

Supportive Professional Staff Council
Minutes
November 12, 2020 Teams Meeting
Approved December 10, 2020

Member Participants: Anderson, Armstrong, Ballard, Bernoudy, Bohanon, Borg, Boswell, Boughton, Burchard, Burgin, Clemens, Costello, Doederlein, Edwards, Gipson, Goode, Guess, Hein, Keller, Koenen, Little, Lovelace, Lundelius, Lyles, Manning, Martial, Menendez, Mewhirter, Meyer, Miesbauer, Miller, Minogue, Mooberry, Myles, O’Grady, Pickett, Porter, Quider, Reynolds, Rogers, Snell, Solfisburg, Stoker, Sutcliffe, Tandez, Vinson, Woodruff

Shared Governance Participants: Beyer, Erickson, Johnson, Klaper, Royce, Self, Thu, Xidis

I. Call to Order:

President Doederlein called the meeting to order at 9:55 a.m.

II. Approval of the Agenda:

Doederlein amended the Agenda to include parking lot closures and the committee selection process. Doederlein called for a motion to approve the amended Agenda. Motioned and seconded, all in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, motion passed (Bernoudy/Myles).

III. Approval of Minutes of October 8, 2020: A correction is needed to Vernese Edghill-Walden’s first name. Hearing no other corrections or changes, the October Minutes were Motioned and seconded, all in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. Motion passed (Bohanon/Mewhirter). Update to correct Dr. Edghill-Walden’s name. Update approved by chat box entries.

IV. Guest Speakers: Upcoming - Provost Ingram/January 14, 2021

V. Announcements:

- a.) COVID Testing begins next week, November 16-18 (and research trial) Anderson Hall parking lot.
- b.) Virtual State of the University address – November 17, 3-4:00 p.m.
- c.) Admissions Team’s Virtual Open Houses – Last was 11/11; next is 12/5/20
- d.) Updated map of parking lot snow closures. New versions will be shared as up dates are made. Doederlein asked if there were any other announcements/discussion. Tedra Mewhirter sends thanks to everybody who participated in the open house.

Melanie Costello reported that because the Lorado Taft is predominately a residential style campus it has been extremely negatively impacted by the Corona Virus. The campus has been focusing on activities *open to the public*. Costello urged everyone to check out and share the website. Website in Chat Box. Some November offerings: Parent’s Night Out 11/20; Fire Building Class 11/21 morning; Taft Brunch and Tour 11/22 a.m.

A question arose about **weather closures**. There was a question about wording-- given that many of our services are virtual-what does “classes canceled” mean? for people working virtual

Can we get clarity? Liz Guess reported there is a group working on a FAQ and she will take the question back to the group. If there are other questions about the weather advisory, please let Liz or Catherine know.

Concerning the new Chicago **travel restrictions** – has there been any discussion about those new restrictions. NIU is still encouraging quarantine, it is not a requirement. NIU encourages a two-week quarantine upon return from just about every state regardless of any less restrictive policies of other states. NIU extends the Family First benefit in support of the two-week quarantine. See HR website for detailed information about the Family First Covid Response Act allowing up to 10 working days of paid emergency sick leave for quarantining.

VI. Committee Reports:

Advocacy: Covid update see chat box.

Awards: Denise Burchard reported the committee had a schedule put together. [At this writing a call for nominations for SPS Staff Awards was included in “Notices” Monday, November 23rd and Tuesday, November 24th.] We need to move forward so we can approve in February and to be prepared for the virtual awards ceremony.

Communication & Technology: No report/No members.

Constitution & Elections: No report.

Events: Danae Miesbauer reported 10 – 12 people came out for the Campus Cleanup. The committee is still looking for a date and time for a self-care workshop event near the end of the semester.

Professional Development: Monique Bernoudy reported. Brian Smith, EAP, joined their meeting. They talked about where professional development opportunities land for SPS employee’s to find them— one place. Brian Smith said that is an easy partnership to do on EAP website—maybe Operating Staff would want to do.

The committee talked about annual supervisor training and about general wellness. Making sure supervisors share information with employees. Debra Boughton and Monique are also going to meet with Catherine Doederlein about SPS performance evaluations.

SPS performance evaluations handled very differently across NIU—this committee is going to re-visit the issue. We need to find ways to speak with supervisors about supporting employees regarding opportunities.

Regional Community Relations: Tedra Mewhirter reported. This committee has a meeting scheduled with Jennifer Groce, Director of Community Promotion. Tedra will report back to the Council on that meeting.

SPS Dependent Scholarship: Jason Goode brought four points forward from the committee. Each issue was discussed and voted on by the Council.

1. We want to increase the number of applicants. Last year there were seven applications but the MyScholarship platform only deemed three of the seven as eligible. Our committee

recommends we **move from an application process to a nominating process**, similar to the outstanding women student awards where nominations come from a broad audience.

The committee requested council approval for converting to a nomination process where an SPS employee nominates an eligible student who then applies for the scholarship. Doederlein called for a motion to shift to a nomination process. (Movant: Rogers/Second: Bernoudy) By voice vote, all in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion to approve the nomination process passed.

2. The committee is currently looking at **reducing the award** to \$500 to extend the life of the fund. (It could be restored to \$1000 in the future as donations increase.) Doederlein asked for a motion to approve the committee's request to temporarily reduce the award from \$1000 to \$500. (Bernoudy/Burchard).

Opposition was raised because we need to make a concentrated fund raising effort to build the fund. Following some discussion, President Doederlein took an on-line chat box vote. The no's & abstentions won. The motion to decrease the award failed. We will re-visit this. Catherine promised to do a message to garner support for the scholarships.

3. The committee needs to **clarify the scholarship criteria** in the application materials and align it with review committee scoring. Everything is out-of-whack. The website does not match the application process and the application process does not match review committee criteria. Goode related the details of the problems. Keller pointed out the lack of opportunities for students to engage in activities at this time, due to Covid-19.

The committee requested the council's approval to clarify the scholarship criteria and align it with review committee criteria. Doederlein asked for a motion to approve the request. (Myles/Burchard). By voice vote, all in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion to allow the committee to clarify the scholarship criteria passed.

4. **Expansion of pool of eligible students** beyond current categories. The committee requested council approval to expand the pool of potential applicants by broadening the eligibility criteria to include mentees, extended family, family-like relationships. (Bernoudy/Miller).

Opposition to expanding the pool because that changes the intent of the scholarship. Current funds were received for the exclusive benefit of family members of supportive professional staff. It was suggested that when the current funds are exhausted the pool of potential nominees could be larger and more equitable.

A robust discussion ensued about the expansion focusing on the definition of another category of eligible applicants. A string of friendly motions were made, discussed concluding with a motion to establish a **second, separate scholarship benefiting non-dependent relationships**. (Bohanon/Pickett)

An online vote passed the motion. (12 in favor; 6 opposed; 3 abstentions) The Council followed the passage of this motion with a commitment to launch an aggressive fund raising drive. Felicia Bohanon, who has a reputation in fund raising, volunteered to join the fund raising team.

VII. Vice President's Report

Only the Parking Appeals Committee reported for October 13, 27 and November 10 meetings. Rebecca Hunt on the Library Advisory Committee and the Campus Parking Committee may have some additional information. If so it will be added to the report and posted on SharePoint accessible through the **Reps & Alts** group as well as the **Reps Alts & Guests** group.

VIII. Unfinished Business

- a.) Search Committee Updates/Ad Hoc Updates: None
- b.) SUCSS Procedure Update: Brainstorming- discussion about training for building job descriptions. Can we ask for a pause in transitioning during this time? Catherine volunteered to reach out to HR on these issues.
- c.) University Committee Selection Process: Doederlein reported she is still working on affirming write-in nominations. There is space on the **Parking Appeals Committee, Campus Parking, Campus Security and Environmental Quality and the Student Conduct Board.**

The Council needs to select a member to serve on the **Police Citizen Advisory Board** monthly meetings. Denise Burchard, nominee. Bohanon moved to approve the appointment of Denise Burchard as our representative on the Police Citizen Advisory Board, Seconded by Pickett. No discussion. By voice vote all in favor, none opposed, no abstentions, the motion passed. Denise Burchard is the SPSC representative on the Police Citizen Advisory Board. Thank you Denise.

IX. New Business: None

X. University Committee Reports

BOT 12/10

BOT Committees 11/12

Faculty Senate 11/18

Operating Staff Council 12/3: President Natasha Johnson reported the operating staff is still feeling uneasy. Dr. Freeman attended November meeting answering all prior questions. People are a little bit more relaxed.

No more layoffs after November 15 for remainder of year but they are still on the table.

Student Government Association 11/20

University Council 12/2

University Benefits Committee: Terry Borg reported on three items:

1. Kudos to HR for representing us well. People who signed up for Healthlink were notified they could no longer be served at Northwestern as of November 1. HR intervened and extended the deadline to June 30, 2021.
2. The 403b plan is in your mailboxes.
3. Please post your feedback on the following question in the Chat Box.

The University Benefits Committee serves an advisory role to the President..

There is a proposal to update the language in the Committee Bylaws. Specifically 8.2.2 where Faculty, Operating Staff and Supportive Professional Staff are specifically named as having representation on this committee. However, Annuitants have been serving on this committee for at least twelve years. The question for you is should the annuitants be specifically named in the language of the Bylaws as having representation on the committee?

Please post your thoughts in the chat box. Terry will be taking your responses back to the next committee meeting where a second reading is on the agenda.

XI. Adjournment

President Doederlein asked for a motion to Adjourn, Bohanon so moved, seconded by Goode, All in favor, meeting adjourned at 11:47 a.m.