EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: **Fech, Flowers, Franti, Konecky, LaCost, Lindquist, McCollough, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Schubert, Shea, Stock**

Absent: **Bolin**

Date: **Wednesday, October 21, 2009**

Location: **201 Canfield Administration Building**

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

Fech called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman and SVCAA Couture

2.1 Clarification of External Letters Policy

Fech stated that there was some uncertainty about the number of external letters needed for promotion and tenure files. He stated that SVCAA Couture discussed previously that the minimum is three or four, but faculty members have reported seeing much higher numbers in the files. Konecky noted that the minimum states three, but the Committee would be interested in having a cap on the number required. Stock reported that the chair of his department has been getting some pressure to have more than three external letters in the files.

SVCAA Couture stated that she heard the Committee's concern when they first discussed this issue. She stated that the minimum across IANR and Academic Affairs is three but there are some differences among departments as to how many letters are required. She stated that her office is currently in the process of collecting information from departments about their required minimum. She stated that she wants to gather information from departments and colleges before arbitrarily making a rule on the external letters. She pointed out that there are some departments that feel the need for additional letters and we need to understand their reasoning for this. She noted that sometimes more information is needed to help a candidate through the promotion and tenure process. She reported that once the information is received, there will be a discussion among the deans to get a better sense of why some disciplines feel the need for more letters.

SVCAA Couture stated that it would be helpful if the faculty could provide a sense of the problems that would incur from having a larger number of letters. She noted that one issue is pragmatic: if someone is continually asked to provide reference letters it can become an imposition on the good will of scholars across the discipline. They may in turn decide not to write many reference letters.

SVCAA Couture noted that requiring a large number of external letters can cause anxiety for the candidate who would need to find numerous people to write letters. She stated that she is not sure of the answer to the question and that this is the reason for the inquiry to deans and departments.

Franti asked if other information was being requested about the process. SVCAA Couture stated that the deans were asked to give information about any department that requires more than three external letters, and if so, what the reason is for the requirement of more letters.

SVCAA Couture pointed out that faculty members are in charge of the promotion and tenure process so it is the faculty that are feeling the need for this requirement. She pointed out, nonetheless, that we do not want to encourage an excessive amount of letters.

Fech asked if SVCAA Couture could provide a summary to her inquiries on this issue. SVCAA Couture stated that she plans on sharing this information with the Committee.

2.2 Response to Faculty in Life Sciences (FLS) Letter

Chancellor Perlman stated that he can see the interest in having the FLS Executive Committee elected but he feels that it is not appropriate for this instance because it will not be a governing group. He pointed out that it would be difficult to figure out how to conduct a fair election since the general assembly of the life sciences is a self-selected group. He stated that he wants various aspects of the life sciences represented on the Committee and he is concerned that some of the life scientists would not be willing to participate in an election process. He noted that the general assembly of the FLS can vote with their feet if they are not supportive of this initiative.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he has had a group of faculty members who have been giving him advice on this issue for some time now. He stated that the FLS Executive Committee would be a more formal advisory group. He noted that he is open to the idea of coming back and reassessing this situation. He stated that if the FLS Executive Committee is doing things that the faculty feels more strongly about in determining who plays a role, than there could be some form of election.

Franti stated that he thinks the Chancellor's instincts to have an informal group provide advice are fine, but asked how people could provide input to this group. Chancellor Perlman stated that there will be the FLS general assembly where any voice can be heard. He stated that ideally the FLS Executive Committee will provide advice on where we have gaps to fill in the life sciences but hiring will be done by departments. He noted that if departments do not want to follow any advice than they don't have to.

Chancellor Perlman reminded the Committee that if any unit or department wants to start a new program, it will have to be approved by the Academic Planning Committee which has members on it elected by the faculty.

Chancellor Perlman stated that his main effort is to get a conversation started so people in the life sciences can find ways to get to know each other to stimulate research. He stated that he understands the Senate Executive Committee's concerns and he is willing at the end of a year to review the situation. If there are problems with the FLS Executive Committee, he is willing to discuss this again with the Senate Executive Committee.

Shea asked what process the Chancellor used or what criteria was used to determine who will serve on the FLS Executive Committee. Chancellor Perlman reported that he has a view of what he would like to accomplish: to have more collaboration in the life sciences without disrupting the disciplinary bases of the university. The question is whether he can put together a group of 10 – 15 people who can help him accomplish this goal. He stated that members will need to represent the various elements of the life sciences and have to reflect both the basic and applied nature of the university and be able to speak with a credible voice.

Shea asked if a list of the people who will serve on the FLS Executive Committee will be made available. Chancellor Perlman stated that the list will be available when the members have all been identified. He stated that at this point he has only talked to a couple of people. He stated that there will be a public announcement when the Committee is completed.

Franti noted that a similar effort has been made with the Environmental Engineering program. He stated that faculty from three different departments provide a program for graduate students that covers the four areas defined as Environmental Engineering. Chancellor Perlman noted that the FLS Executive Committee will not be running any program.

Franti suggested that the FLS Executive Committee be called an advisory committee rather than an executive committee. He stated that this might help with the perception of what the group is doing and the assembly might feel more of a voice in the process. Chancellor Perlman stated that he is not sure that he wants to change the name at this point but certainly a clearer description of what they are going to do and the process he is using needs to be addressed by him. He noted that it has been helpful to talk to the Senate Executive Committee about this. He noted that ultimately it is the faculty that is going to decide what is done with the FLS.

Franti noted that there is concern about hiring plans. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is an administrator's responsibilities to set priorities of where we want to go, but administrators need to get the best advice they can from the faculty on how to meet these priorities. He stated that departments he has been in have played a big role in this process. He stated that if faculty members in a department do not want to hire someone for a particular position than that person won't get hired. Franti pointed out that he has seen departments where the faculty members do not want to hire a person but an administrator hired the person anyway. He stated that what the faculty wants is shared governance and a voice in the process. Chancellor Perlman noted that sometimes faculty

members do not stand up for their rights and administrators will run over them, but the opposite can also happen.

Franti stated that he appreciates the honesty of the Chancellor with all of the pending initiatives but he wishes there was a better avenue for faculty to provide input into them. Chancellor Perlman stated that he is trying to build in a solid faculty voice in the life sciences. He noted that it might not be an elected voice but this is not the only way to get a faculty voice. He stated that the idea is to build a faculty voice that would help drive the initiatives and there are efforts to have an independent voice in regards to hiring and instrumentation.

Fech asked the Chancellor to define majors that will be included in the core curriculum. Chancellor Perlman noted that there will be a core curriculum and it is being approached with a process similar to the creation of the ACE program.

SVCAA Couture noted that there are many structures in place that can help us get things done but sometimes these structures can level us in certain directions, and exclude others. She stated that with the life sciences faculty, the idea is to create an opportunity for an advisory group to provide input; the group is not to be a governing body.

SVCAA Couture stated that there is agreement by many that we need to prepare our students for careers in the life sciences for the 21st century. She stated that one of the challenges is to help students in the life sciences understand all of the different opportunities that will be available to them. She stated that another group of disciplines that addressed this problem is the arts. She noted that the faculty and deans from architecture, interior design, art and art education, textile design and journalism and mass communications came together to form the visual literacy curriculum and this curriculum provides students with opportunities to see which of these areas they want a career in.

SVCAA Couture stated that the question is how we can create a set of opportunities in the early years of a student's college career that lets them better understand what their potential is in the life sciences. She stated that the idea is to set up a planning team similar to that of the ACE program and an advisory committee that will meet with all the necessary groups of faculty and then let the faculty create the curriculum and the way the program will be structured.

SVCAA Couture stated that she and VC Owens are working with Deans Waller and Manderscheid to create a structure for a faculty driven process to create a portal of opportunities in the life sciences. She stated that administrators will help move this process along, but it will be the faculty who will determine the program. She stated that the faculty will need to determine the outcomes for the program. She stated that the hope is to get the program up and running in two years.

Shea stated that he does not think the faculty has any problems with what has just been said. He stated that the concern is with the process. He pointed out that one of the problems is that the faculty does not know what the process is. As a result the faculty are

guessing or becoming suspicious of what is going on. He stated that it is important to have a maximum level of communication throughout the process to let the faculty know what is going on. He stated that keeping the faculty informed and why would be very helpful. He stated that there seems to be little knowledge, at least in IANR about what is happening and what is being planned.

SVCAA Couture stated that this is an excellent point and the program will succeed a lot better if the faculty is aware of what is being done. She pointed out that the process really just got started. She noted that one of the strengths of the deans is that they create great leadership for their college and defend their territory. She stated that there needed to be discussion among the deans about how they will work with their faculty so that whatever is produced can go across these administrative structures. She reported that the deans discussed this and she believes they have a comfortable working relationship that will assist the process.

SVCAA Couture stated that she sees it as her obligation to keep the process open and to assure that people who want to provide input are allowed to do so. She pointed out that she learned from the ACE program how web communications can help. She stated the discussion is just beginning with the faculty and the chairs on how to get things accomplished. She stated that the faculty will be kept informed every way that is possible about how things are progressing.

McCollough noted that her department is having problems with defining life sciences and knowing whether they will be a part of it. SVCAA Couture stated that these kinds of questions are going to arise when you are trying to define the outcomes of such a broad based educational program. She stated that there needs to be a structure in place for the process to proceed so that questions like this can be answered and so that the faculty can understand the expectations and the time frame for creating the program and know when it's time to move on from one set of issues to the next.

McCollough asked if the life sciences program will be parallel to ACE or tacked on to it. SVCAA Couture noted that ACE differs from some traditional general education programs because it didn't start off with a specific set of courses. It started with objectives set by the faculty and courses that fit these objectives and the learning outcomes developed by the faculty were developed later. She stated that a similar structure will be suggested for developing the life sciences curriculum.

Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the ultimate decision of what courses will be in the life sciences program will have to be determined by the faculty. He noted that there will be some core departments but there might be majors in different departments that don't' necessarily fit in with the life sciences. He stated that he is hoping that there will be a broader set of courses rather than a narrower set. He stated that the faculty will need to develop the outcomes. He stated that the faculty will have the last say on the program, just like the faculty had to vote in each of the colleges on the ACE program.

SVCAA Couture noted that when she first came here she couldn't believe the success of the visual literacy program and how different departments and colleges came together to develop a program to help the students be introduced to these disciplines. She stated that in talking with the advisory board of the Raikes School they were in admiration of the ACE program and wanted to see the Raikes School take a similar approach to its curriculum. She stated that the faculty acted in a collegial way to address some complex issues in developing ACE. She pointed out that if we can also accomplish this with the life sciences program, we will have one of the most successful undergraduate programs in the country.

Fech asked about the concerns with the core facilities. Chancellor Perlman stated that he does not believe he said anything about the core facilities being self supporting. He stated that it's a nice thought but once you get to the issue there needs to be allocation of the use of equipment. He noted that there are already some core facilities on campus and there are some costs associated with the use of the equipment, but most of these costs are captured through federal grants whenever possible. He stated that he has not received any feedback that faculty members have not been able to get access to equipment in the existing core facilities. He does not think the core facilities are going to create a problem. Fech pointed out that the service center model is frustrating for faculty members. Chancellor Perlman appreciates this concern.

Franti asked if core facilities are developed by faculty with grant money or if the university sets these up. Chancellor Perlman stated that they are created both ways. He pointed out that equipment purchased with grant money does not become the principal investigator's personal property. He noted that even the large grants that can purchase instrumentation usually get some help from the university. He pointed out that some faculty members may not have been able to use the core facilities but most just aren't aware that the university has the equipment that they need. He acknowledged that there might be some equipment where there is a time limit on its use.

Shea stated that there is a lot of logic to the core facility approach. He stated that an on-going concern to watch out for is to make sure that the core facilities are accessible to all faculty members interested in using them and that charges that are assessed to use the equipment are not prohibitive to the average faculty member on campus. If a person has limited resources it could make it difficult to get some of the testing done that they need. He stated that if the cost is too high some faculty members will be prevented from doing the research that they would like to do.

Chancellor Perlman stated that these are legitimate concerns but noted we are not free of market restraints. He noted that at some point, when there are limited resources, someone has to make a priority decision about the use of instruments. He stated that it is not usually the case that those with the big grants get the full allotment in the use of equipment. He stated that things are much better now for faculty members wanting to use equipment than it used to be. He pointed out that making available equipment transparent will allow those faculty members starting out to have opportunities to use the equipment.

Fech asked for comments on the concerns the Executive Committee would have with the hiring plans. Chancellor Perlman agreed with both concerns that were raised. He stated that the idea is to get the faculty together with the deans to discuss what is needed for the life sciences program. He stated that the challenge is to get people to have conversations to see if we can have a major initiative without having duplication of faculty. He pointed out that the faculty has the final authority in some respects on these decisions and if you can't get a department to agree to hire someone some things will not get done. He stated that incentives may need to be upped in some cases. He stated that having an integrated plan is just to break through the structure and get people talking about the life sciences.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he hopes the Committee can come back and look at these issues again and see if there are areas where we need to make adjustments. He stated that he hopes now that the life sciences initiative will be supported recognizing there is always room for an appropriate amount of skepticism.

2.3 Budget Update

Chancellor Perlman noted that the Governor has called a special session of the legislature but it is unknown at this time what will happen with the budget although it is likely that the university will have some budget cuts.

2.4 Recommendations of Ad Hoc Committee on the Canceled Visit of Professor Ayers

The Committee discussed the recommendations from the ad hoc committee on the cancellation of Dr. Ayers' visit. Chancellor Perlman stated that some of the recommendations are matters of faculty governance. He cautioned that procedures should not limit the Chancellor's ability to quickly deal with a situation if a circumstance arises, but if time permits he would be happy to consult with the chair of the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee. He cautioned in having procedures that speak too narrowly.

Fech asked if it would be helpful for the university community to know about the threat assessment group. Chancellor Perlman agreed and stated that this would be fine.

Rapkin stated that many of the staff people were overwhelmed when they were inundated with all of the phone calls that come in with people complaining. He noted that the recommendations call for a centralized system where these phone calls can be handled. Chancellor Perlman stated that if protocols could be found that would work well he would be happy to have them in place. He noted that his office dealt with many of the angry phone calls and his staff members occasionally have to handle a large volume of calls and email messages when people are upset with something that has or will occur at the university. Konecky pointed out that it would be helpful to let staff know what the proper approach is when dealing with these kinds of calls. She noted that even the reference librarians received phone calls on complaints about Dr. Ayers' visit. Chancellor Perlman agreed that talking points would be good to get out to the campus.

Fech stated that another recommendation has to do with shared issues of safety. Rapkin stated that there have been some cases at other universities in which where smaller departments had to try and deal with security issues. He noted that it is difficult for departments to absorb large security expenses, and that shifting the burden on to them could have a chilling effect on academic freedom. Chancellor Perlman stated that he wants some incentives on the department for providing security but there needs to be a balance. He reported that security is provided for guest speakers. He stated that the campus would bear the ordinary cost of security if notification was provided in advance, but if the security needs are beyond what the campus can bear, departments should know that they may have to share some of the cost for security.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he is in favor of having a symposium on academic freedom and suggested that if the thought was to request money from him, a proposal for this kind of event be brought to him for consideration.

Franti asked what criteria defines when a decision needs to be made quickly without consulting the faculty regarding the cancellation of a guest speaker. Chancellor Perlman noted that the Ayers case was not a security issue with the actual event because that was 30 days from happening. Members of the threat assessment group felt that there was an immediate security issue that would continue to grow as the event drew closer and this was the determining factor in cancelling the event. Franti asked if there are general criteria that are followed such as impending physical harm. Chancellor Perlman stated that he would properly consult with the faculty to the extent that he could, but it is difficult to list the criteria because each event can be so unique. Rapkin noted the Chief Yardley would state that it depends on the venue and the type of event.

Franti asked what criteria were used for the cancellation of Dr. Ayers' visit. Chancellor Perlman stated that it was the perception of the threat assessment group that the threats that were made created a pre-event security issue.

Rapkin pointed out that blogs and social networking capabilities make it possible for unsatisfied people to bring a lot of pressure on the university. He suggested bringing someone in to the planned conference who could address this issue.

Konecky stated that the recommendations are skewed towards awareness and communication. She noted that the more people know about what is occurring, the better judgments can be made. She pointed out that with the Ayers' situation there was a huge dent in communications. Chancellor Perlman agreed.

2.5 Process and Cost of Five year Review of Administrators

Chancellor Perlman reported that the cost for the five year review of SVCAA Couture was under $5000. He stated that he believes it was a good value for what we got out of the process. He noted that he tried to make the process consistent with the bylaws. He stated that comments made by faculty members were kept confidential. He provided the Committee with a summary of the faculty interviews and asked the Committee for feedback on it.

Fech stated that he thought it was useful to be interviewed by the consultant. He noted that the consultant was very inviting and seemed to genuinely accept everything that was said. He stated that the consultant did a nice job of bringing out positive and negative comments. He stated that he would have liked to have had some feedback on SVCAA Couture's accomplishments before the interview.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he struggled with this. He stated that he wanted to get an impression from those interviewed regarding her strengths and weaknesses, not just on what she has accomplished. He noted that he would possibly do it differently next time.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he feels a lot more comfortable with this process than the previous one used because this process provides a better picture. He noted that SVCAA Couture suggested that a similar process be conducted on an administrator after they have been here a year because it could be very helpful to see how they are doing.

Franti pointed out that the faculty still has a certain level of expectations about the review of an administrator. He stated that if faculty were aware of what the Chancellor's reasoning was for not providing a narrative it would have been helpful. Chancellor Perlman stated that he is willing to do this. He noted that he was trying to follow what he thought happened with his own review. He reported that a narrative was not sent out in his case and didn't think it was an issue, but he can understand the committee's concern. He noted that the idea of faculty members being allowed to comment via email was helpful. He reported that seven email messages were received by the consultant.

Shea stated that some kind of report on administrators should be made available at some point during the evaluation period. Chancellor Perlman stated that this would be fine. He suggested having a factual list of a person's accomplishments. He stated that he is pushing for a narrative because it is a little more personal and allows a person to be more reflective. He stated that this will be worked on to make the process better. He noted that he is inclined to use this process again.

2.6 VC of IANR Search Committee Update

Fech stated that the members of the search committee for the VC of IANR are a good broad, representation of people. He stated that one concern is that the IANR Liaison Committee was overlooked and suggested that candidates be interviewed by this Committee. Chancellor Perlman stated that he would include the Liaison Committee in the interview process.

Chancellor Perlman reported that a search firm is not being used. He reported that he was advised by several other land grant universities that recently conducted similar searches, not to bother using a search firm because the pool of candidates is well known. He stated that he hopes that people will suggest candidates as well. He noted that he does have a consultant standing by if needed but pointed out that search consultants are expensive.

2.7 Possible Elimination of unlserve

Chancellor Perlman stated that unlserve will not be eliminated. He reported that CIO Askren is looking at email and what will serve the campus best but there is no intention of eliminating unlserve at this time.

2.8 Storage Space Charges to Faculty for Research Equipment

Shea reported that some departments are assessing space charges to faculty members for equipment needed to conduct research and to teach classes. He pointed out that this is not fair to faculty members whose research depends very heavily or exclusively on field operations for which equipment needs to be stored versus those who use a lab. He stated that he wanted the Chancellor to be aware that this is happening and to see if anything can be done about it. He noted that some faculty members have resorted to storing the equipment off campus, sometimes in their own home.

Chancellor Perlman pointed out that storage space does not come free. He stated that his experience is that the amount that needs to be stored relates to how much space is available. He reported that the campus does not have the space to accommodate everyone's needs and some departments are being charged for storing items in the old Textron building. He stated that we cannot afford to store everyone's equipment so they need to decide what is important and what isn't which can be a hard balance to strike but something that needs to be done. He noted that he cannot make a decision about what the departments are doing but he can sympathize with each side of the issue.

2.9 Capital Campaign Announcement

Chancellor Perlman reported that he recently met with the steering committee for the capital campaign. He noted that it was a very positive meeting. He stated that each college has a volunteer leader plus a committee to work on fund raising for the college. He reported that these people are very energized and enthusiastic, and have ideas on how to raise money. He noted that some have pretty ambitious goals and overall it was very encouraging to hear these people speak.

3.0 Minutes of 10/14/09

Fech told committee members to get any changes they have to Griffin.

4.0 Unfinished Business

No Unfinished Business was discussed due to lack of time.

5.0 New Business

No New Business was discussed due to lack of time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:06 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Rapkin, Secretary.