I. Call to Order
President Jay Monteiro called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:10 AM.

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Pamela Roesner.

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by Patricia Liberty-Baczek to accept the Agenda. The motion was seconded by Barb Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of December 4, 2014 Minutes
A motion was made by Barb Andree to accept the Minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by John Hulseberg and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
There was no treasurer’s report due to Elizabeth Buck’s absence.

VI. Announcements/Correspondence
In early February there will be focus groups of smokers in reaction to our campus being smoke free. In July it will be the law that the campus is smoke free. This will force smokers to go into the neighborhood to smoke.

Andy Small said that he attended three out of four presentations of the candidates for the position of Vice President of Administration and Finance. One in particular was very strong. This is an important position, and we should see improvements in this area.

Andy Small said that he and Carlos Raices are on the search committee for the Senior Associate Vice President of Human Resource Services.
There is a task force that started collecting data on January 5, 2015, on the administrative programs in the bottom quintile. They are looking at retooling and retraining the bottom groups, outsourcing people, or eliminating programs. They are meeting for the next two years. See summary of January 7, 2015 that Andy Small sent to OSC members on the program prioritization plan.

University Shared Governance is addressing morale and how outsourcing affects morale. They are looking at what we do well and plan to allocate resources towards these areas and sustain and do better in other areas. Maybe with increased enrollment, compensation for those of us who are here will follow.

Rhonda Wybourn recommended updating HR with staff members’ resumes. Also, HR records the HR Development classes that the staff has taken; a staff member may get a list from them.

Jay Monteiro said, regarding the search for the Vice President of Advancement and NIU Foundation that two dropped out of the race and two remain. The one who Jay thinks is strongest is still in the running.

Patricia Liberty-Baczek had an announcement from Gender and Sexuality Resource Center (GSRC). The deadline is coming up for the Joseph Harry Scholarship, which offers scholarship funds to junior and senior level students who have participated in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) organizations or activities.

Patricia Liberty-Baczek also said that Ally Training is imminent. The deadline is approaching for an ally award called the Eychaner Award, for which students, staff, and faculty members are eligible.

The deadline for dependent scholarship award applications is February 2, 2015.

The Outstanding Service Award nomination deadline is February 27, 2015.

VII. President’s Report
A. Board of Trustees
Jay Monteiro did not attend because the meeting was held at the same time as the Operating Staff Council meeting, however Deborah Haliczer attended and reported on the meeting. A hiring consulting firm has been hired to coordinate and streamline the efforts of Enrollment Management in finding and hiring an Associate Vice President.
B. Faculty Senate
   They did not meet.

C. University Council
   They met on December 3, 2014. You may refer to the December 4, 2014 minutes for the report.

VIII. Committee Reports
A. Workplace Issues
   • Ad Hoc-Employee Morale
     Finalizing their list. What are we doing as a council to assist the 1700+ employees who are the OSC’s constituents? Coming up with a plan. Consider rotating meetings quarterly – take it outside the building like the Monsanto building. Andy Small suggested that it be relevant to the topic so that we have increased attendance. They questioned whether work release time will be given to those who want to attend OSC meetings to learn about what we do. There was communication about getting help with our and SPS’s newsletter from Bill Pitney’s graduate student. Jay Monteiro stated that putting the newsletter together is easy (using a template). It is getting the stories that is difficult.

B. Elections and Appointments
   We have 17 members with Adam Lewis.

C. Public Relations
   The NIU Dependent Scholarship deadline is February 2, 2015. If there are not enough applications, they will check with the scholarship office, and an extension will be implemented. Information was sent to all faculty and staff electronically and it appeared on NIU Today. The welcome letter, which welcomes new NIU operating staff members, has been revised. The bylaws have been revised, but since some OSC members had suggestions, therefore the committee will relook at the bylaws, after which Patricia Liberty-Basczek will send the OSC members the new verbiage for further feedback.

D. SPS Council
   Morale and the University Strategic Plan have been topics of great discussion. Deborah Haliczer passed out copies of their list, “Addressing Morale Issues at NIU.” The SPS Emeritus proposal was revisited. The committee will convene and Web communicate with other members.
E. Visiting Committees/Guests

1. Sarah Klaper, University Ombudsperson shared her brochure, “Helping You Navigate Living, Learning, and Working at NIU.” She has four principles. She’s a confidential resource except for child abuse or an immediate threat. She’s neutral – she can tell a person his/her options and give an opinion on policies, but she can’t represent through the process. It is informal – she doesn’t have the authority to receive notice of a problem, but helps guide people to the right person. Independent – evaluated by the entire campus. She tracks the number of individuals who are seen by the ombudsperson. Visits have gone up this year by about 145 with a total of 837. There were 233 simple referrals, 12 on policy development, and 592 complex cases. The most common issues with students are academic status issues, followed by interactions with faculty and staff. The University focus is on collegiality, transparency, and voice in process. Communication is key. In assisting faculty and staff, how we treat each other and communication in the decision making process are the main reasons they seek assistance. Over-reaching policies apply to all when the problem is with one or two people. Sarah Klaper recommends supervisor training and to make it mandatory. Increase communication policy decision makers down to the lowest level employee. Make the focus on training a reality once again. Make an opportunity for success for them and for administration.

2. Joshua Nixon is the head of promotion and marketing for an NIU program called H2O 2Go. Their goal is to reduce our reliance on disposable water bottles and to install more water bottle refill stations (hydration stations). Reducing disposable water bottles reduces water and oil consumption, preserving our resources. Joshua Nixon is a senior in the College of Engineering & Engineering Technology’s Energy and Environmental Technology emphasis with a minor in Women’s Studies.

F. EAC

No meeting

G. UAC

Instead of audits looking at the whole staff, look at specific positions that are problematic. There are concerns with how audits are performed. The main topic was SPS positions and defining what makes them SPS. Tying to teaching was brought up, but this isn’t true. It’s a prioritizing situation. If SUCCS system is rigid and antiquated, what is the solution?

H. APAC

The President is attending APAC’s meeting next week at 2:30 PM. on January 14, 2015, in HR100.
IX. Old Business
   A. Operating Staff Awards Banquet
      It will remain as an evening ceremony.

X. New Business

XI. Adjournment
    The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 AM.

Respectfully submitted,
Pamela Roesner
Operating Staff Council member