

**Supportive Professional Staff Council
Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, September 9, 2021
Hybrid Teams Video Conference
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

Approved October 14, 2021

Members Present: Eric Armstrong, Monique Bernoudy, Felicia Bohanon, Terry Borg, John Boswell, Lupe Flores, Liz Guess, Andrea Hein, Joan Laurino, Laura Lundelius, Scott Mooberry, Margaret Myles, Tom O'Grady, Michelle Pickett, Jerri Reynolds, Andrew Rogers, Roselyn Snell, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe, Manuel Valdez, Megan Woodruff

Guests: Peter Chomentowski, Dallas Douglass, Merlynette Griffin, William Hodson, Holly Nicholson

I. Call to Order:

President Bohanon, confirming a quorum, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m., and began recording.

Approval of Agenda: Bohanon called for a motion to approve the Agenda. All in favor by voice vote, motion carried, the Agenda unanimously approved. (Borg/Manning)

Approval of August Minutes: Bohanon called for a motion to approve the Minutes of August 12, 2021 meeting. A motion was made and seconded, all in favor by voice vote, motion carried, August minutes unanimously approved. (Bernoudy/)

II. Guest Speaker: Merlynette Griffin, Interim Ombudsperson

Ms. Griffin introduced herself and reminded the Council that anyone can seek conversations with the Ombudsperson. She thanked the Council for allowing her to be part of these conversations. Ms. Griffin was asked about and she elaborated on her NIU experience.

III. Announcements

Monique Bernoudy announced the change of name for Rose Henson's area of ADEI (Equal Opportunity, Education and Awareness) that deals with sexual misconduct. Rose also provides the share survey and several other educational programs. The new name for her area is **Preventive Education and Outreach**. Also, Monique announced Campus Dining is looking for full-time employees to help with catering events for the upcoming school year: If interested contact Dan Koenen dkoenen@niu.edu

- \$15.00/hour, paid as additional pay
- Only full-time employees, we can not offer this to GA's
- Supervisor approval required
- Can only work outside of their normal work schedule
- Available shifts will be posted for people to sign-up to work
- Black pants and shoes, white button down shirt
- Work includes setting tables, clearing plates, serving food, washing dishes, bar tending, preparing food, making boxed lunches

Roselyn Snell announced the HEED Award. (Higher Education Excellence in Diversity) NIU is among top 100 universities to be honored by *Insight Into Diversity*. HEED Award recipients will be announced in the November 2021 issue. *“This award is open to all colleges and universities across the United States and Canada, measures an institution’s level of achievement and intensity of commitment in regard to broadening diversity and inclusion on campus through initiatives, programs, and outreach; student recruitment, retention, and completion; and hiring practices for faculty and staff.”*

Each award recipient receives a certificate, copies of the award issue, complimentary access to the HEED award logo and a full page in *Insight Into Diversity* magazine. Roselyn also mentioned the magazine would sweep our open position information from HR and re-publish in the magazine.

IV. University Committee Reports:

University Council: Peter Chomentowski reporting. The Council had its first in-person meeting yesterday, September 8, 2021. There was not much business to take up. It was more like a welcome back meeting. Lisa Freeman spoke about her objectives and ideas for the next year; about getting the University going in the right direction.

Student Government Association: Dallas Douglass introduced himself, Speaker of the Senate, and Devlin Collins, President. Douglass reported he and Collins spoke at University Council about our anti-racism agenda; they are thinking about the ways student government is constructed and how they can represent students equitably. Dallas expressed his concern about the State minimum wage for students, (\$11). He related they were aware of the labor shortages and are hopeful they can brainstorm practices to alleviate that situation. The SGA is looking to build a coalition to seek solutions by working with University Administration.

Roselyn Snell reported that yesterday’s HR, Dining Services, and Student Affairs Job Fair was attended by 425 students. Ms. Snell noted there are a lot of reasons there is a labor shortage besides money. Snell pointed out that local businesses are offering signing bonuses and benefits, i.e., paid time off and insurance. There is competition out there and we need to keep looking at ways to maintain our competitiveness. Snell expressed interest in engaging with Dallas.

Boswell noted they are short 30 positions and losing employees as well. He said he would like to be part of any conversations and asked Dallas to let him know.

Operating Staff Council: Holly Nicholson reporting. The OSC has created a Civil Service Emergency Fund. The link is in Chat. We are in the donation phase. We are looking to get at least \$2500 so we can start accepting requests for assistance. Donations can be made by phone, mail, in person as well as via payroll deduction. Spread the word with any civil service people you know or who are your co-workers.

Faculty Senate: Peter Chomentowski reporting: Last week was the Faculty Senate’s first in person meeting. Roughly 50 people showed up after 18 months of being away. The Senate spent time getting back on track, shoring up committees. OSC changed their UC and FS seats to one year. Professor Gregory Beyer, Director of Percussion, presented *Cycles and Constellations Rearranging* --about getting faculty and staff interested in shared governance and sitting on committees. Pat Erickson can forward you a link to Professor Beyer’s PowerPoint. Dr. Chomentowski expects to have about the same attendance at their October meeting.

Board of Trustees & Committees: Peter Chomentowski reporting. Three committees of the BOT and a Special BOT meeting convened August 26:

- Provost Ingram updated the NIU-Harper College collaboration.
- Approval was given for a full professorship for new Chair of Biological Sciences, Garry Sunter.
- Jerry Blazey spoke about how state and federal reports focused on sponsored funding being up; 81%, its highest point in ten years, due to increased funding secured by Sarah Chinniah for COVID relief keeping sponsored programs much higher than expected.
- Our desk telephones are obsolete so we will be transitioning to Microsoft Teams for voice messaging.
- Wi-Fi for outside? It is available but may be a little pricey. How much cost is involved is being looked at.
- Document Services has been outsourced to R.R. Donnelley and will be closing after 70 years. This transition should be mostly done by January 2022. Six employees are to be retained or offered other university positions. Our obsolete equipment and declining demand for document services made it clear that going forward we would be operating at a loss so outsourcing makes the most dollar sense.
- The BOT reviewed the R.R. Donnelley contract to verify pay for retained employees was in line with prevailing wages.
- Funding is in place for transitioning from keys to key-card access.
- Next regular BOT is September 23, 2021

V. Vice President's Report

Due to membership vacancies and summer schedules, we have no report from the following committees: Athletic Board, Campus Parking Committee, Campus Security & Environmental Quality, Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence, Computing Facilities Advisory Committee, Innovative Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee, Libraries Advisory Committee, Student Conduct Advisory Board, Student Conduct Board.

- Parking Appeals Committee met August 30th & 31st. Representative Scott Mooberry reported reviewing 78 appeals: 14 approved, 53 denied, and 11 were special instructions (reduced, approved, or denied).
- University Benefits met September 7th. Representative Dan Pedersen reported the committee started to examine NIU's bereavement benefits compared to our peers. In late spring the U of I system increased their bereavement benefit to 5 days. We are just starting to look at those details and a possible recommendation or advisement statement.
- Family First extended through September 30. It includes time off for vaccinations and quarantines.
- State deferred compensation supplemental retirement plan, 457(b) is being offered. No matching funds. Begins September 1, deductions begin in October. [State of Illinois Deferred Compensation Plan](#)

VI. Unfinished Business

a.) Election to University Committees: We want to fill all our positions. Athletic Board nomination. Jerri Reynolds. Any other nominations from the floor? President Bohanon closed nominations and called all those in favor of electing Jerri Reynolds to the Athletic Board. All in Favor, none opposed, Jerri Reynolds is the new Representative to the Athletic Board.

The following nominations were made and later presented for approval as a slate.

Campus Parking: Shannon Stoker (3 yrs.); Andrea Hein (2 yrs.)

Campus Security & Environmental Quality: Scott Mooberry and Melanie Costello. Mooberry is the Chair on this university committee. Bohanon stated that she saw no conflict of interest with Scott serving as the Chair of the committee and serving as an SPSC representative. Bohanon asked if anyone had any concerns about that? None were heard.

Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence: Roselyn Snell

Computing Facilities Advisory Committee: Stephanie Richter continues.

Innovative Teaching & Learning Advisory Committee: At least one person is needed. Megan Woodruff volunteered.

Grievance Committee & Panel: Meets as needed, (P&C) Panel & Committee.

Shannon Stoker (C&P)

Terry Borg (C&P)

Roselyn Snell (C&P)

Ronald Smith (C&P)

Jerri Reynolds – Panel

Eric Armstrong – Panel

Joan Laurino – Panel

Libraries Advisory Committee: Monique Bernoudy

Parking Appeals Committee: LaBrian Carrington & Scott Mooberry

Student Conduct Board: Monique Bernoudy and Roselyn Snell

State Universities Retirement System-Members Advisory Committee (SUR-MAC): One year term. This is a joint appointment by both staff councils. One representative is selected by agreement of both councils. Peter Chomentowski has been on the board for seven years and shared his insight. There are a lot of people on the board. How often do you attend? You can go when you choose. You may get a meeting or none. It is always, *does this fit your calendar time?*

University Benefits: Dan Pedersen and Terry Borg continuing in those positions

Committee for Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence: Roselyn Snell

Libraries Advisory Committee: Monique Bernoudy

President Bohanon called for a motion to approve the university committee nominees.

(Borg/Pickett) All in favor by voice vote. None opposed, no abstentions. The Motion carries. Congratulations! Thank you all for stepping up.

b.) Sign-Up for SPSC Committees and Selection of Chairs. If you did not sign up, some assignments represent a request for you to serve:

Advocacy – Lupe Flores, Chair; Jeanna Ballard; Melanie Costello.

Awards – Megan Woodruff, Chair; Anna Quider; Christina Sutcliffe; Jennifer Manning.

Communications & Technology – Manuel Valdez, Chair; Jason Underwood; Debra Boughton.
Constitution & Elections – Tom O’Grady, Chair; Nathan Birtell; Andrew Rogers; Joan Laurino.
Events – John Boswell, Chair; Eric Armstrong.
Professional Development –Monique Bernoudy, Chair; Julie Colhoff; Liz Guess; Kellie Martial; Margaret Myles; Andrew Rogers.
Regional Community Relations – Roselyn Snell, Co-Chair; Shannon Stoker, Co-Chair; Dara Little; Elbia Menendez.
SPS Dependent Scholarship Fund – Andrea Hein, Co-Chair; Ronald Smith, Co-Chair; Heath Duncan; Scott Mooberry; Jerri Reynolds
President’s Budget Roundtable Advisory Group: Roselyn Snell

c.) Personnel Advisor: This was discussed last month. An ad will go out university wide. This person does not need to be an SPS employee.

d.) Workplace Climate Survey: This was also discussed last month. This survey will be going out to SPS employees and a reminder deadline, prior to our next meeting.

VII. New Business: None

VIII. Adjournment

Being no further discussion, President Bohanon called for a motion to adjourn. (Bernoudy)
All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. The meeting adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

<p>Representatives: Please contact our SPSC Secretary, Lupe Flores, and SPSC Administrative Aide, Frances Mitchell, if you are unable to attend a meeting. They will identify an Alternate for you. Alternates: You are invited and encouraged to attend all meetings.</p>
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Respectfully submitted by Lupe Flores, Secretary