MINUTES
Faculty Senate-University Council Rules, Governance and Elections Committee
Thursday, Jan. 27, 10 a.m.
Altgeld Hall 125
Northern Illinois University
DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Chomentowski (for Olson), Creed, Demir (for Chen), Hunter (for Penkrot), Maki, Martin, Nicholson, O’Grady (for Rogers), Sharp, Timko

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Chen, Collins, Cripe, Olson, Penkrot, Rogers

OTHERS PRESENT: Hill

I. CALL TO ORDER

FS-UC Rules, Governance and Elections (RGE) Committee chair, H. Nicholson, called the meeting to order at 10 a.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was verified.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

D. Maki moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by B. Creed. Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE NOVEMBER 29, 2021 MINUTES – Pages 2-4

B. Creed moved to approve the minutes, seconded by D. Maki. Motion passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

VI. WORKING GROUP REPORTS

A. Resource Development Working Group report

The working group is researching and developing definitions of bullying and harassment, with plans to share those definitions with the RGE Committee members soon.
B. Data Collection Working Group report

A literature review shows that there is a variance in findings from one cyberbullying study to another. The perception of what type of behavior constitutes cyberbullying also varies greatly from one person to another. Michele Demaray might have related data she can share. Does any research exist which focuses on people who have engaged in cyberbullying, who maybe don’t realize their behavior was seen as such?

Concern was expressed that care be taken when setting policy focused on behavior that can be so variously interpreted. Definitions of cyberbullying and harassment will be key in this process.

The main goal of this project is to create a website to serve as a means of sharing resources with those experiencing cyberbullying. A secondary goal is to enhance currently existing NIU policies to include information on cyberbullying and harassment. Any proposed policy language should focus on providing resources and education as opposed to dictating punishment.

Can a website be created based on currently existing resources, and updated as more information is gathered?

Could we be thought leaders on this topic, perhaps composing an article for the NIU News Room?

There was consensus that a survey of the NIU community could provide valuable data. S. Sharp will work on this and share a draft with RGE Committee members.

- Survey participants to include both students and employees
- Consider including scenarios to help the committee members learn about the varied perspectives of aggressiveness.
- Consider conducting qualitative interviews with those who believe they’ve been cyberbullied.
- Keep the survey brief so that it can be completed in no more than five minutes.

C. Reviewing Current Policies Working Group report

Several policies related to, or which reference, cyberbullying either already exist or are being developed by other NIU units.

- The Student Code of Conduct is currently being reviewed, and a proposed definition of cyberbullying and harassment is being developed as part of that review process.
- Reference to bullying by electronic means currently exists in the Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy.

P. Chomentowski will reach out to Human Resource Services Senior AVP Bill Hodson to learn about other possible existing related policies.
VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Spring 2022 RGE Committee meeting schedule

There was consensus to continue using an availability poll to schedule each meeting going forward.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

T. O’Grady moved to adjourn, seconded by K. Martin. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.