Convener: Janiece Kiedrowski, Chair

Recorder: Kathleen M. Kielar, Secretary

Agenda:
1. Approval of the minutes of October 1, 2009
2. Report of the Chair
3. Report of the Vice Chair
4. Interactive discussion with Scott Nostaja, Vice President for Human Resources and Chief of Staff
5. Old Business: Continuing discussion of committee reorganization
6. New Business: Book Drive?
7. Adjournment

Minutes:

1. Minutes from the October 1, 2009 meeting were approved.

2. **Report from the Chair**

   Janiece proposed to the group that the general membership meeting start meeting at 2:30 rather than 3:00 PM. After group discussion, the group decided to send out an email with a couple of pointed questions to the PSS general membership to find out what everyone thinks.

   Janiece then reviewed the SUNY budget plenary. The bad news $3 Billion this year, $3-5 billion next year, then $13 billion 2011-2012 because the federal stimulus package money was cut. SUNY was not a big participant with the federal stimulus, so it’s going to hit home. We have to come up with decisions for November 17th.

   Capped reserves of .5 billion dollars are working capital for the campus. This money is obligated for projects that we are working on. These are one time monies and not recurring costs, so if the state took this money away, it would in essence be a budget reduction.

   The SUNY Chancellor is working on the Strategic Planning process. She talked about her travelling time listening to the SUNY campus concerns. She is now in Phase 2. She is trying to rebuild relationships with the State Budget Office, the Unions, and the governor.
3. Interactive discussion with Scott Nostaja

Scott talked about the visit from the SUNY Chancellor at UB. She reached out to all SUNY campuses for representatives. She narrowed the list to 200 people to attend meetings on seven different dates will go to seven different campuses and engage in seven different conversations. The first one was at Hudson Community College and the topic was the role of SUNY and the economic development of the State.

The one at UB was the Education Pipeline. Basically, states are looking at the probability of ninth graders graduating from a four year school. Essentially, what is the percentage? For example, the number for Detroit was 7% of the 9th graders will graduate from a four year college. The discussion revolved around how to address the problem of such a low percentage. Scott made the assumption that our percentage might be similar.

The intentions of these seven discussions are to develop the SUNY Strategic Plan.

Part of the problem with this type of strategic planning process, is that there are too many people involved in trying to have a conversation. It would be better if the experts met and discussed these issues, rather than just open them up to everyone.

The SUNY Strategic Plans can be found at http://www.suny.edu/strategicplan/. It’s all as transparent as possible.

The ultimate plan is to develop a document that illustrates SUNY’s value to the state of NY. Then to use that document to lobby for why we need a sustained investment in SUNY.

Scott then talked about some of the personal qualities of the Chancellor saying that she is a strong planner and that she is a strong advocate for women in leadership. She is seeking greater participation from women in SUNY.

Scott was asked how UB was preparing for the cuts. There are no real plans at this time. The Vice-Presidents and Deans have been busy formulating a variety of plans. It’s just not known yet how those cuts will be handled.

A question was asked about a retirement incentive. Scott talked about why people at the University who are able to retire, don’t retire. He explored what the American Dream meant and how that concept is differentiated by different populations. He also said that people are taking jobs where they are getting less money than a previous job because they are looking for jobs that have meaningful contribution. He theorizes that we have a higher percentage of people working for UB that want to have more of a contribution than a feeling of making a bunch of money. Why do the 300 people who wouldn’t lose anything as far as medical benefits and monthly salary, still continue to work? He believes that among other things, it is because the University environment mentally stimulates them. They aren’t leaving because of the social interactions and professional incentives. He feels that offering a retirement incentive in terms of money, will not be
very successful. We have to find a way to offer people a meaningful opportunity to remain on engaged on campus if they would like, …post retirement.

There doesn’t appear to be any state-wide or SUNY wide discussion on retirement incentives. We’ve been thinking does it make sense for UB? With the State budget cuts, at some point you start to look for ways you can reduce the size of the organization. Retirement incentives may be a way to go. The problem with a retirement incentive at the State or SUNY-wide perspective, is we would systematically lose people and not be able to plan our reduction. It would be better to offer targeted retirements. As our budget situation continues to erode, this is something we should be considering seriously. Other universities, like Ohio State, are experimenting with an idea like this.

A discussion occurred about the need to formalize flex time across the University. Scott is a big fan of it and shared the experience HR had with the policy. They had about 16 people that participated and it worked out very well. He has on his desk a proposal to broaden the policy and is working with the campus leadership to do so. Also, a 10 month appointment should also be offered across the university. HR set up a set of reasonable rules for employees to follow and the pilot project seemed very successful.

Finally a discussion on the treatment of exempt and nonexempt employees as it relates to compensatory time and/or charging of time to attend University meetings as it relates the Fair Labor Standards Act occurred. Scott indicated the University strongly follows the Fair Labor Standards Act. Specific instances should be directed to either Scott or Jim Jarvis.

Janiece redirected the discussion PSS’s desire to reorganize our workflow efforts. With the reorganization of HR we are finding duplication with what we are doing and what HR is doing. We want to communicate more effectively regarding our members and build a collaborative relationship with HR. Professionals have always wanted to move up or around UB to contribute more to the organization. Janiece introduced a chart illustrating how to develop a continuous, closer relationship with HR about personal development for our professionals. What we are mainly concerned about is how to we have a more consistent working relationship with HR that benefits HR about knowing what the professional concerns are; as well as us informing the professionals about what HR is doing. An example brought to Scott’s attention was Diversity Committee. This committee struggles with duplicating efforts with existing departmental and HR efforts.

Scott indicated that this should be a mutual communication effort between PSS and HR. There’s no formal structure right now that allows for this exchange of information to occur that would be beneficial for both HR and PSS. Scott very much supported this structure and effort. The thought was that the Executive Officers would meet with the four HR leaders initially and start identifying individuals by issues. Scott advocated a monthly meeting with HR leaders and the PSS leaders.

Scott brought up the notion of volunteerism and how we can get more volunteers on campus. His thought that volunteerism brought greater camaraderie and pride. Will/can PSS assist in these efforts? If so, how can we expand our ability to get this program
going as far as participation? This might be an example of how PSS can assist HR. Some executive committee members were unaware of what “CORE” was. This is a specific example of where the word has not gotten out regarding volunteerism!

A short discussion occurred on the IT transformation. Someone brought up what’s going to happen to employees. A couple people cited that they were afraid of what is going to happen. Others in the room have seen improvements in their areas.

Finally, a discussion occurred on the documentation needed to return to work should an employee be absent for more than 3 days, particularly with the H1N1 virus. With the flu virus are looking at weekly trends, ultimately looking for spikes. We are then looking at if these absence are affecting service levels. Are we able to effectively conduct business? HR is not making it mandatory that employees bring back a doctors excuse. In fact, HR is discouraging it. Publication and distribution of HR policies university wide was recommended.

Does HR have a list of discount programs? Yes. You can find it at http://suny.corporateperks.com

4. Report from the Vice Chair

January 21 the HR people will be visiting the PSS General membership meeting. Jim, Jen, and Scott Morris will be there.

Ann Marie welcomed suggestions to improvement of the chart that was distributed.

She also reported on the Outstanding Staff Awards programs. Information will be posted on the PSS website next week for the Chancellors award, Outstanding Service Award, and Outstanding Service to Professional Staff Senate Award. Nominations for the Chancellors award is due January 20th.

Diversity has updated their calendar for events for November.

The Marketing and Communications Committee is still working on a communications plan with updating the general membership with different events.

The Staff Development Committee is still sponsoring different tours. November 12 is the tour of the earthquake facility. December 2 is going to be the Center of the Arts.

Feel free to check the PSS site for logos and information.

5. Meeting adjourned
PSS Organizational Chart

PSS Officers

University Liaison(s)

PSS Executive Committee

Personal Development
- Staff Development & Services
- Mentoring
- Welcome
- Diversity
- Wellness
- Quality of Work Life
- Groener Shado of

Marketing & Communications
- Website
- Standards
- Student Life
- PSS Book Drive

PSS Administrative
- Constitution & By-Laws
- Elections
- Policy & Governance

Outstanding Service Committee

Human Resources

Liaison
2009 Professional Staff Senate
Executive Committee Attendance

Date of Meeting: November 5, 2009

Area I:
Present Mathew Deck
Present Rebecca Goodman
Absent Fred Covelli

Guests:
Laura Yates

Area II:
Absent Dave Ballard
Present Letitia Thomas
Absent Eilene Fleischmann

Area III:
Absent Randy Borst
Present Amy Wilson
Absent Dan Ryan

Area IV:
Absent Laura Pruski
Present Cherie Williams
Present Anne Marie Swartz

Area V:
Present Amanda Brown
Present James Jarvis
Absent Laura Barnum

Officers:
Present Janiece Kiedrowski
Present Ann Marie Landel
Present Kathleen M. Kielar

SUNY Senators:
Absent David Ballard
Absent William Coles
Absent Henry Durand