



NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY

University Council and Faculty Senate

To: Faculty Senate

From: Benjamin M. Creed, Faculty Senate President/University Council Chair

RE: Faculty Senate Activity Report for AY 2023-2024

Date: April 12th, 2024

Position Overview:

Pursuant to the Faculty Senate's (FS) Bylaws Article 2.5 outlining the duties of the Faculty Senate President, this report hereby provides a summary of main duties and accomplishments during my term which began July 1, 2023, and extends through June 30, 2024. As the report is due to Faculty Senate at the last meeting of the AY (April 24th, 2024), the report does not include activities which occurred during the period between the last FS meeting and the end of the term.

I: Primary and Routine Duties:

- Set agenda, chaired 8 FS meetings during AY 2023-24.
- Set agenda, chaired 8 FS Steering Committee meetings during AY 2023-24.
- Set agenda, chaired 7 FS Social Justice Committee meetings during AY 2023-24.
 - Moved core work forward to completion related to amending FS Article 8.
 - Worked with FS Social Justice Committee to identify priorities for AY 2024-25.
- Set agenda, chaired 1 FS Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee during AY 2023-24
- Co-facilitated, co-chaired 7 University Council meetings with one more to come, with President Freeman, during AY 2023-24.
- Attended all Operating Staff Council and Supportive Professional Staff Council meetings.
- Served as primary shared governance liaison between faculty and NIU senior administration.
- Served as member of the University Advisory Council to the Board of Trustees.
- Regularly attended Board of Trustees meetings, Board of Trustee subcommittee meetings.
- Held regular meetings with University Senior Leadership, including NIU President Lisa Freeman, Executive Vice President and Provost Laurie Elish Piper, Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs Bárbara González, Vice Provost for Academic Affairs Alicia Schatteman, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Chief Diversity Officer Carol Sumner, Vice President and Chief Financial Officer George Middlemist, and others as needed.
- Held regular meetings with senior leadership of the two staff councils, President of the Supportive Professional Staff Council Felicia Bohanon, and President of the Operating Staff Council Natasha Johnson.
- Other duties as needed.

II: Faculty Senate Actions Taken:

- **Passed amendments to FS Bylaws**
 - Amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 4.8.1.6, University Assessment Panel Administration Representation, passed February 21st, 2024.
 - Amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Articles 3, 8, and 9 related to Tenure and Promotion, passed February 21st, 2024.

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- Amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 3.1, Article 6, and Article 7 related to the academic calendar and authority of FS to operate outside of academic year, will be voted on at April 24th, 2024 FS Meeting.
- Amendment to Faculty Senate Bylaws Article 3.5 updating Social Justice Committee bylaws, will be voted on at April 24th, 2024 FS Meeting.
- **Key topics presented at Faculty Senate meetings**
 - Blackboard Ultra Transition and updates on Curriculum (September 6th, 2023)
 - Faculty Affairs Priorities and Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act (October 4th, 2023)
 - HLC Accreditation and Multiyear Budgeting (November 1st, 2023)
 - Supreme Court Decision on Affirmative Action and impact on NIU; Updates from ADEI (November 29th, 2023)
 - Title IX and Sexual Harassment at NIU; Blackboard AI Design Assistant (January, 24th, 2024)
 - HLC Updates (February 21st, 2024)
 - Faculty Mentoring; Open Scholarship (March 27th, 2024)
 - *Planned*: Budget update (April 24th, 2024)
- **Improving Faculty Senate**
 - Initiated the use of Qualtrics surveys to learn from FS members
 - Initiated sending summary emails after each meeting to facilitate the sharing of information
 - Included standing report from Baccalaureate Council
 - Held office hours for FS President

III: University Council Meetings

- **Passed amendments to University Bylaws or NIU Constitution**
 - Amendment to NIU Bylaws Article 8.3 to remove Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee, passed October 11th, 2023.
- **Key topics presented at University Council meetings**
 - Updates and changes in HR (September, 13th, 2023)
 - Technology accessibility and Mental Health Early Action on Campus Act (October 11th, 2023)
 - Multiyear budgeting (November 8th, 2023)
 - Updates from ADEI (December 6th, 2023)
 - Impact of Normal Road Closure (January 31st, 2024)
 - Progress towards addressing structural deficit (February 28th, 2024)
 - Supreme Court Decision on Affirmative Action and impact on NIU (April 3rd, 2024)
 - *Planned*: FAFSA updates and Normal Road Closure updates (May 1st, 2024)
- **Improving University Council**
 - Added standing budget update agenda item

IV: University Search Committee, Shared Leadership Groups, and other working groups:

- Co-chair EVPP Search Committee

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- Engagement Roundtable member, including participation in the Carnegie Action Team tasked with drafting NIU's application for redesignation as a Community Engaged Campus
- SEM 2.0 Faculty Academic Experience Committee member, and Governance, Policies, and Practices Working Group member
- Called together and chaired the Retroactive Withdrawal Working Group
- Called together and chaired the Readmission and Reentry Working Group
- General Education Working Group member

V: Other Key Activities:

- Participated in New Faculty Orientation
- Participated in the 2024 State of the University Address
- Invited to OERD staff retreat, along with President Freeman, to discuss importance of community engaged work
- Spoke to the 2023 Staff Professional Development Academy about shared governance
- Spoke to members of College of Education's EdLEAD program about shared governance
- Worked to communicate, implement changes to promotion and tenure

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