The Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC) met on Wednesday, February 12, 2014. Listed below are items discussed during that meeting:

**UNIVERSITY ETHICS OFFICER:** Jim Guagliardo from the Office of General Counsel attended the meeting to explain his role as the University’s Ethics Officer. The following items were discussed at the meeting:

**Procurement** – Be on the lookout for any contracts that involve a potential conflict of interest, for example, a contract between the University and a spouse of an NIU employee, or a contract between the University and a business in which you know an NIU employee has a financial interest. Bring this potential conflict of interest to the attention of Procurement and the University Ethics Officer. They will determine whether a potential conflict exists and whether the contract needs to be approved by the University President and/or the state’s Chief Procurement Officer in Springfield.

**Reporting** – When a vendor deviates from: 1) standard terms (price, warranty, service) that are known to the public (on the vendor's website, in published brochures); or 2) terms that are routinely made available to other customers, you must report the substance of that vendor conversation to the Illinois Policy Procurement Board. [http://pcrs.illinois.gov](http://pcrs.illinois.gov) (regardless of whether or not you purchase or enter into a contract). APAC asked specifically about calling for pricing on hotel/meal packages and were advised to ask, “is this your standard rate?” If not, then that conversation should be reported.

**Gifts/Prizes** – Gifts/prizes from a "prohibited source" valued at less than $100 can be accepted by an employee. When such a gift or prize is valued at $100 or more, the employee has the following options: 1) decline the gift/prize; 2) return the gift to the vendor; 3) donate it to a qualified charity; 4) donate the retail value to a charity and keep the gift/prize. A "prohibited source" is an entity currently doing business with the University, or an entity that might want to do business with the University in the future.

**Gift/Work-Educational purpose** – If you are going to attend a conference and the conference sponsor offers to pay for hotel accommodations, or meals, or supplies/materials, etcetera, by law, you must obtain the written permission of the University Ethics Officer to accept this payment/gift. The Ethics Officer will determine whether the gift furthers the educational mission of the University or serves a work purpose (helps an employee do his/her job). If so, the Ethics Officer will approve in writing your acceptance of the gift.

**Prohibited political activity** – It was noted that with the political season approaching, all employees should be aware of this policy. Visit the Compliance Administration website: [http://www.compliance.niu.edu/Ethics/EthicsOfficer.cfm](http://www.compliance.niu.edu/Ethics/EthicsOfficer.cfm) and click on "Ethics Training for New Hires" under "Ethics Compliance Information." This document -- [http://www.hr.niu.edu/resources/files/Downloads/4000-Ethics%20Act%20Orientation.pdf?CFID=94369&CFTOKEN=41434080](http://www.hr.niu.edu/resources/files/Downloads/4000-Ethics%20Act%20Orientation.pdf?CFID=94369&CFTOKEN=41434080) -- will provide you more detailed information on prohibited political activity and other conduct prohibited by the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act.

**Outside work** – NIU employees should discuss any outside employment that they have with their supervisor to be certain that there are no conflicts of interest, including time conflicts, with their university purpose.

**Reporting ethics abuse** – We all have an obligation to report ethics abuse, including falsification of time-keeping records and reporting. Abuse can be reported to a supervisor or to the Ethics Officer.

**Confidentiality** – Employees who report abuse of the ethics policies are protected under the whistle-blower legislation, and the Ethics Office will make every effort to keep their names confidential if they desire. However, there may be instances where the employee cannot remain anonymous. In those cases, the Ethics Office will also pursue any retribution and retaliation in the work place.

While these are some items that were discussed at the meeting, Mr. Guagliardo’s advice to anyone who suspects an ethics violation is that they contact him for consultation.

**PATRICIA S. SIEBRASSE ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE:** The nomination deadline for the Patricia S. Siebrasse Award for Excellence is approaching. The nomination deadline is February 28, 2014. Nomination forms are found at the APAC website at [www.niu.edu/apac](http://www.niu.edu/apac).
**ADMINISTRATIVE PROFESSIONALS’ DAY BREAKFAST:** The APAC is soliciting door prizes for this year’s breakfast that will be held on **Wednesday, April 23, 2014** in the Altgeld Auditorium. If you know of a business or organization that may be willing to donate a door prize, please contact Linda Odom at 753-1508. Registration information for the breakfast will be made available in March.

**APAC VACANCY:** We currently have one vacancy on the Council. If you are interested in serving as an APAC member, please submit a letter of interest indicating why you’d like to serve and what you would like to see accomplished by the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council. Supervisory approval will be required if you are selected in order to allow release time to attend the monthly meetings that are held the second Wednesday of the month. Letters of interest should be sent to Rose Miller in Human Resources. If you have any questions about the Council, please contact Rose at 753-6029.

**ON-LINE SERVICES SURVEY:** If you are responsible for ordering office supplies, coordinating print jobs and/or if you utilize the on-line telephone directory, the APAC would like you to consider participating in a brief survey in order to assess the ease or difficulties of utilizing these “on-line” services. With many of the services going on-line and anticipating that other business processes across campus will be on-line in the future, the APAC feels it is important to reach out to the Administrative Professionals charged with these tasks to see if these services are considered user-friendly. The confidential survey can be accessed by clicking on the following link: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uc97wV86uTAEWkTrO6gPY-Xsl6rPV3ZgmH2oZY7owxk/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1uc97wV86uTAEWkTrO6gPY-Xsl6rPV3ZgmH2oZY7owxk/viewform)

**CPR/FIRST AID TRAINING:** If you are interested in placing your name on a waiting list for future First Aid and/or CPR classes, please contact Nancy Schuneman at 753-1771 or at nschunem@niu.edu.

**SOFTWARE TRAINING:** APAC would like to thank those of you who participated in the recent survey regarding possible Access training. We are pleased to announce that ERP Training is now offering Access training. The first session will be held on Tuesday, March 18.

Other training dates for Access, Word 2010, Excel 2010, PowerPoint 2010, On-Base and MyNIU Student & Financial systems are available on the ERP Training Calendar located at: [http://www.niu.edu/erptraining](http://www.niu.edu/erptraining) > Training Calendar. Select the event by double clicking the name of the event and use the red registration link next to the full class description to reserve a place in a specific training class. You will receive a confirmation a few days prior to the event with details about the training workshop.

**INCOME BASED PARKING FEE PROPOSAL:** No new developments to report this month regarding APAC’s proposal to base yearly parking fees on an employee’s salary.

**COMPUTER TIP OF THE MONTH:** Use F4 to repeat your last action. For example, if you change the font in certain areas of a document, once you have changed the first selection, highlight the next selection and use the F4 command to copy/recreate the change.

**REMINDEr:** If you are currently active on the Office Support Associate, Office Support Specialist, Office Manager and/or Office Administrator registers, please remember to check the following website for vacancies: [www.hr.niu.edu/jobregistry](http://www.hr.niu.edu/jobregistry). Vacancies are posted for five working days, so you are encouraged to check the site at least twice a week.

**OFFICE SUPPLY EXCHANGE:** There are many complimentary office supplies that are available. Visit our website for a current list of available items. If you have supplies or items that you would like to have included in this list, feel free to submit the items to apac@niu.edu and we will post them on our website.

**SUPPLIES WANTED:** Visit our website for a current list of items that departments are looking to secure. If you have an item, equipment or supply need, feel free to submit it to apac@niu.edu and we will make sure to get the word out through our website. Please make sure to follow inventory protocols when transferring inventoried items to another department, if applicable.

**NOTARY PUBLIC:** If you need to have something notarized, please visit our website for a partial list of campus notaries. You may also contact any member of the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council and we would be glad to locate a notary near you. If you have recently become a notary and would be willing to have your name added to our list, please contact Linda Odom at 753-1508.
SOFTWARE SUPPORT: The APAC has established a list of employees who would be willing to be a resource for others who may need assistance in completing certain software tasks. Please feel free to contact Rose Miller at 753-6033 to see if there is someone on our list who may be able to assist you. Also, we are looking to increase the number of people on the list, so if you feel you could provide guidance, please contact the APAC at apac@niu.edu with your specific area of expertise and we'll include you in the list.

The next APAC meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12, 2014. If you have any questions, concerns or items of interest that you wish to share at the meeting and/or have disseminated to Administrative Professionals campus wide, please forward that information to the APAC at apac@niu.edu.

The mission of Northern Illinois University's Administrative Professionals Advisory Council is to identify issues that affect the administrative support staff, to actively seek solutions to those issues and to effectively advocate for our constituents.