

NORTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
COMMITTEE FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC
EXPERIENCE (CIUAE)

Monday, September 12, 2022
Microsoft Teams Meeting

Approved Minutes

Present: J. Gray, R. Mazzolini, K. Wiemer, T. Libert (Guest), N. Knutson, W. Johnson, Y. Ito, J. Rhode, L. Edwards, R. Tork, M. Christian, F. Ishaq, A. Radasanu, E. Zabela Zabelin, W. Gao, J. Tan, J-C Wang, N. Richards

Absent:

Guests:

Adoption of Agenda: The meeting started at 1:02 p.m. W. Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda; Y. Ito seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

Introductions & Icebreaker. All in attendance introduced themselves. Random smaller breakout groups were formed for a simple introductory icebreaker activity.

Committee Overview K. Wiemer gave an overview and background of the committee, including the bylaws, and the academic, social, and mental needs of undergraduate students. The importance of discussing issues, ideas, and collaborating with different university units for assistance. Suggestions are encouraged, the student input is most critical to the success of the committee

Last year's focus was how to make information easier for students to access, which is still a work in progress. In the current year, the group will address another key need identified in the previous year: supporting student mental health and wellbeing. The committee is also responsible for the ranking and selection of recipients for the excellence in undergraduate instruction and teaching awards.

Recruitment Student representation from all colleges is being addressed by email and word-of-mouth/student recruitment. Updates will be shared in the next meeting.

Breakout Groups Three breakout groups were formed with student representation in each to start brainstorming about this year's focus topic (student mental health). Groups discussed ideas for problem areas, mental health needs, and university units to work with. Groups reported back on their discussions.

- Group 1 F. Ishaq reported discussions on stress management, dealing with long waitlists for counseling, the possibility of interim activities for students on the waitlists, sharing resources about supportive services, student peer groups within majors and the need to establish more of these groups to foster a sense of belonging and offer discipline-specific support. J Rhode shared the NIU well-being website: <https://www.niu.edu/well-being/>
- Group 2 R. Tork reported the importance of spreading information about student health services for all areas of need. Also, the group highlighted the importance of professors announcing resources for supporting student mental health in classes and through Blackboard, especially considering recent increases in stress (online classes, pandemic effects). Finally, the group brought up the specific mental health needs of student groups such as transfer students, international students, etc.
- Group 3 N. Knutson reported discussion about many of the same things, with a focus on the importance of making resources available and sharing what resources are available in classes. The group also raised the issue that students who are struggling often do not know how to go about getting support. The suggestion of advocates for students was made (J. Rhode: "student success coach") who could help students navigate the process.

New Business Mental health of students is the priority theme this academic year; a guest speaker will present at the next meeting.

Approval of Minutes The April 12, 2022 minutes were motioned and approved by K. Wiemer due to special circumstances of being the sole returning voting member from last year.

Adjournment L. Edwards moved to adjourn, seconded by R. Mazzolini. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 2:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Richard Mazzolini.