I. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order by Supportive Professional Staff Council President Todd Latham.

The following additions were made to the agenda: Move New Business—Baccalaureate Review Update—to Announcements. Also for Workplace Issues, there is no report. Jen Clark has left the university and Latham will work with Stang on a replacement. The Communications Committee will have a report. Fransen made a motion, seconded by Lamb, to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.**

For the December minutes, Dickey noted that in the appendix, first paragraph, 10 months should be 10 ½ months. Dickey made a motion, seconded by Peska, to approve the SPSC minutes of the December 9, 2010, meeting, as amended. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Attendance was taken and a quorum was confirmed.

II. Guest Speaker
None.

III. Announcements

A. The State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (SOEEA). Latham reported that the reporting of time is required by law. There will be training January 3 through 7. Monteiro noted that there is also an online tutorial.

B. Blackboard Mobile Learn App. Latham passed around a copy of the notice.

C. NIU 2011 Wellness Fair Invitation/Participation. Latham asked Council members if there was interest in the SPSC participating in the Wellness Fair. Gillis noted that she has worked the SPSC booth in the past and there aren’t a lot of people who stop by. She feels that while this is a valuable experience for employees on an individual level, it’s not worth the effort it takes for the SPSC to put together a booth and get volunteers to work.
D. Baccalaureate Review Task Force Update. Smith reported that the new baccalaureate goals and learning outcomes were approved by the Committee on Undergraduate Curriculum and the Undergraduate Coordinating Council last fall. A retreat was held on January 12, 2011, to strategize how to inform the university about the new goals and how to implement them and incorporate them in all programs, e.g., general education, majors, and cocurriculars.

E. Letter to the Board of Trustees. Latham reported that he finalized the letter to the Board of Trustee Chair Strauss regarding the Council’s statement of support for domestic partner benefits, passed at the December, 2010, Council meeting.

F. Vision 2020. Latham reported that he presented the concerns of the Council regarding lack of representation and several more SPS were added to the working groups. He added that the response he got reflects how well staff are thought of at NIU.

G. Harris announced a couple upcoming events in Athletics. January 15 is Faculty/Staff Appreciation day and faculty and staff receive four free tickets to a women's/men's basketball doubleheader starting with the women's game at 1:00. Then on January 16, gymnastics opens their schedule with a meet at 2:00 p.m.

IV. Committees of the Council

A. Awards. Gautcher reported that the committee met to select the recipients for the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence. Gautcher noted that all the nominees were very deserving and put forward the four names the committee recommends for Council approval. The members of the Awards Committee are Gautcher, Apperson, Gillis, Haliczzer, Montag, Uhlenk, Xidis, and Young. Jagodzinski asked how the committee made its selection. Gautcher responded that each committee member reviewed the nominations and ranked them on their own, then they met they deliberated on the results. Gautcher added that they really look at which nominees go above and beyond the call of duty and what difference do they make in the lives of SPS. They also take into consideration the supporting materials and what the colleagues of the nominees are saying about them. She noted that the individuals the committee is recommending to receive the award have a wide range of service time at NIU and job descriptions. Gillis added that it was a matter of picking between great, greater, and greatest. Gautcher made a motion, seconded by Gillis that the names of the four individuals the Awards Committee recommends for receipt of the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence be forwarded to President Peters for his consideration. Motion passed unanimously. In light of the confidential nature of this process and the fact that the final decision is up to Peters, Council members were asked to keep the names confidential until they are informed otherwise. One of the next steps for this committee is to solicit nominations for the SPS Council Service Award. Gautcher said that this is a person who goes above and beyond and works to advance the Council and SPS at large. Requirements and the deadline will be included in the e-mail to Council members. Late in February the Awards Committee will solicit nominations for Certificates of Recognition. These go to the nominees of the of the SPS Presidential Award for Excellence who did not receive the award, in addition to SPS who are nominated (either by themselves or their colleagues) for their contributions to the SPS, NIU, and/or their professions. This includes, but is not limited to, SPS who have earned advanced degrees, wrote publications, made a presentations at conferences, or served with professional organizations.

B. Communications. Xidis reported that Hayenga asked her to put to the Council the issue that Hayenga’s colleagues weren’t aware that she is on the Council or that they are represented at all. Discussion followed as to how the Council can better inform its
constituents. Ideas included e-mails to all SPS including meeting times and agendas and highlight when there are guest speakers, end-of-the year reports, newsletter; SPSC cards that members could post in or around their offices to identify who they are; use the EASY calendar system for meetings and special events; have Northern Today do an article on the Council; and hold public forums to get feedback on hot issues like increments (but not necessarily at increment time—more as an information gathering session). Ostenburg felt that it may not be beneficial to see a monthly communication since many employees get so much e-mail they tend to get overloaded. He did agree that sending something once a semester targeting key issues could be beneficial. Apperson added that the communication could explain who they are, what are the issues being discussed, and who the representatives are. Jagodzinski said that the Council’s role in shared governance should be explained. It was pointed out that there were e-mail groups for each division. Ostenburg noted that if Council members decided they wanted to make use of these again, he could work on updating those. Ostenburg made a motion, seconded by Apperson, that an ad-hoc committee be established to put out an SPS-wide communication prior to the end of this fiscal year, which will include the past year’s accomplishments, future plans, and membership. Motion passed unanimously. Those volunteering to serve on the committee are: Dickey, Fransen, Gautcher, Hardy, Hayenga, Ostenburg, and Smith. Latham will get these individuals together to determine a chair and a plan of action. Peska would like to build on the idea of an open forum and asked if prior to the next Council meeting that time be set aside for Council members to meet according to their respective divisions to discuss strategies for communicating with constituents. Latham will add this to the next agenda.

C. Constitution and Elections. Latham reported in Stang’s absence that Stang is working on a procedure manual for elections.

D. Events. Hardy reported that on April 20, there will be a luncheon in the Chandelier Room with Peters as the guest speaker. The committee is also planning another lunch in February or May. They also may plan a brown-bag information lunch around legislative issues if anything comes up.


F. Legislative. No Report.

G. Technology Resources. Ostenburg reported that he worked on the reconciliation for the election and distributed the information to Council members. If anyone thinks he misinterpreted where the apportionments should go, please let him know.

H. Workplace Issues. There was no report except to announce that Benson will serve as the sole chair due to Clark’s departure from NIU. Latham noted that he has made a request of HRS for information on the various ways temporary SPS are funded and he will forward that to the committee as soon as he receives the information.

I. Vice President. No Report.

V. Old Business

B. Grievance Procedure Update. Latham reported that he followed up with University Council Executive Secretary Alan Rosenbaum and Latham has been informed that this will be on the University Council agenda in February for a vote. Sue Willis, chair of the Rules and Governance Committee of the University Council, told Latham that they did not have any concerns with the changes the Council proposed and will be sending Latham a courtesy copy of what will be presented to the University Council.

VI. New Business
There was no new business.

VII. University Committee Reports
Latham reported that the Operating Staff Council met, but he didn’t have anything formal to report. Monteiro added that their last meeting was mostly housekeeping issues.

VIII. Adjournment
Dickey made a motion, seconded by Lamb, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed by acclamation. Meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by SPSC secretary, Donna Smith.