Northern Illinois University
Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting
MINUTES
Thursday, December 10, 2009
Sky Room, 10:00 A.M.

Present

Guests
Barbara Fouts, Tim Griffin

Absent
Pat Anderson, Dan House, Al Mueller

I. Call to Order
SPS Council President Cesarek called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

II. Guest Speakers

A. Becky Lewis, Recreation Services. Lewis gave the Council a break down on the cost of a recreation membership, which for faculty and staff is $100 for a fall or spring term. An invitation was sent through campus mail inviting employees to participate in a week-long open house and trial use of the facilities for January 5-8. Lewis highlighted the programs offered and provided an overview of the benefits afforded to employees including a payroll deduction option. She concluded her time with the Council with a reminder of recreation service hours of operation, including the holiday schedule at either the Recreation Center or the Field House.

B. Barbara Fouts and Jes Cisneros provided the Council with an update on the Baccalaureate Review process. Fouts asked Council members how many have seen the report and reviewed it. A positive response was received. She then provided an overview of general education requirements and the baccalaureate review process including majors and co-curricular areas. She explained how the task force utilized focus groups and a survey for feedback. Cisneros and Fouts then explained the student review process of values, skills, and tools required of the workplace and how this is all tied into the strategic plan. They presented the results of the focus groups and survey: the three Cs of critical thinking, communication, and context. Further discussion elaborated on majors/minors, co-curriculars, data collection, and faculty-owned curriculum. They concluded their presentation reiterating the shared governance system, the sharing of information, and how open the process has been in its success. Cesarek opened the floor for questions.

Cesarek asked if there is a format to pull the three Cs into extracurricular, non-classroom activities. Fouts responded that her area in Career Services, they are seeking input from more constituents from off campus such as employers and community members. Cisneros stated that we are already doing this with general
education courses and co-curriculars, but the key is to align them with the strategic plan. Fouts stated that as the task force makes these presentations to other shared governance groups, they have received feedback that a fourth C for creativity should be added.

Cesarek asked how SPS and its constituents can provide input to the process including areas such as student affairs and athletics, for example, and are these areas to be part of the executive review, should they contact the task force or work through Donna Smith, the SPSC representative. Cisneros responded that they can use any of these opportunities. Fouts indicated that the executive report made available in September included several reports for review. NIU's identity and future (students, employers, alumni, committees and the task force) are open for external input. Bernoudy made a point that due to the nature of many SPS and OS positions it is difficult to see how we can contribute, unlike faculty who routinely report their contributions through evaluation pieces like faculty service reports.

Dickey asked about the fundamental levels of the three Cs and if they required reading with understanding, writing clearly, and mathematics. Fouts responded that the baccalaureate review process is looking at outcomes, basic and advanced, what is manageable by students. Students must be responsible and able to communicate. She mentioned concerns with e-mail and student etiquette. Dickey responded that faculty are often overwhelmed with e-mail communication from students. He questioned student etiquette and general knowledge of the NIU system. Ostenburg commented that two more Cs could be added: competency and civility. He had reservations on student behavior. Fouts and Cisneros expounded that the C on context is students' understanding of their roles in the world, to be competent and professional. The concern is how this is assessed, how do we make curricular results in measurable outcomes. Fouts stated that some classes like UNIV 101 may address professional behavior. Cisneros added that in the next two to three years a curricular mapping piece will be implemented. Deans, chairs, and faculty buy-in will be needed for change.

Uhlken asked who owns general education. Cisneros responded that it's the committee representatives of colleges. Badgley asked, as a health educator, if the baccalaureate review looked at the overall wellness of students. Further discussion between Griffin, Badgley, Bernoudy, and Dickey focused on student behavior and what is acceptable and not acceptable. There was concern that civics and ethics may also need to be taught to students who may be of different backgrounds. Cisneros and Ostenburg engaged in dialog on UNIV 101 and if additional information should be introduced through the course. Ostenburg questioned if students were receiving enough information to be successful and if UNIV 101 or Orientation should provide more to students. Peska stated that the three Cs are basic, but he struggles with “context” from a student perspective. Dickey supported Ostenburg's concerns and felt that students need to consult with an advisor and be more familiar with deadlines.

Chemers asked if context was the same as being competent in the major. She felt that assumptions are made that writing skills are being taught campus wide, but possibly this is not the case. Wyland pointed out that Orientation covers many of these areas discussed and recommended that there be a review of the information students receive for “consistency” with NIU advising. The Academic Advising Center could possibly coordinate advising efforts with advisors across campus. Fouts added that her 18 years as a career counselor with the counseling center suggests that students come here from a variety of backgrounds and many students do struggle to adjust. Builta stated that he hoped that the process of getting through NIU did not become so complicated.
that it required a 16-week course; it should not be that difficult and complex. Dickey, in agreeing with Builta, did not want a complicated system for students, and Peska agreed that students are different and we need to assist the students who are challenged; provide the basics.

III. Latham made a motion, seconded by Dickey, to approve the agenda with the following additions:

A. Announcements: February Speaker and Human Resources Updates
B. Old Business: Adhoc Survey Committee  

Motion passed unanimously.

Latham made a motion, seconded by Perkins, to approve the SPSC minutes of the November 12, 2009, meeting.  

Motion passed unanimously.

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

IV. Announcements

A. President Peters Visit. Cesarek announced that the only Council meeting in the remaining schedule that President Peters could make is the April 8 meeting. She asked Council members to begin thinking of questions for him.
B. Steve Cunningham will be at the January meeting. Cesarek reported that the Workplace Issues Committee will be reviewing questions and issues for him to address.
C. In February, the speakers will be Greg Barker and Julia Spears who will report on the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
D. Haliczer reminded Council members that if something changes in their personal data, they need to update the personnel data form. She then cited as examples two Council members who recently received doctoral degrees, Cesarek and Peska.

V. Committees of the Council

A. Awards. Haliczer reported that there were eight nominations for the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence. The committee will be meeting to select the recipients and will present those results to the Council in January. She also asked Council members to start thinking about nominations for the certificate of recognition, for example, SPS who have earned an advanced degree, were published, presented at a conference, or held a leadership role in a professional organization. Another award to be considered is the service award to the SPSC. It was clarified that an e-mail notice will go to SPS asking them for their nominations. Cesarek reminded Council members about the background of the certificates of recognition; to illustrate to President Peters and the administration who attend the awards ceremony what great things SPS employees are doing for NIU and their communities.

B. Communications
   No report.

C. Constitution and Elections
   No report.
D. Events
Cesarek reported that the November 19 luncheon, with Jim Lockard, the faculty representative to the SURS Member Advisory Committee, was a success. Lockard presented wonderful information on SURS. Also, a notice was sent to SPS that his presentation was posted to the SPSC website. She also reported that the committee met prior to the December Council meeting and discussed programming that is appropriate to all SPS, such as hearing from Ken Zehnder, associate director, Department of Government Relations, on legislative issues. Another topic suggested was financial planning. She asked for other ideas and another suggestion was a meet and greet, which has previously been discussed by the Council. Cesarek noted that whatever the program is, it should be planned for March as the awards ceremony is usually in April.

E. Finance
Chemers reported that there has been minimal activity. She asked committee chairs to let her know if they anticipated any expenses. Cesarek asked what the Council thought about offering a portion of the budget back to the administration. Chemers suggested that the Council could be frugal in its expenditures, then if there were unspent funds in the budget, those could be returned.

F. Legislative
No report.

G. Technology Resources
Ostenburg asked if there was anything anticipated for January that he could be working on. Haliczer responded that the sabbatical ad-hoc committee will want to do a brief survey of the list serve. The draft is ready and it will be a survey instrument that SPS can access through a link to the web.

H. Workplace Issues
Workplace Issues has been discussing 360° evaluations. It was noted that 360° evaluations across the board for SPS will help negate poor supervision. Bernoudy stated that she likes the idea, however, it's time consuming. In Athletics, their 360° evaluations were done through a lengthy survey. Roznowski stated that in her area they receive feedback on employees who are working with the outside agencies. Perkins stated that a 360° evaluation helps an individual see how things can be done better within an organization or how the individual can do his or her job better. Builta pointed out two very different rationales: 1) individuals can see what others see in their performances, or 2) individuals can evaluate their supervisors. He added that the Council needs to decide what is to be accomplished with the 360°evaluation, what is hoped to be gained. It was discussed that consistency is needed, but that there also needs to be flexibility to accommodate varying needs of departments. Cesarek asked what are the next steps. Clark responded that at the next meeting the committee will be compiling questions for Cunningham.

I. Vice President
Latham summarized the report from the Faculty Development Advisory Committee. Attendance has improved steadily in the Fall 2009. Krishnamurthi reported that their entire budget is from general revenue funds and does not look good. The committee also discussed the new Blackboard version.
VI. **Old Business**

A. **Sabbaticals.**
   No report.

B. **Grievance Procedures**
   Haliczer hopes to have something to the Council for January’s meeting.

C. **Kishwaukee Health Network.** Haliczer reported that Cunningham has met with regarding lack of reimbursements. The University Benefits Committee has prepared a list of talking points to give to Council members so they can be better informed when speaking on the issue of pensions and insurance.

D. **SPS Image.** No report.

E. **Parking Update.** Young reported that the Parking Committee discussed a tiered payment structure. One of the drawbacks is that it would involve substantial recoding for faculty and staff. They also discussed another option, to reduce fees based on need. The parking director talked about ticket issues and warnings and they plan to start ticketing on the first day of classes in the fall, rather than relax the ticketing that week. They are also looking at putting a hold on permit rate increases. The bike program, where students could check out a bike for a semester, was very successful and includes a waiting list. The committee heard about vending machines for temporary permits for when the Parking Office is closed and they voted to increase the citation to $20 for parking in the visitor lot without a permit. This used to be $5, which was same as the permit, and some violators were simply paying the fee rather than purchasing a permit. The committee discussed remote parking and a shuttle service. However, they are hesitant to start this up again since it was very underused last time. Dickey asked about multiple violators and Young responded that the general policy is that after four tickets, there is a temporary suspension. Griffin added that if the parking citations exceed a certain dollar amount, students will be unable to register for classes or, if they have graduated, they will be unable to receive their transcripts. It was also noted that employees may have payroll withdrawals to cover outstanding parking debts. Latham asked about a campus master plan and could the SPSC see it or have Young review it carefully. Young responded that he hasn’t seen it, but the committee has discussed future plans such as another parking structure.

F. **Ad-Hoc Survey Committee.** See report under Technology Committee.

G. **H1N1 Update.** Latham reported that while NIU’s link regarding H1N1 has not been updated recently, the County Health Department has updated their information. Basically, the immunization has been opened up to anyone, not just the high needs populations.

VII. **New Business**

A. **May Council Meeting Date Change.** Cesarek asked Council members to review their calendars before the January meeting to see if the May meeting can be changed to May 20 from May 13 to accommodate BOT meetings.
VIII. University Committee Reports

A. Cesarek asked Council members to review the following reports: three BOT committee meetings and the University Council.

IX. Adjournment
The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Todd Latham, SPSC vice-president, and Donna Smith, SPSC secretary