

Supportive Professional Staff Council

Minutes

Thursday, September 8, 2022

Teams and In Person AL 203

10:00 a.m.

Approved October 13, 2022

Call to Order: President Bohanon called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Roll Call: Lupe Flores called roll and confirmed a quorum present.

Members Present: Eric Armstrong, Nathan Birtell, Felicia Bohanon, John Boswell, LaBrian Carrington, Heath Duncan, Lupe Flores, Liz Guess, Joe Lovelace, Jennifer Manning, Frances Mitchell (Admin Aide), Margaret Myles, Scott Mooberry, Tom O'Grady, Jesse Perez, Michelle Pickett, Anthony Preston, Andrew Rogers, Ronald Smith, Shannon Stoker, Christina Sutcliffe, Jason Underwood, Manuel Valdez, Dan Wolfe, Megan Woodruff

Guests: Sandra Cox, Anthony Del Fiaccio, Patricia Erickson, Ismael Montana, Holly Nicholson

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

Approval of August 11, 2022, Minutes: Properly motioned and seconded, (Smith/Mooberry) all in favor, none opposed. August 11 minutes approved by voice vote.

University Committee Reports:

University Council: Ismael Montana reported the first meeting of the University Council was September 7. The main highlight was President Freeman's updates on the official census. Based on 10 days of attendance she noted the increase in freshman enrollment for fall 2022 increased over last year by 7%. This year, we are looking at about 2440 freshman students compared to last year, a significant increase. Also, it's the largest freshman class since 2014. President Freeman invited the Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Communications, Sol Jensen, and Provost Ingram, to comment on this enrollment trend, especially in the context of their strategic enrollment management.

The Council also had an update from Scott Mooberry, Director, Environmental Health & Safety. Ismael recalled the Council's discussions last year about their desire to hear from more university committees and leadership.

Faculty Senate: Ismael Montana reported this first meeting was for approval of several faculty to various roles; unfinished business regarding the proposed amendment to student evaluation of instruction that was brought back for a second reading; unanimously approved.

Ismael thanked Holly Nicholson for her report on cyberbullying and online harassment resources project which was well received. Holly presented her committee's report to the Senate and University Council.

The Senate also called for Faculty Personnel Advisor nominations including self-nominations. Letters of nomination were due Friday, October 7 and will be shared with faculty Senate members by e-mail by October 10th.

Following Ismael's report, President Bohanon asked Holly Nicholson to update the Council on her work with the Rules, Governance and Elections Committee that she chaired last year: President Freeman asked the committee to investigate creating resources for people who were experiencing cyberbullying because there have been reports of professors who had been trolled by students. Over the academic year the group developed a website.

Nicholson described the website: how to report bullying on social media sites, who to talk to at the university, examples of cyberbullying. The committee also did some of the first research out there about cyberbullying in higher Ed; there was nothing out there. Nicholson commented that "luckily cyberbullying isn't a prevalent issue. Most people report that they haven't experienced it very much. If they did, most of the time they knew the person and they weren't part of NIU. So that's good. The most common form was digital sexual harassment."

Student Government Association: President Bohanon related that students were excited about the increase in student engagement opportunities on campus, in terms of the number of activities. Other concerns were filling Senate seats, the long counseling wait list, and employment pay.

Operating Staff Council: Holly Nicholson reported on the success of the Civil Service Emergency Fund. Contributions doubled after the **NIU Today** article. The committee received 15 eligible applications. Holly related how sobering it is to read the applications from colleagues undergoing terrible hardships. The committee split the available funds evenly between the applicants. Now that the fund is depleted the committee will be returning to fund raising mode. Greg Beyer approached the fund with some suggestions on how to make it easier to donate, so they will be looking into that.

Staff Fest, aka Civil Service Celebration, usually held in August, was derailed by the pandemic. The Council is now looking at hosting the celebration in January or February and making the event more inclusive.

Board of Trustees: Ismael Montana reported the August 18 meeting considered the approval of tenure recommendations for the academic year 2022-2023. The Board also took on faculty emeritus recognitions affecting 22 retiring NIU faculty. Also, Vernese Edghill-Walden updated the Board on shared equity leadership being developed by Academic Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (ADEI) which she expects to be completed very soon. *On July 7, 2022, Governor Pritzker's office notified NIU that the Capitol Development Board had approved including NICCS¹ in their monthly bulletin of projects seeking requests for proposals.* Also, the sale of NIU's Hoffman Estate property was approved, there is a purchaser.

Vice President's Report:

Tom O'Grady reported results of the Parking Appeals Committee: 13 appeals, 7 approved, 5 denied and 1 reduced. The next meeting is September 13. Also, the Athletic Board meets September 14th, the Campus Parking Committee meets on the 15th.

New Business:

a) Faculty Senate Personnel Committee: (Five members) President Bohanon asked Megan Woodruff and Lupe Flores if they were interested in continuing with this committee that meets only as needed. They concurred.

¹ Northern Illinois Center for Community Sustainability

b) SPSC committee meetings – breakout rooms

Advocacy: Armstrong, Costello, Lovelace, Rogers, Valdez

Awards: Woodruff, Manning

Communication and Technology: Jason Underwood

Constitution and Elections: O’Grady, Chair

Dependent Scholarship: Armstrong/Duncan, chairs. Mooberry, Smith

Events: Sutcliffe

Professional Development: Flores, Chair. Boswell, Guess, Myles, Preston

Regional Community Relations: Stoker, Chair.

- c) Officer Election-Secretary: Melanie Costello was elected by the Council to fill this position. Properly motioned and seconded, all in favor, none opposed, motion carried and Melanie Costello is the Secretary of the SPS Council effective 09/08/2022. Congratulations Melanie and thank you!

Announcements:

Campus Meets Community Block Party – today, MLK Commons 11-2:00

Kite Fest – Sunday, September 11 - Free, on Fairview, Ferraro donated a candy drop

Adjournment: It has been properly motioned and seconded that the meeting be adjourned after the breakout sessions conclude. (O’Grady/Smith) All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, meeting adjourned.

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

