

Northwestern Unidos: Latinx Professionals Coalition – Charter & Bylaws

Proposed by bylaw committee and approved by membership – February 2024

Article I – Name

The name of this group shall be Northwestern Unidos: *Latinx Professionals Coalition*

Article II – Mission Statement

Northwestern Unidos: The Unidos mission is to create a vibrant community for individuals of Latin ancestry across Northwestern, celebrate the variety and uniqueness of our cultures, and support our members including staff, faculty, alumni to thrive at Northwestern.

Article III: Goals and Values

Section I - Goals

- Create a space for expression and visibility across the institution
- Build a network among Latinx staff and supporters
- Create professional development opportunities for Latinx staff to progress in their career
- Foster a sense of community and belonging among Latinx staff
- Collaborate and demonstrate solidarity with other Northwestern staff affinity groups

Section II - Values

As a Northwestern affinity group founded to support a sub population that by its nature is diverse and intersectional, our activities are guided by the following core beliefs and values:

- We use the term Latinx intentionally to demonstrate our commitment to (support of) an individual's right for self-determination and expression. Latinx reflects the multifaceted nature of those who recognize a cultural link to a Latin country, heritage, or tradition, and who may transcend the limitations—i.e., gendered duality and constructs of subordination—inherent in the Spanish language that unites us historically.
- We value intercultural respect and acceptance. We recognize that a common language does not mitigate the cultural and political differences that may exist between Latinx members historically.
- We work toward social justice through volunteer work and community engagement.
- We work toward recognizing that a spectrum of perspectives, opinions, and philosophies inform and contribute to a vibrant, healthy, collegial, and professional environment.

- A individual's role or position at Northwestern will not be a barrier to full participation in the group's leadership board and chair roles.

Article IV – Membership

Section I – Membership is open to all current Northwestern University employees with full- and part-time assignments who self-identify as members or supporters of the Latinx community.

Section II – Membership is voluntary and in effect for a term of one year, coinciding with the fiscal year from September 1 – August 31. Group will accept membership year-round.

Section III – Membership status is assigned to university staff who demonstrate an interest in joining the group by completing a registration process. Members are asked to renew their membership annually to ensure that their interest in the group is current.

Section IV – Members are entitled to participate in the group's administration within the roles and processes defined within these bylaws.

Section V – Members may attend all open meetings and functions of the group; join committees or working groups; seek elected office or appointment to leadership positions; and receive communications from the group through various technologies, including social media.

Article V – Meetings & Gatherings

Section I – General meetings and gatherings will be held monthly during a predetermined hour, with additional meetings as necessary to promote the objectives of the group. General meetings are open to all members.

Section II – Two thirds of the members are required to be present at any regular or special meeting to constitute a quorum to pass amendments.

Section III – Leadership meetings (in person or virtually) will be held on a monthly basis, or more frequently as required.

Article VI – Elections

Section I – Elections will be conducted by an election committee made up of three active members who are not running for office.

Section II – The inaugural election process will take place as soon as possible following the passing of the bylaws. Inaugural election positions will be held for one year. Subsequent election positions will be held for a two-year term.

Section III – Elections will take place by mid-June and role will begin on September 1st. Committee will determine the exact dates of elections and communicate timeline to membership.

Section IV - Members may self-nominate for any position on the board and/or may be nominated by any member of the group. Members may run for multiple positions but are restricted to hold one position at a time.

Section V – Nominations will be accepted until two weeks prior to Election Day.

Section VI – Committee will distribute ballot voting information no less than 10 days before Election Day and conduct two reminders before the close of voting.

Section VII - In the case of a tie, a runoff election will be conducted during the two weeks following the initial election. Elected officers will be announced within 3 weeks of the initial election, or as soon as possible.

Article VII – Voting

Section I – Voting privileges are extended to all members.

Section II – Referenda to be brought to the general membership will be presented for discussion as agenda items in the last two open meetings prior to the vote. Voting will be open to members who attend, in person or electronically, at least one of these two sessions or events prior to the vote.

Section III – Each member may submit one vote per referendum or open elected position.

Section IV – Simple majorities of votes cast will determine the position of the general membership on most referenda. A two-thirds (2/3) majority or (66%) is required for items that would amend the group’s bylaws. Open elected positions with more than two candidates require special election procedures if no candidate garners more than 40% of the vote.

Article VIII – Board Officers

Section I – The board shall consist of elected officers from within the active membership. These include the positions of Co-Chair(s), Records Officer, Finance Officer, and Communications Strategy Officer. Board members shall attend all scheduled board meetings in person or electronically. Board members are highly encouraged to attend all group general meetings and gatherings.

Section II – During the inaugural election, officers will be elected as soon as possible following ratification of the Bylaws. The term length of the founding officers will be 1 year ending on August 31, regardless of the time of the original election, with the opportunity for re-election under the following guidelines. In subsequent elections, all positions will have a two-year term with a maximum of two concurrent terms in the same position.

Section III – Board terms begin on September 1st, following elections.

Section IV – The Board shall consist of officers whose duties are outlined below:

A. Co-Chairs

- Within 30 days of taking office, co-chairs present a unified plan to the Board regarding their division of responsibilities & intended focus for the upcoming year;
- Appoint and oversee Committee Chairs to ensure proper support from the Leadership Board;
- Speak officially for the group;
- Submit, no later than August 15th, a comprehensive report of group activities for the current fiscal year to the executive committee, and the general membership;
- Work with Financial Officer to obtain funding and access to University financial systems for group account(s) with approval authority for transactions;
- Co-chair the Leadership Board;
- Appoint chairs of the standing committees in consultation with the board;
- Monitor “old business” for items that require discussion at subsequent meetings;
- Engage other Affinity Group Presidents to communicate group projects and create inter-group initiatives; and
- Such other duties as the group shall require.

B. Records Officer

- Maintain all minutes, records and resolutions of the group;
- Receive and file all committee reports;
- Record all votes of the group;
- Maintain applications for membership;
- Creates monthly agenda with input from Leadership Board and Committee Chairs;
- Assure that each member of the group has access to our Bylaws, shared files, monthly agenda, minutes, materials from committees and treasurer, and any other pertinent documents;
- Establish group meeting schedule, including all necessary arrangements for meeting locations, and distribute to members;
- Manage and maintain the group email listserv (UNIDOS@LISTSERV.IT.NORTHWESTERN.EDU); and
- Such other duties as the group shall require.

C. Finance Officer

- Prepare, with Leadership Board, a yearly proposed budget;
- Maintain all financial records for the group;
- Monthly reconciliation of budget presented at Leadership Board meetings;
- Obtain access to University financial systems for our accounts;
- Manages and monitors all group purchases; and
- Such other duties as the group shall require.

D. Communications Strategy Officer

- Takes the lead on external communications for the group;
- Will Chair the Communications Strategy Committee;
- Establish and maintain a group web site in collaboration with the Leadership Board;
- Establish and maintain group social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.; and
- Establish and maintain other forms and mediums of communication as made available to or deemed necessary by the group or Co-Chairs;

Article IX - Officer Position Vacancies

Section I - Permanent Leaves

- A. If a position is vacated during first quarter of the year (September 1 – December 31) the runner up has the first option to assume the position. If there is no runner up or declines role, new elections will be held for that role within 30 days.
- B. If a position is vacated during the second or third quarters (January 1 – May 31), the position will be appointed by the board.
- C. If a position is vacated during the fourth quarter (June 1 - August 31), the position will remain vacant and the board will assume those responsibilities.

Section II – Short-Term Leaves

- A. Leaves that last 1-3 months are considered short term leaves. the position will remain vacant and the board will assume those responsibilities.
- B. An officer is limited to take a maximum of two short-term leave during the two-year term.

Section III – Long-Term Leaves

- A. Leaves longer than 3 months are considered long term leaves. The board will discuss and decide whether to assume responsibilities for the duration of the leave, appoint an interim officer or appoint a new officer.
- B. An officer is limited to take a maximum of one long-term leave during the two-year term.

Section IV - If all positions are vacated, new elections will be held.

Article X: Committees

Section I– Standing Committees

Standing committees include: Communications, Strategic Partnerships, Professional Development, and Community Involvement. Standing committees shall be established to support the work of the group led by a chair appointed by the Co-Chairs. Committee Chairs will recruit committee members from membership of group. Committee chair shall set separate monthly meeting time (in person or virtual) to set goals and accomplish goals of the committee. Committee will report progress of group during regular meetings. All appointments are for one year with option for re-appointment. Anticipated absence from committee meetings must be reported to the committee chair. It is the responsibility of the

committee chair to submit an agenda to all committee members and/or guests prior to each meeting and to ensure that meeting minutes are taken. All committees are open to all members. To attend a committee meeting, the group member who is not a regular member of that committee is should contact the committee's chair in advance of the scheduled meeting. Each committee is required to submit an annual report to the Leadership Board.

Section II: Standing committees shall consist of the following guidelines:

A. Communications Committee

- Develop the communication strategy with the support of the Leadership Board;
- Coordinate publicity and public relations activities of the group in conjunction with the Co-Chairs;
- Establish and maintain a group web site and maintain group social media accounts such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.;
- Establish and maintain other forms and mediums of communication;
- Publicize, in conjunction with the other group standing committees, events on topics of interest to group; and
- Such other duties as the Co-Chairs or group shall request.

B. Strategic Partnerships Committee

- Support members' involvement in professional associations and committees and encourage them to report their work to the committee;
- Establish ongoing communications with NU Human Resources/Training and academic departments that focus on topics that bear on the Latinx experience.
- Create new and enhance existing partnerships with organizations that align with our mission.
- Connect members to local and national partners that will aid in advancing member growth/opportunities;
- Maintain a record of membership's affiliation to professional associations and committees;
- Committee Chair will appoint a liaison to internal committees as needed, (e.g. the Diversity and Inclusion Committee); and
- Such other duties as the Co-Chairs or group shall request.

C. Professional Development

- Create and implement programming to facilitate a mentorship program and liaise with other mentor programs across the University to implement best practices;
- Work on staff development topics of interest related to career management such as performance review, compensation, hiring, promotions and transfers, mentoring, career ladders, transparency in job grade and salary range, staff job growth and professional development;
- Serve as a resource for group members regarding issues surrounding personnel policies and procedures; and
- Such other duties as the Co-Chairs or group shall request.

D. Community Involvement Committee

- Identify and develop relationships with local Latinx community organizations and businesses.
- Develop partnerships with Northwestern staff/student/faculty groups regarding community engagement projects relevant to group interest (i.e. Omega Delta Phi in their annual Cesar Chavez Day of Service, NUSAC coat drives, etc.)
- Committee Chair will appoint a liaison with Neighborhood and Community Relations at Northwestern; and
- Such other duties as the Co-Chairs or group shall request.

Section III - Ad Hoc Committees. Ad hoc committees may be created, as the need arises, to carry out specified tasks. Any active member may lead an ad hoc committee which will report progress to the Leadership Board and to all members during regular meeting. Normally, an ad hoc committee continues until it gives its final report or completed its specified tasks.

Section IV - Inaugural Year Suggested Ad Hoc Committees

A. Ad Hoc IT Committee

- Create and maintain group database to provide necessary statistics and support for officers and committees
- Propose and implement IT strategy to support group's mission and membership
- Support committee technology needs

B. Events Committee

- Setup guidelines / best practices document for running events and distribute to committees

Article XI - Removal of Officer and Chair Members

Section I - Officers, chairs, or members can be suspended or removed by 2/3 vote of group members. Valid causes for removal include:

- Continued, gross, or willful neglect of duties of the office;
- Failure or refusal to disclose necessary information on matters of organization business;
- Unauthorized expenditures or misuse of organization funds;
- Misrepresentation of the organization and its officers to outside persons.

Section II - Examples of conduct that are not valid grounds for removal from office are:

- Poor performance as an officer due to lack of ability;
- Negligence that is not gross or willful;
- A tendency to create friction and disagreement;
- Increase in job responsibilities that temporarily interfere with abilities to perform duties.

Section III - The procedures for suspending or removing members must provide adequate notice to the accused member, a fair hearing, and a reasonable opportunity for the member to present a defense.

Article XII - Amendments

Section I - Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote (2/3 or 66%) of the membership. The proposed amendment must be distributed in writing to the full membership at least one week before the vote.