

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

April 11, 2024

Teams/In Person Hybrid Meeting

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

**Approved May 9, 2024**

**Call to Order:** President Bohanon called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

**Roll Call:** Administrative Aide called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

**Members Present:** Felicia Bohanon, Heath Duncan, Liz Guess, Joe Lovelace, Margaret Myles, Tom O’Grady, Candice Olagunju, Perez, Jesse, Michelle Pickett, Anthony Preston, Christina Sutcliffe

**Members Excused:** Bill Braksick, Cody Carter, Andrew Rogers, Shannon Stoker, Lauren Teso, Manuel Valdez, Dan Wolfe

**Guests:** Benjamin Creed, Anthoy Delfiacco, Pat Erickson, James Innis, Ja’Kobe Jones, Kellie Martial

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

**Approval of March, 2024 Minutes:** Properly motioned and seconded (Duncan/Myles) all in favor, none opposed, March, 2024 minutes approved by voice vote.

**University Committee Reports**

**Board of Trustees:** Ben Creed reporting: Three main updates: **(1)** approval of remaining fee and tuition increases that were recommended to the Board. **(2)** Board of Trustees opened up their regulations relating to financial reporting requirements to streamline those meetings and the amount of reports that need to be developed by various staff members. Streamlining the process and raising the reporting cap on certain types of expenditures from 250,000 to \$500,000. **(3)** Board unanimously approved appointment of Laurie Elish-Piper to be Executive Vice President and Provost.

**University Council:** Ben Creed reporting: President Freeman shared updates related to FAFSA and the poor rollout by the feds; what NIU is doing to help support our students by adjusting deadlines back so they can make informed decisions based on the financial aid they hope to receive. Freeman also shared updates on the state funding model for higher Ed and some insights into the appropriations conversations that are ongoing this week. Adding that it is unlikely that any sort of new action will be taken in this legislative session. Followed by a report from Bryan Perry about affirmative action, the history of it and some relevant court cases in front of the Supreme Court. NIU does not use race in admissions practices, so no changes needed. At our May University Council meeting Sol Jensen or his team will share updates and what is being done to support our students. Also, the Council will have George Middlemist and John Heckman to talk about Normal Road updates and plans to improve communication on major changes to campus in more proactive ways.

**Faculty Senate: Ben Creed reporting:** At our March 27 meeting we heard reporting from the Dean of the Libraries about open scholarship. This month (4/24) we will be hearing from George Middlemist and Laurie Elish Piper to share some updates related to the budget and progress made towards closing the deficit and plans going forward.

We were not able to take action on Biology changes. We did not reach 2/3 of our membership, so we didn't vote; at the next meeting we'll be voting on two bylaw changes. One to allow Faculty Senate to operate over the summer, and the second is just a reconfiguration related to a clarification of language within the Faculty Senate session. We also had a presentation on mentorship by Director Janet Hamlet who presented her work and the types of mentorship opportunities she's going to be rolling out in the new year.

**Student Government Association:** The newly elected president of the SGA. Ja'Kobe Jones was asked to share a little bit about himself and provide any updates. Ja'Kobe shared that he is very passionate about the students here and it is his goal to enhance the student experience as much as he can. Ja'Kobe is a sophomore and plans to change his major to Finance with an interest in finance education.

**Operating Staff Council:** No report

**Human Resource Services:** No report

**Vice President's Report:** Not much to report this month. The Parking Appeals Committee heard 51 appeals, 26 approved; 24 denied and 1 reduced. The Athletic Board meets April 17; Computing Facilities Advisory Committee meets April 12.

**University Committee Selections:**

John Boswell will continue in the Faculty Senate position for 2024-25

Shannon Stoker will continue on the Campus Parking Committee for 2024-25

Heath Duncan and Cody Carter will continue on the Non-Union faculty and Staff Grievance Panel for 2024-25; Felicia will reach out to find a third member.

Heath Duncan, Cody Carter, Tom O'Grady continue on Parking Appeals Committee 2024-25

Three vacancies remain on Student Grievance Panel; Felicia will come back to that.

**Committee Updates:**

**Advocacy:** Joe Lovelace reporting: We have the survey together, just need to make a couple of tweaks. Thanks to Felicia and Anthony for their help. It should be going out next week. I am still trying to get a meeting with John Acardo. I am hoping that maybe over the summer I can take a look at the results with the committee members and perhaps figure out ways we can address some of the concerns that are reflected from the survey responses. Felicia will invite John Acardo to come and talk with us next month (May) getting his perspective on the SPS and position changes.

**Awards:** Felicia congratulated the Awards and Event committees for the very successful awards program last week. It was very successful. We got the word out early and did individual emails to SPS which definitely resulted in a greater number of respondents. Margaret Myles thanked Felicia for all of her work to make the event a success and mentioned that she too got positive feedback, especially that it was in the middle of the day and not at the end.

**Constitution & Elections:** We are running behind. We're going to work on getting nominations out by next week so that we can come back and actually do elections before we end. That is pretty much the bottom line. We're working on it, and we're going to get this done.

**Events:** Jesse Perez reporting: We will be planning an end of the year activity and so you will be hearing more from the Events Committee as far as that is concerned.

**SPSC Dependent Scholarship:** We had about 20-25 applicants. Awards were given to Maddie Voorhis, whose Father has worked at NIU for 33 years and has made a huge impact on a lot of lives, including hers. Our other scholar is Jorge Ruiz who shared a very interesting story. He came to the United States much later in life, so English is his second language. He has had a lot of help, experienced a lot of positivity and that's what has driven him to stay here at NIU.

**Professional Development:** Candice Olagunju reporting: We have an employee well-being scheduled. It was supposed to happen today, but we are moving to next month and I'm working with the presenter on that to nail down the topic.

**Old Business: None**

**New Business:**

**Announcements:**

**Adjournment:** Having no further business, President Bohanon adjourned the meeting at 10:47 a.m.

**Representatives:** Please contact our SPSC Secretary, Manuel Valdez, ([mvaldez2@niu.edu](mailto:mvaldez2@niu.edu)) and SPSC Administrative Aide, Frances Mitchell, ([fmitchell@niu.edu](mailto: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*