Summary of UNI response to the October draft of the AAUP Report

Financial Considerations

- The report fails to recognize the severity of the financial crisis facing the University for several years. At the time the University made the difficult decision to engage in programmatic changes, it was faced with an existing budget deficit of $5 million.
- The report references the 8.5% increase in funding approved by the Legislature but fails to note that the increase was not approved by Governor Branstad until May 25, 2012, two months after changes to academic programs were approved by the Board of Regents.
- The report ignores critical cost saving measures undertaken by the University in advance of programmatic changes; including, closing UNI Print Services, integrating Museum Services, and reducing general fund support for auxiliaries such as Intercollegiate Athletics.

Faculty Involvement

- The report inaccurately concludes that the University failed to adequately consult with faculty throughout the decision-making process.
- As required by the applicable Collective Bargaining Agreement, the University and the Board of Regents met with designated representatives of United Faculty – the AAUP-affiliated union – on at least five separate occasions.
- The University also solicited input from the Faculty Senate and the Graduate Council, and made revisions to the draft list of impacted programs in light of this feedback.

Policies and Procedures

- The report criticizes the University for allegedly departing from AAUP principles in its handling of the program closure and restructuring. AAUP principles are merely recommendations, and are not controlling in this situation.
- UNI faculty members are represented by an AAUP-affiliated union – United Faculty. United Faculty and the University entered into a Collective Bargaining Agreement which incorporates some, but not all, AAUP principles.
- While AAUP principles recommend severance of one year’s salary, the Collective Bargaining Agreement does not contain such a requirement. Despite this, the University provided in excess of one year’s salary as severance for faculty members who elected to voluntary resign.