

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bradford, Fech, Franti, Konecky, LaCost, Ledder, McCollough, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Schubert

Absent: Hachtmann, Lindquist, Zimmers

Date: Wednesday, January 28, 2009

Location: Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace

Note: These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

1.0 Call to Order

Prochaska-Cue called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Board of Regents Meeting

Prochaska-Cue reported that the Board went into a closed session to discuss collective bargaining negotiations at UNK and UNO.

2.2 Committee Updates

Prochaska-Cue reported that the ad hoc committee to investigate the cancellation of Dr. Ayers' visit will be meeting on Monday. She noted that the official Senate motion regarding this issue will be sent to the chair and members of the ad hoc committee.

LaCost reported that the ad hoc committee to review the Office of Research's policy on research misconduct has met. She stated that the committee is working hard to try to incorporate the language from the ARRC's Professional Conduct-B procedures into the research policy. She noted that the committee will be meeting again during the week of February 16th. Prochaska-Cue asked if the committee will complete its work by the end of April. LaCost stated that she believes it will be completed by then. Fech asked if there is good cooperation with the Office of Research. LaCost reported that the cooperation is good and that Lindquist is doing a very good job with chairing the committee and dealing with issues raised by the committee members about federal regulations.

Bradford reported that the Academic Honesty Committee is moving very slowly in part because it is having difficulty with scheduling meetings. He reported that the chair of the committee, Professor Bicknell-Holmes, is considering breaking it into subcommittees so it can move forward. He noted that there were problems with getting feedback regarding the existing bylaws.

Fech reported that the Pepsi Events Committee has met twice. He stated that some event requests are funded fully, and others receive less depending on a variety of circumstances.

Schubert reported that the beverage contract committee had a complicated, multiple-layered process. The first phase called for bids from vendors. The second phase allowed bidders to review their original bid and make needed adjustments. He reported that there were two major competitors, Pepsi-Cola and Coke. He noted that projected revenues were a huge factor in determining who would get the contract. He pointed out that the committee recommended one of the vendors and it will now be up to the Board to approve the contract. He stated that in the past some money was allowed for diversity events and other activities and this will continue although he is unsure how all of the funding will be divided.

Fech asked if students can continue to apply for free products for a student sponsored events. Schubert stated that he did not know the details of the contract. He suggested that people with detailed questions about the contract should contact Associate VC Phelps. Schubert reported that the contract will be for the next ten years.

3.0 Approval of 1/21/09 Minutes

Bradford moved and McCollough seconded approval of the minutes as amended. Motion approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Reconsidering English Proficiency Requirements and Practices for Undergraduate Students

Prochaska-Cue noted that SVCAA Couture wants feedback on the proposed changes to the English Proficiency Requirements. Bradford stated that he wants it clarified that departments or colleges could set higher requirements in English proficiency for their programs than the standard that is required for admission into the university. Ledger asked about students who would be admitted into the university but might want to transfer to a different major later. He questioned whether Bradford's suggestion would impede students from transferring into a different program. Bradford stated that departments should still be free to set their own requirements for admission into their program.

Fech asked if certain departments require students to maintain a certain grade point average in order to stay in a program. Konecky stated that this is a requirement for many departments.

Ledger stated that the demonstration of a student attending a high school or college where English is the language of instruction causes him concern. He stated that he would like to see these students monitored while attending UNL. Prochaska-Cue agreed and pointed out that the question is with the quality of English that was taught at the school. Ledger noted that a student might be able to hear and read English well but cannot speak the language well.

Franti questioned why it was necessary for a student to have two years of coursework at a college where English is the language of instruction rather than one year.

McCullough asked if students would still be required to take the English placement exam. Bradford stated that the proposed changes would use the TOEFL score in place of the English placement exam.

Ledder stated that the concern is that we are going to certify students as capable of succeeding here when in fact they might not be capable. He noted that there is not a system in place to help these students. He suggested that students entering the university under these demonstrations of proficiency should be followed to see what their graduation rates are. He pointed out that by doing this the campus would see if there is a mistake with some of the proficiency demonstrations and could correct them.

Konecky asked if Ledder was referring to students who are admitted solely on the demonstration of proficiency because they graduated from a high school where English is the language of instruction. Ledder stated that this was correct. Ledder pointed out that these students could be monitored to see how they are performing. McCullough stated that she thinks all of the students entering UNL who need to demonstrate English proficiency should be monitored to see if they need further assistance. Ledder pointed out that it might be the case that these students actually perform better than our average students.

Prochaska-Cue stated that she will draft a response to SVCAA Couture and send it to the Exec for their review. She asked that any additional comments be sent to her.

4.2 Faculty Salary Survey

The Committee reviewed and revised the faculty salary survey. The Committee agreed that the survey be kept on file but not deployed until the economic situation improves.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Faculty Senate Budget Cut

Prochaska-Cue reported that the Chancellor's Office has asked the Senate Office for a 5% reduction in its budget. Griffin stated that the Senate Office can reduce its budget by 5% by eliminating a student line and cutting the operating budget by over a third. She pointed out that the entire budget for the Senate is small and further cuts of this size would have serious impacts on the operation of the Senate.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:35 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, February 4th at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Rapkin, Secretary.