April 11, 2025

Office of Faculty Senate

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, IL 60115

**Re: AY24-25 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 16, 2024.

During this time period, I have interacted with faculty at various ranks and roles from different colleges to provide support. I have also meet with administrators across the university and officers in both faculty unions to gather information and clarify university policies and procedures to support faculty. Over the past year, I believe I have gained increase knowledge into personnel policies as well as how to support faculty in navigating concerns and issues. Throughout my interactions with faculty in my role as FPA, I sought to assist faculty in understanding different options available to them to make the best decision they could with the best information available to them. It has been an honor to serve in the capacity and to support my faculty colleagues.

Over the past year, I directly supported six faculty members across three colleges. The nature of this assistance included sharing campus resources for managing interpersonal conflict, clarifying policies, workload concerns and policies, appeals processes, departmental procedures, concerns regarding potential disciplinary action, and contract issues. Some of these issues were exasperated by interpersonal conflicts and dynamics within programs and departments and differences between institutional/departmental practices and policies (or not having a policy) regarding a particular issue. Increased support for professional development regarding addressing conflict, supervision, and managing interpersonal dynamics might help in creating more supportive academic environments and cultures. This might also help minimize issues and address conflicts earlier on.

My interactions with faculty and others regarding particular issues involved over 320 email exchanges, 60+ individual TEAMS meetings and phone calls with faculty members, and 3 co-meeting with a faculty member and a campus administrator (i.e., Dean, Department Chair, Associate Provost). The vast majority of these emails and meetings involved significant issues two faculty members were experiencing. I also had information seeking meetings and email exchanges with Bárbara González, Vice Provost for Faculty Affair, Cathy Doederlein, Director of Employee Experience, Keith Nyquist, UIP President, Jeff Kidder, UFA Grievance Officer, and Holly Nicolson, Operating Staff Personnel Advisor. These meetings/emails were to clarify institutional policies, procedures, gain advice, and other questions related to personnel matters to assist faculty members.

This past year, I engaged in collaborative efforts with other individuals who provide personnel support across the university. Starting last year, the other personnel advisors on campus, Joe Lovelace and Holly Nicholson, along with Brian Smith, Director of Employee Assistance, Sandra Cox, Ombudsperson, and Cathy Doederlein, Director of Employee Experience, met to discuss our roles, issues we were facing, ways we might collaborate, and how to support each other. This meeting turned into bi-monthly meetings between the personnel advisors, Human Resources, the Ombudsperson, and Employee Assistance to discuss issues, concerns, and trends we have been seeing. I have found these meetings to be particularly useful in terms of gaining additional information and support but also as a source of referrals. When appropriate, they have referred faculty to me to get support and I have referred faculty to them.

I have also engaged in outreach efforts to promote the services of the FPA. These efforts included sharing a flyer about the role of the FPA at the being of the 24/25 academic year with Faculty Senate and reaching out to the leadership of the faculty unions. I also presented about the role of the Faculty Personnel Advisor at the two general membership meetings for the UFA in November and offered support during the special meeting in January.

This past year, I have continued conversations with Ben Creed, President of NIU Faculty Senate, about the role and scope of the Faculty Personnel Advisor. I believe the position is important and needs to continue, particularly to individuals not represented by one of the two faculty unions. However, I agree that the position and scope of responsibilities and expectations needs to be revisited. I look forward to engaging in these conversations.

Thank you again for the honor of serving in this position. Please let me know if you have any questions about the contents of this report.

Sincerely,

Carrie Kortegast, Ph.D.

Associate Professor | Faculty Personnel Advisor

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