

## **Operating Staff Council Minutes – December 2, 2010**

**Present:** Stacey Bivens, Elizabeth Buck, Donald Butler, Gay Campbell, Sara Clayton, Marcia Dick, Linda Jennings, Glenda Jones, Jay Monteiro, Danell Nixon, Pamela Rosenberg, Andy Small, Karen Smith, Michele Stieren, Jesse Tellez

**Excused:** Alan Smith

**Guests:** Steve Cunningham, Tim Griffin, Celeste Latham, Todd Latham, Amy Polzin, Carlos Raices, Scott Peska, Jodi Tyrrell

**I. Call to Order**

Vice-President Sara Clayton called the regular meeting of the Operating Staff Council (OSC) to order at 9:03 a.m.

**II. Roll Call**

Attendance was recorded by Pamela Rosenberg.

**III. Approval of Agenda**

A motion was made by Gay Campbell to accept the Agenda as amended. The motion was seconded by Karen Smith and passed by vote.

**IV. Approval of November 4, 2010, minutes**

A motion was made by Karen Smith to accept the minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Michele Stieren and passed by vote.

**V. Treasurer's Report**

Elizabeth Buck gave the Treasurer's Report for November. A motion was made by Danell Nixon to accept the report as given. The motion was seconded by Gay Campbell and passed by vote.

**VI. Announcements/Correspondence**

It was announced at the last meeting that Jodi Tyrrell's retirement party would be held Friday, December 10, 2010, at 2:00 p.m. in the HSC Sky Room. Jodi has moved her retirement date to January 31, 2011, so her retirement party will be moved. More information will be forthcoming.

Francis Stroup passed away yesterday at the age of 101. He was a Physical Education teacher and swimming coach at NIU from 1959 to 1974. He wrote the lyrics for our current Huskie Fight song back in 1960. To quote President Peters, "For 45 years, in good times and bad, we have been sustained by his words: 'Forward, together forward'."

The annual Bridal Expo will be held in January

The NIU Football team will be playing in the MAC Championship game on Friday, December 3, 2010, at 7:00 p.m.

The Center for Black Studies will be holding an early Kwanza celebration at 5:30 p.m. on December 2, 2010, in the multi-purpose room.

## **VII. President's Report**

### **A. Board of Trustees – Meeting today.**

Board of Trustees Committees – Met November 11, 2010.

#### **Academic Affairs, Students Affairs, and Personnel Committee**

- Kerry Freedman, School of Art, read a statement in memory of Toni Keller.
- Kathy Buettner reported that the Higher Learning Commission off-campus visits were conducted on October 11 and 12, 2010. The purpose of the new policy requiring site visits is to ensure that all instructional sites meet the same program and facility standards as the main campus. The visit went extremely well.
- Virginia Cassidy presented an extensive report on the university-wide academic review process. The oversight of academic programs is conducted every year on a continuing, eight-year cycle (each review taking three to four years).
- Gip Seaver gave a presentation on the outcomes of the recent work on student retention and the work of the Office of Student Academic Success. This office defines academic success as completion of an undergraduate degree within four years. Seaver said that every person at NIU is responsible for student success. Seaver explained the ways that NIU identifies and helps “at risk” students. For example, students who do not achieve a 2.0 GPA by the end of their first year, have no connection to campus (such as sports or clubs), are undecided on a major after attending 60 hours, or are not attending classes are targeted for intervention. It was asked if this meant that faculty members would be asked to reconsider academic standards to improve retention. Provost Ray Alden said definitely not.

#### **Legislation, Audit, and External Affairs Committee**

- Steve Cunningham presented potential amendments to the Board Regulations regarding employee benefits particularly relation to domestic partner benefits. He presented comparative reviews on peer groups, benefit policies for domestic partners, NIU commissions, Illinois State benefits, and current Board Regulations. Reviews were given based primarily on the impact of cost to NIU with the implementation of such benefits. It was pointed out that the addition of tuition waivers for dependent children of domestic partners would have the most financial impact of benefit additions reviewed. Discussion continued on areas of concern including: the legal definition of domestic partnership, the draft of potential amendments, policies, change of status reporting, legality of changes, discrimination, and reverse discrimination of

implementation, coverage for homosexual and heterosexual partnerships, gender identity and sexual orientation defined, documentation of domestic partnership, and residency requirements. The committee will resume discussions at another meeting where the student area of the draft will be discussed.

- 96<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Report – Ken Zehnder commented on the success of on-campus registration and early voting offered by the DeKalb County Department of Elections. He highlighted how NIU alumni had fared in the election. He stated that pension borrowing was not successful in the Illinois Senate, but noted that the subject may return for further discussion. Items for the next Senate sessions will include pension borrowing, university borrowing, student debt collection, Procurement (SB51), Administrative Burden (HB918), Illinois higher education funding, redistricting, MAP, and ISAC funding.
- Congressional Report – Lori Clark presented the outcomes of relevant deferral elections. She noted that NIU has several federal funds pending appropriation.
- International Audit Update – Danielle Schultz presented the final university audit report. The 2010 audit plan of 17 audits had been reduced to 14. Two audits were postponed by NIU. The third was delayed due to short staffing.

#### B. Faculty Senate – Met Wednesday, November 17, 2010

Alan Rosenbaum gave a brief update on the status of a number of items:

- NIU does have guidelines on how to deal with troubled students.
- The issue of whether there should be rules about guests in the classroom was sent to the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities Committee.
- There will be a liaison appointed from the Faculty Senate to the Library Advising Committee to aid in crucial decision such as retention of periodicals.

Tim Griffin talked about an ad hoc committee on staff and student grievances toward faculty members.

President Peters was a guest speaker and talked about his Vision 2020 plan which will cover the following subjects: a look at what we've already done, what's working, benchmarks, where are we going, engaged learning, regional planning, continual decline in state funding, how can we be sustainable. He outlined the different committees that will be formed from the Steering Committee.

#### C. SPS Council – Met Thursday, November 18, 2010

Steve Cunningham and Celeste Latham from Human Resources gave a presentation on the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act Work Time Reporting Procedures.

President Peters presents his Vision 2020.

The Salary Stabilization authorization and allocation guidelines were presented and discussed.

The mandatory vacation usage days for December 20, 21, and 22, 2010, were announced as official.

D. University Council – Met Wednesday, December 1, 2010

President Peters discussed the 12 different taglines that had been sent out for survey. The survey was sent to faculty, staff, alumni, parents, students, and high school guidance counselors. There were about 400 respondents. The tagline that was chosen was “Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow”.

Other reports were given, but they were repeats of topics covered in aforementioned meetings.

E. Administrative Professionals Advisory Council – Met on Wednesday, November 10, 2010

Chad Glover from Student Employment presented information on the student hiring process. This included what paperwork the department and the employee need to complete

It was announced that APAC’s proposal, that Operating Staff Council supports, asking administration to increase non-exempt employee’s vacation accrual accumulation to 56 days, was endorsed by the University Benefits Committee. The UBC will now write a letter to Human Resource Services recommending the change.

F. University Advisory Council  
Did not meet.

### **VIII. Committee Reports**

A. Personnel/Staff Development/Benefits

Did not meet. A letter from University Benefits Committee was sent to Steve Cunningham endorsing the change to the vacation accrual for non-exempt civil service employees. A meeting will be set up to discuss changes to the evaluation of civil service employees.

B. Elections and Appointments

None.

C. Public Relations

Did not meet.

D. Visiting Committees/Guests

1. Amy Polzin gave a presentation on Operating Staff Awards, as well as how the committee responsible for choosing the awardees works. She shared with us an organizational chart, a committee checklist, and a letter that goes out to all employees. She also shared a copy of the tabulation spreadsheet that they use.

She asks the committee members to read the nominations without looking at the name so each person is judged fairly, to then rate each candidate, and return the tabulation sheets to her. Once everything has been tabulated, all documents are shredded.

It was suggested that all the nomination documents be scanned and emailed to the committee members, as there are 23 members and that results in a lot of copying expense, as well as a lot of paper. Concern over confidentiality was expressed, but Amy will discuss the option with the committee.

In order to be nominated for the award, one must be employed at NIU for 5 years. This was changed in 2000. If a person on the committee is nominated or nominates another person for the award, then they will remove themselves from the committee for that year. It was asked if every person nominated for the award is notified, and Amy was not sure. They are notified at the end. The names of those who have been nominated are no longer published.

2. Steve Cunningham and Celeste Latham gave a report on the new Time Reporting system that goes into effect for exempt employees, not including faculty, on January 1, 2011. All employees in this category must begin reporting their time in 15 minute increments on this date. This is a requirement via the State Ethics Act.

Employees can record their time daily or monthly and will be able to review the submitted document, however, no edits can be made once the document is submitted. If an employee is on a vacation day, but they have to perform state work on their vacation time, that time would be recorded on the on-line time reporting system, as well as the vacation time. The vacation day would also be reported on the paper time sheet.

If an employee is at a conference and is on state time, the time outside of the normal commute to NIU would be recorded and would include all time worked, excluding time for sleeping, etc. Therefore, it would include all time outside of the normal daily schedule.

At this time, there will be no reporting to departments on time worked. The only people who will see the recorded time will be Human Resources. If a person refuses to submit an on-line time reporting, then it could result in a fine and/or disciplinary action, as this is a state statutory requirement, and it is the employee's responsibility to complete.

Training sessions will begin the week of December 6 and will be held every hour on the hour. There will also be a tutorial on-line for those who cannot attend a session.

- E. EAC  
SUCSS's Merit Board met on November 17, 2010. There were three discharge hearings, and all were discharged. The next EAC meeting will be in January at Eastern Illinois University.
  - F. UAC  
Did not meet.
  - G. Special Events Committee  
Did not meet.
  - H. Baccalaureate Review  
No report.
  - I. Foundations of Excellence  
No report.
  - J. Enrollment Management Task Force  
No report.
  - K. Raise Equity Committee  
Did not meet.
- IX. Old Business**  
None.
- X. New Business**
- A. Constituents have expressed concern over Lot W. It is not paved and is not well lit, so is very dark at night. There is also additional concern over parking being decreased due to the demolition of married student housing.  
  
It was reported that the lot will be paved but there are no plans for anything with lighting and safety. It was suggested that a blue emergency pole be installed if there isn't one there already. The committee asked that Alan Smith look into having an officer posted there so people can be walked to their cars parked in the lot. Sara Clayton will send Alan an email concerning this.  
  
Alan Smith was contacted about this and there is a blue emergency pole in Lot W. Additionally, any employee can always call the Police and ask to be escorted to your car.  
  
Additionally, concern about lighting on Anne Glidden Road was expressed. It is very dark and hard to see pedestrians at night. The city needs to add some lighting along the roadway.

- B. The OSC has been asked to give a support letter for domestic partner benefits, stating that we are in support of putting benefits for domestic partners in the policy and procedures of NIU. Additionally, they want to add sexual orientation to the non-discrimination policy of NIU. However, we need more information and specifics on what they want to change. Karen Smith will draft a letter so we can read and discuss, and determine if this is what the committee wants to do.

**XI. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pamela Rosenberg  
Operating Staff Council Secretary