

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA**  
**Wednesday, October 5, 2016, 3 p.m.**  
**Holmes Student Center Sky Room**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

**II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**III. APPROVAL OF THE [MINUTES](#) OF THE SEPTEMBER 7, 2016 MEETING**

**IV. PRESIDENT'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A. [Ombudsperson Annual Report](#) per Bylaws, Article 20.1 – Sarah Klapner – Pages 3-16

**V. CONSENT AGENDA**

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, [Article 17.1](#), Athletic Board – Pages 17-20  
**SECOND READING – ACTION ITEM**
- B. Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, [Article 15.3.1.3\(B\)](#),  
Academic Planning Council – Pages 21-22  
**SECOND READING – ACTION ITEM**
- C. Program Prioritization update – Lisa Freeman, Provost

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Approval of [Proposed University Holidays for 2017](#) – Page 23 – **ACTION ITEM**

**VIII. REPORTS FROM COUNCILS, BOARDS AND STANDING COMMITTEES**

- A. FAC to IBHE – Paul Stoddard – report
- B. University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – no report  
Cathy Doederlein, Greg Long, Holly Nicholson,  
Rebecca Shortridge, Kendall Thu, Leanne VandeCreek
- C. Academic Policy Committee – no report
- D. Resources, Space and Budget Committee – Sarah McHone-Chase, Chair – no report

- E. Rules, Governance and Elections Committee – Therese Arado, Chair – report
  - 1. NIU Bylaws [Article 17.4](#), University Advisory Committee to the Board of Trustees – Page 24
- F. University Affairs Committee – Linda Saborio, Chair – no report
- G. Student Association – Giuseppe LaGioia, President – report
- H. Operating Staff Council – Holly Nicholson, President – no report
- I. Supportive Professional Staff Council – Cathy Doederlein, President – no report

**IX. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR**

**X. INFORMATION ITEMS**

- A. [Minutes](#), Academic Planning Council
- B. [Minutes](#), Athletic Board
- C. [Minutes](#), Baccalaureate Council
- D. [Minutes](#), Board of Trustees
- E. [Minutes](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- F. [Minutes](#), Comm. on the Improvement of the Undergraduate Academic Experience
- G. [Minutes](#), General Education Committee
- H. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council
- I. [Minutes](#), Graduate Council Curriculum Committee
- J. [Minutes](#), Honors Committee
- K. [Minutes](#), Operating Staff Council
- L. [Minutes](#), Supportive Professional Staff Council
- M. [Minutes](#), University Assessment Panel
- N. [Minutes](#), University Benefits Committee
- O. [Minutes](#), Univ. Comm. on Advanced and Nonteaching Educator License Programs
- P. [Minutes](#), University Committee on Initial Educator Licensure
- Q. [Annual Report](#), Campus Security and Environmental Quality Committee
- R. [Annual Report](#), University Assessment Panel

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

**Northern Illinois University**

**OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSPERSON**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**May 16, 2015—May 15, 2016**

**Sarah Klaper, J.D.  
University Ombudsperson**

## **Acknowledgments**

During Office orientation, new members of the Office of the Ombudsperson view a TEDx talk by Drew Dudley called “Everyday Leaders.” In that talk, Mr. Dudley explains how we are all leaders in everything we do, every day, even when we don’t realize it. A kind word, a smile, a listening ear, or an understanding look can change someone else’s day or life. In addition, empowering others to use their voices is an act of leadership in itself.

[I]f you change one person's understanding of [the world], one person's understanding of what they're capable of, one person's understanding of how much people care about them, one person's understanding of how powerful an agent of change they can be in this world, you've changed the whole thing.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/drew\\_dudley\\_everyday\\_leadership?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/drew_dudley_everyday_leadership?language=en).

Mr. Dudley’s talk is the theme for the Office of the Ombudsperson. The staff members here are everyday leaders, and they take this message to heart. Coming to the Office of the Ombudsperson should be the best part of any distressed visitor’s day. The staff members make it so.

The Office of the Ombudsperson is effective on this campus in large part because of the incredible people who staff the Office. Office Administrator Karola Smith retired after approximately 3.5 years with the Office of the Ombudsperson, and many more years elsewhere on campus. In her tenure within the Office, Karola was known for her knowledge, professionalism, kindness, and discretion. Karola’s work was integral to setting the tone and knowledge base for this Office, and we miss her terribly.

After the reporting period for this Annual Report (and after a semester-long vacancy), the Office was able to hire Administrative Assistant Gay Campbell. It has been a pleasure to have Gay in the Office. She is extremely kind, a good listener, and she has extensive knowledge of the campus and community. I could not have put this Annual Report together without hours and hours of tedious, and sometimes frustrating, work from Gay. I truly appreciate her assistance, and look forward to an excellent year ahead.

Graduate Assistants Yvette Cancelliere and Kristina Wilkerson have been crucial in providing research and policy analysis, outreach, administrative assistance, and direct service work with undergraduate and some graduate student and family member visitors. They also helped keep the ombudsperson abreast of changes in policies, procedures, and trends in the student population, attended Student Association meetings, and maintained Office social networking. Because we did not have an administrative assistant for second semester this year, Yvette and Kristina

We congratulate Yvette on her graduation from the NIU College of Law in May. Kristina, a Ph.D. student in Counselor Education and Supervision, has honored the Office by staying on as our graduate assistant for another year. Due to budget cuts, the Office was not able to rehire Yvette’s position. So, Kristina has taken on the duties of both graduate assistants for this year, for as many hours as her position allows. We hope to be able to offer the second graduate assistant position in the future.

Many other individual members of the NIU community helped us to serve the entire campus community this year through administrative and policy assistance, collaboration, and being referral

points for individual concerns. Although you are not named specifically here, please know that we are deeply appreciative of your efforts and assistance.

Finally, we would like to thank all of the faculty, staff, students, and administrators (including the presidents of each of the councils and the heads of the different presidential commissions), who have been excellent partners, and who have offered assistance in a myriad of ways throughout the past year. We truly appreciate your willingness to share information, to allow us to attend your meetings, and to work together to address issues to make NIU a place where we can all live, learn, and work together.

### **The Office of the Ombudsperson**

The Office of the Ombudsperson (Office) is a confidential, neutral, and independent resource for conflict resolution at NIU. The Office serves the entire campus community, including faculty, staff, students, and administrators. As a confidential resource, members of the Office neither disclose who visits the Office, nor the content of conversations. The Office maintains the International Ombudsman Association Standards of Practice found at [http://www.ombudsassociation.org/sites/default/files/IOA\\_Standards\\_of\\_Practice\\_Oct09.pdf](http://www.ombudsassociation.org/sites/default/files/IOA_Standards_of_Practice_Oct09.pdf). As such, the only exceptions to confidentiality are for reports of child abuse and neglect (as required by Illinois law), and instances of an imminent risk of serious physical harm. Pursuant to Article 20 of the Bylaws of NIU (found at [http://www.niu.edu/u\\_council/constitution/bylaws/article20.shtml](http://www.niu.edu/u_council/constitution/bylaws/article20.shtml)), the University Ombudsperson is a direct report to the President and is evaluated by the University Council.

The Office consists of the University Ombudsperson, an office administrator, and (in this reporting year) two graduate assistants. While the University Ombudsperson sees all categories of employees, students, families, and alumni at NIU, the graduate assistants spend the majority of their time working with undergraduates, doing outreach, and conducting research. In addition to her administrative duties, the office administrator also assists visitors with research and answering questions related to university policy and procedures. She has also been integral in assessing and improving office procedures, including keeping the rest of us (who are less-than-administratively-gifted) on task. The administrative assistant is the first person a visitor sees upon entering the Office. She sets the tone of the Office, and she is responsible for making the visitor feels as calm as possible, feel respected, and feel heard.

Individuals come to the Office with a mix of fairly simple procedural questions, as well as many complex issues that are all balled-up in a big knot. For the fairly simple procedural questions, we are an information clearinghouse for university policies and procedures. We give direction to those individuals with questions about to whom they should address a concern, what office addresses a particular issue, what university policy applies, or the best ways to approach a situation.

For the individuals with the more-complex issues that resemble a big knot, our services are similarly more complex. We begin by actively listening to the concerns at hand. Then, we work to unbind the multiple issues that are knotted together so that they are in manageable pieces and are not so overwhelming. We then advise the visitor regarding the university policies that apply to each component of the issue, we work with them to develop strategies regarding the options for dealing with the issue, and we strategize regarding the best interpersonal communication methods to address those concerns.

When discussing options with visitors to the office, we go through the full range of options

available, from the least-active, least-formal option, to informal options, to formal routes of complaint both on and off campus. We always stress the best practice of going back to the person with whom the visitor has an issue to discuss the matter first. Sometimes that is not possible, or the visitor has already attempted that unsuccessfully. In those cases, we will advise about how to move forward with other informal or formal options.

The Office of the Ombudsperson is also characteristically a practical office. If the visitor is incorrect about a university policy, or if the visitor has exhausted all formal processes to deal with the situation, we honestly assess the situation. We are really good at giving bad news. However, even in giving that “bad news,” we try to give options to the individual on how to move forward. The visitor leaves the office with an action plan in mind in order to keep moving forward.

Even though I formerly practiced law in both Illinois and Ohio, in the position of University Ombudsperson, I am not a practicing attorney. I do not represent the university or visitors to my office as an attorney. I do not give legal advice. I do not advocate for any individual or group. Instead, I work with visitors to understand policies and to develop strategies surrounding those policies so that they are empowered to advocate for themselves.

The University Ombudsperson is also tasked with identifying trends in conflict across the university community, and informing administrators and governing bodies regarding those issues. The Ombudsperson does not have decision-making authority within the university system, and is not a “reporter” for any other office. However, the Ombudsperson will recommend changes to policies and procedures that can in turn improve the university community. In this way, the Office of the Ombudsperson seeks to reduce incidents of conflict and to make the NIU experience successful for everyone who works and attends school here.

## **Neutrality**

The Ombudsperson is a designated neutral in all matters that come to the office. According to the Ombudsperson’s job description, “As a designated neutral party, the Ombudsperson shall not serve as an advocate for any individual.” This office also complies with the Standards of Practice of the International Ombudsman Association, including the standards of Neutrality and Impartiality. Section 2 of the Standards of Practice elaborates on the concept of neutrality, stating in part:

**2.1** The Ombudsman is neutral, impartial, and unaligned.

**2.2** The Ombudsman strives for impartiality, fairness and objectivity in the treatment of people and the consideration of issues. **The Ombudsman advocates for fair and equitably administered processes and does not advocate on behalf of any individual within the organization.** (emphasis added).

Therefore, although I absolutely do not advocate on behalf of any individual, I can and do advocate for fair and equitably administered processes within the institution. If I receive reports that a policy is not being applied fairly, or that a new policy has been created that is not fair and equitable on its face (e.g. a new attendance policy), I will talk with the decision-maker on the creation or application of that policy to ask questions about the background of the policy or practice, discuss the matter further, and make recommendations on how to tweak the policy to make it more fair in order to avoid future conflict on the issue. In discussing the issue with the decision-maker, I look at the bigger picture beyond individual concerns, toward how to prevent the issue from gaining momentum and causing bigger conflicts for all involved.

## The Data

This year's data is significant in many ways. First, the number of complex cases addressed by the Office increased again this year by 11. Simultaneously, the number of simple referrals dropped by 80 referrals. The explanation for this drop is evident in the staffing of the Office. The Office did not have an administrative assistant for an entire semester. While the graduate assistants and ombudsperson stepped in as they were able, the ombudsperson still had to regularly close the Office if she and the graduate assistants were out at meetings, in confidential meetings in the Office, or the graduate assistants were in class. If no one was available in the Office, the Office had to close. We left a sign on the door expressing regret that we had missed visitors, and providing instructions on how to reach us. We also kept on top of our email and phone messages. However, we were told repeatedly that if visitors (particularly students) could not reach us by walking in or by someone answering the phone in the moment, they would not leave messages or email us. Not having a consistent, front-line, knowledgeable person in place was quite detrimental to our simple referrals and to our student visitor numbers.

Complex cases	626
Simple Referrals	153
Policy Development	39

Similar to the past couple of years, I do believe that the numbers are actually higher than what is reflected in this Report. In my day-to-day work life, I talk with people as I go across campus. People stop me in hallways, at receptions, at meetings, at lunch, etc. to discuss pending issues, even very serious concerns that take a significant amount of time to address. I continue to work on a system to better document these cases so that they can be tracked for purposes of the Annual Report. Regardless, based on a small amount of research, the NIU Office of the Ombudsperson, with one professional ombudsperson, typically sees the same number, if not more, visitors than ombuds offices at other academic institutions, even those with more professional staff. So, we do the best we can in this office to document visitors.

In addition to raw numbers of visitors, starting in October 2013, we began tracking how many times we saw individual visitors on the same issue. Many cases are complex and take more than one contact to help the individual resolve the situation. Therefore, the numbers of visitors tends to not be a completely accurate reflection of the total time spent on visitor concerns. Out of the 626 visitors to the office with complex issues, 100 of those individuals required multiple visits. The number of multiple visit concerns broke down in this fashion:

2 visits =	49
3 visits =	31
4 visits =	11
5 visits =	05
6 visits =	02
8 visits =	01
10 visits =	01

In addition to the Office staff assisting individuals and groups, I have attended and participated in the meetings of each of the presidential commissions, the University Council, the Faculty Senate, the Operating Staff Council, and the SPS Council throughout this year. I have also attended committee meetings regarding workplace issues and morale for operating staff and SPS, as well as the AAEC Advisory Committee. Attending all of these meetings is time-consuming. However, it has been extremely helpful in getting to know the campus and the issues pending across campus in order to better advise individuals and decision-makers.

The entire Office has also been extremely active in outreach through presentations and as exhibitors at different campus fairs. We have presented to literally thousands of people through UNIV 101 & 201 classes, in CAHC 211 instructor classes, for international student orientations, for different student and faculty/staff organizations, First and Second Year Experience, and with Faculty Development, Human Resource Services, and Employee Assistance. We were panel members for different division town hall meetings and panel discussions, and provided eight separate trainings for each department in one college. We also exhibited at the Wellness Fair and the International Student Fair. We exhibited at several other fairs in the fall.

The Ombudsperson also presented at two professional conferences in the past year, including the Summer Meeting of Academic Ombuds at hosted her at NIU, and the California Caucus of College and University Ombuds. The Ombudsperson was also accepted to present for the second year in a row at the International Ombudsman Association in Seattle, Washington; however, she was not able to attend due to budget restrictions.

## **Trends and Comments**

### **Budget and Morale**

The budget stalemate in Springfield is truly a crisis for higher education in the State of Illinois. It has had a direct impact on every single area of study, work, and life at NIU. The past two years of incomplete allocations have forced a speedy change toward efficiency and frugality across the university that was likely needed in some places. That can be seen as a positive move in safeguarding the resources of the taxpayers of Illinois and the tuition dollars of our students. However, it has also caused significant cuts to essential programs and departments across campus. Faculty and staff consistently report to the Office that they feel as though NIU has positive momentum, great things happening, and so much potential. Programs are being reassessed and reformed, new projects are being developed, etc. Unfortunately, positive progress is then thwarted by the state budget issues when those projects and programs cannot be funded, students reconsider acceptance due to worries about financial solvency, and granting bodies holding grant applications in lower regard because the requestor is from an Illinois university.

Among other things, the budget situation has caused a “soft” hiring freeze that has left many departments with the same or greater levels of responsibilities, but with much fewer faculty and staff to carry out necessary tasks. The Program Prioritization Process will eventually address these concerns and reorganizations. However, Prioritization is a process that takes time. In the meantime, faculty and staff on campus repeatedly report to the Ombudsperson that they are doing multiple people’s jobs, with a significant increase of work and work hours, both on campus and at home, frequently without additional compensation or acknowledgment. In a matter of two weeks in the Spring Semester, at least three employees and one student visitor revealed to the Office that as a result of the stress experienced within their departments, their doctors had prescribed anti-anxiety medication. Issues that used to be “no big deal” or that used to roll off individuals’ backs now cause crises in a department because nerves are frayed, and faculty and staff have been pushed past a breaking point to feeling abused and taken advantage of. Patience and understanding is in short supply.

The Ombudsperson has periodically heard the response from some supervisors that faculty and staff should just be happy to be employed. Certainly, it is true that individuals in central administration have worked hard to prevent furloughs and lay-offs that have affected other Illinois universities.

However, these responses to faculty and staff concerns minimize those concerns and tell employees that they have no right to expect civility, reasonableness, and an enjoyable, pleasant workplace.

Similarly, students are burdened with issues such as limited course selections, increased class sizes, and departments with few tenured faculty to sit on graduate committees. Doctoral students are being used to fill gaps traditionally filled by faculty, with little to no faculty/administrative supervision, because there aren't enough faculty members to go around.

The bottom line is that we are all in this together. Central administration is doing its best to keep NIU working toward its mission. Simultaneously, faculty and staff are also committed to the mission, want to be good team players, to "make it through," and to become an even better institution. Imputing good motives to one another and responding to one another with empathy will help engender trust and better feelings all around in an environment that is particularly challenging. In addition, morale would improve significantly if we each acknowledged the extra work that each of us is doing – not that it is just expected and taken for granted that we will do the work, but that we as an institution see and truly appreciate all of the extra that so many people have been putting in year after year now. If the workplace cannot be made better through monetary and resource gains, can we do other things to make life go better?

When individuals reach the breaking point of feeling unheard and unappreciated, they look for other outlets to regain some control of their work lives. We have seen that happen in the past two years through the formation of two new, large faculty and staff unions. Active listening, empathy, understanding, and reasonable, straightforward responses (in addition to additional resources) are all in our control, even when the State allocation is not. They will all be key to bridge some divides and to prevent morale from continuing to deteriorate.

### **Student Concerns**

At over 40% of the total visitors, students continued to be the largest constituency to use the Office of the Ombudsperson, although those numbers are down this year. The decrease in student users can be attributed the decrease in total student population at NIU, and the Office being short-staffed for an entire semester. Our graduate assistants had to focus on keeping the Office open as much as possible second semester instead of doing their normal outreach efforts. When no one was available to be in the Office with the doors open, students were met with a locked office or a voicemail message. In the Office's experience, students walk away if faced with a closed door, and don't always leave messages or follow-up emails. All of that was detrimental to fully serving our students throughout the second half of last year in the same way we have done in the past.

The Office plans to increase outreach for this year through many avenues. Our graduate assistant will continue to work with the SA, give presentations to UNIV classes, and offer presentations regarding conflict resolution to student organizations and residence halls. In addition, the Office will be working with Housing to having our graduate assistant populate a "satellite office" or display in different residence halls once each week, every week, for the semester to increase visibility and accessibility.

Concerns continue to focus on students' ability to get disability accommodations (54 students reporting such issues), due process in the student conduct system (51 students reporting such concerns), faculty and staff unprofessionalism (208 students, faculty, and staff expressing concerns).

The Office has also worked with numerous students to just improve communication between the students and their academic departments. The Office continues to actively work with other departments across campus to attend to the needs of student in financial or other crisis.

As was the case last year, graduate students in particular are struggling to deal with retirements, resignations, and other vacancy issues affecting their ability to complete their degrees. In some departments, it is increasingly difficult to find faculty with the appropriate expertise (and time) to teach advanced-level courses, to sit on graduate committees, or to provide clinical or practicum supervision. As addressed above, doctoral students are frequently taking on increasing levels of responsibility in what are traditionally faculty roles, for which they are not necessarily prepared or capable.

Faculty and staff are dedicated to working with students to make sure that they get what they need to be successful and to graduate, or to find “work arounds” to these challenges. However, students complained over and over again about the stress involved in the process of finding these work arounds, and the added responsibilities for faculty and staff to insure the students’ ability to graduate. Again, while this issue will hopefully be rectified with Prioritization, students are still “in the weeds.”

### **Faculty and Staff**

The numbers of faculty and professional staff visitors to the Office have increased dramatically in the past year. Faculty visitors went up by almost a third, and SPS visitors doubled. These numbers alone indicate the level of unease and frustration experienced by our faculty and staff. Despite rumors to the contrary, these concerns are not merely whining or complaining. The issues brought to the Office of the Ombudsperson have been real concerns that again centered on treatment by supervisors and colleagues, including unprofessional behavior (208 students, faculty, and staff reporting), poor supervisory skills (146 employees reporting), and supervisor/employee relations (165 employees reporting).

Effective communication in decision-making processes and general collegiality still seems to be at the core of most concerns, whether it be tenure, promotion, and sabbatical decision-making, or office/departmental policy and interpersonal issues. In addition, the Office regularly encounters supervisors who do not feel empowered to take control of situations and remedy them in an effective manner. Increased and consistent supervisor training across divisions and within colleges, that individuals either have or make time to attend, would increase supervisors’ abilities to effectively handle difficult situations and prevent them from getting worse.

Operating Staff numbers were down by five visitors this year. With changes in leadership across the university, as well as new unionizing efforts, Operating Staff seemed to put their concerns on hold as they waited to “see what will happen.” By the end of the academic year, visits by Operating Staff started to increase again as frustration levels and a feeling of helplessness started to rise in certain areas across campus. Again, the issues with supervisory skills and supervisor relationships dominated discussions with Operating Staff, as detailed above with other employees. The Office continues to work with university leadership to address concerns that are laid out in the “Budget and Morale” section above.

Continuing to increase communication throughout the university and across divisions regarding decision making, processes, and new procedures, as well as providing supervisors with mandatory,

consistent training would help the university become more effective, and would help employees enjoy coming to work again. Supervisor training must extend to supervisors promoted from within, new hires, and department chairs.

Despite all of the budget challenges and frustrations, we are in control of our own behavior and our own interactions with others. If we as a collective can find a way to effectively advocate for our needs and concerns while being leaders at every level and keeping collegiality and our humanity intact, we will be better as individuals, and as an institution.

## **Data Tables**

When interpreting the data displayed throughout the following pages, it is crucial to keep the following points in mind in order to place the data in the proper context.

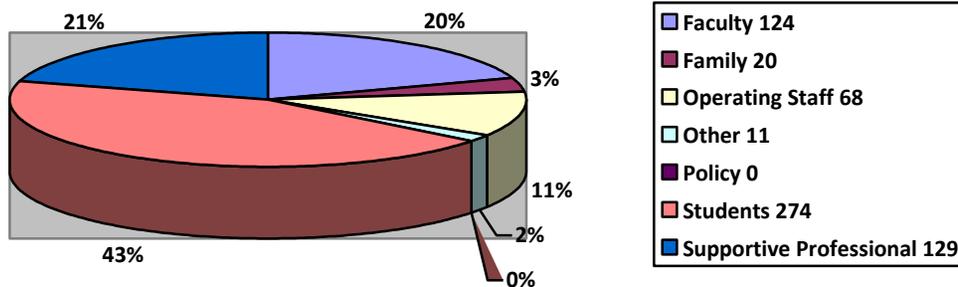
- These data represent the largely unsubstantiated and uninvestigated allegations of individuals contacting the Office of the Ombudsperson for assistance. They are, at best, honest singular perceptions, not the objective judgments of uninvolved parties.
- The incidents reflected in the data represent concerns presented by individuals who chose to contact our Office for advice and assistance.

Questions or comments regarding this report are welcome and may be directed to the NIU Office of the Ombudsperson.

**Table 1**  
**Status, Gender and Ethnicity of Office Contacts in 2015-2016**

Status of Contact	Male	Female	Unkn.	Policy	TOTAL	African-Am.	Asian	Cauc.	Latina/o	Other	Unkn.	Policy	TOTAL
Undergraduate	84	82	1	0	167	47	12	57	11	1	40	0	168
Graduate	27	40	0	0	67	9	8	43	4	0	3	0	67
TA/GA	12	16	0	0	28	7	2	18	1	0	0	0	28
Student-at-Large	3	0	0	0	3	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	3
Former Student/Alum	5	3	0	0	8	1	0	1	1	0	5	0	8
Faculty (Tenured)	44	54	0	0	98	0	12	83	1	0	1	1	98
Faculty (tenure track-nontenured)	4	15	0	0	19	0	2	17	0	0	0	0	19
Faculty (Temporary)	3	3	0	0	6	0	1	2	0	0	3	0	6
Supportive Prof Staff	41	88	0	0	129	20	10	78	20	0	0	1	129
Civil Service	27	41	0	0	68	4	3	55	6	0	0	0	68
Family	6	14	0	0	20	6	0	9	1	0	4	0	20
Policy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	6	5	0	0	11	3	0	6	0	0	2	0	11
Post-Graduate	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faculty (Instructor)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Faculty (Adjunct)	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
	<b>262</b>	<b>362</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>625</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>* 59</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>626</b>

**Policy Development Cases: 2**  
**Simple Cases: 153**  
**Complex Cases: 626**

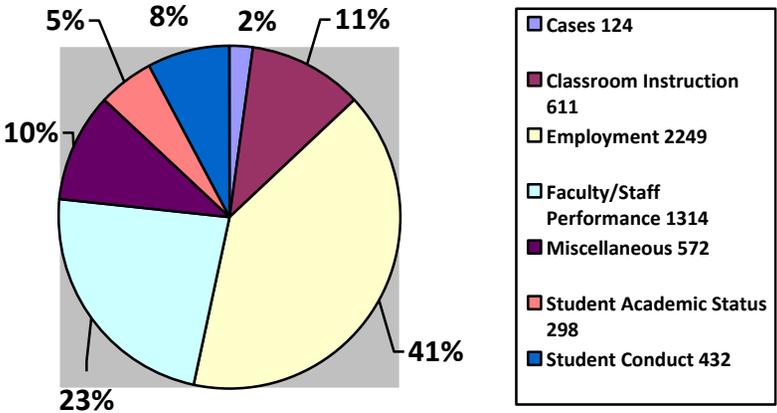


\* unable to determine via phone or email communications

\*\*does not include participants in workshops, presentations by members of the Office staff, or consultations with external entities

**Table 2**  
**All Issues (Primary and Secondary) Presented in 2015-2016 Sorted by Constituency\***

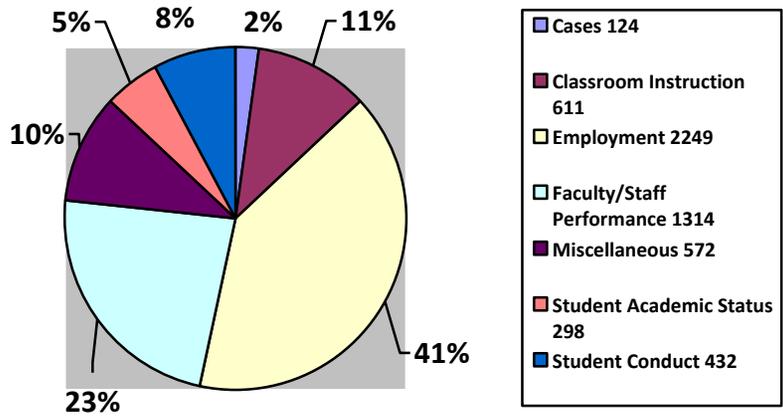
Types of Concerns	Constituency						
	Students	Faculty	Supportive Professional Staff	Operating Staff	Family	Policy	Other
Cases	109	5	5	0	3	0	2
Student Academic Status	262	14	6	0	11	0	5
Student Conduct	225	94	48	17	45	0	3
Classroom Instruction	468	63	34	9	36	0	1
Faculty/Staff Performance	415	304	353	214	16	0	12
Employment	173	700	770	582	0	0	24
Miscellaneous	194	136	156	49	24	0	13



\*These data represent only allegations and should not be interpreted as confirmed incidents.

**Table 3**  
**All Issues Presented in 2015-2016\***

<b>Cases</b>	contracts(7), emergency funding(7), encumbrances(17), evictions(8), fees(14), financial aid(25), fines(2), insurance(1), leases(3), other(2), paycheck(4), policy issue(5), refunds(9), residency(2), scholarship(3), tuition(8), tuition waiver(7)
<b>Student Academic Status</b>	academic advising(6), Academic probation/dismissal(14), add/drop(2), admission(1), class permits(17), class scheduling(9), clinical/student teaching course(20), closed classes(3), comprehensive exams(2), credit transfer(1), degree/graduation requirements(42), hardship withdrawal(1), incompletes(16), medical withdrawal(9), other(4), placement testing(1), policy issue(34), program admission(3), program dismissal(31), registration (MyNIU)(3), reinstatement(14), repeat courses(23), SAP(2), staff/hearing(5), thesis/dissertation(4), transcripts(20), withdrawals(11)
<b>Student Conduct</b>	Academic misconduct(14), alcohol(11), assault(22), battery(13), classroom disruption(16), deceitfulness(7), discrimination(13), drugs(13), due process(52), harassment(16), intimidation(28), judicial system(54), other(11), policy issue(47), residence hall misconduct(18), roommate disputes(10), sanctions(60), sexual harassment(13), stalking(10), theft(3)
<b>Classroom Instruction</b>	Attendance(17), Course syllabus(70), discriminatory grading(41), faculty absences(7), faculty office hours(7), final exams(10), grade appeals(67), grade change(43), grading standards(94), make-up work(34), other(6), personality conflicts(73), policy issue(57), quality of instruction(81), teacher fluency(3), tutoring(1)
<b>Faculty/Staff Performance</b>	assault/battery(4), deceitfulness(115), derogatory comments(151), discrimination(93), favoritism(40), harassment(38), inaccurate advising(10), inattentiveness(74), incompetence(113), intimidation(140), other(19), retaliation(136), retention of tests/papers(1), rudeness(148), sexual harassment(15), theft(4), unprofessionalism(213)
<b>Employment</b>	academic freedom(22), disciplinary action(84), discrimination(38), grievance(139), harassment(29), hearing(22), hiring process(51), inadequate staffing(31), insubordination(33), job classification(89), job description(88), job duties(152), lay-off(3), merit raise(3), morale(91), other(15), payroll(3), performance evaluation(106), personality conflicts(164), policy issue(166), poor supervisory skills(152), probation(9), promotion(13), retirement(1), salary/benefits(46), separation(9), sexual harassment(11), student employment(48), supervisor/employee relations(172), suspension(5), tenure(49), termination(44), transfer(5), union(28), work schedule(54), working conditions(189), workload(84)
<b>Miscellaneous</b>	athletics(1), career advising(9), commencement(2), disability accommodations(56), environmental issues(2), ethical considerations(65), FERPA(14), health concerns(33), immigration issues(7), interpersonal problems(40), legal issues(96), off-campus housing concerns(15), off-campus problems(1), on-campus housing concerns(26), other(19), parking issues(3), policy development(39), policy issue(39), privacy issues(46), records retention(2), safety issues(47), shared governance(9), transportation(1)



\*These data represent only allegations and should not be interpreted as confirmed incidents

## Appendix A

### Ombuds Staff Outreach, Service, and Support Activities of 2015-16

#### Presentations by Ombudsperson or Staff

CHANCE Orientation  
International Student Orientation Panel  
Residence Hall Student Floor Programs  
Teaching Assistant Orientation  
Teaching Effectiveness Institute  
UNIV101/201 and Other Classes

#### Office Outreach Activities

Employee Wellness Fair  
Holmes Student Center Window Display  
Message on Campus TV and Electronic Message Boards  
New Faculty Forum  
New International Students Welcome Fair  
Northern Star article for Orientation Issue  
Office Flyers Posted on Campus Bulletin Boards and Buses  
Office Brochures and Magnets in HRS New Employee Handouts  
Student Association Meetings  
Table Tents in Holmes Student Center Café  
Table Tents in Residence Hall Cafeterias  
Transfer Students Open House

#### Training Sessions Provided by Ombudsperson

Training re Relationships with Students, Title IX, and FERPA (8)  
CAHC211 Instructor Training  
Department Chair Training  
HR Workshop – *Resolving Conflict*  
HR Workshop – *The Art of Disagreeing AND Maintaining Professional or Personal Relationships*  
HR Workshop – *A Sign of a Great Leader-Hearing and Responding to Negative Feedback*  
Northern Star Staff Training  
Orientation Leader Training  
Teaching Assistant Training

#### Ombudsperson Service/Committees

Affirmative Action/Equity Resources Advisory Committee

Customer Service Committee  
Faculty Senate  
Operating Staff Council  
Operating Staff Morale Committee  
Operating Staff Workplace Issues Committee  
Presidential Commission on Persons with Disabilities  
Presidential Commission on Sexual Orientation & Gender Identity  
Presidential Commission on the Status of Minorities  
Presidential Commission on the Status of Women  
Summer Meeting of Academic Ombuds Planning/Host  
Supportive Professional Staff Council  
Supportive Professional Staff Council Workplace Issues Committee  
Title IX Subcommittee – International Ombudsman Assoc.  
University Council  
Provost Committee on Conflict Resolution and Management

## Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, Article 17.1, Athletic Board

### **RATIONALE FOR OVERALL CHANGES:**

The Athletic Board's Policies and Procedures Manual had not been revised or revisited in almost ten years. This past academic year, the Executive Committee of the Athletic Board did a thorough review and revision of the Policies and Procedures Manual as well as the university bylaws. These proposed changes will make both documents consistent with the actual work of the Athletic Board and reflect improved changes in how the Board operates. The proposed changes were approved by the Athletic Board at its April meeting.

### **CHANGES TO 17.1.1**

Although it is preferable to have a male and a female student-athlete on the Board, practice and class conflicts often make this difficult. The Board feels that it is better to have two student-athletes regardless of gender, as opposed to one student-athlete if a male or female student-athlete is not available to serve.

Students' schedules change in between semesters. As a result, in the past some students have had to miss all meetings in a semester because of class conflicts. The proposed change would allow the student to be replaced on the Board with another student who serves the same constituency (e.g., student government, student-athlete).

The addition regarding administration and/or faculty members constituting a majority of the Board is consistent with NCAA requirements and seemed to make sense to include in the bylaws' section on Athletic Board Composition since the sentence is listed in the Policies and Procedures Manual under Board Composition.

### **CHANGES TO 17.1.2**

The changes here are designed to better reflect what the Board is actually doing. It is not clear to the Board why certain functions of the Board were specified in the bylaws while others are not. The new changes provide clarity regarding the areas where the Board has oversight and directs those interested in specifics to the Policies and Procedures Manual.

Additionally, the changes allow the Board to have more oversight over the athletic department and for both bodies to be more efficient. For instance, in terms of scheduling, the Board had to approve every change because of inclement weather. This was often difficult to do in a timely fashion and, frankly, there was no reason for it to be done. Instead, it is better for the Board to get a report on scheduling philosophy and missed class time and provide feedback when a problem exists.

The Board has moved to a new model that better integrates it into the athletics department as a whole and provides greater oversight of the department. In the past, the Board had four standing committees that dealt with various areas of Board oversight (e.g., diversity, finance). However, these subcommittees were ineffective as they were separate entities from the athletics department and, while they had athletics department representation on them, were not privy to the day-to-day operations of the department. When the new athletic director was hired, he asked the chairs of the subcommittees to be members of four working groups whose focus is nearly identical to the areas of responsibility for the old subcommittees. Because the liaisons are meeting with members of the athletic department as policies are being created and implemented, they are better informed and can have a greater voice. The liaisons now report to the Board as a whole regarding the happenings of the working groups. This change provided the Board with more and better information than it had in the past as well as a stronger conduit to provide feedback.

### **CHANGES to 17.1.3**

The first change reflects the move to liaisons from subcommittees.

The second change better reflects the responsibilities of the Executive Committee.

## **ARTICLE 17: OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY**

### **17.1 Athletic Board**

#### 17.1.1 Composition

The Athletic Board is directly responsible to the president of the university. It shall consist of the following members:

- One faculty member from the College of Law to be selected by the faculty of that college and one faculty member from each of the other degree-granting colleges selected by the respective college councils;
- One member of the University Library faculty selected by that faculty;
- Two students selected by the Student Association with two colleges represented;
- ~~One male and one female student-athlete~~ **Two student-athletes, when possible from a female and male team**, selected by the Student Athlete Advisory Council (SAAC);
- One member of the Alumni Association selected by the Alumni Association;
- One member of the operating staff selected by the Operating Staff Council;
- One member of the supportive professional staff selected by the Supportive Professional Staff Council;
- One nonvoting member from the Huskie Athletic Fund selected by the Huskie Athletic Fund.
- In addition, the associate vice president/director of athletics and the university general counsel shall be ex officio, nonvoting members.

With the exception of student representatives, members shall serve three-year staggered terms. Student members shall be appointed annually, ***although they may be replaced midsemester if class conflicts occur***. All members shall be eligible for reappointment.

The Faculty Athletics Representative shall serve as the chair of the Athletic Board, ex officio, voting.

***Administration and/or faculty members shall constitute at least a majority of the board.***

#### 17.1.2 Duties

- 17.1.2.1 The board shall assume responsibility for directing the policies through which intercollegiate athletics shall function as a university activity. In

performing this responsibility, the board shall develop and implement procedures for the periodic review of athletic programs in terms of their quality and their consistency with the institution's academic mission.

17.1.2.2 The board shall assure equity between men's and women's intercollegiate athletic programs.

17.1.2.3 ***The areas in which the board provides oversight are related to diversity/inclusion, finance/facilities, staff/student services, and external affairs. The specific responsibilities of the board are articulated in the board's policies and procedures manual.*** The board and the athletics director shall assume the following responsibilities relative to the preparation and submission of budgets for the operation of the programs:

~~(A) The associate vice president/director of athletics shall prepare budgets of finances needed to operate the programs; the budgets shall include intercollegiate sports with recommendations concerning amounts to be assigned to various sports, administrative, and support activities. The budgets shall be submitted in writing to the Athletic Board. Copies of the complete budgets shall go to all coaches prior to submission to the Athletic Board.~~

~~(B) The coaches of the various sports shall appear before the Athletic Board, at the request of the board or at their own request, to explain budget items before the budgets are approved by the board and submitted to the president and the president's staff. Any major changes in the budgets shall be approved by the Athletic Board.~~

~~(C) The associate vice president/director of athletics shall submit to the Athletic Board an accounting of all funds received and expended.~~

~~17.1.2.4 The board shall establish scheduling policies and parameters. The board will monitor compliance with those policies and parameters and review the impacts of scheduling on missed class time, academic performance and other outcomes.~~

~~17.1.2.5 The board shall have the responsibility to review matters pertaining to awards and their costs and issues regarding eligibility, travel, medical responsibilities, public relations, ticket sales, seating accommodations, and other items dealing with intercollegiate athletic programs.~~

17.1.2.46 Minutes shall be kept of all board meetings.

17.1.2.57 The board shall distribute minutes and reports to University Council members. Substantive changes in policy shall be submitted to the University Council for approval. Approved minutes shall be deposited in the university archives.

### 17.1.3 Executive Committee

17.1.3.1 The Athletic Board shall appoint an executive committee comprised of the chair, the ~~chairs of the standing committees~~ *liaisons to the working groups*, and such other persons as the board shall determine.

17.1.3.2 The executive committee shall be chaired by the chair of the board.

17.1.3.3 ~~The committee shall advise the chair between meetings of the board, review and make recommendations to the board regarding recommendations made by administrators of the intercollegiate athletic program, develop the agenda for board meetings, insure the development of adequate background information for the board on matters expected to be put on the board's agenda, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to it by the board.~~ *The committee shall advise the chair between meetings of the board, develop the agenda for board meetings, serve as an advisory body to the intercollegiate athletic department, and perform such other duties as may be assigned to it by the board.*

**Proposed amendment to NIU Bylaws, Article 15.3.1.3(B)**

**RATIONALE FOR CHANGES:**

Currently the Vice President for Research and Innovation Partnerships is listed as an ex officio member of the Academic Planning Council but the Dean of the Graduate School is not. Historically, the two positions were held by the same individual but, when the two positions were separated in 2009, the Dean of the Graduate School continued to attend APC meetings to bring in the perspective of the Graduate School but was never formally added as an ex officio member. The requested change will address that omission.

**ARTICLE 15: ACADEMIC COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY**

**15.3 Academic Planning Council**

**15.3.1 Composition**

**15.3.1.1 Faculty Representation**

(A) Fourteen faculty representatives shall be chosen as follows: two each from the Colleges of Business, Education, Engineering and Engineering Technology, Health and Human Sciences, and Visual and Performing Arts; one from the College of Law; three from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (one each from the areas of the humanities, the social sciences, and the other sciences).

(B) Faculty shall be elected by the college council of the college they represent, or by the college faculty if there is no college council. They shall serve three-year staggered terms beginning in the fall semester. If no elected faculty representative is a voting member of the Faculty Senate, the Senate shall elect one Senate member to serve on the council as ex officio, nonvoting member. No department shall have more than one faculty representative at any one time.

**15.3.1.2 Student Representation**

(A) Two students, one undergraduate and one graduate, shall be appointed annually as voting members of the council. The appointments shall be made by the president of the Student Association from a list of nominees submitted by the college student advisory committees. Each student advisory committee shall be entitled to nominate annually one undergraduate and one graduate student, as appropriate to degrees offered in that college. Terms of office for student members shall begin at the beginning of the fall semester; no such term shall extend beyond the

beginning of the succeeding fall semester. Students shall be eligible for reappointment to successive terms.

### **15.3.1.3 Administration Representation**

(A) The executive vice president and provost who shall serve ex officio.

(B) The following, or their designees, shall serve ex officio, without vote:

- vice provost responsible for undergraduate education;
- vice president for research and innovation partnerships;
- vice provost for academic development and planning;
- vice provost for resource planning;
- dean of the University Libraries;
- **dean of the Graduate School;**
- director of the office of Institutional Research;
- associate vice provost for academic outcomes assessment
- director of academic accreditation;
- director of the office of Academic Analysis and Reporting.

(C) Others who may be directly involved in issues concerning academic programs may assist the committee as resource personnel.



## PROPOSED UNIVERSITY HOLIDAYS FOR 2017

New Year's Day (Holiday)	Sunday	January 1, 2017
New Year's Day (Holiday Observed)	Monday	January 2, 2017
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Holiday)	Monday	January 16, 2017
Memorial Day (Holiday)	Monday	May 29, 2017
Independence Day (Holiday)	Tuesday	July 4, 2017
Labor Day (Holiday)	Monday	September 4, 2017
Thanksgiving (Holiday)	Thursday	November 23, 2017
Floating Holiday	Friday	November 24, 2017
Floating Holiday	Friday	December 22, 2017
December 25 (Holiday)	Monday	December 25, 2017
Floating Holiday	Tuesday	December 26, 2017
Floating Holiday	Wednesday	December 27, 2017
Administrative Closure	Thursday	December 28, 2017
Administrative Closure	Friday	December 29, 2017
New Year's Day (Holiday)	Monday	January 1, 2018

**ARTICLE 17:  
OTHER STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE UNIVERSITY**

**17.4 University Advisory Committee (UAC) to the Board of Trustees**

**17.4.1 Composition**

**17.4.1.1** The committee shall consist of the president of the Faculty Senate, the presidents of the Supportive Professional Staff Council and the Operating Staff Council, and three additional faculty members selected to represent the faculty's multiple roles in the university, particularly those in teaching, research, and service. These faculty shall be nominated by the Executive Secretary of the University Council and confirmed by the University Council. They shall serve three-year staggered terms. In the event of a mid-term vacancy in a faculty position, the Executive Secretary shall nominate a person to fill the remainder of that term with the nomination confirmed by the University Council. In the nomination of the faculty representatives, the Executive Secretary shall consult with the Faculty Senate.

**17.4.2 Duties**

**17.4.2.1** The Board of Trustees expects the president to meet regularly with the University Advisory Committee. The president shall keep the University Advisory Committee informed of and shall seek and receive advice from it about matters coming before the Board of Trustees. The University Advisory Committee may appoint one or two of its members to serve as liaison to each of the working committees of the board. A University Advisory Committee liaison, or a spokesperson chosen by the University Advisory Committee because of expertise on a specific issue, will be recognized at a regularly scheduled point on the committee agenda.

**17.4.2.2** The committee shall be accountable to the University Council. Members of the committee shall also be accountable to their specific university organization--Faculty Senate, Operating Staff Council, or Supportive Professional Staff Council.