



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

Department of Counseling and Higher Education

College of Education

April 16, 2024

Office of Faculty Senate
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, IL 60115

Re: AY23-24 Summary of Service – Carrie Kortegast

Dear Dr. Creed and NIU Faculty Senate:

The following outlines my activities as the Faculty Personnel Advisor since my last report submitted to Faculty Senate on April 12, 2023.

Over the past year, I provided assistance to six individual faculty members across three colleges. The nature of the assistance included sharing campus resources for managing interpersonal conflict, clarifying policies regarding course scheduling, workload concerns and policies, promotion procedures and appeals processes, departmental procedures, and concerns regarding potential disciplinary action. Many of these issues seemed exasperated by particular interpersonal conflicts and dynamics within programs and departments.

The faculty ranks include two clinical faculty, three associate professors, and one professor. This included 180 email exchanges, 11 individual meetings with faculty members, and 1 co-meeting with a faculty member and their department and program chair. I also had information seeking meetings with Bárbara González, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs for two different situations and with Cathy Doederlein, Director of Employee Experience twice regarding the same issue. These meetings were to clarify institutional policies, procedures, and other questions related to personnel matters to assist the faculty members.

For one case, I was able to assist via email as the nature of the inquiry was informational and focused on clarification of policy. For the other five cases, we exchanged multiple emails and met virtually/in-person to discuss their situations and concerns. For these meetings, I provided support, advice, and discussed potential responses. In some cases, I also reviewed and provided feedback on correspondences. When appropriate, I referred individuals to the Ombudsperson, Employee Assistance, UFA Grievance Officer and/or Human Resources. Because of the nature and complexity of two cases, they involved multiple meetings, emails, and consultation with individuals from the provost's office, human resources, and/or the UFA.

I also want to note that I was on partial FMLA for the first half of the spring semester. While I still responded to emails and held virtual and phone meetings with individuals, I was unable to meet with individuals in-person or attend on-campus meetings during this time. This was not an issue as most concerns could be resolved virtually.

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Regarding outreach efforts, I again presented to Faculty Senate on September 6, 2023 about the role of the FPA. I shared a handout to be distributed to faculty. The handout included information about the FPA position and how I can provide assistance to all faculty, regardless of rank and title. As I continue in this role, I welcome suggestions and feedback from Faculty Senate on additional outreach efforts.

This past year has also raised some questions about the role of the Faculty Personnel Advisor and ways this role can support faculty. Additionally, I have been involved in conversations about what support and training individuals serving as personnel advisors need to have. With that, I have met with Ben Creed, President of NIU Faculty Senate, several times to discuss the FPA role and ways we might enhance it. This included meeting with Bárbara González, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and John Acardo, Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resource Officer, in January. Recommendations from these meetings included updating the NIU website faculty resources pages to include information about the role of the Faculty Personnel Advisor along with other resources and support on campus, identifying training needs for individuals in the FPA position, further conversations regarding role clarification particularly with the new HR partners positions, and increasing outreach efforts.

On April 12, 2024, the other personnel advisors on campus, Joe Lovelace and Holly Nicholson along with Brian Smith, Director of Employee Assistance and Sandra Cox, Ombudsperson, and Cathy Doederlein, Director of Employee Experience, meet to discuss our roles, issues we are facing, and ways we might collaborate, potential ongoing training, and how to support each other. There is a desire to continue this collaboration and have ongoing meetings starting this summer.

Thank you for the honor of serving in this position. Please let me know if you have any questions about the contents of this report. I look forward to continuing in this role for the next academic year.

Sincerely,

Carrie Kortegast, Ph.D.
Associate Professor | Faculty Personnel Advisor
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