

Supportive Professional Staff Council Meeting
Thursday,
September 12, 2019 (**Approved October 10, 2019**)
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
HSC Sky Room

Present: Anderson, Ballard, Bohanon, Borg, Burchard, Costello, Davis, Doederlein, Dymond, Edwards, Gipson, Goode, Guess, Kazmierczak, Koenen, Lyles, Mewhirter, Meyer, Miller, Mooberry, Myles, O’Grady, Olson, Solfisburg, Sutcliffe, Xidis

Excused: Botterman, Boughton, Hochstatter, McKee, Miesbauer, Reid.

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: Kazmierczak

Second: Mewhirter

Approval of August 8, 2019 Minutes, as amended, motioned and seconded, all in favor, no abstentions, none opposed.

Motion: Goode

Second: Burchard

II. Guest Speakers: We are planning to have President Freeman in December and the Provost in October or November.

III. Announcements: Doederlein shared that the Chair of the Board of Trustees expressed frustration with the DeKalb Chronicle’s focus on NIU’s low enrollment. Doederlein added that our enrollment is actually in line with projections. The Chair gave credit to us for focusing on the positive side of our enrollment picture.

a.) **Spike in “Phishing” Scams:** Students have been a particular target, although we are all vulnerable. Please know and communicate to students that if they are contacted with a job offer as assistant to the president of some company; the president is currently out of the country but they will send you a check to get you set up for the job. *It is not a real job offer.* Remind your students: Do not engage with these solicitors and to forward their communication to abuse@niu.edu Please also know these fake job offers are not from Career Services. Another tactic of scammers is to leave a message designed to make you think it is from someone you know, saying “call me” or “we need to talk”. These messages come via an outside email domain. Do not engage. Any official NIU message is going to come from a **niu.edu** address. Be alert to notices that appear to be from a doctor, usually through gmail, warning you about some dire circumstance intended to frighten you and hoping you will be less attentive to its legitimacy. Do not engage—forward to abuse.

b.) Unity March – September 24th Gathering at MLK Commons, 5:00 p.m.
Sponsored by “*DeKalb and NIU community members to bring positive change and collaboration. Meet new people and make connections outside your circle.*”
Engage as many people as possible to join the march to show our overall support.
<https://www.niutoday.info/2019/09/11/step-up-for-the-unity-walk-on-sept-24/>

c.) STEM Cafes:

Wednesday, September 18 (Opioid Epidemic)

Tuesday, September 24 (Census)

Tuesday, September 24: Student Assoc. Meet & Greet, CLB Room 100 4:00 pm

Tuesday, October 8 (Nuclear Waste)

Thursday, October 10 Ombuds Day – Open House – 6th Floor HSC

Thanksgiving Weekend (Friday & Saturday) NIU hosting IHSA Football Championship
Volunteers needed to help with parking.

If you have things to share that you think the Council might be interested in knowing about, please feel free to let Catherine Doederlein know.

IV. Committee Reports:

Advocacy: They are meeting with members today.

Awards: No updates since last meeting.

Communications & Technology: No report.

Constitution & Elections: No report.

Events: Sutcliffe reported they are trying to put together some things from last meeting.

Professional Development: First meeting August 27 was a prioritizing and brainstorming session. The committee is planning to delve into sabbaticals. There is not a strong awareness of that opportunity. We are looking at increasing awareness about how it is applied. This is a priority for SPS. Also, looking at finding a way to put all the current professional development opportunities across the campus into a one-stop shop.

Regional Community Relations: The committee revised their survey, which is currently being circulated among members for approval of changes. The next step is to get it in Qualtrics and then talk about how to get the survey out.

SPS Dependent Scholarship Fund: Doederlein reported they are working on making sure everything is up-to-date in *My Scholarship*. There is approximately \$5500 in the fund. A “dependent” is the child or grandchild of an SPS employee (biological, adopted, foster, step or legal guardianship). Anyone may donate on line for a one-time donation or payroll deduction. <https://www.niu.edu/spsc/pdf/sps-pledge-agreement.pdf>

V. Vice President’s Report: Bohanon attended the Space, Resource and Budget Committee and gave the highlights of the meeting which focused on space allocation/use and expanding decision making authority of Deans.

VI. Unfinished Business:

- a.) Search Committee Updates/Ad Hoc Committee Updates: No report.
- b.) SUCSS Procedure Update: The process is continuing at about the same pace. A major concern among employees is the seniority issue. Relating an actual case where reclassification from one civil service position to another resulted in the loss of the employee's seniority earned in the former classification. Doederlein finds this to be a common concern among SPS and OS. She suggested we all pull together and advocate here and at the State level. We will try to partner with the OSC and are discussing merging into one staff council.
- c.) 125th Birthday Committee Update: Doederlein re-stated the deadline for groups to apply for grant money to participate in the celebration which is **September 30, 2019**.
- d.) Priorities for Council for 2019-2020: Doederlein asked if anyone has thought of anything we should address. Two issues mentioned were parental leave and sabbaticals. The Board of Trustees today voted approval of 25 days of paid leave to eligible employees for the birth of a child or the placement of a child for adoption or foster care. Doederlein will send out something for consideration of what priorities we should consider.

VII. New Business:

- a.) Proposed Ombuds Day Proclamation: Doederlein read the proclamation aloud and asked for a motion to approve and vote. Motion: Meyer;
Second: Goode

Discussion: The Office of the Ombudsperson has been crucial and the SPS has benefited greatly from having the highest level of advocacy from Sarah and her predecessors in making sure the issues of the SPS are brought forward and considered. Doederlein asked for a show of hands vote. All in favor, none opposed, no abstentions. Motion passed.

VIII. University Committee Reports:

- Board of Trustees – meeting today, nothing to report at this time.
- Board of Trustees Committees – next meeting November 14, 2019
- University Council – Next meeting October 16, 2019
- Operating Staff Council – Next meeting October 3, 2019
- Faculty Senate – Next meeting October 2, 2019
- Student Association-First meeting was September 8: approval of Cabinet members and Treasurer. The Association is working on recruitment.

IX. Adjournment: Doederlein called for a motion to adjourn. Ballard so moved, seconded by Davis, all in favor, Meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Frances Mitchell, Admin. Aide