Minutes
Operating Staff Council
April 7, 2016
Altgeld 315 – 9:00 a.m.


Absent: Zach Bohn, Nancy Brown, Elizabeth Buck, Jennifer Jeffries, Pam Roesner, David Smith

Guests: Steve Builta, Sarah Klapeter, Greg Long, Rose Miller, Michelle Pickett, Andy Small, Matt Streb, Rhonda Wybourn

I. Call to Order
President Holly Nicholson called the regular meeting of the OSC to order at 9:12 a.m.

II. Roll Call
Attendance was recorded by Stacey Bivens

III. Approval of Agenda
A motion was made by K. Smith to accept the agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Andree and passed by unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of March 3, 2016, minutes
A motion was made by Small to accept the March 3, 2016, minutes as amended. The motion was seconded by Nay and passed by unanimous vote.

V. Treasurer’s Report
There was no treasurer’s report due to Bohn’s illness.

VI. Visiting Committees/Guests
The three students chosen to receive the Operating Staff Dependent Scholarship Award attended the OSC meeting. The recipients are Elora Berg, Erin Boyle, and Olivia Monteiro. Each will receive $1000.00 ($500.00 per semester) for the 2016-2017 school year.
Matt Streb, Chair of the Political Science Department, and Michelle Pickett, Director of Academic Advising Center, visited the OSC meeting to discuss progress on Program Prioritization. The Academic and Administrative task forces each had 21 people, and the OSC and attendees at the meeting were reminded that Program Prioritization is a resource allocation process, not a budget cutting exercise. The two groups have not been asked to target certain dollar amounts.

There were 233 academic and 236 administrative programs submitted for review. Each program was placed into one of five categories: candidate for enhanced resources, continue with no change in resources, continue with reduced resources, requires transformations, subject to additional review, candidate for phase-out. The task forces were charged with placing around 20% of programs in each category. T

Seventeen votes were needed to reach a consensus on a categorization. The report should be released on or about May 2, 2016. Reports and program narratives will be made available to the entire campus. An opportunity to provide feedback will occur from around May 2 – May 15. A Town Hall meeting will be held on April 27 in the Regency Room in the Holmes Student Center from 1:00 until 2:30 p.m.

Employee Compensation Policies (Postgraduate Degree/Professional Certification Program)

This policy was brought to the March 3, 2016, OSC meeting. Builta explained that currently only Operating Staff may be compensated when they receive a certificate or graduate degree. This policy does not include Supportive Professional Staff (SPS). The SPS Council believes that the achievement of, and compensation for post-baccalaureate and post-graduate degrees, or professional certificates is a retention and morale issue. A 2-5% increase in pay should be awarded based on relevancy of the degree to the employee’s position. Faculty receive pay increases as they move up the tenure ladder, regardless of NIU’s budget situation. The SPS Council was asking for the OSC’s support of this proposal. After some edits were made, Builta brought the document back to the April 7 OSC meeting. A motion to support the Employee Compensation Document was made by Lubbers. The motion was seconded by Andree and passed by vote with one abstention.

Policy on University Service

OSC read through the policy. Builta noted that President Baker seemed surprised that staff are not supported. A motion was made by Raices to accept the policy. The motion was seconded by K. Smith and passed by unanimous vote.
VII. Public Comment
No report

VIII. Announcements/Correspondence
The recipients for the Operating Staff Outstanding Service awards have been selected. They are Brenda Hart (Marketing), Ruperto Herrera (ITS), Lynne Meyer (FLAL), and Lise Schlosser (CLAS External Programming).

Nicholson shared that there seems to be some movement on the budget in Springfield, so now is the time to contact our legislators. Remember to write, call or e-mail using personal means. Do not use NIU phones or computers.

Liberty-Baczek announced that the Student Association is sending buses to Springfield on April 13, 2016.

IX. President’s Reports
A. Executive Committee
No report

B. Board of Trustees
There was discussion about the Policy on Public Service.

C. Faculty Senate
There was a Program Prioritization presentation at the meeting. Unionizing faculty was discussed. University Council (UC) made changes to undergraduate curriculum. The Resource, Space and Budget Committee talked about the budget of prioritization. Long brought up the University Council’s attendance policy. He mentioned that Liberty-Baczek, rightfully so, had observed that a number of UC members regularly missed meetings. The UC has an attendance policy, and the Council had a discussion, in which the question was asked, “Do we follow our rules?” It was decided to endorse the attendance policy, and it will be enacted beginning fall semester.

D. Supportive Professional Staff Council (SPSC)
See VI.

E. University Council
The new speaker of the Student Association (SA) was in attendance. Christine Wang is the first female in the history of the SA to be elected to that position.
X. Committee Reports
A. Elections and Appointments
Met March 5, and talked about candidate interest sheets. The committee also discussed the best time to send out the ballots, the timing of seating new OSC members and selecting officers as these things play into the selection of the Operating Staff Personnel Advisor.

B. Employee Morale
No report.

C. Legislative Committee
No report.

D. Public Relations
Will solicit nominations for the Operating Staff Personnel Advisor position. Discussed the softball challenge issued by the Supportive Professional Staff Council. However, because of ethics regulations, items like refreshments cannot be solicited from sources outside of campus.

E. Workplace Issues
Met March 24. Discussed implementing a policy to have computers available to all employees, specifically to those in Building services and Dining services. Some workers are not aware they even have e-mail. It was suggested that a policy be established to make computers, possibly taken from surplus, available in departments that have Operating Staff employees without access to their employee e-mail. Nay stated that the issue is that individuals and administrators of departments have to ask for computers. Klaper suggested discussing this with Al Phillips to ensure follow through on this matter. Long mentioned that President Baker was surprised that computer access was not readily available to all employees.

F. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
Miller shared that APAC will issue its mentoring document the day of the yearly breakfast, which will take place April 27. Due to new ethics rules, APAC cannot solicit door prizes from off campus businesses this year. However campus offices have been extremely generous with donations. A committee is still meeting to select who will receive the Pat Siebrasse award.
G. Employee Advisory Committee (EAC)
Small reported that EAC will meet on April 15. Because of budget constraints at the universities, this will be a one-day meeting. Northeastern Illinois University, Eastern Illinois University, and Western Illinois University are having serious budget troubles. Furlough policies are being enacted. Employees are taking one unpaid day off per week which is the equivalent to 30 days in one fiscal year. Eastern has just laid off 200 employees, while Northeastern might close. These are unprecedented times in the history of the state university system. Andree mentioned she read an article in the Chicago Tribune about students looking at private or out-of-state colleges. In this dire situation, going through Program Prioritization might be NIU’s saving grace.

H. University Advisory Committee (UAC)
No report

XI. Old Business
A. Open Meetings Act
This has been tabled until the OSC’s May meeting.

B. Report from Vicky Nay
Due to time constraints, Nay agreed to present her report at the May OSC meeting.

C. Operating Staff Personnel Advisor Position
This has been tabled until the OSC’s May meeting

XII. New Business

XIII. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 10:55 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Stacey Bivens
Operating Staff Council Secretary