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

Present: Diane Alberts, Eric Biletzky, Cliff Bottiglieri, Steve Builta, Melissa Burlingame, Alicia Czachowski, Abigail Dean, Dena Funkhouser, Megan Gerken, Lesley Gilbert, Deborah Haliczer, Anne Hardy, Emily Hochstatter, Gail Jacky, Marti Jernberg, Gillian King-Cargile, Julia Lamb, Bri Lauka, Jeanne Meyer, Debra Miller, Kiera Miller, Ted Moen, Randi Napientek, Susan Oppenborn, Donna Schoenfeld, Gail Schumacher, Donna Smith, Michael Stang, Christina Sutcliffe, Brian Walk, and Rachel Xidis

Excused: Pat Anderson, Catherine Doederlein, Dan House, Betsy Hull, Anne Petty-Johnson, and Kathy Smith

Absent: None

Guests: Sarah Klaper, Margie Miles, Toni Tollerud, and Eric Weldy

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Supportive Professional Staff Council President Deborah Haliczer.

President Haliczer made several additions to the agenda under ‘Announcements’ adding, “D. General Education Survey”, “E. Bullying Prevention Program”, “F. Clery Act Report”, “G. Employee Eligibility for 403(b) Programs” and “H. Homecoming Events”. 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 Lamb and was seconded by Oppenborn. The motion to approve the amended agenda was passed unanimously.

President Haliczer asked if there were corrections to the September 12, 2013 minutes. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion to approve the minutes was made by Jernberg and was seconded by Builta. The motion to approve the September 12, 2013 minutes was passed unanimously.

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

Guest Speaker
President Haliczer introduced Dr. Eric Weldy, Vice President of Student Affairs and Enrollment Management, and welcomed him to the Council meeting. Weldy thanked Council for the invitation to speak and answer questions. He shared his background and discussed how he’s spent his first few months working with Student Affairs and Enrollment management departments to identify and address campus issues.

Weldy answered several questions presented by Council and offered comments to address Council concerns:

- The campus must realize NIU as a whole is reviewing and determining strategies to best address enrollment concerns. It will take all members of the university community pulling together to fix it. He stated there are already lots of wonderful programs in place.
- This is a new day at NIU. This is a time for building new relationships and looking at some things in a new way. Things which worked in the past, might not be working now, so NIU must decide what to do to remain relevant. Working more closely with
Community College is a relationship being redefined. Taking recruitment to the next level and retention strategies are being looked at in new ways.

- Student Affairs and Enrollment Management is working closely with President Baker in order to help him meet his goals for student and university success.
- The university will continue to make sure NIU is recruiting qualified and hard-working students. Hard-working students may not start at the university with excellent grades, but they have the potential to strive and become top-tier graduates.
- NIU must continue to find ways to better market services it has available to students to help them succeed academically. The university must also better address why students choose to leave the university and offer solutions to difficulties which force students to leave school before graduation.
- NIU must do a better job in the quality of service offered to students. We all need to make NIU the university students want to attend and stay at until graduation. If students sense employees don’t like their position and don’t want to work with them, that might make them believe they should go somewhere else.

Before leaving, President Haliczzer asked Weldy how SPS can be of assistance to him. He asked members to be open with him – let him know what we think he and Student Affairs is doing well or where there are concerns. He asked everyone to focus on working for the best interest of our students and not be too concerned with department territory issues. He said he welcomes the opportunity to come back and speak to Council again for a progress update.

Announcements

A. State of the University/President Baker’s Inauguration
President Haliczer reminded Council President Baker’s Inauguration is planned for Wednesday, November 13th at 3 p.m. in the Carl Sandburg Auditorium of the Holmes Student Center, but noted there will be other activities scheduled during that week to help celebrate. She shared many individuals on Council are assisting with the planning for the inauguration and thanked everyone for the time.

B. Flu Shots (October 23rd)
President Haliczer shared there will be one final flu clinic on campus for university employees on Wednesday, October 23rd from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. in the Regency Room of the Holmes Student Center. If employees are unable to attend the final flu shot clinic, they can contact the DeKalb County Health Department to find about additional flu shot dates. Employees will need to bring their ID and insurance card with them if they get the shot at the DeKalb County Health Department.

C. Ethics Training (October 16th – November 14th)
President Haliczer reminded Council the annual Ethics Training period will begin on Wednesday, October 16th and runs until Thursday, November 14th. All employees will be receiving the official Ethics letter from Dr. Steven Cunningham and James Guagliardo, the University Ethics Officer, the first morning of the training. Council was reminded of the importance of completing this yearly training.

D. General Education Survey
D. Smith reminded Council everyone should have received an invitation to complete the General Education Survey. She said for those who teach/advise students, now is the opportunity to share thoughts regarding General Education requirements on campus. She noted the request was also included in NIUToday.

E. Bullying Prevention Program
D. Miller shared information about a Bullying workshop on Wednesday, October 23rd in the Carl Sandburg Auditorium of the Holmes Student Center, which will include a showing of the movie, “Bully” followed by reflection and discussion. During the afternoon
there will be a “Bullying Prevent and SEL in the Classroom” presentation. The event is being sponsored by the NIU Office of Educator Licensure and Preparation and the Office of Student Academic Success. She noted there is no cost for registration, but those interested are asked to RSVP to D. Miller.

F. Clery Act Report
President Haliczer announced the 2013 - 2014 Clery Annual Security Report is now available online. This report can be viewed at www.safety.niu.edu or you can contact the NIU Police Department at 753-9628 to request a copy of the report.

G. Employee Eligibility for 403(b) Programs
President Haliczer reminded Council employees recently received notice of the Supplemental Retirement Plans or 403(b) Plans which are available. Employees with questions can contact Human Resource Services at 753-6000 for assistance. Council was also reminded those not currently members, may wish to consider joining the NIU Annuitants Association.

H. NIU Homecoming
President Haliczer asked Stang to share some of the remaining events planned for Homecoming week. Stang announced dates and times for “Yell-Like-Hell”, the Homecoming Parade and bonfire, the Homecoming 5K and Football game. Council was reminded there are parking restrictions in town from Thursday evening to Sunday, so employees are advised to check before parking this weekend. Council was also asked to be mindful as this Saturday is another sell-out game, so lines will be long and to remember there are restrictions on what can be brought into the stadium. When in doubt, ask.

I. STEMfest
King-Cargile reminded Council “STEMfest 2013” will be held on Saturday, October 19th from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the NIU Convocation Center. Visitors will be able to see over 200 hands-on exhibits. She noted there are lots of great things to see and people of all ages will learn from the event. Admission to the event and parking is free.

Burlingame shared Save the Date information for the “2014 Green Lens – Environmental Film Festival” which is planned for February 24 – 27, 2014. About 30 films will be shown on the NIU campus and downtown at the Egyptian Theatre. More information can be found online at www.niu.edu/greenlens.

Committees of the Council

Awards
Czachowski announced the nomination forms for the ‘SPS Presidential Award for Excellence’ are now available. An announcement has been made on NIU Today and information was emailed to all SPS employees. The deadline for nominations is Monday, December 2, 2013 at 4:30 p.m. She clarified to be eligible to receive the award, an employee must be at least 50% time and may not hold rank or tenure. She asked all Council members to consider nominating deserving, fellow SPS employees. She added the committee is thinking about additional awards for the future, which the committee will be meeting to discuss soon. She and Gautcher hope to be able to share this information with Council in the future.

Communications
Xidis and Walk reported the committee is still gathering stories for the Fall edition of the SPS newsletter. The committee hopes to have all articles submitted by the end of the week, so it can be sent to employees by the end of next week. She shared this year’s Council group photo is now on the SPS webpage.
Constitution & Elections

Stang shared Holly Nicholson has left Council because she has moved to a Civil Service position, so that leaves a vacancy in Division 5. The committee met and since there are no extra employees in the Division pool that can fill the vacancy it was decided a special election will be necessary to find a replacement. The committee is working to prepare for this special election and Division 5 SPS employees will receive information soon.

He shared with Council: President Haliczer received an urgent request for a SPS representative to serve on the Academic Diversity Programs Advisory Committee. The Executive committee approved the selection of Lisa Roth to fill this position. Stang made a motion to approve Lisa Roth for a one year position on the Academic Diversity Programs Advisory Committee. The motion was seconded by Oppenborn. The motion to approve Lisa Roth for a one year position on the Academic Diversity Programs Advisory Committee was approved unanimously. He added in the Spring, the request for SPS employees to serve on committees will now include the Academic Diversity Programs Advisory committee.

He added the committee is reviewing the SPS Constitution and is working on recommendations for changes which should be ready by the January meeting.

Events

President Haliczer congratulated the committee on the many wonderful events which have been planned for SPS employees this semester. Burlingame reported the “Office Highlight Series” with Toni Tollerud (Faculty & SPS Personnel Advisor) and Sarah Klaper (University Ombudsperson) on Wednesday, September 25th was well-received. She added the tours of Gilbert Hall on Thursday, September 26th also went very well. She reminded Council Tuesday, October 22nd is the next “Office Highlight Series: Student Support Services” with Jerry Wright speaking at Noon in the Blackhawk Annex. The “3rd Annual Huskie Tailgate & Football Game Experience” will be held on Saturday, October 26th. The tailgate begins at 11 a.m. and the football game kick-off is 2:30 p.m. The price is $30 for the full game package which includes; the tailgate, game tickets, and access to the Open House events of the Kenneth and Ellen Chessick Practice Center. For those who already have their tickets for the game or do not plan to stay for the football game, they can tailgate and attend the Chessick Open House events for $15. Food will be provided by Hy-Vee and vegetarian options are available. The deadline to register for the event is Saturday, October 19th.

She announced upcoming plans. Tuesday, November 5th is the Department of Biological Science’s Specimen Museum tour. Monday, November 18th will be another “Office Highlight Series” event with a speaker from the Center for P-20 Engagement which will be held in the Blackhawk Annex. Monday, November 25th and Tuesday, November 26th will be the tours of the Microelectronics Research and Development Lab and tour will be limited to 10 employees. Finally, Wednesday, December 4th will be a “Lunch & Learn” presentation on Cloud Technology and will be held in the Blackhawk Annex. She said the committee is also trying to decide whether or not to host a SPS Holiday Open House or maybe something during the Winter months. They hope to have a decision on a date by the next meeting. Full details and registration information for the upcoming events will be on the SPS website shortly. Burlingame thanked everyone for the support of the events this Fall and asked if anyone has any ideas for more activities to please share them with her or another committee member.

Finance

Funkhouser announced she has prepared the Purchase Order for the tailgate event on October 26th and has received approval for the funds for the SPS Holiday Open House. She asked if other committees need funding, to please contact her.
**Legislative Issues**
Bottiglieri reported legislators are back in Springfield, but it is looking like nothing will happen regarding pensions until January. He asked everyone to remain vigilant.

**SPS Dependent Scholarship**
Hardy shared as of the end of August, there is now $2,193 in the scholarship account. She said the committee was trying to think of creative ways to raise funds, but Foundation has advised against them and suggests the best method to raise funds is to do another letter campaign to all SPS employees, including Annuittants. She said the committee will be working with Foundation for another mailing and is submitting an article for inclusion in the Fall SPS newsletter. She said she would like to have 100% participation from all Council members as a good show of support and reminded members that any donation amount is welcome.

**Technology Resources**
Biletzky reminded Council members if they have questions about Vibe to contact he or Walk as Council has fully moved to posting information to Vibe. He reported the committee is working on setting a process of who is responsible for maintaining certain technical issues for Council. He ended by sharing the results of the survey for find a new name for the Events committee Brown Bag Lunches. “Lunch and Learn” was the name which received the most votes. He thanked everyone for taking time to vote.

**Workplace Issues**
Lamb reported the committee recently met and discussed several issues. She shared there are a lot of employees who are concerned about the SPS positions which were flagged during the Civil Service audit earlier this year. There are requests for HR to share information to notify employees and answer questions affected employees have been sharing with the committee, such as benefit questions (i.e. accrued vacation). She added she wants to ensure employees are receiving the most accurate information to help alleviate concerns employees have been expressing. President Haliczer reminded Council Dr. Steven Cunningham is on the agenda to be the guest speaker next month and has been asked to share what he can regarding the audit. President Haliczer said she is preparing an article for the newsletter, with help from others in HR to talk about some of these issues.

Lamb also noted they have received numerous requests asking the committee to research employees who are working odd contract terms (employees who work a 10+2, 9+3 or 9+1+1+1 contract) for equity. It appears there are about 18 employees working these sorts of contracts. Employees working odd contracts have reported they are working the same tasks all year long, with no differentiation of responsibilities to justify two or more different work contracts. None of these employees appear to be based on funding from a grant and they are denied eligibility to earn vacation time. There is confusion as to why these employees are not on full year contracts. Lamb said the Workplace Issues committee has written a request asking the University Benefits Committee to investigate the issue of Odd Contract terms. Lamb made a motion on behalf of the Workplace Issues Committee to Request the University Benefits Committee investigate the issue of odd contract terms (10+2, 9+3 or 9+1+1+1). The motion was seconded by Hardy. **The motion to approve sending the Workplace Issues Committee’s request asking the University Benefits Committee to investigate odd contract terms (10+2, 9+3 or 9+1+1+1) was passed unanimously.**

**Committees of the University**

**Vice President**
Hardy announced her report is in Vibe and she asked everyone to review it. If they have any questions, she asked Council to contact her.
OLD BUSINESS

A. Guest Speakers for 2013 - 2014
President Haliczer reminded Council that Dr. Steven Cunningham and Celeste Latham are scheduled as the guests for the November meeting. Sean Frazier, NIU Athletics Director, is scheduled for the December meeting.

B. December 23rd
President Haliczer announced the memo announcing NIU will be closed on Monday, December 23, 2013 and that employees will be expected to use a Vacation time for that day has been sent to all employees. Those with questions were asked to contact K. Smith.

NEW BUSINESS

A. President Baker’s – “Bold Futures” Workshops
President Haliczer reminded Council who were going to President Baker’s “Bold Futures” workshop to wear their SPS Council buttons. She noted a lot of work has gone into planning these workshops and she asked that everyone who has the opportunity to participate do so. Biletzky shared he completed the facilitator training and stated he believes those participating will find the sessions informative and very engaging.

University Committee Reports
President Haliczer reported all of 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.

Adjournment
With no further business, President Haliczer asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Builta made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which was seconded by Lamb. The motion to adjourn was passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by
Lesley Gilbert, SPSC Secretary