MINUTES
Administrative Professionals Advisory Council (APAC)
March 10, 2021
MS TEAMS – 1:00 pm
Minute Keeper: Debbie Williams

I. Call to order and Roll Call

Present: Miriah, Sarah, Debbie, Rachel, Karen

Guests: Chris McCord

II. Approval of Agenda

Sarah moved to approve agenda, seconded by Rachel. Passed by all.

III. McCord and PowerPoint Slides

Chris updated us regarding Prioritization Administration Efficiency using three slides of information.

Chris: Dr. Freeman asked Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Sarah Chinniah and Vice President and General Counsel Bryan Perry with the help of Chris McCord to identify what NIU staff paper forms could become digitized and/or automated and doing this will save time and money.

APAC (Rachel and Miriah) helped Chris McCord with a survey that was sent out to the administrative professionals asking how much time was spent on completing certain paper forms. 74 projects were identified that could become digitized or automated, more than they anticipated.

12 complete or just about completed.
8 can be managed locally.
24 will not be considered at this time.
9 will require some development.
21 to be implemented.

Of the 74 projects, 21 projects are under way. There are some that are far enough along in the process that they do not need to be prioritized. For example, some of the projects they are doing can be completed by taking an existing form and making it digitized. Others can be made automated, some with just creating new tools. Of these projects, some are completed and others are in a final testing stage.

High-level projects had more impact/issues. We had to look at how many times the form had to go through hands before completion. How many transactions were involved, how long do those transactions each take?
Administration put these projects into tiers. Tier one was high, tier two was middle and tier three low.

**Miriah:** Is there a timeframe for each tier? Does all of tier one have to be completed before moving to the next tier?

**Chris:** This is all new and we will have to take a deep look into what is to be done now that we have them in order. Then each project will be moving at its own pace. My idea on how each project will be performed will be straightforward and done quickly. If a project is completed in tier one, then they can move into tier two either up or down in that tier. All of tier one does not have to be done before moving to tier two. If you are in tier one and a project needs to have them moving to the next tier?

No idea how long it will take. We want to be careful what we say what we want to do first. We need to figure out how long it will take. Can we find more resources to get things done? Can we get more resources to get things done faster? Are our resources limited and will we have to do it at our own pace? We do know what we want to do first but not sure how long it will take.

**Rachel:** you said these projects are moving in a queue. Is each project handled separately? Who is managing each project in the area? Who in the university is tagged for the project? Who is doing the chartered budget? Who is tracking each project?

**Chris:** Terra Foss is the lead; however, some of these will be chartered, some will not, it will be Terra’s assessment. Yes, all the things you said will be done. Plans are still being worked out.

**Rachel:** Tracking would be good; these efficiencies whether big or small have a big impact. Using a tracking professional management tool that shows the process, letting you see the gauge moving along, gets people excited and people will be engaged.

**Chris:** I recognize the important communication of progress and honest expectations. I want to be clear just because a project is in the top tier does not mean it will be done, it might not be cleared in six months. We want to be honest; Dr. Freeman wants some tracking on President’s website, want higher-level visibility on her website.

**Miriah:** Projects scream Administration professionals identify. We are very happy to help with communication or training to launch these programs.

**Chris:** We are aware we put a lot of work into the technical side in the past and not the training or user feedback. Projects touch a wide number of staff, and we are definitely going to need help. Top tier high volume high impact touches many staff, students, or they are high dollar.

**Miriah:** Time benefit reporting, not time labor, how to get information in the world of remote/Covid. Some projects very much related to time benefit reporting if electronic signatures were in place.
Chris: Time report, purchase order, graduate student forms move into electronic form. Want to build self-service tools, guidelines tools, so DoIT does not have to be involved especially for electronic signature.

Miriah: Going paperless can have very big implications.

Chris: Many things like that people can do locally. There will be things people will want Irene and Roberto and the On Base team to help with, but we have set the priorities for them for the future. People come with new ideas they will not take new businesses right now. They have their priorities already set for them. They have things they need to do in order.

Miriah: We are here to help communicate, with training and messaging.

Chris: Leaves meeting.

*Full-length explanation regarding all projects can be found on the President’s website links below.*

[https://www.niu.edu/president/priorities/efficiency.shtml](https://www.niu.edu/president/priorities/efficiency.shtml)

[https://www.niu.edu/president/_docs/administrative-efficiency.docx](https://www.niu.edu/president/_docs/administrative-efficiency.docx)

IV. Approval of Minutes

Motion to table February minutes to April.
Rachel moves to table and Sarah seconds. Motion passes.

V. Chair report

a. OSC Patricia Siebrasse nominations
b. AAEOE and APAC going on.
c. Read letter of reduction in staff.
d. OSC on our radar for some time
e. Workplace Guidance (WG) sub-committee lead by Linda Yates, Chair
   Important action plan needed for Over Time if not hiring. Asked to attend their meeting to discuss.
   A person had issues in their department with an employee doing a job above their title and finally being promoted to that title but without increase on doing above and beyond.
   One person asked and worked overtime for extra duties and was granted.

VI. Patricia Siebrasse Administration Professional Awards
a. Announcement was sent out.
b. Sent to 170 directors and above to nominate Administrative Professionals.
c. Release time memo to business manager/directors above.
d. Talk about order of the event such as who is speaking and where in the program.
e. Help with invitations.
f. Worked out the details of breakfast.
g. Breakfast Live on Teams.
h. Meet April 5.
i. No e-mails of nominees.

VII. Next meeting April 5 at 10 am -12 pm

VIII. Adjournment