

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

Monday, November 6, 2023  
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.  
Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Approved Minutes**

**Present:** Farah Ishaq (Chair), Alicia Schatteman (Vice Provost, Academic Affairs), Jason Rhode, Jeffery Salmon (Guest), Emily Reilly (Guest), Richard Mazzolini, Jifu Tan, Dr. Mark Pienkos, Naina Richards, Alissa Droog, Andrea Radasanu, Wenlian Gao, Yasuo Ito, Schicheng Chen, Jui-Ching Wang, Tylo Blackburn, Amelia Gericke, Brian Podkulski, Hannah Gebke

**Absent:** Julian Garcia, Mikayla Dirksen, Karla Padron, Chamayze Hall

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

**Guest Speaker – Jeffrey Salmon, Ed.D. | Director of Center for Student Assistance**

- **Overview** – J. Salmon gave a brief overview of the services the center provides. The center strives to take a holistic approach, looking at all barriers impacting the student outside the classroom that are keeping them from being their best selves inside the classroom. These include, but not limited to, academics, financial aid, health services, registration deadlines, food insecurities, and personal health issues. The goals are to prevent students from being shuffled around and provide services in a timely manner.

**Student Introductions & Icebreaker**

- F. Ishaq briefly reviewed the committee website, duties, and voting and non-voting membership, along with past meeting minutes: <https://www.niu.edu/university-council/committees/ciuae.shtml>
- The icebreaker activity was committee introductions emphasizing new members: Hannah Gebke

**Approval of Minutes:** Motion to approve the October 2, 2023, minutes by A. Droog. The minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

**Committee Focus Theme - – Student Retention (Sense of Belonging/Access to Services)**

- F. Ishaq shared CITL resources and an article from Inside Higher Ed on building a sense of student belonging.
  - CITL Resources: <https://www.niu.edu/citl/resources/guides/fostering-engagement-and-sense-of-belonging.shtml>
  - Inside Higher Ed Article: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/student-success/academic-life/2023/09/13/survey-how-increase-belonging-among-college-students>

- Breakout Rooms to continue brainstorming topics: Sense of belonging and access to services. Key takeaways/needs:
  - Focused on student belonging, especially for transfer and non-traditional students.
  - Resources at the college level would be helpful, like the clubs and societies found in CEET.
  - Connection with heritage is also important.
  - Professor/student relationship.
  - Strive for consistency in professor communication about resources
  - Increase advisor contact with students.
  - Increasing retention between freshman and sophomore year by improving professor understanding of student needs.

### **Old Business**

- Student representation is needed from the College of Business and College of Health and Human Sciences, and the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology.
- A. Radasanu and E. Reilly updated the Student Engagement Fund by saying The CIUAE will be receiving their application assignments for review with the goal being to notify faculty of what undergraduate research projects will be funded in early December. The application process was reviewed, and committee members may members may reach out with any questions.
- Awards Schedule and Application Process:
  - The Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching (EUTA) and Excellence in Undergraduate Instruction (EUJA) applications are open, and the application review process will be discussed at the next meeting.
  - Promotion has included communication with Associate Deans, Faculty Senate, NIU Today, and the new Provost Office Newsletter.

**New Business:** F. Ishaq encouraged the students to participate on the University Fee Advisory Group, which works under the Executive VP and Provost as well as the VP of Administration and Finance that looks at student mandatory fee proposals and recommended fee levels within the university budget.

**Baccalaureate Council Updates:** A. Schatteman shared work is being done on Curriculog the online system to submit curriculum proposals. We're building it now, so this fall we're looking at proposals for the 24/25 catalog that'll close at the end of November. The GEC has recommended doing away with the pathways, will be brought to the BC for vote. The Provst's Office is doing things around student retention, communications and all the things the CIUAE has been talking about. The Provost would like this committee to assist in reaching out to students who are in need of help.

**Announcements:** None

**Adjournment:** Y. Ito moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 2:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Richard Mazzolini.