

**Supportive Professional Staff Council
Minutes – General Meeting**

October 12, 2023

Teams Only Meeting

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

Approved November 9, 2023

Call to Order: President Bohanon called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

Roll Call: Secretary Valdez called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

Members Present: Felicia Bohanon, John Boswell, Cody Carter, Heath Duncan, Liz Guess, Joe Lovelace, Margaret Myles, Tom O’Grady, Candice Olagunju, Jesse Perez, Michelle Pickett, Anthony Preston, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe, Lauren Teso-Warner, Manuel Valdez, Dan Wolfe

Members Excused: Bill Braksick,, Andrew Rogers, Ronald Smith

Guests: Ben Creed, Faculty Senate; Catherine Doederlein and Pulchratia Lacy, HR

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

Approval of September Minutes: Postponed to November 9, 2023 meeting.

University Committee Reports

University Council: Ben Creed reported the new funding model for higher education and other factors helped NIU’s budget. At the next University Council and Faculty Senate meetings, George Middlemist and Laurie Elish-Piper will present an update on the budget.

Faculty Senate: Met September 15 and heard an update on the Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act by Kelly Olson and Tim Paquette; Elish-Piper will be establishing office hours; Approval of Therese Arado to serve as faculty representative on the 2023-24 University Fee Advisory Group followed by reports from councils, boards, and standing committees.

Board of Trustees: September 21, 2023

Approved Operating Engineers Local 150 July 1, 2022-June 30, 2025 contract

Approved Mid-America Carpenters Regional Council, Local 790’s six-year successor agreement, July 1, 2023-June 30, 2029.

Kerry Wilks, Dean of the Graduate School and Associate Vice President of International Affairs gave an update on the State of the Graduate School and International Students.

Alicia Schatteman, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs provided an update on community college transfer enrollment, partnerships, and strategies for being a transfer-friendly institution.

The University recommended, and the Board of Trustee approved, a request for engaging ReUp through FY2028 at the amount not-to-exceed \$3,000,000

The Board approved acquisition of the Yordon Academic Performance Center and the Chessick Practice Center

Student Government Association: No report.

Operating Staff Council: Natasha Johnson reported the council is continuing to look at its committees and raising funds for the Civil Service Emergency Fund.

Vice President's Report: No report.

Old Business: President Bohanon previously surveyed members, asking for their thoughts about priorities for the SPSC this year. She reported receiving a few responses and would like to get more input. What should we be working on this year? Are there other things we should be addressing? Did everyone see the comments Felicia received in terms of priorities for this year?

Responses: More recognition of staff members across campus; more appreciation of staff members vs. only faculty members; How can we as a group help with student body and staffing recruitment/retention? Employee protections, since we're one of the few non-unionized groups. Unity and sense of purpose; outdated SPS Search Committee Policy. It was last revised in the 90's; Parking; Staff recruitment and retention; Staff retention/increasing candidates for job openings

Guest Speaker: Carol Sumner, Vice President for DEI and Chief Diversity Officer

"There is not one of us . . . who has the same everything and that gets to why I say diversity, equity and inclusion work is for everyone because there isn't another like you."

". . . I've asked us to think about who we are as multi-identity people and how we then work to support our community through each of us contributing in that way." ". . . I am asking as we think about diversity, equity, inclusion, we're not talking about it being for minoritized or underrepresented individuals."

"It is about lack of knowledge. It is about lack of information. It is about lack of resources or it's about purposeful structures."

"As the Chief Diversity Officer, I'm here as the senior educator." "I am here to be a resource." "I'm not the principal's office. That is not the way I want to engage, but whether if something has occurred, what I'd like to be able to do is to say what have we learned and how might we move forward differently."

"It is not about setting laws and policy, . . . it's [about] informing those things." It's about your ability to make folks feel welcome, and it's not about aligning and having to think the same, but it is about recognizing the difference is a place to start a conversation, not to shut it down."

New Business:

Meeting of Council Committees and Committee Chairs:

If you did not sign up for a committee, you will be assigned to one. If you don't want to be on the assigned committee, please contact Felicia Bohanon. Felicia expressed her hope that these committees will meet within the next 10 days and asked that each committee identify a chair.

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Adjournment: President Bohanon asked if there were any other comments or concerns, any questions, any suggestions? Hearing none, President Bohanon adjourned the meeting at 11:18 a.m.

Representatives: Please contact our SPSC Secretary, Manuel Valdez, (mvaldez2@niu.edu) 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
by Administrative Aide
for Manuel Valdez, Secretary
Supportive Professional Staff Council*