

PUBLIC NOTICE AND AGENDA

FACULTY SENATE – SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, April 12, 2023, 3 p.m.

Altgeld Hall 125

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, Illinois

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM**
- III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**
- IV. APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 8, 2023, MINUTES – Pages 2-4**
- V. PUBLIC COMMENT**
- VI. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS**
 - A. Academic Affairs – Xiaodan Hu
 - B. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Natasha Johnson
 - 1. DEI Fest Revised Draft Proposal – Pages 5-10
 - C. Institutional Racism – Beth McGowan
- VII. ITEMS FOR FS-SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION**
- VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
- IX. NEW BUSINESS**
- X. ADJOURNMENT**

MINUTES

FACULTY SENATE – SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Wednesday, March 8, 2023, 3 p.m.

Altgeld Hall 125

Northern Illinois University

DeKalb, Illinois

VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT: Books, Hu, McConkie, McGowan, Palese, Scanlon, Vahabzadeh, Valentiner

VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: Bohanon, Douglass, Johnson

OTHERS ABSENT: Flynn, Montana

I. CALL TO ORDER

Faculty Senate (FS) Social Justice Committee (SJC) chair, **D. Valentiner**, called the meeting to order at 3p.m.

II. VERIFICATION OF QUORUM

A quorum was verified.

III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

B. Palese moved to adopt the agenda, seconded by **B. McGowan**. Motion passed.

IV. APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 8, 2023, MINUTES

B. McGowan moved to approve the minutes, seconded by **D. McConkie**. Motion passed.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

VI. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

A. Academic Affairs – Xiaodan Hu

- The second wave of college council conversations has continued with focus on sharing what was learned from the first wave in regard to re-envisioning the promotion and tenure policies at NIU. Response is varied.
- The working group will continue to clarify its message as plans to amend FS Bylaws Article 8, The Academic Personnel Process, are developed.
- A summary of the working group's work will be compiled to be passed on to next year's committee members.

B. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion – Natasha Johnson

1. DEI Fest Draft Proposal
Biagio Palese

- The committee reviewed and discussed the proposal.
- The working group will refine its proposal based on feedback received from the committee members and bring it back for further review at the April 12 committee meeting.
- Provost Ingram has suggested that the final proposal be submitted to her office and to the Council of Deans for their partnership in shaping the final structure. Incoming Interim Provost Elish-Piper perhaps should also be included.
- The proposal calls for hosting the inaugural event in Fall 2023.

C. Institutional Racism – Beth McGowan

- Reviewing DEI-focused books for book discussion.
- FS Bylaws, Article 4 – Hoping to meet with curricular committees, such as the Academic Planning Council, Baccalaureate Council, Graduate Council, relative to possible Article 4 amendment proposal regarding curriculum. Most of the time, these committees are fairly hands-off, and more inclined to defer to the academic departments.
- Bursar’s Office – Investigating complaints about the book charge program. The charge program is open for six weeks before classes begin and two weeks after. But often books aren’t available in time to purchase within that timeframe.
- Vaccination expense – Investigating an issue relative to student cost for required vaccinations.
- Resource Library – working to create a resource library.
- Shared Equity Leadership – Moving toward implementation. Currently identifying co-chairs and members of what will be six working groups. Once the university goals are approved, these working groups will be responsible for ensuring the goals are met. The model is intended to bring stakeholders across campus together. We should see this project taking more specific shape mid-fall 2023 semester.

VII. ITEMS FOR FS-SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Continuing discussion of request for anonymous survey
- B. Continuing discussion of how to promote academic freedom

Several stakeholders have met to discuss how to foster open and respectful communication. The group will meet next on March 22 in the OASIS Room [HSC lower level]. Possibly this activity will replace the previously discussed need for a survey.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

X. ADJOURNMENT

B. Palese moved to adjourn, seconded by **B. McGowan**. Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

1st Northern Illinois University DEI Fest Final

Final Proposal Draft

Presented by the FS Social Justice DE&I Subcommittee
Natasha Johnson, Biagio Palese, Sahar Vahabzadeh
April 5th, 2023

Introduction

To achieve our goal in making NIU a more equitable institution, there are measures the university could consider adopting to inspire and encourage faculty, students, staff and the community to take a deeper dive into DEI's initiatives. One suggestion the DEI Working Group would like to propose, for instance, is instituting an annual DEI fest (either in Spring or Fall) where faculty, students, staff, and the community could come together in a series of events to share ideas, make research presentations and/or exhibit creative artistries to promote equity and DEI climate at NIU. Our working group is proposing below a structure of the annual DEI festival. Should this idea receive the Faculty Senate Social Justice Committee's and the university's buy-in, the DEI Working Group would be responsible for organizing this event annually. We propose that the venue of this event be rotated to allow each of our seven colleges to work with the DEI Working Group to co-host and invite the whole campus community to participate. We also envision some of the events to be hosted in our campus location depending on the number of participants (e.g., library, convocation center). In our proposed structure of the DEI fest, we envisioned two different sides of it. On one side we have one side that relates to academic events/activities. On the other side we have entertainment events/activities. The event's academic side will be a combination of individual presentations, round table panels, workshops and posters exhibition. Interested and prospective presenters would be required to submit a one-page length abstract that briefly outlines their research. Submissions for round table panels will also require a prior submission of an abstract that discusses the topic of the panel and the expertise of the panelists. We will also invite an expert in the DEI's domain to deliver a keynote speech to start the DEI fest. The event's entertainment side will include activities such as attending a multicultural dinner, enjoying different art performances, reading books, watching movies and listening to music to celebrate diversity. We are not aware of other institutions organizing this type of event at a university level, and we genuinely believe that the DEI fest can set NIU apart from other universities. The DEI Fest will not only be an avenue to promote, discuss research, start of cross-disciplinary/ trans-disciplinary collaborations that will bring advancement to the topic but also to learn from the perspective of others and to appreciate the beauty of diversity. The DEI fest will help promote equity, diversity, inclusion, and togetherness for all NIU faculty, students, staff, and the community. This event clearly aligns with DEI Working Group goals and prioritized

recommendations, and we believe the DEI Fest would offer NIU an opportunity to sustain, sponsor and celebrate the DEI work already underway. For more detailed information on the work completed this summer, please see the extensive report DEI Hiring Statements and Practices available in the FS-SJC Repository in Teams.

Date and Location

- Spring (April 2024, exact dates TBD)
- NIU College of Business (it will rotate among other colleges in the following years)

Tentative Event Structure

Day 1:

9:00 AM - 10:00 AM: Opening ceremony and welcome speech from the organizers and university administration.

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM: Keynote speech from a renowned DEI expert.

11:30 AM - 12:30 PM: Panel discussion on current DEI initiatives and best practices at the university.

12:30 PM - 1:30 PM: Lunch break.

1:30 PM - 3:00 PM: Short Talks from professors from different departments, displaying their research and initiatives related to DEI.

3:00 PM - 4:00 PM: Poster display session, where students can highlight their projects and ideas related to DEI.

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM: Networking Break.

5:00 PM - 6:30 PM: DEI-focused workshops and interactive sessions. This can include activities such as role-playing, simulations, and games aimed at promoting DEI awareness and understanding.

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM: Cultural showcase, where students and local community members can display their cultural talents and performances.

7:30PM- 9:30PM: Movie Night, where we we watch a couple of movies DEI related.

Day 2:

9:00 AM - 10:30 AM: Poster display session, where students can highlight their projects and ideas related to DEI.

10:30 AM - 12:00 PM: DEI-focused workshops and interactive sessions. This can include activities such as role-playing, simulations, and games aimed at promoting DEI awareness and understanding.

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM: Lunch break.

1:00 PM - 2:30 PM: Short Talks from professors from different departments, displaying their research and initiatives related to DEI.

2:30 PM - 3:30 PM: Panel discussion on current DEI initiatives and best practices at the university.

3:30 PM - 5PM: Networking break.

5PM - 5:30PM: Closing ceremony and feedback session, where participants can share their thoughts and insights on the event.

5:30PM - 9PM: Social Event (Multicultural dinner).

Budget

Here is a budget estimate:

- Marketing and promotion: \$1500 to \$2500
This includes the cost of creating and distributing marketing materials, such as flyers, posters, radio and email campaigns, to promote the event.
- Speaker fees: \$1000 to \$5000
Depending on the keynote speaker, you may need to pay a speaking fee.
- Food and beverage: \$2000 to \$3000
The cost of food and beverage will depend on the number of attendees, type of menu, and any dietary restrictions.
- Miscellaneous: \$1000 to \$3000
This includes any other expenses that may arise, such as decorations, printing, and miscellaneous supplies.

This is a rough estimate, and actual costs may vary depending on the final number of participants.

DEI Fest (Academic side)

In this section, we will present the information related to the event's academic side:

Types of submissions:

- Short Talks
- Panel Discussions
- Workshops
- Posters (students oriented)

Submissions deadlines:

- Six weeks before the day of the DEI Fest. Submissions will not peer reviewed. Rejection will only happen if the submission does not cover topics related to DEI. Otherwise, all submissions will be accepted (events will be spread out among multiple rooms).

Submission guidelines:

- Short Talks

One page abstract that discusses the research idea and any preliminary results.

- Panel Discussions

Two pages abstract. It should cover the topic of the panel and provide information/qualifications of the panelists.

- Workshops

Two pages abstract. It should cover the topic of the workshop and provide information/qualifications of the organizer.

- Posters

One poster document that summarizes the research project (e.g., a power point slide). The poster authors will be responsible for printing the poster to a readable size and to attend the posters display session.

Other events (more students oriented):

- **Students Associations Displays:** Invite the different student association to display their work and to share their experiences on campus.
- **Book Clubs:** Organize book clubs and author readings focused on DEI themes. This can provide an opportunity to discuss and learn about DEI issues through literature.
- **DEI case competition:** Partner with a company or create a realistic case competition with awards and prizes for students competing in the competitions. A set of judges will be required to assess students' team performance.

DEI Activities and events (Entertainment/Cultural showcase side of the DEI event)

These events will be offered through the duration of the DEI Fest and, at times, in parallel to the academic side of the schedule. The best participants will be featured at the social event (the DEI Fest Multicultural Dinner):

- **Cultural performances:** Invite local dance groups, musicians, and artists to perform and showcase their talents. This can provide an opportunity to learn about different cultures and traditions.
- **Art exhibitions:** Display artwork from local artists, students, and community members that highlight DEI themes and messages.
- **Movies screenings:** Screen Movies that address DEI themes, such as documentaries, short films, and feature films. Select a couple of movies to be displayed during Movie night and/or in parallel of some of the sections with the objective to open-eyes and start discussion on DEI related topics.
- **Game shows and competitions:** Organize fun and educational games and competitions related to DEI, such as trivia games, debates, and essay writing contests.
- **Social event (DEI Fest Multicultural Dinner):** This is a social event where food from multiple cultures will be available and served. The dinner will also feature diverse music, dance, and art. This event will be open to the public (\$15 per person and will be free only for students) and conclude the DEI Fest. The money collected from the dinner can help cover some costs and/or funds scholarships and/or research projects DEI related.