Northern Illinois University  
Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting  
MINUTES  
Thursday, December 19, 2013  
HSC Clara Sperling Skyroom  
10:00 a.m.

Present: Diane Alberts, Pat Anderson, Eric Biletzky, Karinne Bredberg, Melissa Burlingame, Alicia Czachowski, Abigail Dean, Catherine Doederlein, Dena Funkhouser, Dana Gautcher, Megan Gerken, Lesley Gilbert, Deborah Haliczer, Betsy Hull, Gail Jacky, Marti Jernberg, Gillian King-Cargile, Julia Lamb, Bri Lauka, Jeanne Meyer, Debra Miller, Randi Napientek, Anne Petty-Johnson, Lisa Pluhm, Nyoka Polyak, Donna Schoenfeld, Gail Schumacher, Donna Smith, Michael Stang, Christina Sutcliffe, and Brian Walk

Excused: Steve Builta, Anne Hardy, Dan House, Janet Love-Moore, Kathy Smith, and Rachel Xidis

Absent: Cliff Bottiglieri

Guests: Sarah Klaper, Cynthia Nelson and Andy Small

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 10:03 a.m. by Supportive Professional Staff Council President Deborah Haliczer.

President Haliczer made additions to the agenda under ‘Announcements’ adding, “D. CMS Dependent Audit for Employees”, “E. Student Profiles” and “F. Special Announcement”. She added Vice President Hardy was unable to attend the meeting and the Vice President Report and the Bold Futures discussion will be tabled until January. She asked for further additions to the agenda. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the amended agenda. The motion to approve the amended agenda was made by Doederlein and was seconded by Lamb. The motion to approve the amended agenda was passed unanimously.

President Haliczer asked if there were corrections to the November 21, 2013 minutes. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Petty-Johnson and was seconded by D. Smith. The motion to approve the November 21, 2013 minutes was passed unanimously.

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Guest Speaker
President Haliczer shared that due to preparing for the Poinsettia Bowl game, Sean Frazier, NIU Athletic Director, was unable to attend the meeting. She said she will work to reschedule him for a date in the Spring.

Before starting with the announcements, President Haliczer welcomed Lisa Pluhm, new Division 5 Alternate to Council. Pluhm introduced herself and Council members provided introductions.

Announcements
A. December 23rd – Vacation Day
President Haliczer reminded Council to make sure fellow colleagues remember they will need to take December 23rd as a mandatory vacation day. Those with questions were advised to contact K. Smith in Payroll as soon as possible.
B. Holiday Memo Reminder  
President Haliczer also reminded members to print a copy of the “Winter Closure Insurance Procedures and Payroll Distribution Schedules” letter which Dr. Cunningham sent to all university employees last week. This letter details steps to take in case of emergency hospitalization or if surgery is required over the holiday break.

C. Faculty Development Annual Report  
President Haliczer shared with Council a copy of the 2012 – 2013 Annual Report from the Faculty Development and Instructional Design Center for review.

D. CMS Dependent Audit for Employees  
President Haliczer announced all retirees will be receiving a letter from CMS asking them to verify their dependents. HR will be sending a letter to NIU retirees to advise them what they need to know in preparation for this letter, so there will be less confusion.

E. Student Profiles  
Dean shared the university is working to build a database of diverse student profiles for the NIU webpage – as students want to see and hear from other current students when doing a college search. She asked for those who know students that might be good candidates to contact her and she will have the student complete a profile template for consideration and review. She clarified this is open to all Undergraduate, Graduate and Transfer students and thanked everyone for their help with the project. More information will be available in Vibe.

F. Special Announcement  
President Haliczer shared Czachowski has accepted a new position and will be leaving campus in January. She was thanked for all of her work with the Awards committee and was presented with a “Certificate of Appreciation” from Council.

Committees of the Council

Awards  
Gautcher and President Haliczer shared that with Gautcher’s nomination for the “SPS Presidential Award of Excellence” and Czachowski leaving – President Haliczer and Gilbert, a member of the Awards committee, will lead the committee through deliberations for the “SPS Presidential Award of Excellence” the afternoon of January 9, 2014. Stang and Missy Gillis have agreed to join the committee to fill in for Gautcher and Czachowski during this process. Gautcher will then take over again as Chair for the remainder of the awards. Gautcher said this year the committee received 14 nominations, the most since 2008 and six of the nominees are Council members. The committee will make its selection and then bring the names back to Council for approval. Once approved the names will be submitted to President Baker and when he gives his approval, then the winners will be notified.

Gautcher added an email will be sent in January to employees seeking nominations for the “SPS Certificates of Recognition” and the committee will bring the four new revised awards back to Council for review. In February, the committee will select the “Certificate of Recognition” winners and Council will vote for the “SPS Service Award” winner. Gautcher said pending approval of a date from President Baker, the SPS Awards Ceremony will be held either Tuesday, April 15th or Wednesday, April 16th.

Communications  
Walk reported the committee has been busy working on updates to the website. In January work will start on the next newsletter.
**Constitution & Elections**

Stang reported the committee will work to replace Czachowski for Division 2. He announced the committee met to discuss four issues of focus for them:

- Determining if revisions to current Council Divisions are necessary, in light of recent campus changes.
- To define properly what is an “unexcused absence” for Council Representatives.
- To clarify how vacant spots on Council are filled.
- To determine if and when the Council President can vote.

He asked if Council know of any other issues which should be reviewed, to please contact him or any of the committee members. He said the committee hopes to have proposed changes to the SPS Constitution ready for the January meeting.

**Events**

Burlingame announced the “NIU Cares Day” email to SPS employees was distributed and a reminder will be sent in January to determine if there are employees who are interested in this project. Invitations to the “SPS New Year’s Celebration” which is scheduled for Wednesday, January 8, 2014, from 3 – 4:30 p.m. in Altgeld Hall (Room 315) will be sent to employees shortly. Stroobants is working on entertainment for the event. Biletzky shared the “Lunch & Learn: The Cloud” presentation went well and a summary of the event will be posted in Vibe. Burlingame said the committee hopes to have the Spring schedule of events ready by the January meeting.

**Finance**

Funkhouser had nothing to report for the Finance committee.

**Legislative Issues**

Bottiglieri was unable to attend the meeting, so President Haliczer reported a pension reform bill did pass in Springfield earlier in the month. Many organizations have posted links to the Bill for review. Those who are members of SUAA have received information regarding how they can donate to the Legal Defense Fund, which will be used to challenge this Bill. She also shared the video from the “Pension Forum” is now on the SPS website, but employees will need to login to view the video.

**SPS Dependent Scholarship**

President Haliczer announced the Foundation letter soliciting funds for the SPS Dependent Scholarship was sent to employees in November. Council members were all challenged to donate to the fund, especially those who wish to make a donation before the end of the year for tax purposes.

**Technology Resources**

Biletzky said he will make sure Pluhm is added to the necessary SPS Vibe lists.

**Workplace Issues**

Lamb shared the committee met at the end of November. The committee continues to wait for an update on employees with odd contracts (9+3 or 10+2). The committee also discussed the State Universities Civil Service System (SUCSS) Audit Report for NIU and some of its findings. President Haliczer shared there is a link on the SPS website which will take you to the report, but she asked those reading it to be sensitive to the fact that actual employee names are mentioned and to be cautious of how the information is shared. Council discussed the need for the audit and clarified that the “findings” made were actually due to changes made to the Civil Service classifications while employees were in the positions. Andy Small discussed some concerns and shared the Operating Staff Council is planning a meeting on Thursday, January 9th at 9:30 a.m. in the HSC Skyroom with speakers from SUCSS and campus HR.
representatives to discuss strategies and practices for moving forward. He invited all SPS Council to attend.

Committees of the University

Vice President
Hardy will provide her report in January.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Guest Speakers for 2014
President Haliczer reminded Council she will reschedule Sean Frazier for the Spring, along with NIU Police Chief, Tom Phillips. She opened the floor to suggestions for other speakers. Recommendations included Career Services to find out how they are working towards President Baker’s goal of “Student Career Success” and Nancy Suttenfield, Interim CFO. Those with other suggestions were asked to contact her.

B. CIO, Provost and CFO Searches
President Haliczer reminded Council she and Funkhouser are serving on the CFO Search. Doederlein is representing SPS employees on the Provost Search. Celeste Latham and Kelly Wesener Michael are serving on the CIO Search. All committees have met, all searches have confidentiality agreements, but they will try to report as they are able.

C. SPS Emeritus Status Proposal
President Haliczer reported she will pull together the committee soon to work on the SPS Emeritus Proposal and will provide an update for Council during the next meeting.

D. SPS Survey Update
President Haliczer welcomed Cynthia Nelson back to Council. She thanked Nelson for all of her time volunteered to work on the survey. Nelson thanked Council for their help with this survey. To further help with the analysis and presentation of findings, she broke Council in sections to flesh out information of importance for further analysis and gather the following information:
- What information is most important from each section?
- What are the major issues?
- What else needs to be reviewed?

Council was divided into 5 groups and given time to review information before presenting their findings. Each group presented their findings and offered additional questions to Nelson to consider for analysis. President Haliczer shared once the analysis is completed and Council has reviewed the results a public statement and a copy of the survey will be sent to the university administration. Included with the letter will be actions Council plans to undertake to address concerns raised in the surveys and suggestions on things university administration should consider to speak to pressing SPS issues. Most of these will be low or no-cost options.

NEW BUSINESS

A. New Business
There was no new business during the meeting.

University Committee Reports
President Haliczer shared her reports have been placed in Vibe and asked Council to review the documents. If there are any questions or concerns, she asked members to contact her.
President Haliczer reminded Council again of the January 8th “SPS New Year’s Celebration”, the meeting with OSC on January 9th and the first Council meeting of the year will be on Thursday, January 16th. She wished everyone a safe and happy holiday break.

Adjournment
With no further business, President Haliczer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion to adjourn was made by Jernberg and was seconded by Lamb. The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Lesley Gilbert, SPSC Secretary