

Minutes
University of Southern Indiana - Administrative Senate
Wednesday, November 17, 2021*
3 p.m. Virtual Zoom Session

****The Senate did not have quorum on November 3, 2021. The monthly meeting was rescheduled to November 17.***

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 3:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

PRESENT: Steven Stump, Vice Chair; Britney Orth, Past Chair; Brandi Hess, Secretary/Treasurer; Maggie Carnahan; Nathan Payne, Nick Bebout, Robert Threet, Megan Doyle, Carissa Prince, Betsy Mullins, William Pool, Taylor Gogel. Liaison VP Steve Bridges, Kat Draughon.

ABSENT: Jake Hansen, Ray Simmons.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion made by Carnahan to approve the October, 2021 minutes. Taylor 2nd. Motion passed.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS

Chair: Jake Hansen

No report.

Vice Chair: Steven Stump

Stump reminded everyone that each committee should have a chair and vice chair.

Past Chair: Britney Orth

Orth reminded the Senate they may fill out a form to report their vaccination card and booster through the online form.

Secretary/Treasurer: Brandi Hess

Hess reported expenses from Nurturing Our Nest initiative finally hit the account. There was a \$1,013.62 Printing and Publishing and \$5.74 Hospitality and PR charge. Expenses total \$1,019.36. Our balance is \$480.64. This is a reimbursable expense since the project was approved and supported by USI Foundation. Hess will be completing the paperwork for reimbursement from the Foundation.

Hess also represented Administrative Senate at the COVID-19 Task Force meeting this morning. Discussion was around the federal vaccination mandate and how that relates to USI. The Task Force would like to remind employees to be mask ambassadors. Kindly remind students and guests to wear masks – do not be confrontational about it.

REPORTS FROM STANDING COMMITTEES

Employee Benefits - Brandi Hess, Chair

Hess reported the ERB committee met to discuss the Floating holiday IFC, Retiree Spouse at RFC IFC, and progress the Remote Work committee has been doing.

In New Business we will be discussing and voting on two recommendations from the committee:

- Floating Holiday
- FlexWork (aka remote work)

Regarding the IFC from last month regarding Retiree Spouse having access privileges to the RFC with the retiree, Hess reported the following:

The ERB Committee investigated the use of the RFWC. The operation of the building is funded by student fees, which is why it is used primarily for students, with permission for employees and retirees only. Since the intent of the IFC sounded like the retiree and spouse wanted to work out together, the committee investigated gym discounts and had a discussion with Jeff Spohn in Procurement. He said most west side gyms do offer a USI discount if you ask, even though it's not listed on our discount website. He also told Hess he thought there was a free gym membership at the Y for retirees. Further investigation with HR Benefits revealed that Yes, there is a retirement benefit with Medicare

UHC (65 or older - supplement USI offers) if enrolled in that, there is a free gym membership at the Y. The IFC did mention the new aquatics center. It is the committees understanding the pool is open to students, employees, and retirees for now. Then next year broadening that to the community. The committee feels the retiree and spouse issue will be resolved at that time. Having investigated this request thoroughly, the committee feels there are options available for retiree and spouse and this IFC is resolved. A member of ERB will follow-up with the submitter and let them know of their findings.

Employee Events –Megan Doyle, Chair

Doyle reported contacting the Professional Development committee to collaborate ideas and planning for the 2022 Professional Development Day. More information to come.

Employee Outreach – Carissa Prince, Chair / Taylor Gogel, Vice Chair

Prince reported the committee discussed the Volunteer Pilot Program and how they might reboot the program. They also reviewed data from the Fall Survey on how they feel about volunteering.

Nominations and Elections – Britney Orth, Chair

Orth reported the committee came up with proposed changes to the By-Laws. We will be discussing and voting on those changes in New Business.

Professional Development - Will Pool, Chair

No report.

Liaisons – Kat Draughon / Steve Bridges

Draughon reported her resignation effective January 4. She congratulated the Senate on the work they've accomplished over the years.

Bridges reported he will be following up on the items from Senate.

Unfinished Business

Constitution and By-Laws

Changes to:

- Article III – Membership, Section 1: Eligibility – A. Strike “and B.5”. This better defines who is eligible to serve on the senate.
- Article III – Membership, Section 1. Eligibility – B. For clarity “The following positions are excluded from eligibility even if the primary assignment is administrative: the president, all those that report directly to the president (except the Senior Executive Assistant to the President, and Executive Assistant to the President), members of President’s Council (except the Chair of Administrative Senate), vice-presidents, associate/assistant vice-presidents, provost, associate/assistant provosts, academic deans, academic associate/assistant deans, academic program chairs/directors, academic associate/assistant program chairs/directors, and professional librarians; “academic” in this context refers to the colleges. Individuals serving in an interim capacity in positions that are excluded remain eligible if the interim position is one year or less.”
- Article IV – Organization, Section 4. Nominations and Elections – E. Correct misspelling: “insuring” to “ensuring”.
- Article IV – Organization, Section 4. Nominations and Elections – L. Strike bullet 2, second sentence “The executive Committee shall validate the conduct of the election and shall certify the election prior to the June meeting.”
- Article IV – Organization, Section 4. Nominations and Elections – M. Strike “when the election is certified”.
- Article IV – Organization, Section 6. Officer and Senator Responsibilities – C. add “The past chair organizes, and prepares for vote, any By-Law changes.

Motion was made by Bebout to accept the proposed By-Law changes, seconded by Threet. Motion passed.

Rule of 85 to 75

By request of the Senate last month, Hansen sent the original IFC submission to the Senate for their review. The Senate further discussed the difference between the two “Rules”.

Motion was made by Bebout to decline action on the Rule of 85 to 75 IFC, seconded by Threet. Motion passed.

Water Fill Stations

Doyle reported talking with Jim Wolf about the installation of water fill stations. Based on the need across campus, the installation project has been completed. If a department or area would like more, that can be requested and is a departmental expense. It is possible more will be installed using Pandemic dollars as more people may use water fill stations rather than drinking fountains. The Senate will contact the original IFC submitter to inform them of the process for requesting water fill stations in specific areas.

Ongoing Projects

Nurturing Our Nest – If you'd like more stickers and drink vouchers to reward people actively Nurturing Our Nest, contact Brandi Hess.

Tabled Projects

Tuition Benefit – (Dependents increase in credit hours. December 2019) Faculty Senate charge that we support. Provost Khayum and VP Bridges are investigating, Bridges will have a report for the next meeting.

Sick Bank Policy – Tabled until Pandemic is resolved.

Parental Leave – Tabled until Pandemic is resolved.

Volunteer Pilot Project – Tabled until Spring/Fall 2022 depending on Covid.

New Business

Remote Work

Hess respectfully submits the "FlexWork" policy for review and approval. The subcommittee researched over 22 other universities offering remote work and flexibility options post-pandemic. There was an unprecedented number of IFCs received from constituents to look into this option. The committee is calling the flexibility "FlexWork" with a category called "FlexLocation" for remote work; and "FlexTime" for compressed hours or staggered start/stop. At this time, the proposal is for Administrators. The proposal includes survey data from the 2021 Fall Survey which indicates most people say their job could be performed all or some of the time remotely. The overwhelming majority of administrators (94%) would like the option to work remote. Of those, 49% would like to work remote on a regular schedule with some days on campus, some remote. With a majority of those wishing to work 2-3 days remotely a week. Additionally, the committee felt that this would be an employee retention and recruitment tool. The survey data also revealed nearly 53% of administrators say they, or someone they know at USI, is seriously considering leaving USI for a position that offers remote work. The committee also stressed this isn't a benefit for all. Not all positions could be remote and not all employees are good candidates for remote work. The committee did not go into detail in the policy to distinguish which positions could be remote. This is a discussion between the employee and the supervisor. If the arrangement is not working out because of a performance issue, the arrangement can be terminated immediately.

Motion was made by Carnahan to approve the FlexWork proposal, seconded by Mullins. Motion passed. Executive Committee will take this forward to leadership.

Floating Holiday

Hess respectfully submits the Floating Holiday proposal. The IFC originally requested a floating holiday for employees to use on non-Christian holidays, which are currently observed as employee holidays (Christmas and Good Friday). The ERB committee did not want to request additional days off because they feel the University is generous with our existing paid time off. Since one of USI's core values is to be an inclusive and diverse community, the committee felt in the spirit of inclusion and respect for other religions, we strike all religious labels of holidays in the USI Handbook. The committee proposes changing Christmas plus two working days to "Winter Recess (December 23 thru December 31)", and Good Friday to "Campus Holiday" or "Spring Holiday". This change could occur now, with a recommendation the Academic Calendar committee look at how Good Friday is observed on the calendar. The Senate held discussion around the topic about renaming/not renaming the holidays, winter recess, other observances of holidays. Due to time constraints, the discussion was tabled.

A motion was made by Gogel to table the discussion, Bebout seconded. Motion passed.

Announcements

Nurturing Our Nest – Let us know if you need stickers/drink vouchers.

Adjournment

4:32 p.m. Meeting adjourned.

Next meeting on December 1, 2021, on Zoom.