2010-2011 Annual Report to the SPS Council

This report shall serve as a summary of committee and council activity of SPS that are elected, appointed or recommended by the SPS Council.

The council dedicated much time and energy this year obtaining information and keeping SPS apprised of changes and proposed changes to employee benefits. The council through its representative on University Council was successful in having Article 11, SPS grievance procedures, passed. This consolidated various information, streamlines the procedure, implements a more fair and equitable process.

SPS Council committees

Awards - Co-Chairs: Dana Gautcher and Missy Gillis
In 2010-2011, the Awards Committee accomplished its annual responsibilities:

- Coordinated the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence, which was presented to four individuals: Kate Braser, University Honors; Abby Chemers, Finance & Facilities; Dan Nichols, School of Music; and Patricia Sievert, Outreach.

- Certificates of Recognition were presented to twenty-five SPS from across all six divisions: Pat Anderson, Alumni Services; Kristie Bongiovanni, Sociology; Jeff Daurer, Capital Budget and Planning; Tamara Farley, Treasury Operations; Dena Funkhouser, Budget and Planning; Dana Gautcher, Student Academic Success; Missy Gillis, Transfer Center; Gail Hayenga, College of Education; Betsy Hull, NIU Foundation; Keith Jackson, NIU Controller; Jane Jordan, Student Financial Aid; Tom “Tuke” Matukewicz, Intercollegiate Athletics; Kevin Meyer, Media Services; Melody Mitchell, College of Law; Deborah Pierce, International Programs; Emily Prieto, Latino Resource Center; Patricia Reisdorf, Math/Teacher Certification; Jason Rhode, Faculty Development; Stephanie Richter, Instructional Technology; Denise Rode, Orientation and First Year Experience; Dawn Roznowski, College of Health and Human Sciences; Curtis Steele, College of Engineering and Engineering Technology; Brian Walk, Outreach Communications; Abbey Wolfman, Orientation and First Year Experience; Ken Zehnder, University Relations.

- The Committee coordinated the selection of recipients of the SPS Council Service Award, which was presented to Todd Latham, Leadership, Educational Psychology & Foundations.

- The Committee was not able to coordinate SPS/Faculty Development grants in either semester. This year, funds were not available for these grants due to budgetary constraints across the university.

Respectfully submitted by Dana Gautcher

Communications Committee Report - Chair: Rachel Xidis
During 2010-2011, the Supportive Professional Staff Council Communications Committee carried out the ongoing tasks of monitoring the SPSC email box, maintaining and posting items to the SPSC website, and coordinating with other SPSC committees to create and distribute both printed and electronic mailings pertaining to SPS events and relevant campus issues. The Committee also assisted the Ad Hoc PR committee with designing SPSC magnets and laminated cards, as well as providing advice on the newsletter.
The efforts of the Ad Hoc PR committee this year will provide direction and additional tasks for the Communications Committee next year. One goal for the Communications Committee in the upcoming year is to work with the PR committee on creating and distributing the SPSC newsletter. Another goal is to convert the SPSC website into the new NIU templates and collaborate with the Technology committee to create an info page for each Council representative.

Respectfully submitted by Rachel Xidis

**Constitution and Elections**- Chair: Michael Stang
Elections to SPS Council Executive Board and Second University Council representative were conducted in July, 2010.

A procedure manual was developed and adopted by the committee during the spring semester.

Vacant council positions were filled in February and March, 2011.

Nominations for 2011-13 positions were collected in March, 2011 with 125 unique nominations received. Elections were conducted in April, 2011.

The committee would like to thank Jonathon Ostenburg for his continuing technical assistance with the elections process.

No changes to the constitution were proposed or adopted.

Respectfully submitted by Michael Stang

**Events**- Chair: Anne Harde
The council sponsored several events, open to all faculty and staff.

Oct. luncheon with Dr. Matthew Streb on Midterm Elections

Oct. football tailgate

March luncheon with Dr. Brian Hemphill on Enrollment and Budget Implications

March brown bag sessions co-sponsored by Operating Staff Council, with Ken Zehnder, Dr. Steve Cunningham, Dr. Joe Grush, and State Representative Bob Pritchard

April luncheon with President Peters on Vision 2020

It is advised that the Events committee work to develop a calendar of events for the entire academic year to post on SPSC website and add to the e-newsletter. In addition, it is recommended that the council work with campus partners to develop a system to register and pre-pay for events on-line.
Respectfully submitted by Anne Hardy

**Legislative Committee:** Chair: Scott Peska

This year the legislative committee gathered only three times throughout this academic year. The committee discussed dividing responsibilities to monitor and report on legislative issues and concerns (federal, state, and local governing bodies) that would directly or indirectly impact SPS employees. Monthly the chair would reach out to Ken Zehnder to learn of any updates regarding the state of affairs in Springfield and how it might impact NIU and SPS employees. Additionally, the legislative committee supported SPS Council events that hosted State dignitaries and NIU administration (e.g. President Peters) to keep the SPS Council apprised of key issues such as pension reform, state budget appropriations for NIU, and changes to employee benefits.

Respectfully submitted by Scott Peska

**Work Place Issues Committee:** Co-Chairs: Frankie Benson and Jen Clark

In March of 2008 (Survey taken 9/11/08), the SPS Council received the results of the 2007 SPSC Survey. The Council charged the Workplace Issues Committee with examining the quantitative and comment areas, identifying areas and themes of concern, and developing strategies to address these areas and themes.

The Workplace Issues Committee surveyed the full Council in order to generate a list of categories that the Committee would be charged with addressing. The Committee has spent the remaining semesters, to date, addressing the different areas, developing strategies, and carrying forward the actions required by the strategies.

Here is a short list developed from the In-house survey conducted to set the Workplace Issues priorities:

List of Issues that were rank ordered:

- Performance Reviews
- “Temporary” category among SPS employees
- Change of name from SPS to a more recognizable name
- SPS Survey
- SPS Morale
- Tuition waiver procedures/policies
- Supervisory training
- Definition of a reasonable workload
Supervisor accountability for interpersonal relationships

360 degree evaluations

Internal promotions, title changes

10 + 1 contract issues

Cross-campus cooperation

Top 5 Issues, ranked (frequency of responses ranking an item within their top 3 concerns):

#1: Supervisory training (15)

#2: Definition of a reasonable workload (11)

#3: Performance reviews (10)

#4: “Temporary” category among SPS employees (8)

#5: SPS Morale, 360 degree evaluations, Internal promotions & title changes (3-way tie) (7)

Issues 1 – 3 were addressed through a training developed by a group in NIU’s Human Resource Services, supervised by Debbie Haliczer. This training, in various stages, is being implemented with new hires and current employees have options to take short courses in related subjects.

Issues listed under #5 have been discussed at length by the Committee. The internal promotion structure is under current examination by the Committee related to employees who “Retire and Return” to NIU.

Issue #4 was addressed most recently by the Committee. The issues surrounding temporary SPS and temporary grant-funded SPS was examined starting the middle of the fall, 2010 and research continued through the spring. A proposal was developed by the Committee that would change several aspects of HR and University Policies. A vote was held in the SPSC meeting of June 9, 2011 to decide whether the proposal should go forward to the NIU Benefits Committee. The vote passed and presently the proposal is awaiting final editing before it goes on to the Benefits Committee. Once vetted by the Benefits Committee, it will return to the Council for a final vote to go to the University Council.

Respectfully submitted by Frankie Benson

Ad Hoc PR Committee: Chair Donna Smith
At the January 13, 2011, SPSC meeting, the Council voted to establish an Ad Hoc committee to deal with how to best communicate with constituents and publicize the Council.
On January 28, 2011, committee members met, elected Donna Smith, as chair, and titled the committee Ad Hoc PR. They laid out a number of issues to address and tasks to try to accomplish.

- **Key issue**: The type and frequency of information to come from SPS Council to SPS employees at NIU.
- **Post Election Results**
  Work with the Constitutional Elections and Communications Committees to determine how to streamline the communication process regarding elections, including getting notices out to all constituents as to election results, arranging for a *Northern Star* article about the election process and outcomes, and providing for an announcement in NIU Today.

- **Representative List/Division Contacts**
  Set-up e-mail access for the SPS constituents within each representative’s division. It was suggested Jon Ostenburg help arrange this.

- **SPS Desk Card**
  Have some type of signage for a door or desk to identify an individual as an SPS Council representative would be very useful. Rachel Xidis may be able to assist with this.

- **NIU Notice/Information System**
  Brainstorm the variety of ways in which we could share information, including;
  - NIU and College Calendars
  - Campus Directories
  - Websites

- **Shared Governance Process**. Could share how SPS Council and representatives in a newsletter article.

- **SPS Newsletter**
  Suggested items to include were:
  - Committee Reports
  - Events – Preview of upcoming, as well as retrospective on past events
  - Announcements – elections, etc.
  - Topics of interest to SPS members, such as legislative issues, etc.
  - Use newsletter as a PR tool to promote involvement by more SPS members.
  - President’s Year End Review

- **Recruitment/retention/service acknowledgement strategies for SPS employees**. Even a small acknowledgement of years of service/milestones/achievements would be meaningful. Council should develop a proposal regarding meaningful ways to acknowledge SPS members to be shared with President Peters.

Of the aforementioned the following have been accomplished:

- SPS Desk Card and Magnet that identifies Council representatives and alternates.
- Researched and developed a process for getting Council meetings in the NIU calendar and e-mail notifications of upcoming events.
• Prepared a proposal for SPS service awards for the Sustainability Committee of the Vision 2020 Task Force.
• Get SPSC listed in the campus phone book.

The following were discussed, but will not be accomplished for various reasons:

• Establishing e-mail addresses/contact information for each Council rep.
• Message board and/or controlled blog at the Council website.

The following are still being worked on or are being planned:

• Newsletter
• Press release regarding elections to Northern Today.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Smith

Reports by SPS Member on Committees or Boards of the University

Athletic Board- Todd Latham
The athletic board reviewed and approved ticket prices for major sporting events, football, men’s basketball and women’s basketball. This year Athletics experienced the replacement of the head women’s basketball coach, men’s basketball coach and football coach. NIU experienced its first Bowl win with the football team. This year, as others in the past, NIU Student Athletes have continued to succeed in the classroom, in the community and on the field/court. Athletics was asked and presented to Faculty Senate an overview of NIU Athletics and its financials.

Respectfully submitted by Todd Latham

Judicial Affairs Hearing Board-
No report submitted

Campus Parking Committee-
No report submitted

Computing Facilities Advisory Committee
Major topics discussed during FY11 include:

• Future of Computer Labs

The existing labs as they stand today are frozen and ITS cannot sustain, upgrade, add to or do anything with the labs as they are. Discussed at all four meetings this year, issues include:
The high cost of letting students print for free, and the large amount of print that is thrown away by students; testing of hardware and software for multifunction copiers that require swipe cards so that students pay up front for printing.

Virtual cloud services for all applications on campus so that coursework can be developed around the cloud. Any student with a web-based interface would be able to use applications from the web. ITS explored the use of Citrix

Lab funding applications to be put in a cloud so that students can access them from any web-enabled device, smart phone, tablet, Apple, Windows, or Linux OS, and not have to be running Windows XP or be in a computer lab.

Campaign to move to Windows 7 was canceled due to costs.

Cole Hall collaboratorium, “the classroom lab of the future. If this model is successful, ultimately every classroom lab will be modeled like the collaboratorium.

**BTOP Grant**

Wally announced that ITS received over $100 million in federal BTOP grants for broadband technology, with $80 million going to the university, and about $30 million going off campus. NIU is also included in another $140 million in BTOP grants for the rest of the state to build and modify their broadband in the whole state

**Blackboard**

- Upgrade to release 9.1 scheduled for May; release 9.1 (Blackboard Next Generation) is the most significant upgrade to date, incorporating over 80 new features.
- Space quota for courses was discussed
- Blackboard Mobility (apps for iPad, Android, or Blackberry) was demonstrated

**PeopleSoft Enterprise Portal** in development and was demonstrated

**Apple Developer & iTunes**

**Distributed Learning Technology and Infrastructure**

Aline Click, Assistant Director, eLearning, spoke to the committee regarding the technology and infrastructure related to distributed learning. Distributed learning is linked to the Vision 2020 initiative.

**Clickers**

Current standard approved by CFAC in 2005-2006 is problematic and faculty is requesting that a new standard be approved.

Respectfully submitted by Jan Gerenstein

**Multicultural Transformational Institute**

No report submitted
Parking Appeals Committee-

No report submitted

Presidentaial Commission on the Status of Women-

No report submitted

I respectfully submit this annual report to the SPS Council on 7/14/2011.

Todd Latham,

SPS Council President