

Minutes
Operating Staff Council
August 3, 2023
Hybrid Format (Altgeld Hall 203/Teams) – 9:00 A.M.
Approved September 7, 2023

Present: Nicole Adams, Zac Birch, Angie Gutierrez-Vargas, Natasha Johnson, Rob Kerschke, Cindy Kozumplik, Mandy Kreitzer, Frances Mitchell (Administrative Aide), Jay Monteiro, Kathy Mosher, Mark Pietrowski, David Rapp, Sara Richter, Cindy Robinson, Mary Schlagel, Jim Slagstad, Linda Srygler, Tracey Ward

Guests: John Acardo, Felicia Bohanon, Renata Catlett, Sandra Cox, Benjamin Creed, Cathy Doederlein, Patricia Erickson, Patrick Gerhardt, Jessica Guo, John Hulseberg, Lauren Kurpius, Tiffany Morris, Miriah Ranken, Karen Smith

Absent: Rave Meyer

I. Call to Order

President Johnson called the regular meeting of the Operating Staff Council to order at 9:01 AM

II. Roll Call

Attendance was recorded by Adams online and in person.

III. Approval of Agenda

Schlagel made a motion to accept the agenda. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Schlagel made a motion to accept the July meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by vote.

V. Treasurer's Report

Mosher reported.

- a. Fiscal Year 2024 budget is not yet available. Review of Fiscal year 2023 ending balance of \$8,658. No new transactions in fiscal year 2024. Budget balance \$16,462.54.
- b. The Civil Service Emergency fund is currently at \$545.42. It is still closed for transactions.
- c. The Scholarship Fund has a deficit of \$30.23.

Srygler moved to accept the Treasurer's Report. The motion was seconded by Birch and passed by vote.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests

- A. John Acardo answered questions gathered from OSC members.
 - a. Your (NIU) Northern Illinois University Today article talked about approaching (HR) Human Resources from a "strategic perspective... to implement a

comprehensive vision for HR that aligns with the university's vision, mission and values." What is your strategy, and why do you think it will be effective?

- i. **Answer Summary:** "Us" approach through collaboration and conversation engaging stakeholders across campus; to find the synergies and connected campus in a more strategic way; to offer advice or counseling, coaching, training, development, and the like, including process improvement; become agile in our creative process hiring process, finding ways to really improve our process along with planning.
- b. How do you plan directly and drive a positive work environment at NIU?
 - i. **Answer Summary:** drive and promote positive changes; really to be seen and to go out and hear what campus is saying; be a champion of positive and encouragement to change when we're out and about listening; actively engaging with stakeholders on campus; we collaborate, get to know each other and have that continued dialogue to create positive and lasting changes; promote, help encourage and foster ideas that will begin to add into our value proposition for retention and recruitment; training; look at a more practical and deliberate and strategic approach to how we can serve individual units and branches on campus, give or coordinate facilitate deploying training including supervisor training.
- c. What plans do you have to connect with new and existing employees to engage them with HR, how do you plan to help retain HR/NIU staff moving forward?
 - i. **Answer Summary:** Collaboration; Helping find opportunities for employees to grow within their profession; Strategic partnerships with supervisors; having the difficult conversations
- d. What are your goals (if any) to help promote internal promotions/hiring from within NIU when possible and ensuring NIU has competitive pay band structures for all distinct types of staffing roles on campus?
 - i. **Answer Summary:** Retention; great benefits; emphasis on value proposition; succession planning
- e. What do you feel will be your focus when building a talent pipeline here at NIU?
 - i. **Answer Summary:** Students, community and apprenticeship programs
- f. What do you feel is or should be your mission and the mission of the HR department at NIU?

j. HR has often seemed siloed and secretive, what if any are your plans to improve the transparency or HR and include campus stakeholders in projects and improvements. The new PAF (Personnel Action Form) is an example to use if you think having one is beneficial. It was announced with no real time for feedback meaning changes had to be made when it was already live and to my knowledge HR did not reach out to the people that submit the most PAFs (Personnel Action Form) (Personnel Action Form) (Personnel Action Form). Worse yet from what I understand, the project was done without the input of those that process the PAF's within HR.

i. **Answer Summary:** HR can do better with communicating; create a "round table" to help advise HR from various campus stakeholders, communicate at all levels not just the upper levels- such as attending department meetings; cannot compare higher ed institutions to other businesses, it is very different and not equal, very complex with 17 collective bargaining units, state statues with employee classifications may all look like a lack of transparency but is not; it is important to ask exhaustive questions and make sure every level and department of stakeholders is engaged as necessary in each situation which can also be a contributing factor for confusion and length of response time; collaboration involving people in the processes to make sure that we are effectively doing process changes that are going to be positive

k. Will remote working be allowed to continue? It has proven to be productive and efficient in most cases. It has been a blessing for handicapped employees.

i. **Answer Summary:** We have a robust work from home policy. It is department and role specific. We do need to be aware this policy is subject to change based on future needs. We are a heavy residence-based institution, and it is important that we are here to serve our students.

l. What are some of the best lessons you have learned in previous positions and how do you plan to implement them and evolve the NIU HR department?

i. **Answer Summary:** Listen understand and know I do not have all the answers. We may not always agree, but it is important that everyone has a voice. And a safe environment to have a voice.

m. Are tuition waivers being taken away?

i. **Answer Summary: Not now.** It is determined by the state.

VII. Public Comment – None

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence

A. President’s Report

- a. Holly Nicholson will be taking over for John Hulseberg as personnel advisor as of October 1st.
- b. Several active cases will be open for filing when joining different counsels.

Commented [FM1]: Holly is temporarily filling John's role while he is out and she will be taking the Personnel Advisory role effective Oct 1.

B. Human Resource Services Update – Pulchratia Lacey

- a. Tuition waiver length of time is a state law, you would need to petition the state to get the time limit changed.
- b. HR hires in student/graduate areas.
- c. Job description updates/audits working to get back log caught at beginning of July 20th 59 requests, as of July 27th- 21 had been completed.
- d. How long do they take to be completed? Depends, there are 2 ways request is submitted to HR. If it is submitted and has complete information then can be reviewed analysis, recommendation of classification and salary, get approval from dept, business manager, dept head, unit head, div head, civil service test if necessary-must be requested and submit resume. Then notify employee of results, then turn into Employee Lifecycle to be entered into people soft.
- e. Is there a desk audit sheet to show workflow? The key is to make sure all the fields in PeopleAdmin are filled out including Fair Labor Standards Act Section (it is often not filled out and gets sent back)
- f. It can take as short as a few weeks or 4-6 or more. It depends on how well the request is fully filled.
- g. Human Resources has been struggling with staffing in HR. John Acardo is the civil service representative and now the official contact.
- h. Civil service response was sent, but no system office response had yet been received. They have already started asking about the next audit cycle.
- i. Meeting with HR Directors and EAC (Employee Advisory Committee) throughout the state later this month to discuss partnering on changes needing to be made.

IX. Shared Governance Reports

- A. Board of Trustees – Ben Creed no meeting since last OSC meeting. Working to fill committees across campus meeting. Also working on bringing topics of interest to Faculty senate. Will be Meeting with OSC President Johnson later this week.
- B. Faculty Senate/University Council (Felicia Bohanon) – No report
- C. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC) – No report
- D. Student Government Association (SGA) – No report

X. Operating Staff Council Committee Reports

A. Elections and Appointments

- a. Full board and alternates. We ended up with full board, but only one alternate.

- b. We have 2 more alternate spots. One interested applicant, Sam Hawkins, Holmes Student Center has already been approved by the supervisor.
 - c. Motion to accept Sam nomination: Tracey Ward
 - i. Discussion-None
 - ii. Vote: Approved.
 - d. Representation on the University Council
 - i. All the decision in the university is being made in this room...if you want your voice heard and want to know what decisions are being made this a great committee to know. Five seats: OSC President (Natasha), Operating Staff Member not on council (Jennifer Gregory), 3 council member seats (Zac Birch, Sarah Richter, Jay Monteiro)
 - ii. In-person or virtual? -either, but not considered present for voting if virtual- need to be in person
 - iii. Alternate position-University council no alternate position but would be good to have. Last seat
 - 1. Anonymous vote completed to fill last seat.
 - 2. Vote results: Morris is 5th position, Gregory is alternate.
 - e. Operating Staff Council Committees
 - i. Please sign up!
 - ii. Sign-up sheet electronically will be sent by Monteiro. Members are required to be on at least one committee but can be on several. Sign up was on minutes and agenda.
 - iii. Sign up by 8/16 or you will be assigned by executive committee
- B. Legislative Committee – No report
 C. Public Relations/Activities – No Report
 D. Workplace Guidance – No Report.
 E. Civil Service Emergency Fund- No Report
 F. Civil Service Celebration Committee – Kozumplik reported.
- a. Served approximately 350 ppl.
 - b. Lots of ideas and feedback, please share both positive and negative with committee Kozumplik.
 - i. Cake walks was great need more cakes for next year.
 - ii. issue with serving time to be fixed next year.
 - iii. Thinking about minimizing turning away people for future.
 - iv. Part of the fear was running out of food. Maybe find a unique way to get counts. Move location for cheaper price? food will always need number estimates. Next week committee will have wrap up meeting
- G. Council of Councils Ad Hoc Committee – Kozumplik reported.
- a. Speakers Scheduled.
 - i. Breakout sessions with speakers set: Dr. Thurmaier, Molly Holmes, Katie Davison
 - ii. Still need contact info for other universities, SURS representation.

b. Reminder all council members are invited. Event is Friday 10/20 at Barsema Alumni Visitor Center

i. Will let you know if there is a dress code. Possibly wear black polo shirts given by Mitchell.

1. Current count of polos: one large woman's white and one XL men's white left and others leftover from some being turned in from past members. (All have old logo.)

2. Do not use the ones with old logos.

3. We need to order more polos.

c. Council of Councils is in person only

d. Mitchell will bring nametags to the next meeting or stop by Mitchell's office to pick them up.

H. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC) -No report

XI. Prior Business - None

XII. New Business – None

XIII. Adjournment

Birch moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Kozumplik and passed by unanimous vote. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Nicole Adams, Secretary
Operating Staff Council

Commented [FM2]: Ben Creed is newly elected President of the Faculty Senate and Chairman of University Council whose name may not be familiar to everyone yet.