efficiencies in station operations.
I am encouraged by this progress, and call on the parties to continue to work toward a long-term goal of a fully integrated media convergence center. That report will be due by the end of the calendar year.

**June 2018 Report:** Northern Public Radio has addressed Program Prioritization recommendations over the last two years. This includes calls for deeper synergy across campus, increased self-sufficiency and a reduced reliance on appropriated funds.

Engagement across campus has resulted in increased NIU faculty, staff and student presence throughout station programming, including: live events featuring NIU student and faculty performers; broadcasts from the NIU School of Music performance halls; performances from NIU’s quartet-in-residence, the Avalon String Quartet; the launch and iTunes distribution of new podcasts, including: “STEM Read” and “Mind U” featuring NIU contributors; and most recently the development of a new weekly broadcast feature, “The Sound of Science,” during NPR’s Science Friday.

“The NIU News Media Collaborative” continues to provide journalism training and experiences to students across disciplines. The project has resulted in a continuum from one-time student visits to a four-part journalism workshop (Pub Radio 101) to for-credit internships, to paid professional experience and finally to full-time professional employment within the industry. For the near-term, the NIU News Media Collaborative will remain focused on converging content and expertise across campus. Under improved budgetary conditions, the media collaborative could examine the feasibility of a “media convergence center.” Future collaborative projects as well as those currently underway will continue to connect NIU and community resources to create content that fulfills our mission to “enrich, inspire and inform.”

Strategic operational and programmatic changes as well as circumstantial staff shortages have resulted in reduced expenditures, notably a 32 percent cut in institutional support in FY18 with similar funding levels projected for FY19. A decrease in institutional support has a compounding effect on the station’s revenue. Northern Public Radio’s largest grant (Corporation for Public Broadcasting) is partially calculated on the amount of support provided by the license holder. Some of this reduction has been offset by growth in local funding. However, in order to fully realize fundraising potential and continue toward greater self-sufficiency, Northern Public Radio must invest in personnel charged with fundraising for FY19.
**Research & Innovation Partnerships**

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**Center for the Interdisciplinary Study of Language and Literacy**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The task force encourages the Center to become more self-sustaining by continuing to apply for grants/contracts and reducing reliance on university resources. The narrative addresses a key cost saving opportunity by phasing out the CISLL Graduate Certificate program and instead supporting the Graduate Certificate program for Post-Secondary Reading (GCPSR), which is fully online and national in scope.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** CISLL has done excellent work in language and literacy and is becoming self-sustaining. Vice President Blazey and I both agree that CISLL should be reduced with the goal to reduce general revenue funding and increase grant support instead. I would like to receive a draft of the proposal by 12/15/16 that identifies a reduction in 02 funding, and a timeline for that reduction (whether or not grant support has been secured). I invite you to set a realistic date for that reduction that allows a reasonable opportunity to write proposals and secure funding. At the same time, I would expect 02 reductions to take place no later than 06/30/18.

**May 2017 Report:** CISLL had already been working to reduce financial dependence on the university through increased external funding. A two-year reduction plan that will begin in FY19 includes termination of a selected set of CISLL operations and transfer of other operations from central funding to indirect returns associated with grant activity. In FY19, core funding will be reduced by eliminating a graduate student fellowship that is no longer needed; reducing funding for planning grants and pilot grants now that several funded grants are in place and proposals are in queue; and eliminating funds for clerical help now that centralized services are available through RIPS. In FY20, core funding will be further reduced by moving one of the two center research associate positions and the two co-director teaching buyouts from direct to indirect funding. Current and submitted grant activity indicate that indirect funds should be available for the movement. If the indirect returns are insufficient, CISLL leadership will reduce operating expenses further and/or seek funding from other sources. The target central funding level will provide resources for compensating the two co-directors and a research associate, as well as providing a minimal operations budget. This represents an appropriate guaranteed funding level for CISLL to continue as a platform for attracting and hosting sponsored research. In FY20, and in preparation for the FY21 budget, CISLL and RIPS leadership will reevaluate the level of central funding.

**June 2018 Report:** RIPS has worked with Academic Affairs to create a review process for research centers. During the 2017-18 academic year, this review process was applied to CISLL, and confirmed the recommendations of the May 2017 report that CISLL should move forward with stronger self-reliance, reduced central funding and refocused efforts. The subsequent departure of the CISLL director is not expected to fundamentally change these expectations. Discussions are underway for a successor as director, and it is expected that implementation will proceed once those discussions are complete.
Innovation

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: This program has potential to bring in substantial money for the university. As a research institution, it is imperative to have an active program in innovation. However, the program was created recently without the appropriate resources for it to be successful. For example, the university cannot afford the attorneys to protect NIU’s intellectual property with the current funding level for this office.

Charge from November 2016 Report: I agree that the program should be considered for enhancement. Innovation is an important part of our mission, and also contributes to our strong teaching, outreach and engagement functions. The action plan calls for strengthening IP protection and launching an innovation center, with funding requests for staffing and start-up for the innovation hub, as well as for patent work. These funding requests should now go to the EBC for evaluation. Also, strong efforts should be made with external partners (e.g., Ideal Industries) to support this program.

May 2017 Report: RIPS has been working to develop partnerships, particularly IDEAL and Discover Financial Services.

June 2018 Report: The focus during the 2017-18 academic year has remained on the innovative partnerships with IDEAL and Discover Financial Services (DFS). The well-established IDEAL-NIU Intrapreneurship Program continues to flourish. This program provides NIU students from disciplines across the university with experience in researching markets, developing products and building business plans, as well as opportunities to earn paid internships and offers of longer-term employment from IDEAL. DFS and NIU have entered into an agreement to launch the Discover Campus Innovator Program in 2018-19. This program provides students in computer science and related disciplines with real-world experience working on applications development as paid interns in a DFS business unit located in “71 North,” the university’s collaborative space located on the bottom level of Founders Memorial Library. Based on these successful partnerships, and the growing number of opportunities for NIU to form innovative partnerships with other businesses and institutions of higher education, RIPS has been authorized to search for a Director of Innovation Partnerships during FY19.

Institute for Nanoscience Engineering and Technology

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: AcTF recognizes this is a strong interdisciplinary program but insufficient data related to student involvement. Excellent program but the AcTF does not believe that Institute should be consuming scarce resources at this time.

Charge from November 2016 Report: Vice President Blazey and I agree with the task force’s recommendation to reduce InSET. I support efforts to end the dedicated funding for InSET and redirect those funds towards other research initiatives. This redirection should take place as soon as current commitments to InSET can be wound down, and the process complete by 06/30/17.
**May 2017 Report:** The reallocation of dedicated funds away from InSET has been completed. To bring a structured conclusion to the Program Prioritization process for research centers, the Division of Academic Affairs and Division of Research and Innovation Partnerships have developed a review process for those centers placed by the program review task forces in the “Reduce”, “Transform” and “Review” categories by the task forces, including InSET. The review will build on the Program Prioritization process, with a tighter focus on the mission of research centers to provide added strength to a research area that takes work beyond that which can be achieved by individual efforts in that area. These reviews will determine whether InSET and other centers should continue, and set expectations for those that do continue.

**June 2018 Report:** The development of the review process for research centers has been completed, and will be used henceforth for all research centers on a scheduled basis. In the 2017-18 academic year, the review process was completed for all research centers in the “Reduce,” “Transform” and “Review” categories by the task forces, including InSET. The review process confirmed that InSET should be discontinued. That has been carried out, and the resources formerly directed by RIPS to InSET have been redeployed to other research needs.

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**NIU Press**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Although the NIU Press has published some impressive books in niche areas, the sustainability of university presses in general is questionable. The ability of the NIU Press to generate outside revenue and rely less on university resources is highly unlikely. This program may be a non-essential service that the university cannot afford to afford.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** The NIU Press makes a valuable contribution to the scholarly community and enhances our reputation. However, I agree in part with the task force recommendation that NIU’s contribution to the cost of the NIU Press needs to be reduced. I look for a plan to do so to be delivered by 7/1/17 and implemented as soon as feasible.

**May 2017 Report:** I have requested a significant reduction in the cost of the press. While we consider alternative operating models, costs have been significantly reduced through attrition. Staff numbers have decread from seven to five while operations were maintained through process reengineering and outsourcing. At present, RIPS is engaged with an outside consultant to develop a long-term sustainable strategy.

**June 2018 Report:** We have determined that a sustainable future for NIU Press will require an external partnership. Explorations for such partnerships are underway.
Research Compliance

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program is run competently and appears to have adequate resources. The program can be more efficient by using OnBase. Even with potential cost savings, this program is essential for a research institution and should be sustained.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** Vice President Blazey and I agree that Research Compliance should be considered for enhancement rather than sustained at its current level. Research compliance is critical for the safety of our research community, and for continued federal support. The action plan offers staffing scenarios for addressing overall compliance needs as well as the particular needs of the animal care facilities. These funding requests should now go to the EBC for evaluation, where I believe they should be given particularly urgent attention.

**May 2017 Report:** An emphasis on laboratory safety continues through policy and curricular development. This fall, UNIV600 will offer professional training in laboratory safety to graduate students. The course will improve lab safety and the competitiveness of our students. This represents a distinctive strength, as the course may be unique to NIU.

**June 2018 Report:** The culture of laboratory safety continues to grow. UNIV 600, a course offered to graduate students focusing on laboratory safety, saw 16 students enroll in Fall 2017. The course earned external recognition, receiving an award from the Campus Safety Health and Environmental Management Association (CSHEMA) for innovation. Additionally, the UNIV 600 instructors held presentations in a webinar and at CSHEMA’s national conference. CSHEMA also recognized Dr. Gerald Blazey with an award for Campus Leaders who Care, making NIU’s commitment to laboratory safety known on a national level. The course will be offered again in Fall 2018. A campus-wide policy on safety has also been created, with an expected rollout of early FY19. The new policy stresses the importance of safety and showcases NIU’s commitment to instill safety in students and staff.

Sponsored Projects Administration

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program is essential at a research institution and has the potential to help faculty and staff secure significant grant money. Additional resources to this program will provide the university with a positive return on investment, attract and retain excellent faculty and staff, and enhance the university’s reputation.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree that the program should be considered for enhancement to maintain the effective functioning of our external funding. The action plan calls for implementation of the PeopleSoft Grants module, and staffing support for SPA, including new staff and professional development. RIPS should investigate if some of the data analysis needs can be met by the new Institutional Effectiveness office. In parallel, the funding requests should also go to the EBC for evaluation.
**May 2017 Report:** Despite the absence of additional resources, RIPS has been reassigning duties to establish an electronic records group. This fall, the group will introduce more online features for proposal development and notification.

**June 2018 Report:** Sponsored Program Administration has continued to add functionality to InfoEd. During the past year, the most significant advance was the activation of electronic routing and review of grant proposals and research compliance protocols. Work is now proceeding to integrate InfoEd with PeopleSoft. This will facilitate grant budget development by enabling direct population of data on salary, fringe benefit and reporting hierarchies.
Advocacy Services

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program is required per the Violence Against Women Act. The program has recently undergone a transformation by moving from Wellness Promotion to Counseling and Consultation Services. The task force believes this move is appropriate and the new reporting arrangement should be given the opportunity to work. Between compliance requirements and the increased focus on sexual assault on campus, this program is necessary and will likely need more funding in the future. There are opportunities for this program to better coordinate with other units on campus, particularly the newly transformed Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance (AASEC) office.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s placement of this program in Transform. I have asked Vice President Weldy and Executive Vice President and Provost Freeman to work together to facilitate an external review of their reporting units that contribute to compliance with the various statutes and policies that govern the NIU response to sexual misconduct, including but not limited to Title IX, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) and Illinois law. The external review should be scheduled no later than 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The external review has been deferred for several reasons. The reorganization of Student Affairs under the Office of the Executive Vice President/Provost that includes Human Resource Services and Title IX has provided an opportunity for greater integration of services. There was a desire to allow these conversations to develop before inviting a review. The need to conduct the Campus Climate Survey, and to use those data to inform the university’s path forward, provides additional rationale for deferring the review until the university has incorporated the findings into its action plans. Finally, the current fiscal circumstances led to a decision to postpone incurring costs for consultants. As a result, the external review should be scheduled no later than the end of the 2017 calendar year.

**June 2018 Report:** Since the reorganization of Human Resources, Title IX and Student Affairs under the executive vice president and provost, the discussion on advocacy services was expanded to include the advocacy needs for the newly launched bias incidents reporting in Fall 2016 through the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

In Fall 2017, the leadership of Student Affairs, Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance met with the provost to evaluate the current ways the university manages cases across the institution that require any level of advocacy for students, faculty and staff regarding Title IX, student crisis management and bias incidents. Collaboration across divisions to support these functions has continued since.

In Spring 2018, the associate vice president for Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance announced her retirement. The decision was made to reorganize the components of AAE,
effective July 1, 2018. In particular, Affirmative Action and related training will be incorporated into the Office of Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, reporting to the chief diversity officer. This new alignment of roles and responsibilities will increase the opportunities for collaboration on advocacy issues.

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**Campus Childcare Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program provides high-quality childcare to the community, in particular students. It is an important program to attract and retain students, faculty, and staff. The program has the potential to grow as demand for childcare is great. Although the task force does not necessarily recommend merging this program with the Child Development Lab because their missions are different, the two entities should consider opportunities for synergies. The university should consider housing both in the same facility. The task force recommends enhancing the program by investigating the ability to expand the facility's capacity, providing more competitive salaries, and hiring more staff to meet the significant demand for childcare services.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation that this program should be considered for enhancement as it provides a valuable service to the university community, particularly students with children. The task force recommended exploring possible synergies with the Child Development Lab in order to expand childcare services. I have asked these two units to deliver a proposal by 3/1/17 to increase synergies or merge the two programs.

**May 2017 Report:** Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS), an academic program in the School of Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences, and Student Affairs have proposed merging the Child Development Laboratory (CDL) and Campus Child Care into one unit overseen by FACS beginning in Fall 2017. This merger would take place over a two-year period. This collaboration would expand the number of experiential learning opportunities for students studying child development in a modern facility; support continued growth in the number of students studying child development; provide additional space for research involving young children; and continue to perform the critical mission of providing high quality child care for members of the NIU community. Additionally, the number of children this new unit could accommodate would increase to meet high demand, specifically for infants and toddlers. The new entity will build on the award-winning (i.e., ExceleRate Illinois Gold Circle of Quality rated and ExceleRate Illinois Award of Excellence in Family and Community Engagement) strengths of both centers by emphasizing the importance of consistent learning environments for children and continued support for building relationships with families and children. The proposal will go to the Executive Budget Committee for consideration.

**June 2018 Report:** The proposed merger between Campus Child Care and the Child Development Laboratory is moving ahead as planned. The merger will create a new entity called the Child Development and Family Center (CDFC) as part of the School of Family and Consumer Sciences (FACS). Information Technology support has already been assumed by the College of
Health and Human Sciences. The transitioning of “practicum classrooms” took place in mid-May 2018 with child development practicum students completing their required practicum experiences in the former Campus Child Care facility for the first time. Expanded infant care started at the CDFC beginning in mid-May 2018 as well. FACS will assume full fiduciary and operational responsibilities for the Child Development and Family Center beginning on July 1, 2018, along with re-alignment of both state licensing and national accreditation. Expanded infant and toddler care is anticipated to begin in August of 2018.

**Counseling and Consultative Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The mental wellbeing of students is of utmost importance to promote health, happiness, and academic success. Even with declining enrollments, demand for this program is increasing and will only continue to grow as community partners and the local hospital lessen their mental health services. The program provides 24/7 coverage and is an important resource for students who experience crises at night or on weekends, and also helps to mitigate university liability with respect to students at risk of self-harm or harming others. NIU should be a national leader on improving student mental health, which will improve retention of students experiencing mental health and substance abuse problems. The task force recommends additional resources be provided for increasing staff and a review of salary competitiveness.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force that this program should be considered for enhancement. This program is essential for the mental health of our students and the demand for the program’s services are growing. The program’s request to hire additional staff should be sent to the Executive Budget Committee (EBC) for review. Additionally, the program should continue exploring partnering with an outside company to provide on-call coverage. The program should provide a recommendation regarding the feasibility of such a partnership by 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Counseling and Consultation Services will partner with ProtoCall, a leading service provider for college and university campuses, to provide customized on-call mental health resources for the campus community. These enhanced services will create an opportunity for greater access to mental health care outside of normal business hours. This partnership will contribute to the prevention of significant mental health emergencies and support increased retention and academic success for NIU students. The partnership should be in place by Fall 2017. CCS continues to experience increased demand for daytime services, and a detailed plan to create additional staff positions is being submitted to the Executive Budget Committee (EBC).

**June 2018 Report:** Counseling and Consultation Services has partnered with ProtoCall, a leading service provider for college and university campuses, to provide customized on-call mental health resources for the campus community. ProtoCall has been responding to after-hours mental health inquiries and emergencies since January 2018. The service has enhanced CCS’s ability to provide comprehensive support to the campus community after hours. Additionally, in partnership with Counseling, Adult and Higher Education, CCS has received funding from the Substance Abuse
and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant to develop the Helping Huskies Thrive initiative. Activities include programming focused on increasing mental health awareness and decreasing stigma, providing training to faculty, staff and students, and providing mini-grants to student organizations to fund speakers who focus on mental health issues within marginalized communities. At this time funding is still needed to evaluate staff salaries and retain current experienced staff, as well as recruit and hire additional staff to meet the growing mental health needs of the campus community.

**Direct Health Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program is hiring a new director and will likely undergo a significant transformation to review staffing models and organizational structure as well as efficient means of addressing the health care needs of students. The program might consider moving to more physicians’ assistants or hiring more staff under nine or ten month contracts since demand is significantly reduced during the summer. Certain aspects of the program could be considered for outsourcing, although the task force does not have enough information to know whether outsourcing would be more efficient financially.

**Charge from the November Report:** Vice President Weldy has communicated to these programs that we are exploring outsourcing. I have asked to have an RFP out for review by 1/15/17. No decision on outsourcing will be made until we get a better sense of the financial feasibility and service quality in such a move. In the interim, I have asked the vice president to make other cost reductions to these programs as appropriate.

**May 2017 Report:** No proposals were received on the published RFP for Health Services. I have asked Procurement to examine why we did not receive any proposals. That report is due by June 30, 2017.

Strategic analysis on the future of the lab has been completed. Currently, certain lab tests are sent out to a third-party entity that reports the results back to Health Services. Beginning this summer, those lab tests that are currently performed in-house will also be sent to a third party, and the Health Services testing lab will be closed. Work has already begun toward implementation of this decision.

Health Services is finalizing an RFP for third-party billing that will be released this summer so that most health insurance plans can be accepted by Health Services by the fall.

Strategic analysis on the future of the pharmacy is ongoing, focusing on revenue generation and the impact of third-party billing within the pharmacy.

**June 2018 Report:** This month, NIU and Northwestern Medicine (NWM) signed a letter of intent for NWM to provide comprehensive healthcare expertise, by way of staffing, operating and
managing health services at NIU. With a letter of intent in place, NIU and NWM will begin negotiations on the final agreement related to the potential services that will be provided by NWM.

Northwestern Medicine is one of the top medical groups in the nation with the resources, expansive network and expertise required to provide excellent care for our students.

It is the goal of both parties that the final agreement will be executed and effective in early 2019. Northwestern Medicine will already assume responsibility for sports medicine services beginning July 1, 2018.

**Disability Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** As the number of students with disabilities continues to grow, supporting them appropriately in a central office is key to recruiting and retention. This program helps NIU to be an inclusive university. The program is significantly understaffed and will only continue to be more so as the definitions of disabilities broaden and the population of students with disabilities continues to increase. The program also must adhere to a rising number of federal and state mandates, which taxes capacity even further. The task force recommends providing enhanced resources to expand facilities to make them more accessible and increase staffing.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation to enhance as the program is under-resourced. The program’s requests to hire a braille specialist and for increasing captioning services should be sent to the EBC for review. Additionally, the office is located in an unacceptable location. A plan to move the office to a more suitable location must be in place by 5/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** A job description for a full-time adapted materials coordinator has been generated and will be submitted to the Executive Budget Committee before the end of May. Regarding increasing captioning services, a group of individuals across campus who have interest in centralizing closed-captioning services for the university has been meeting for several months. This team has formulated recommendations to move a centralized closed-captioning operation forward, and a proposal will be submitted to the Executive Budget Committee for review by mid-June.

In terms of relocating the program, a team with representatives from across the university is working to create and implement a multi-year, phased space reallocation plan that strategically clusters and positions student services. The space planning goals are to support student academic and career success; optimize access and service provision; enhance recruitment efforts; and, overall, better meet the needs of current and prospective students. Priorities for the space reallocation project include relocating Disability Resource Services as per Program Prioritization recommendations.
**June 2018 Report:** A job search responding to the program’s request to hire a Braille specialist/full-time adapted materials coordinator is underway.

The position for university wide centralized captioning services is currently under review by the AVP of Student Affairs and members from the Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost. This centralized system will assist in coordinating the efforts of several departments, provide enhanced efficiency, reduce overall costs and time delays, and bring NIU in compliance with Illinois legal mandates. The request for full-time office support for this position, as well as the DRC front office, is aligned with this service.

Discussions about the relocation of the DRC continue. With the upcoming renovation of Holmes Student Center, the opportunity exists to discuss spacing issues for other academic and student support offices. Those conversations will flow through the new Capital Planning and Space Management process being established between Academic Affairs and Administration & Finance.

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**Health Services Support and Office Operations**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The hiring of a new director will allow this program to transform some of its services and business practices. The program has the opportunity to centralize IT, possibly outsource billing, and identify more affordable health care plans for students. These reforms may reduce costs.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** Vice President Weldy has communicated to these programs that we are exploring outsourcing. I have asked to have an RFP out for review by 1/15/17. No decision on outsourcing will be made until we get a better sense of the financial feasibility and service quality in such a move. In the interim, I have asked the vice president to make other cost reductions to these programs as appropriate.

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**Holmes Student Center**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The Holmes Student Center (HSC) is the central hub of the campus and needs substantial upgrades and transformation. Because the narrative discusses the HSC as a whole, it is difficult to evaluate different units under the HSC. The task force encourages the university to consider remodeling many of the heavily-used student areas as well as outsourcing areas including food services, the hotel, and the bookstore if doing so would increase financial stability.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation to transform. The HSC is the hub of the campus and, as such, we need to make it a comfortable place for people to study, relax, eat, and converse. I support the proposed remodel of the first floor and want the option of outsourcing of food services, the hotel, and the bookstore to be examined. No decision on outsourcing will be made until we get a better sense of the financial feasibility and service quality in such a move. A report on the issue is due to me by 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The plan is being revised. The new plan is due August 15, 2017.

**June 2018 Report:** A plan for the initial phases of HSC renovation has been developed and presented to the Board of Trustees. Implementation of the first phase is now underway. The plan calls for a dramatic overhaul of the HSC ground floor that will enhance the student experience and make the building a destination for the entire campus community.

Effective May 2018, the university has partnered with Follett Corporation, a national bookstore chain, to manage and operate our bookstore. By partnering with one of the nation's leading bookstore operators there will be more affordable choices for students, better service for faculty and increased revenue for the university.

Plans for the ground floor renovation also include a coffee shop and restaurant, both national franchises, as well as a sports-themed grill and a convenience store. These venues will be available to residential students to enhance the variety of dining options available to them while creating new on-campus dining options for faculty, staff, visitors and commuter students.
Recommendations regarding a comprehensive campus dining strategy are included in the Housing and Dining report and support the self-operation model as the most cost-effective model.

The HSC will also become a nexus where student leaders meet and collaborate thanks to the relocation of the Campus Activities Board, the Student Association and the Student Involvement and Leadership Development department.

Bright, comfortable lounges throughout will provide spaces to study, meet and relax, while a revitalized Huskie Den will serve those looking for recreation and entertainment. Huskie Bus riders will also enjoy a comfortable transit lounge.

**Housing and Dining**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Because this unit is such a large and complex department, the task force is challenged to assign an appropriate categorization for this program. Little useful data on housing is provided in the report as the narrative focuses primarily on dining. Housing and dining already appear to be undergoing a transformation as they are being split into two separate units and a new director of the campus dining program will be in place by Fall 2016. Based on the limited information available to the task force, this transformation seems appropriate. In terms of housing, the task force is not able to evaluate the current housing plan and whether it is sufficient due to a lack of information in the narrative.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation to transform the program. These two programs have split since the narratives were written. I am pleased that the new director of campus dining has been hired and would like an assessment of the university’s current dining services. Additionally, I look forward to receiving the comprehensive housing plan that is being developed. Both reports are due by 3/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** In July 2016, Housing and Residential Services (HRS) and Campus Dining Services (CDS) were established. CDS brought together all food service operations on the campus. A new executive director was hired to oversee the merging of the operations as well as to develop a comprehensive dining strategy for the campus. A proposed dining strategy has been submitted to institutional leadership. One final component for consideration is the recommendations that will be completed by the dining consultants who are part of the HSC renovation planning. Upon receipt of those recommendations, CDS hopes to finalize the strategy and create a plan to operationalize the vision. That plan will be presented to me for my consideration by June 30, 2107.

Housing and Residential Services has focused on enhancing the on-campus living experience. The department is moving forward with its collaborative effort with Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) to bring together the academic elements of the Themed Learning Communities with the existing residential learning communities. In Fall 2017, four of these comprehensive learning communities will be available for students. Housing is also launching a
community focused on health and wellness as well as working with the College of Law to provide a designated community for law students at the Northern View apartment complex. Additionally, Housing has worked with International Programs to designate two floors of Neptune for international student housing and to offer incentives to international students to live in on-campus housing.

**June 2018 Report:** A new approach to residential dining will increase customer satisfaction, cut costs and raise revenues by creating an expanded selection of dining destinations offering quality food in attractive settings.

By FY20, the dining strategy should provide residential students with the versatility of using their meal plan to dine in on-campus restaurants, such as Coffee and Bagels in Founder’s Library, as well as in residence halls. Those restaurants will also create new revenue streams by serving faculty, staff, visitors, commuter students and others who currently have few options on campus.

When remodeling work at the HSC is complete in Fall 2019, the facility will include a coffee shop, a restaurant, a sports-themed grill and a convenience store. Several of these will be national chains operated by the university under franchise agreements. The new comprehensive dining strategy also includes plans to substantially upgrade dining options in other campus locations. Service at the popular Dog Pound Deli in Stevenson Towers will also be expanded.

This approach to campus dining, which is common on other campuses across the country, will make dining an asset that helps attract and retain students. Although changes to campus dining started in Fall 2017 with an effort to reallocate resources and reduce operating expenses in residential dining, the plan will be fully implemented in Fall 2019. Moving forward, this plan will continue to evolve to meet the operational and service needs of the university.

The support of on-campus living experiences has continued to mature during FY18. Since Fall 2017, Housing and Residential Services has allocated space in Neptune West and partnered with Student Financial Aid to provide scholarships for international students and launched special interest communities in sports, law and health and wellness. Housing and Residential Services and the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) have partnered on several activities:

- They piloted four hybrid-themed learning communities/living-learning communities and determined that such hybrid communities are not viable at this time.
- They re-envisioned living-learning communities, including discontinuing those without a strong academic unit sponsor and separating out living-learning communities from special-interest communities.
- They have hired a new coordinator for learning communities, based in the Office of First- and Second-Year Experience, to coordinate the current themed-learning communities and oversee the full implementation of the re-envisioned living-learning communities.
Northern Star

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: Although the future of print journalism is uncertain, this program provides excellent experiential learning opportunities for students. Alumni consistently reflect on it positively. The task force strongly encourages the university to no longer charge the program $30,000 rent for its office space and still allow the Star to maintain its independent voice.

Charge from the November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force’s recommendation to sustain and that the Star should be moved to a new location. A plan to move the office to a more suitable location must be in place by 5/15/17. I encourage the possible development of a media collaborative and deeper synergy with relevant units on campus.

May 2017 Report: In terms of relocating the program, a team with representatives from across the university is working to create and implement a multi-year, phased space reallocation plan that strategically clusters and positions student services. The space planning goals are to support student academic and career success; optimize access and service provision; enhance recruitment efforts; and, overall, better meet the needs of current and prospective students. Priorities for the space reallocation project include relocating the Northern Star as per Program Prioritization recommendations.

June 2018 Report: Instead of moving the Star from its current space, a decision was made to reduce the Star’s rent to $1. This reduction in rent, along with a new student fee to support the newspaper, is expected to help the Star to remain financially viable.

Because of budgetary constraints, the development of a new Media Convergence Center is on hold. However, the Star continues to collaborate with WNIJ and the Northern Television Center.

Office of Nontraditional Student Services and Military Services

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: This program has recently undergone a transformation. It is too soon to tell whether the transformation is a success, so task force recommends that the program be allowed to continue the transformation. The program should assess effectiveness after the transformation is complete.

Charge from the November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force’s recommendation to transform the program and would like a report assessing the effectiveness of the recent transformation by 1/15/17.


June 2018 Report: The Office of Military and Post-Traditional Student Services has developed new ways to transform the department since the merger in 2015. The strategy is to be proactive in
programming that reaches out to students and meets them where they are. Activities in support of this strategy include:

- Hosting the first Community College Day for student veterans interested in NIU at Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center. This event allowed interested student veterans from our neighboring community colleges to meet our staff and meet with a representative from Admissions.
- Supporting the social and academic needs of our students with the Facts and Snacks workshop series and Breaking Barriers, which focused on our first- and second-generation students.
- Holding the second annual Veterans Job Fair, capped off with the first Warriors Brunch, which brought in veterans and families to honor our veterans for Veterans Day.

The office has not experienced growth with full-time staff, but is now located in the same building with its lounge space on the first floor of the Campus Life Building. This will make post-merger efforts to streamline office activities more practical.

**Pharmacy Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The program provides necessary medications in support of the Health Care Services at the university. The task force encourages a review of staffing models including moving to ten-month contracts and/or limited hours when student use is lowest. Certain aspects of the program could be considered for outsourcing or automation, such as a secure prescription vending machine being used at other universities.

**Charge from the November Report:** Vice President Weldy has communicated to these programs that we are exploring outsourcing. I have asked to have an RFP out for review by 1/15/17. No decision on outsourcing will be made until we get a better sense of the financial feasibility and service quality in such a move. In the interim, I have asked the vice president to make other cost reductions to these programs as appropriate.

**May 2017 Report:** No proposals were received on the published RFP for Health Services. I have asked procurement to examine why we did not receive any proposals. That report is due by June 30, 2017.

Strategic analysis on the future of the lab has been completed. Currently, certain lab tests are sent out to a third-party entity that reports the result back to Health Services. Beginning this summer, those lab tests that are currently performed in-house will also be sent to a third party, and the Health Services testing lab will be closed. Work has already begun toward implementation of this decision.

Health Services is finalizing an RFP for third-party billing that will be released this summer so that most health insurance plans can be accepted by Health Services by the fall.
Strategic analysis on the future of the pharmacy is ongoing, focusing on revenue generation and the impact of third-party billing within the pharmacy.

**June 2018 Report:** This month, NIU and Northwestern Medicine (NWM) signed a letter of intent for NWM to provide comprehensive healthcare expertise, by way of staffing, operating and managing health services at NIU. With a letter of intent in place, NIU and NWM will begin negotiations on the final agreement related to the potential services that will be provided by NWM.

Northwestern Medicine is one of the top medical groups in the nation with the resources, expansive network and expertise required to provide excellent care for our students.

It is the goal of both parties that the final agreement will be executed and effective in early 2019. Northwestern Medicine will already assume responsibility for sports medicine services beginning July 1, 2018.

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**Student Government**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The student government provides valuable services to students and is an important part of shared governance giving students a voice in university operations. However, the budget for the executive staff appears to be excessive, and funding for the student organizations it sponsors varies widely. Because its funding comes from student fees, the task force recommends that the student government engage in an internal analysis of its own spending to ensure that it is a responsible steward of its budget, with the goal of reducing student fees if possible.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s recommendation to reduce this program, specifically as it relates to student fees. I have asked Vice President Weldy to convene a group to make a recommendation on reducing fees; the proposal is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** This program will be considered as part of a broader review of non-academic student fees. A committee comprised of staff and students is charged with creating a holistic student fee structure and development process that is transparent; provides appropriate alignment of resource allocations; meets the financial needs of the institution; is easily understood by students and parents; and includes the appropriate student and constituent input. The committee will provide a comprehensive review and assessment of the student fee structure and process as well as an analysis of an implementation of an enrollment deposit. This review will include all student fees currently in NIU’s fee structure as well as an analysis of the advantages, challenges and feasibility of implementing an enrollment deposit. All recommendations must be made in the context of our current tuition structure and able to adjust to potential changes to that structure. Together, the tuition, fees and enrollment deposit (if implemented) need to be both comprehensive and cohesive. The committee’s report is due May 26, 2017.
**June 2018 Report:** The Fee Effectiveness Evaluation Team, convened during Spring 2017, provided review and recommendations that included the following components: 1) effective, best and next practices; 2) benchmarking resources; 3) recommendations for enhancements; and 4) a proposed model for fee development. Recommendations also included centralizing the review process under a campus-wide ongoing University Fee Review Committee. The recommendations outlined in this report were fully accepted and are in the process of implementation. This was the first year the University Fee Review Committee convened and provided recommendations. This summer, the process will be evaluated and changes implemented as needed for the upcoming student-fee process.

The Student Support Services Fee includes the Student Activities and Services Charge, which includes the student government. The Student Activities and Services Charge was reduced by $0.18 per credit hour (3.75 percent).

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**Students’ Legal Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program provides valuable pro-bono legal services for students to help them prevent and overcome legal issues. The task force recommends further review to determine whether services can be transformed by charging a modest fee for more time consuming activities, such as representation in court outside of the county. The program should also consider policy changes that hold students accountable for missed client appointments and court appearances in order to maximize the resources this program is allocated by the Student Association.

**Charge from the November Report:** I disagree with the task force’s recommendation to transform. I believe student fees associated with this program should either be eliminated or substantially reduced. I have asked Vice President Weldy to convene a group to make a recommendation on reducing fees; the proposal is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** This program will be considered as part of a broader review of non-academic student fees. A committee comprised of staff and students is charged with creating a holistic student fee structure and development process that is transparent; provides appropriate alignment of resource allocations; meets the financial needs of the institution; is easily understood by students and parents; and includes the appropriate student and constituent input. The committee will provide a comprehensive review and assessment of the student fee structure and process as well as an analysis of an implementation of an enrollment deposit. This review will include all student fees currently in NIU’s fee structure as well as an analysis of the advantages, challenges and feasibility of implementing an enrollment deposit. All recommendations must be made in the context of our current tuition structure and able to adjust to potential changes to that structure. Together, the tuition, fees and enrollment deposit (if implemented) need to be both comprehensive and cohesive. The committee’s report is due May 26, 2017.
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The Student Support Services Fee includes the Student Activities and Services Charge, which includes the students’ legal services. The Student Activities and Services Charge was reduced by $0.18 per credit hour (3.75 percent).

Student Life Services

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: This program oversees certain important areas that influence recruitment and retention, including Greek Life, the Student Association, community service, and leadership development. However, the narrative focused primarily on Greek Life, so it was difficult to determine the quality of these other offerings, the cost of maintaining them, and how many students actually participate in the other programs. As many of these functions seem to duplicate services offered by other programs (e.g., community service, leadership training), the task force recommends reviewing these potentially duplicative programs to identify areas for collaboration with other programs, increase efficiencies, and reduce any redundancies. This review will allow the program to refocus on the most essential aspects of its mission.

Charge from the November 2016 Report: I agree with the task force’s recommendation to reduce and support eliminating the redundancy in leadership development and community service between this program and the Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning. I have instructed the heads of both programs to develop a realignment and reduction plan. A draft of the proposal is due by 1/15/17 with the execution to be in place before the end of the fiscal year (6/30/17).

May 2017 Report: The Office of Student Engagement and Experiential Learning (OSEEL) and Student Life Services (SILD) developed a plan that will reduce redundancy and lead to program realignment. In terms of reducing redundancy, SILD is collaborating with other campus entities (e.g., College of Business, Honors Program) to improve the efficiency with which leadership programs are offered, and is developing a survey and focus groups to identify any potential service and volunteerism redundancies. Additionally, the Committee on Service and Service-Learning will be reinstated to advise the university on community-based engaged learning; coordinate the university's multiple programs involved in community engagement and service learning; recommend progressive changes that will advance the service-learning programs; and assist with
the assessment and evaluation of the community engagement initiatives. In terms of realignment, the Huskie Alternative Breaks (HAB) program will now reside in OSEEL with an immediate goal of expanding the program and better establishing links to the curriculum, the Human Diversity requirement and NIU PLUS. SILD will take the lead on the programmatic efforts associated with the residence hall’s Leadership and Service Living-Learning Community connecting it to the Huskie Food Pantry (e.g., food insecurity) and the Leadership Academy. As a campus partner, OSEEL will work with academic departments to connect courses to this community in Phase Two of the new “Learning Community” model, which merges existing Living-Learning Communities and Themed Learning Communities. I am requesting an update regarding the implementation of the proposed changes in Fall 2017 with a final report due in Spring 2018.

**June 2018 Report:** Due to a staff vacancy within the volunteerism functional area in SILD (7/17 – 12/17) and a restructuring of Living-Learning Communities (LLC), SILD’s involvement with this planning has been limited. The vacancy was filled by an assistant director (1/18), and the department is committed to contributing to a future leadership-and-service Themed Learning Community (TLC) or LLC. When a formal partnership is established, the student participants of the TLC or LLC will contribute directly to the Huskie Food Pantry, research food insecurities on our campus and invest service hours to help run the pantry. Additionally, the same student participants will be members of the SILD Leadership Academy to further examine and develop their leadership capabilities and give back to the campus community.

The establishment of the Committee on Service and Service-Learning has been put on hold until further notice. It is recommended that the development of this committee be revisited once budget considerations and organizational changes in units that may be associated with this committee are completed.

**Wellness Promotion Mandates**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Although the functions of this program are required by law (e.g., Title IX education), there appear to be several offices on campus that already do or could be serving these functions (e.g., Advocacy Services, Affirmative Action & Diversity Resources).

**Charge from the November Report:** I disagree with the task force’s recommendation to place this program in review. This program should be reduced with the understanding that some functions within this program are essential. I have asked Vice President Weldy to develop a plan to reduce this program (and Wellness Promotion Services) that demonstrates agreement among collaborating parties, including risk management. The plan is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report:** The closing of Wellness Promotion is on track to be completed in early summer. Essential services have been reassigned to Title IX, Campus Recreation, Student Affairs and Health Services.
**June 2018 Report**: The Wellness Promotion department closed. The following Wellness Promotion mandates have been reassigned:

- Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance within Human Resources is coordinating Title IX mandates.
- University Recreation and Wellness (RecWell) is coordinating Alcohol EDU and is the primary vehicle for alcohol education for all incoming students.
- The Student Affairs division is facilitating the compilation of the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act biennial review report.
- RecWell is facilitating the University Alcohol Education work group which is charged with continuing to develop and implement prevention strategies for campus-wide involvement.

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**Wellness Promotion Services**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation**: The health and wellness of students are important factors in their success. However, the narrative does not provide sufficient evidence that this program is having an impact on student wellness. The task force recommends reviewing the program’s functions and processes to determine effectiveness and identifying opportunities to better serve NIU students. In addition, there may be possibilities to reduce administrative costs and increase synergy with other units.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report**: I disagree with the task force’s recommendation to transform. This program should be reduced with the understanding that some functions within this program are essential. I have asked Vice President Weldy to develop a plan to reduce this program (and Wellness Promotion Mandates) that demonstrates agreement among collaborating parties, including risk management. The plan is due by 2/1/17.

**May 2017 Report**: The closing of Wellness Promotion is on track to be completed in early summer. Essential services have been reassigned to Title IX, Campus Recreation, Student Affairs and Health Services.

**June 2018 Report**: The Wellness Promotion department closed. The following Wellness Promotion essential services have been reassigned:

- Affirmative Action and Equity Compliance coordinates education and resources regarding Title IX.
- RecWell coordinates wellness education to build a culture of wellness on the campus through peer education, resources and outreach.
- Counseling and Consultation Services provides counseling for students with alcohol/drug related issues.
- Health Services provides clinical services for medical/health related issues including sexual health.
**University Administrative Services**

**Internal Audit**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program serves an important function, but the task force sees no evidence of a need for enhancement. The unit would benefit from an IT auditor, but such an addition is a minimal investment, and the task force does not believe it rises to the level of enhancing the program.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree that this program should be sustained, and support the task force’s suggestion of possibly hiring an IT auditor. This request should be sent to the EBC for consideration.

**May 2017 Report:** Given the current budget situation, the hiring of an IT auditor has not been approved at this time.

**June 2018 Report:** Because of the budget situation, the hiring of an IT auditor continues to be on hold. The program is currently covering one IT-focused audit a year by outsourcing that work to a consulting firm that specializes in audit staff augmentation.

**Public Safety**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** A recently changed protocol requires two dispatchers on call at all times (as opposed to one, as was previously the case), which has increased costs. However, the task force notes some potential investments that produce savings over time (such as more automatic-locking buildings, as identified in the Identity and Access Control Program), which will offset the costs of increasing dispatcher staffing.

**Charge from the November 2016 Report:** I agree that this program should be sustained. The task force suggested that some cost-savings could be created by increasing the number of automatic-locking doors in buildings on campus. I agree, and have instructed Chief Phillips to submit a plan to the EBC for review by 1/15/17.

**May 2017 Report:** Given budget constraints, the university is not going to invest in increasing the number of automatic-locking doors in buildings on campus at this time. However, I have instructed the chief of police to find grant money that can help cover the costs of this initiative. In addition, a restructuring plan to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of this department has been developed which will result in significant savings while maintaining public safety.

**June 2018 Report:** Two new security-related initiatives are in progress between Public Safety, Housing & Residential Services, and the Division of Information Technology. The first is the consolidation and integration of security video systems into the Emergency Communications Center. The second is the anticipated installation of a guest registration software system for all
residence halls. Changes in physical security practices have improved building security, including recent policy changes requiring doors to residential housing to be locked at all times.

The chief continues to seek out grant opportunities for security-related technology improvements.

State and Government Relations

Administrative Task Force Recommendation: An important program given the current climate in the state, this program has adequate resources.

Charge from the November 2016 Report: I believe that this program needs to be transformed, and am currently considering several options to do so. I will release a reorganization plan by 2/1/17.

May 2017 Report: Because of the pending retirement of the associate vice president for state and government relations and board liaison this summer, I have reorganized the duties of this position to have a greater emphasis on board liaison and chief of staff duties. The position will continue to have liaison duties with our lobbyist in Springfield. Political science professor Matt Streb has been hired to refill this AVP position and its expanded role and will begin duties June 1, 2017. Any decisions on further restructuring of state and government relations will be made after the legislative session to best meet the needs of the emergent circumstances.

June 2018 Report: To better represent the university’s interests and to increase its presence in Springfield, the decision was made to not renew the contract with our state relations lobbying firm. The savings from that decision was used to hire a Springfield-based legislative liaison, who will join NIU officially on July 1, 2018. This individual will report to the chief of staff, and the responsibilities will include:

- Identifying, analyzing, and reviewing state issues of major importance to the university;
- Assisting in the development of the university’s legislative agenda;
- Coordinating and communicating with NIU leadership on state legislative matters; and
- Developing educational opportunities for students in the legislature, state agencies, and other state governmental entities (e.g., internships, field trips).
**University Advancement**

**Donor Relations**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** This program has lost staff that is currently slated to be replaced to maintain positive relations with donors and continue cultivation. The current practice of hiring students to replace lost full-time staff is not sustainable, and will eventually have a detrimental effect on fundraising.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s statement that the current practice of hiring students to replace lost full-time staff is not sustainable. As such, the funding requests for full-time staff in Donor Relations should go to the EBC for evaluation.

**May 2017 Report:** The division has filled one of the positions, and is working on a plan to reengineer the team. That plan is currently in the final stages of development, and the division expects to have positions in place by August 2017.

**June 2018 Report:** The Donor Relations Team has reached a more robust level, with an associate director and two additional full-time staff (up from one). In the past year, important new work has been produced, such as the development and execution of a Distinguished Donor Event (June), a reengineered and much improved endowment report, and the implementation of a team-wide, individualized donor stewardship process. These and other programmatic advancements are possible only through the enhanced staffing that returned the Donor Relations Team back to pre-2015 levels. All positions related to the recommendations of the Program Prioritization Task Force have been achieved, and continuing evaluation will take place to ensure that donor relations and stewardship staffing and efforts keep pace with the growing fundraising team.

**Fundraising**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** Given the history of decreased appropriations from the state, and the concern that this trend will continue, it is imperative that the university develop alternate funding streams, including private donations. The old adage that “it takes money to raise money” applies here. This program is understaffed and, as a result, is not able to contact sufficient numbers of potential donors necessary to raise the amount of money that it could with appropriate staffing. As a result, the university is missing out on substantial revenue.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s placement of this program in the Enhance category. Given the return on investment in hiring gift officers, this program should submit to the EBC the requests to hire new gift officers that were put forth in the division’s action plan.

**May 2017 Report:** Four new front line fundraising positions were approved for the colleges previously without them (Law, Health and Human Sciences, Education and Visual and Performing Arts), as well as a new regional position. Since September 2016, four of the positions have been
filled: Teri Gensler (internal transfer from CLAS) is the first-ever Regional Major Gifts officer, and was replaced in CLAS by Ray Earl-Jackson (new hire). Judy Schneider (internal transfer from Gift Planning) is the new gift officer for COE. Kristin Scott-Miller (new hire) is the first-ever gift officer for VPA. Still open are Law and HHS, as well as a senior director for COB, as Anthony D’Andrea was promoted to senior director for College Based Advancement, which is a central office function.

**June 2018 Report:** There have been a few changes in staffing internally, and some new hires since the May 2017 report. A new Midwest regional director of advancement was hired, and the previous director was transferred to the College of Business. Following the departure of the senior director of college-based advancement and the director of planned giving, the senior director position was eliminated, and these two positions combined into an AVP/chief development officer role which will oversee the entire fundraising team. This position is currently in recruitment.

Director of Advancement hires have been made for the College of Health and Human Sciences, the College of Law and the Division of Intercollegiate Athletics. All three positions are new to these units.

Combined, these changes have streamlined the management of the fundraising portion of University Advancement, and also placed FTEs in strategic positions within colleges that previously had no dedicated advancement staff. As a result, the colleges will be able to move fundraising forward while also further integrating the advancement efforts within for greater efficiency and effectiveness (i.e., alumni relations and communications). As of this report, all fundraising positions with the exception of the AVP/CDO are filled.

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**NIU Alumni Association**

**Administrative Task Force Recommendation:** The program is important to the university and is performing well. There is a strong relationship and partnership with the NIU Foundation that should be continued. Though university budget cuts have increased the demand for a coordinated relationship with alumni, the program is able to secure revenue through corporate partnerships and outside investment. Therefore, the task force recommends that the program be sustained.

**Charge from November 2016 Report:** I agree with the task force’s placement of this program in the Sustain category. I look forward to working with the new executive director, and expect this program to increase alumni engagement in the future. Further, in discussions with the VP for university advancement, it is clear that efficiencies are possible through a more deliberate alignment of college-based alumni relations efforts to the Alumni Association. I have asked for the analysis to be done once the new executive director is on board, and a plan is developed to address this opportunity.

**May 2017 Report:** Collaboration between the NIU Foundation and the NIU Alumni Association is quite strong. The two entities at both the staff leadership and board levels are integrated and working together strategically at a very high level on the priorities of the university: enrollment, corporate development, capital projects and unrestricted revenue. There are operational
discussions about potentially merging, and very tactical plans to involve alumni in enrollment/yield activities as well as fundraising, especially with affinity groups who are also aligned with university recruitment efforts.

A principal achievement in the past six months has been the successful recruitment and hire of Reggie Bustinza as the new executive director of the NIU Alumni Association. In his first few months, Reggie has successfully developed a reorganization strategy that will be implemented over the coming months and in consideration of the previously mentioned consolidation opportunities between the NIU Foundation and the NIU Alumni Association. Specifically, he will invest in Corporate Sponsorship/Partnerships, Alumni Engagement and Affinity Group support with an eye toward cultivation as well as engagement. Also, efforts will be under way soon to align college-based alumni relations programming to the Alumni Association. In addition to providing strategic alignment, this will serve to further coordinate programs as well as measure alumni engagement effectively.

**June 2018 Report:** Integration of Alumni Relations into the overall construct of the NIU Foundation continues. Hires have been made over the past year who are now supporting the Alumni Association centrally. The executive director, now with 18 months of service, has reorganized the team and made several key hires for new programs that closely and strategically align with university priorities, such as recruitment and retention of students; facilitation of volunteer opportunities at the college level and throughout the university; and alumni communication programs. On a continuing basis, the Alumni Association and NIU Foundation work closely to align programs and resources to ensure the most efficient use. The plans to align college-based alumni relations programming is still in the formative stages, but is expected to become a more focused strategy in the coming year.