

Supportive Professional Staff Council

Minutes

March 9, 2023

Hybrid Teams Meeting

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

Approved April 13, 2023

Call to Order: President Bohanon called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

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

Members Excused: Eric Armstrong, Nathan Birtell, Lupe Flores, Dara Little, Anthony Preston,

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

Approval of February 9, 2023, Minutes: Properly motioned and seconded (Costello/Rogers) all in favor, none opposed. February minutes approved by voice vote.

Liz Guess discussed the State Universities Retirement System Member Advisory Committee (SURSMAC) being dissolved, because State University Retirement System (SURS) felt that they had fulfilled their purpose. There will be a meeting in early spring to decide the fate of the committee. From 2012 to 2022, there haven’t been any resolutions or really any action or activity from SURSMAC. The only activity has been election of officers and revising bylaws.

University Committee Reports:

University Council: President Bohanon reported in Professor Montana’s absence.

A highlight of the meeting was a presentation about a program the university is running out of one of the departments that works with youth who are incarcerated in terms of supporting them and offering them an opportunity to come to campus and see the opportunities available to them after completing their sentences.

New Commission on Wellness supporting students and staff. Complete details will be sent out in President Bohanon’s report.

Faculty Senate: No report.

Student Government Association: No report.

Board of Trustees: President Bohanon: The BOT approved the university’s proposal that tuition not be increased this year for undergraduate students.

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

University Benefits Committee: Met briefly and discussed the EAP Wellness programming, that replaces the Wellness Fair, noting that annuitants are welcome and encouraged to participate.

Student Conduct Board: Is reviewing the Student Code of Conduct and they will discuss it at their next meeting and make any needed revisions during spring and summer .

Parking Appeals Committee: Heard 88 appeals over two meetings: 29 accepted; 43 denied; 15 reduced fines and one appeal withdrawn.

Libraries Advisory Committee: Salary salvage and provost funding was used to upgrade some student spaces (in consultation with Disability Resource Center) and for technology upgrades in staff offices. The library will continue searches to fill open

positions: during the interim they will continue to invest salary salvage funds to enhance library spaces.

Innovative Teaching and Learning Committee: Discussed some new grants being piloted for curricular innovation. There was talk about AI supports that has chat, GPT. They are in the process of doing interviews for several positions to offer online support and they are planning on an online teaching symposium and early planning is in development for resources to help training mentors and collaboration with several other offices on campus.

Council Committee Reports:

Professional Development: President Bohanon noted the recent initiatives in this area and asked for input from Council members relative to their concerns and to look at issues that the Council can advocate for. Where are some of the gaps? Some responses were: earlier notice of opportunities, consistency of availability across departments and how are supervisors held accountable? President Bohanon thanked everyone for their feedback and invited members to send her any other ideas.

Advocacy: No report.

Awards: Megan Woodruff reported the committee has received zero applications or nominations. The deadline date was moved from March 17 to the 24th. Woodruff pleaded for people to nominate an outstanding colleague for an award.

Communication and Technology: Jason Underwood reported the website update is underway via web communications. The next project is drafting a template for a newsletter. Underwood expects to have a template by next meeting and asked for member's input. President Bohanon added that we will be having a group photo in April, at the awards ceremony, for display on the SPSC website.

Constitution and Elections: Tom O'Grady reported the committee has developed a timeline subject to approval by the person who does all of the work to make the election happen. The plan is to have nominations open March 20 and close March 28; online voting would begin April 17 and close April 21.

Regional Community Relations: Shannon Stoker reported not as many events probably due to Spring Break. On the 29th the DeKalb County History Center is starting a genealogy class, on Wednesday evenings for seven weeks and \$25 they will teach you how to log your family history. Also on the 31st, is Jonamac Orchard's Adult Egg Hunt, 6:30-10:00, advance registration \$20/per. You might find a \$100 egg!

SPS Scholarship Committee: Ronald Smith reported receiving ten applications before the February 28 deadline. When the committee meets next they will be reviewing the applications and hopefully selecting two individuals at that time. If not, another meeting will be scheduled. Also, the committee will be discussing ideas for gaining more support. Smith mentioned crowdfunding to help raise money to endow the fund.

Other Business:

President Bohanon called for three volunteers for the Student Grievance Panel. Respondents were: Ronald Smith; Shannon Stoker; Andrew Rogers.

President Bohanon then called for a motion to cancel Council meetings during June and July. Ronald Smith so moved, seconded by Melanie Costello. Having been properly motioned and seconded that for the summer of 2023 the Council will not meet during the months of June and July, except as needed at call of President.

Bohanon announced that during the month of April we will have a presentation about the Staff Development Academy and also, we will meet the new Chief Financial Officer, George Middlemist.

Having no further business, President Bohanon adjourned the meeting at 11:03 a.m.

Representatives: Please contact our SPSC Secretary, Melanie Costello, (melcostello@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,

*Melanie Costello, Secretary
Supportive Professional Staff Council*