

Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting
Thursday, December 12, 2019
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
HSC Sky Room

Present: Ballard, Bohanon, Borg, Botterman, Bredberg, Click, Dymond, Edwards, Gipson, Goode, Guess, Hochstatter, Kazmierczak, Lyles, Mewhirter, Miesbauer, Myles, O'Grady, Olson, Reid, Solfisburg, Vinson, Xidis

Excused: Boughton, Burchard, Davis, Meyer, Miller

Absent: McKee

Regular Guests & Visitors: Chris Dawe, Frances Mitchell, Jeffry Royce, Sabrina Self

I. Call to Order: President Doederlein called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Approval of Agenda, motioned and seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, none opposed.

Motion: Edwards

Second: Mewhirter

Approval of November 14, 2019 Minutes motioned and seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, none opposed.

Motion: Bredberg

Second: Reid

II. Guest Speaker: President Freeman focused on three topics: Human Resource Services, SPS concerns and doing less with less.

Human Resource Services: NIU leadership is identifying needs and making changes so that HR may be viewed as a collaborative partner. Two key positions were created: an institutional communications specialist based in the Communication Department and an additional clerical position within HR.

SPS concerns: NIU leadership is looking at how they can make SPS employees feel more secure in their classification which is without union representation. NIU leadership is cognizant that SPS is not covered by a bargaining unit and SPS employees get increments along with employees covered by a bargaining unit.

Freeman offered assurances to SPS employees. She noted that SPS employees have transferrable skills which gives them greater lateral flexibility than other classifications. As for vacation, civil service employees get additional vacation days with increasing years of service. Freeman stated we cannot change SUCSS, but we can change SPS vacation policy to be in line with civil service vacation policy. She pointed out that sometimes a bargaining unit makes things more difficult. For example when NIU adopted the parental leave policy, it was easier to roll it out for SPS whereas NIU had to deal with unions making it more difficult to do.

SPS employees find it difficult to take advantage of their access to sabbaticals because they cannot be away from their jobs for extended periods. Dr. Freeman suggested SPS may want to look at other opportunities for professional development. She suggested SPS figure out

ways leadership can work together to help people find professional development opportunities. Dr. Freeman pointed to the University of Illinois' program where their academic professionals can shadow to learn what another unit does.

Doing Less With Less:

- (1) are there things that we are doing that no longer align with our values and we continue to use resources to support them?
- (2) Are there places we can take resources from to make things less duplicative?
- (3) Are there things we are doing on paper that no one else in the world does on paper?

Leadership learned from Program Prioritization that there are certain things we are no longer doing. For example, NIU used to train driver education instructors for the purpose of recruiting students; the program never recruited any students. Freeman noted that there are probably other things out there that could be eliminated. Dr. Freeman is very confident that we can do less with less but she asked for our help as well as help from the operating staff, students and faculty.

III. Announcements:

Legalization of Cannabis – STEM Café: January 14, 2020 Fatty's 6:30-8:30 p.m.
SPS Holiday Social – December 17, 2019 Barsema Hall Atrium Noon – 1:30 p.m.

IV. Committee Reports:

Advocacy – Meeting today, after this meeting.

Awards – Meeting today, after this meeting. Edwards asked that we be on the lookout for nomination forms and detailed instructions. The deadline for submitting nominations is **4:30 p.m., January 27, 2020**.

Communications & Technology – No report

Constitution & Elections – No report

Events – Sutcliffe reported Holiday Social December 17, 2019 Barsema Hall Noon-1:30 p.m.

Professional Development – Gipson reported they are checking the archives for historical information about sabbaticals.

Regional Community Relations – Dymond reported the committee is working on their survey and submitted it to Communications. They are now trying to include suggestions from Rachel.

SPS Dependent Scholarship Fund – No report.

V. Vice President's Report: Posted in both SharePoint groups: SPS Reps & Alternates and SPS Reps, Alternates, Ex-Officio and Guests.

VI. Unfinished Business:

- a.) No search committee updates.
- b.) SUCSS Procedure Update: Hiring Institutional Communications faculty who will be in the Communication Department and will be working with our HR to improve communications between HR and rest of campus.
- c.) 125th Birthday Committee update: See website: <https://www.niu.edu/anniversary/index.shtml>

- d.) Priorities for SPS Council: Re-envisioning professional development possibilities and advocating for ourselves

VII. New Business: None

VIII. University Committee Reports:

Board of Trustees – March 5, 2020 (no executive session on agenda)
Board of Trustees Committees – February 13, 2020
Faculty Senate – January 22, 2020
Operating Staff Council – January 9, 2020 (Altgeld 125)
Student Government Association – Moved from CLB to HSC & Name change from Student Association to Student Government Association. Next meeting is Sunday, January 19, 2020 Sky Room
University Council – January 29, 2020

IX. Adjournment:

Doederlein called for a motion to adjourn, Ballard moved, seconded by Kazmierczak. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.