

**Supportive Professional Staff Council
Draft Minutes**

May 11, 2023

Hybrid Teams Meeting, AL 203

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

(no meeting June & July)

Approved August 10, 2023

Call to Order: President Bohanon called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Roll Call: Secretary Costello called the roll, confirming a quorum.

Members Present: Eric Armstrong, Felicia Bohanon, John Boswell, LaBrian Carrington, Melanie Costello, Heath Duncan, Lupe Flores, Liz Guess, Joe Lovelace, Jennifer Manning, Margaret Myles, Scott Mooberry, Tom O'Grady, Jesse Perez, Ronald Smith, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe, Jason Underwood, Dan Wolfe, Megan Woodruff (18 voting representatives)

Members Excused: Nathan Birtell, Dara Little, Michele Pickett, Anthony Preston, Andrew Rogers, Manuel Valdez

Guests: Sarah Clark, Patricia Erickson, Ismael Montana, Malhar Saheed

Approval of Agenda w/Flexibility: Properly motioned and seconded (Costello/Smith); all in favor, none opposed, Agenda w/ Flexibility approved by voice vote.

Approval of April 13, 2023, Minutes: Upon verification of two items, Ronald Smith motioned, and Margaret Myles seconded: all in favor, none opposed; April minutes approved by voice vote.

University Committee Reports

Faculty Senate: Felicia Bohanon, reporting on behalf of Ismael Montana: April 20, Faculty Senate meeting. Ismael, as the outgoing president of Faculty Senate, thanked everyone for their service. Felicia commented how rewarding and informative it has been working with Ismael and Holly Nicolson in terms of moving forward the agendas of the university and in terms of looking forward to continuing to work with them even though they will not be continuing in their current capacity. I thank them for their service during this year.

A third appeal was made seeking support for the Huskie Closet by donating clothing or volunteering at the closet.

Ben Creed steps in as the next Faculty Senate president effective July, 2023.

University Council: Felicia Bohanon reporting: President Freeman talked about the advocacy taking place in Springfield where they have brought together public transit, public university chancellors or members of their staff to remind members of the General Assembly of the importance of supporting the Governor's budget. The budget included a 7% across the board,

increase for higher education. At the time, Matt Streb was in Springfield representing NIU. University presidents and chancellors came together in terms of advocating for the importance of investment in higher education and what it means to Illinois economic development. President Freeman updated the number of searches taking place and an update on the Chief Diversity Officer search. All of the searches are expected to be completed within the next 60 days.

Operating Staff Council: Felicia Bohanon reporting on behalf of Holly Nicholson, OSC President. Elections are underway for representatives; officers are elected at the July meeting. The Council intends to change their voting cycle so that officer elections will occur in June.

The OSC Dependent Endowed Scholarship Fund awarded 4 scholarships totaling \$1800.

The Civil Service Emergency Fund has given out \$4,000 to 21 individuals. The fund is currently closed for fundraising and will re-open as soon as there are sufficient funds.

Vice-President's Report: Tom O'Grady reporting:

Campus Parking Committee is still making plans on issuing warnings for next year and working on how to define abandoned vehicles--because they want to be sure they are being fair before they remove any vehicles.

Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee Scott Mooberry is working with University Council to retire this committee.

Parking Appeals Committee: April 26: 18 appeals; 7 approved; 9 denied; 2 reduced. The committee also met May 9: 15 appeals; 5 approved; 8 denied; 2 reduced. Next meetings are May 23 and June 13 & 27.

Student Conduct Advisory Board: Reviewed the Student Conduct Board policies and made some recommendations for revision.

Student Conduct Board: The Board met Wednesday, April 12, to review the Student Conduct policies and recommend revisions.

- Since spring break there have been a normal stream of cases and those that typically carry a sanction of removal from campus (6 cases regarding fighting and 2 cases with weapon).

- The student conduct office finalized their search process for an Associate Director. The committee expects to submit the revised policies to the Policy Library by June 15.

University Benefits Committee: The benefit enrollment period is now open, so make sure you look at that, make whatever changes you need to and see what's new out there. Also, the UBC will not be meeting again until fall.

SPS Council Committees:

Advocacy: No report.

Awards: Megan Woodruff reporting. The committee is in the process of verifying one or two more recipients, so we will hopefully be able to either send that out via email or we will hold on to our announcements until our next meeting [July 13]. There was a productive discussion about how to celebrate our council awards.

End of Year Event: Volunteers are needed to help plan an event. A poll was conducted to see when the most popular time would be to attract attendees. Felicia read the poll results in Chat. The question posed was, would you prefer another weekday or Friday? From a reading of Chat, another weekday seemed probable so the conclusion was to have the event on a Wednesday or Thursday.

Margaret Myles and Jesse Perez agreed to work with Felicia in getting this event organized. Felicia is going to get out a “save the date” for the mid-June event and then they will move forward finalizing a plan.

Communications & Technology: Felicia reported speaking with Holly about the website update. We will have everything within the next few days. Holly suggested the committee use “publisher” or “word”, both accessible via O365, for the template. The “indesign” tool is difficult to use.

Jason Underwood has developed a template for a newsletter that he will be passing on to next year’s committee for further development. Jason used “publisher” borrowing a lot of Holly’s design elements. Jason wants to make sure Holly is good with what he has done before it is published. He thinks Holly should look at it and make sure she is OK with us borrowing, or mirroring, some of her design elements.

Jason also mentioned including items such as the status of SPS employees; Joe Lovelace publicity; new hires; retirees, separations, etc., and some extra multi-purpose space.

Constitution & Elections: Tom O’Grady reporting. All nominations have taken place and people have been notified. Of the thirty-three nominees, thirteen declined, eight accepted and twelve did not respond.

The committee will move forward with elections and then, probably over the summer, we’ll look at the Constitution and try to have something in front of the Council by then to say, here’s what we recommend. We may want to appoint people to the Council if we don’t have seats filled? That’s where we are right now.

Following some discussion and notes entered into the Chat, Felicia stated the Council would move forward with our election based on those individuals who have responded. Tom O’Grady suggested members reach out to their fellow constituents urging them to vote. Felicia added that in addition to having a general announcement go out, she will make a personal appeal to SPS Staff in general to vote and also to let them know about the upcoming event that will be taking place and to watch their emails for that. Felicia appealed to members to, if they can, tap individuals in their office and just remind them that elections are taking place and please vote.

Professional Development: No report.

Regional Community Relations: Shannon Stoker reporting. Starting off with **Trash Squirrels--** they are still going Saturdays at 10:00 AM. Find them on Facebook. They're picking up trash around the community. It's a great way to get involved and you get a \$10.00 gift certificate and some fun if you volunteer, they're moving to different sections around town. But every Saturday at 10:00 AM for the rest of the month.

An **Evening at Ellcourt**, tomorrow night. If you are interested in learning more about Ellcourt, the secondary house to the Elwood Museum, there will be guides and it is free. Fatties is doing a bar and some food.

Saturday, **May 13, Back Alley Market**: vendors in downtown DeKalb, behind the north side of Rte. 38, lots of businesses and people, selling their wares starting at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday is Mother's Day: There is a **Wildflower Walk** through the Park District. There is also a bunch of places in town offering brunches plus a chiropractor giving free back adjustments for Moms.

May 20, 9:00 a.m. **Plant for Bees** in the Haish Courtyard of the DeKalb Public Library: They are asking for volunteers to come and plant flowers that are specifically designed for pollinating insects.

Farmer's Market opens Thursdays after Memorial Day. Then comes the summer festivals all around Illinois. We have the **Corn Fest** and volunteers are already being solicited for **Pumpkin Fest**. Corn Fest and Pumpkin Fest are looking for volunteers.

SPS Dependent Scholarship Fund: Ronald Smith reported, recapping last month's awarding of two scholarships: Kanaan Deer and Gabrielle Bennett. The committee's plan to explore crowdfunding has been tabled till next year. *"We will probably need more bodies to really bring that to fruition because that's a very heavy lift, but we will revisit that conversation next academic year."* Felicia added that she and Ron will be around this summer and we are going to get that application developed and pretty much have that put together by fall.

New Business:

I. UFA (United Faculty Alliance) Contract Discussion:

A member of SPSC brought attention to some of the changes recently announced relating to faculty and instructors. Their contracts include increases in salary over the course of the next four years. It's about a 16% increase over four years for faculty and instructors, guaranteed under their union contracts.

What, if anything, is being considered for non-union members of our community; has our leadership made any commitment to increased salaries for SPS? We are a small group, a

minority population on this campus that's not unionized so seeing this level of increments is concerning.

Felicia responded that she reached out to President Freeman through a brief conversation concerning salary increases in general for this year; at that time Freeman indicated that this was being brought forth at the June BOT meeting. Felicia said she would be bringing forth specifics learned from this conversation to Dr. Freeman's attention so that she is aware of our concerns.

The next BOT meeting is June 15.

President Bohanon said we will move forward with a formal letter to the President and then if the council would like to have something in addition to that, we can do that. President Bohanon also solicited Liz Guess' comments which were that what the council is planning is entirely appropriate. Felicia will reach out to other unrepresented groups to indicate this is what we're planning and to see whether they are interested in getting involved.

II. University Committee Selections:

The following appointments were made:

University Council/Three-Year Term:

Felicia Bohanon; Christina Sutcliffe, Tom O'Grady, Shannon Stoker

UC – Personnel Committee/One-Year Term:

Shannon Stoker, Tom O'Grady

FS-UC Rules, Governance & Elections Committee/One-year term

Shannon Stoker

Faculty Senate/Three-Year Term:

Felicia Bohanon, John Boswell

FS Steering Committee/One-Year Term

John Boswell

FS Social Justice Committee/One-Year Term

Felicia Bohanon

Campus Parking Committee/Three-Year Term

John Boswell, Tom O'Grady, Shannon Stoker, (Vacancy)

Committee for Academic Equity and Inclusive Excellence/Three-Year Term

Lupe Flores

Innovative Teaching and Learning Advisory Committee/Three-Year Term

Megan Woodruff

Non-Union Faculty and Staff Grievance Panel

Ronald Smith
Heath Duncan
(Vacancy)

Parking Appeals Committee/Three-Year Term

Heath Duncan (for Carrington). O'Grady, (Vacancy)

SURSMAC/One-Year Term (Termination of this Committee is on Hold)

Liz Guess (2023-2024)

Student Conduct Board/Three-Year Term

Karinne Bredberg was nominated. Awaiting her response.

Student Grievance Panel

Ronald Smith
Shannon Stoker
Andrew Rogers

University Benefits Committee/Three-Year Term

John Boswell
Joe Lovelace (for Armstrong)

Having no further business, President Bohanon adjourned the meeting at 11:35 a.m.

Representatives: Please contact our SPSC Acting Secretary, Melanie Costello, and SPSC Administrative Aide, Frances Mitchell, (fmitchell@niu.edu) if you are unable to attend a meeting. An Alternate will be contacted for you.

Alternates: You are invited to attend all meetings.

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

