

## **Supportive Professional Staff Council**

### **Minutes**

April 13, 2023

Hybrid Teams Meeting, AL 205

10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**Approved May 11, 2023**

**Call to Order:** Vice President O’Grady called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**Roll Call:** Quorum confirmed.

**Members Present:** Nathan Birtell, John Boswell, Heath Duncan, Lupe Flores, Jennifer Manning, Jesse Perez, Anthony Preston, Ronald Smith, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe, Jason Underwood, Dan Wolfe, Megan Woodruff, Tom O’Grady

**Members Excused:** Eric Armstrong, Felicia Bohanon, LaBrian Carrington, Melanie Costello, Liz Guess, Joe Lovelace, Margaret Myles, Scott Mooberry, Michelle Pickett, Andrew Rogers, Manuel Valdez

**Visitors:** Amada Ascencio, Bridgett Davis, Catherine Doederlein, Patricia Erickson

**Approval of Agenda:** Properly motioned and seconded (Stoker/Preston); all in favor, none opposed, Agenda approved by voice vote.

**Approval of March 9 Minutes:** Properly motioned and seconded, all in favor, none opposed, March minutes approved by voice vote.

**Guest:** Michaela Holtz, President Staff Fellow  
Staff Professional Development Academy

Michaela shared information about the Staff Professional Development Academy, a year-long, professional development and educational program open to all non-academic, full-time civil service and SPS employees--developed last year by the Office of the President.

The Academy is a cohort style program of 15 participants who meet monthly about various topics that surround all the areas of the university--learning about those functions and about higher education in general. The program offers a mentoring piece, so every participant is matched with a mentor for one-on-one meetings in addition to the monthly Academy meetings.

The goal of the program is to develop future leaders--for example--those who have been in a particular area and want to expand their network and knowledge of the workings of a state university. For those who have a specific career goal, this program provides a great stepping stone on that path. For more information about the program goals, curriculum, and the application process, contact Michaela Holtz at [mholtz@niu.edu](mailto:mholtz@niu.edu). Application deadline is May 1<sup>st</sup>.

## **University Committee Reports**

**Board of Trustees:** Ismael Montana reporting. The March 23 BOT meeting was rescheduled due to the expiration of the terms of four trustees. The Board reconvened April 3 and held an off-cycle election, reappointing three of the four trustees, enabling a quorum. There were four action items:

**The Board approved** a retroactive four-year agreement (2022-2026) with United Faculty Alliance (UFA--tenure track and tenured faculty) and Local 4100 University Professionals of Illinois. Dr. Kerry Ferris, UFA president, was present with a significant number of union members to express their support and encourage the trustees to approve the agreement.

**The Board approved** the hiring of Dr. Kelly Fiala as the Dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at the rank of professor with tenure in the School of Interdisciplinary Health Professions.

**Also approved** was the university recommendation to increase fee costs for Law students who will see an increase in health and wellness charges by 25 cents; university advancement fees for capital improvement by 45 cents and transportation access by 70 cents. **No tuition increase.**

**The Board agreed** to a lease-to-purchase agreement with the DeKalb Community Unit School District 428 for previously determined surplus property. (School of Nursing)

**The Board's last action item** was the approval of the Fiscal Year 2024 Master Agreement Facility Contract Renewals.

**Dean Bob Brinkman** of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences presented an overview of the various workings of the college. One of the highlights of his presentation was the college implementation of 8-week courses and the positive impact in the College. The next BOT meeting will be May 11.

**Faculty Senate:** Ismael Montana reporting: CFO, George Middlemist, made his quarterly visit introducing himself and giving a brief overview of what he has been up to since he came to NIU.

Rena Cotsones, Chief Engagement Officer and Alicia Schatteman, Director, Nonprofit and NGO Studies, gave a presentation centering on engagement, encouraging faculty to share with them some of their community related projects that they are engaged with so they can find ways to support those kinds of research.

**University Council:** Ismael Montana reporting: Courtney Hughes, Athletic Board Chair and Courtney Vinson, Sr. Associate Athletic Director, provided an overview presentation followed by a budget update presented by President Freeman and George Middlemist.

**Student Government Association:** No report.

**Operating Staff Council:** No report.

**Board of Trustees Committees:** May 14, 2023

## **Vice-President's Report**

### **Committees of the University/Summary Report**

**Campus Parking Committee:** The committee decided to discontinue issuing warning tickets at the beginning of the semester. The process was time-consuming and ineffective.

The committee is updating parking regulations language to be more inclusive; changing Handicapped to Disability Accessible and discussed vehicle towing for multiple tickets. The committee wants to ensure regulations are equitable and fairly applied.

**Parking Appeals Committee:** Over three meetings, March 14/28 and April 11, a total of 142 appeals were considered resulting in fifty approvals, 76 denials, and 16 reduced fine.

**University Benefits Committee:** SURS will be coming to NIU in May to discuss retirement benefits. Childcare for employees was discussed.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

**Advocacy:** No report.

**Awards:** Megan Woodruff reported they are making decisions and hopefully will have some announcements at this council's next meeting, May 11, 2023.

**Communications & Technology:** Dan Wolfe reporting no significant updates; the committee communicated their concerns to Felicia.

**Constitution & Elections:** Tom O'Grady reporting a lot of nominations. Eligibility to be followed by letter from the Council President confirming the nominees interest.

**Events:** No report.

**Professional Development:** No report.

**Regional Community Relations:** Shannon Stoker reported numerous events around the area:

Civil War Camp/Sandwich/Knights Park/Weekend 4/14-15

Take Back the Night/Egyptian/April 17/walk against sexual assault

April 22 Blooming Gardens – Antiques \$5 or canned good to donate

April 22 Egyptian Theatre Adult Prom \$25 7:00 pm Benefit Barb Food Mart

April 23 Spring Fling craft show, Sycamore High School, free

April 25 Egyptian 6:00 p.m. Volunteer Training

April 27 Children's Theatre putting on The Descendants

Stagecoach is putting on Funny Money

May 6-7 Stagecoach still going on

May 4 Star Wars Day so give to DeKalb County (may the 4<sup>th</sup> be with you)

Trash Squirrels – April 22, 29, May 6, 13, 20 and 27 – mobile group that goes around picking up trash-volunteers get gloves, water and \$10 gift card. Facebook page updates where they are going to be.

April 28-May 1 Park District putting on take a picture of wild plants and animals in our area. More information from the Park District.

May 20 Girls on the Run of Northern Illinois – seeking volunteers. Organization that

benefits middle school age girls and teaches them how to handle growing up and transitioning from kids to teenagers and other issues for that age group.

**SPS Dependent Scholarship Fund:** Ronald Smith reporting: The committee awarded two \$750 SPS scholarships to students who have been impacted and/or positively influenced by an SPS employee. We did not receive anyone that met the criteria for the \$1250 scholarship for a student who is a direct relative of an SPS employee. There is opportunity there for us to do a little bit more aggressive communication because obviously we believe that there are SPS employees who may have relatives who are students—who doesn't need funding or some type of financial assistance? The students awarded \$750 are Kanaan Deer and Gabrielle Bennett.

Tabled until next year is our investigation of crowdfunding to help us support the SPS scholarships.

Having no further business, Vice President O'Grady adjourned the meeting at 10:30 a.m.

<p><b>Representatives:</b> Please contact our SPSC Secretary, Melanie Costello, (<a href="mailto:melcostello@niu.edu">melcostello@niu.edu</a>) and SPSC Administrative Aide, Frances Mitchell, (<a href="mailto:fmitchell@niu.edu">fmitchell@niu.edu</a>) if you are unable to attend a meeting. An Alternate will be contacted for you.</p> <p><b>Alternates: You are invited to attend all meetings.</b></p>
--

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Melanie Costello, Secretary*  
*Supportive Professional Staff Council*