

Email:

Website:

UNL ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES
Campus Union,
April 3, 2007
Presidents Ali Moeller, and Steve Bradford, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Moeller called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Executive Committee Elections

President Moeller stated that nominations were still being sought for Executive Committee members. She pointed out that being a member of the Executive Committee is an important job and it is a stellar group of people to work with. She noted that serving on the Committee provides a person with the opportunity to find out what is happening on campus and it is a great experience. She encouraged Senators to run for the Committee.

3.0 Vice Chancellor Owens

Vice Chancellor Owens reported that Chancellor Perlman was in China working on agreements between UNL and Chinese universities.

Vice Chancellor Owens reported that he was recently in Mexico to work on an agreement with the Northwestern Center of Biological Research (CIBNOR) in La Paz, Mexico. He stated that this is an organization within the National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) that sponsors Mexican students working on their graduate education outside of Mexico. He noted that the support is given to these students with the understanding that they will return to Mexico to work.

Vice Chancellor Owens stated that UNL used to have a contract with CONACYT but lost it. He stated that he was glad to report that with the signing of the agreement, UNL is once again in contract with CONACYT. He pointed out that these graduate students can participate in disciplines in any appropriate field of study on the entire UNL campus and are not limited to the agriculture and natural resources disciplines. He stated that these are exceptionally good students who are proficient in English. He stated that the contract will provide UNL professors with the opportunity to do a faculty development leave with Mexican scientists.

Vice Chancellor Owens reported that the Veterinary Science program with Iowa State has been fully accredited and the first class will begin this fall. He stated that the students selected for the program will have their first two years of study here and will complete their last two years of study at Iowa State.

Vice Chancellor Owens noted that recently there were approximately 3,200 high school students on campus who came in with the Future Farmers of America organization. He stated that having the students here provided the campus with great opportunities to recruit students. He pointed out that the campus needs to think about ways of working together to convince these students to study here at UNL.

Vice Chancellor Owens stated that President Milliken will probably address the university's budget. Vice Chancellor Owens noted that almost every morning President Milliken stops by the state capital to meet with the legislators while they are in session. Vice Chancellor Owens noted that the Appropriations Committee has recommended a 4% average increase per year for the university. He pointed out while this is better than the

budget the Governor was recommending, it will still leave the university short. He reminded the Senate that there are still some things haunting the university such as the cost of utilities. He doubted that the legislature is going to do anything to help the university out with these costs.

Vice Chancellor Owens reported that the Programs of Excellence have been very good for the institution but they have not been funded by the legislature but he thinks the Board of Regents will probably continue to support them. He noted that the same is true for the diversity funds. He stated that average salary increases have been reported in the paper but the university will need to see what the costs of benefits will be before salary increases are confirmed.

Vice Chancellor Owens stated that he is deeply appreciative to the Appropriations Committee for moving from the Governor's proposed budget increase of 1% to the 4% proposed by the Appropriations Committee.

4.0 Approval of 3/6/07 Minutes

Professor Flowers, Psychology, moved and Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, seconded approval of the minutes. Motion approved.

5.0 Recognition of Outgoing Senators

Professor Moeller recognized and thanked the work and service of the outgoing senators: Eric Thompson, Economics; Timothy Arkebauer, Agronomy & Horticulture; Erin Blankenship, Statistics; Rodney Moxley, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences; John Bender, College of Journalism and Mass Communications; Anita Breckbill, Libraries; J. Clark Archer, Anthropology & Geography; Ken Nickerson, School of Biological Sciences; Stephen Reichenbach, Computer Science & Engineering; James Ford, English. In particular, President Moeller wanted to thank outgoing senators and Executive Committee members: Gordon Scholz, College of Architecture; Robert Stock, English; Dennis Alexander, Electrical Engineering.

President Moeller thanked and welcomed back those senators that have been re-elected: William Grange, Theater Arts; Steve Harris, Plant Pathology; William Kranz, Northeast Research & Extension Center; James Schild, Panhandle Research & Extension Center; Ken Dewey, School of Natural Resources; Joan Konecky, Libraries; Merlin Lawson, Geosciences.

6.0 President Milliken

President Milliken thanked the faculty for the work that they are doing. He noted that he has the task of traveling and speaking with donors and recently met with 200 donors in California. He stated that he speaks to the donors about the work that the faculty is doing. He pointed out that last year the university had the greatest amount in fund raising because of the faculty's work. He noted that he also speaks to the state legislators about the great things that are happening at the university and the importance of this work. He reported that recently the university moved into the top 35 public universities in research and development in the country.

President Milliken reported that UNL and UNMC have doubled their sponsored research in the last five years and that we have grown market shares in federally-sponsored research. He noted that for the first time UNL is in the top 50 public universities in the U.S. World and News report and we had the first ever Marshall Scholar this year plus seven Fulbright Scholars.

President Milliken stated that one concern he has is enrollment growth. He stated that he believes that we need more Nebraska citizens to go on to college to get more education. He pointed out that research is clear that higher education positively correlates with many desirable outcomes. He noted that he also wants more people from out of state to go to college here. He pointed out that he believes that one of the most effective ways to

get more people into Nebraska is the university.

President Milliken stated that we must address the needs of the growing Latino population in the state. He pointed out that over the next ten years the number of high school graduates will stay relatively flat in Nebraska but the percentage of these students that are Latino will go from 4 1/2% to 20% during this time period. He pointed out that one of the concerns is that the high school graduation rate for Latino students is far less than for the majority population. He reported that the number of Latino, African American, Native American, and Asian students in high schools is predicted to go from the current 10% to 30% over roughly the same period. He noted that there are now fourteen school districts in the state where minority status students now make up the majority of the students. He stated that what these figures mean is that how the university recruits and prepare these students will need to change.

President Milliken stated that a key is recruitment. He reported that he recently spoke with 330 Latino high school students about attending college. He noted that he hopes many of these students will go on to college but he admitted that the university needs to do a lot of work to recruit these students. He pointed out that efforts need to start before children even begin kindergarten. He stated that it is important to get more Nebraskans to go to college otherwise the state will not be successful. He pointed out that Nebraska does not have a large pool of people to draw from to go to college.

President Milliken noted that fundraising for the university grew to \$127 million last year and \$87 1/2 million was transferred to the university. He stated that the Governor recently said that the time may have come for the university to tap into its Foundation funds to operate the university. He noted that Foundation funds are used on a daily basis to support chaired positions, scholarships, and constructing new buildings. These are just a few of the things funded through Foundation money.

President Milliken reported that university leaders are very involved in raising funds to leverage the state investment. He noted that trends in the past twenty years show that state investments are declining as a share of the total budget. He pointed out that as a result universities are becoming more privatized. He stated that it is important not to lose the notion of what a public university is but the reality is that the university is becoming more privatized. He stated that he thinks there is not the same sense of commitment to the state and to the people of the state if a university becomes more privatized.

President Milliken stated that he is interested in the notion of a partnership between the public and private sectors. He pointed out that the 2015 group is an example of a public/private partnership and he believes this kind of partnership will be a benefit to Nebraska. He reported that one of two state fair bills moved out of committee in the legislature recently. He stated that people have questioned why the university would need the 250 acres of the university and he does not think he will see in his tenure university buildings covering these acres but he stated that Centennial campus in North Carolina grew from a large farm of 350 acres ceded to the university in 1985 to approximately 1300 acres that now houses university buildings as well as private sector buildings. He pointed out that this resulted in attracting businesses into the area.

President Milliken stated that the Governor recommended a 1.1% increase for the university in the next biennium. He pointed out that this is the third lowest budget increase in 40 years, the other two low increases occurred during national recessions.

President Milliken noted that the Appropriations Committee initially recommended a 4.2% increase for the university budget. It was then changed to 2.2% but after hearings, testimonies, and communicating with legislators the Committee's final recommendation will likely be 4% per year of the biennium. He stated that in

order to keep tuition rates the same the university would need to receive a 5.7% increase. He noted that the legislature agreed to reduce the planned increase for depreciation of facilities which saves about \$4 million in operating funds. He stated that the university wants to take care of our buildings but funding is really needed now in order not to cut programs. He pointed out that while the proposed budget increase is much healthier now, it still must go through the floor of the legislature and it could face a veto from the Governor. He noted that there is very strong support for the university especially with the new legislators who understand the importance of investing in the university.

President Elect Bradford stated that President Milliken was quoted in the Lincoln Journal Star as saying that a 4.4% salary increase for UNL and UNMC is contingent on funding but this is not consistent with what the President has stated recently. President Elect Bradford asked for clarification. President Milliken stated that what was reported in the Lincoln Journal Star was not an exact quote. He noted that a special master has ordered a 4.3% increase for UNK and a 4.4% increase for UNO. He stated that last year the settlement was 3.95% increase and this was the amount that was allocated across the system. He pointed out that UNL and UNMC are non unionized campuses but they are further behind their peers than UNL and UNK. He stated that in order for UNL and UNMC to be treated equitably they should be given a larger increase. He pointed out that staff salaries are nearly 9% behind their peers but the university is not asking for a budget increase to correct the difference. He stated that he would like to give UNL and UNMC the same amount of increase that UNO and UNK are getting.

President Milliken stated that because the budget situation is still unclear decisions on salary increases are still pending. He pointed out that currently there is not enough money in the proposed budget to cover everything. He stated that tuition could go up more than is being proposed but he thinks this is unlikely. He stated that reallocation could take place and UNL and UNMC would have the option of reallocating their budgets for salaries. He stated that one scenario is that a 3.85% salary increase would be spread out evenly across the campuses but UNO and UNK would have the obligation of paying 4.3% and 4.4% salary increases. He noted that UNMC might, for instance, decide to stay with the 3.85% because it would not want to make additional cuts to programs in order to meet a 4.4% salary increase.

Secretary Alloway noted that the President mentioned the possibility of the Governor vetoing the university budget increase. He asked what would cause the Governor to do this. President Milliken stated that the Governor is concerned with having a tax reduction plan and total state spending. He stated that the question needs to be raised whether higher education should be used to balance the budget.

President Moeller asked what the tenor is of the new senators toward the university. President Milliken stated that he is very impressed with the new senators. He noted that there are a couple of young Lincoln freshmen senators on the Appropriations Committee, Senator Nantkes and Senator Fulton, and they could not be stronger in their support of the university. He stated that the level of energy and openness with the new senators is very gratifying. He hoped that faculty members and staff would take the time to visit with their legislator. He noted that Senator Tony Fulton has the most university employees in his district.

President Moeller stated that presentations made to the Board of Regents showed that UNL and UNMC met their goals in research efforts but UNO and UNK fell short of their goals. She pointed out that it would be quite demoralizing for the faculty members of UNL and UNMC to receive less of a salary increase than faculty members at UNO and UNK, particularly since these campuses did not achieve their goal. She asked President Milliken his views on this issue.

President Milliken stated that he sees this issue from a different perspective. He noted that the Board's strategic

framework of research success recognizes that UNL and UNMC are research campuses and while the Board set a tough goal for these two campuses they were confident that they could reach these goals. He pointed out that UNO and UNK's goals were very different and he does not think they were correct goals. He stated that the goals were measured differently.

President Milliken stated that in regards to enrollment UNL had a banner year with a 2.2% increase in enrollment. He noted that every campus except UNO increased in enrollment but a review over the last 10 years shows that UNO had larger increases in enrollment than UNL. He stated that faculty members at UNO felt that the distribution of funds to the campuses was unfair during this time because they had the larger increase in enrollment. He pointed out that the way the budget model now works is that UNL is being awarded for their enrollment growth but this model was not being used when UNO had the enrollment increases.

Professor Zorn, Finance, stated that he understands the President's position needs to be politic but the national reputation of the university lies with UNL and UNMC. He noted that it is important that we don't get into comparison battles with UNK and UNO. He stated that he is concerned with these comparisons. President Milliken stated that most comparisons are done with the campus peer group, not with each other. He pointed out that in some cases the Board has said they want all of the campuses to grow and there has been growth in the last two years but this goal may be reassessed at some point.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Computational Services and Facilities Committee (Professor Carrell)

Professor Carrell reported that the committee is charged with recommending computing policies for the campus. He stated that computing on campus has changed in the last ten years because almost all aspects of the university now depend on computer networking. He noted that this change in computing and networking needs to be reflected in the committee and how it interacts with the campus. He pointed out that advising Information Services is a critical connection that has not been paid enough attention to and communications between Information Services and senior administrators needs to be strengthened. He stated that it is also important to get feedback to faculty on important computing issues.

Professor Carrell stated that the committee is discussing the idea of proposing that UNL have a position equivalent to a Chief Information Officer position found in many companies. He noted that this person would bring computing issues to the attention of the top administrators.

Professor Carrell thanked the committee members for their work.

7.2 Executive Committee (President Moeller)

President Moeller stated that the report gives a feel for what the Executive Committee actually does. She noted that the committee meets regularly with senior administrators, addresses all the issues that affect the

faculty and discuss emerging issues, and see what faculty members can do to assist with the mission of the university.

President Moeller stated that the Executive Committee has been working on the general education reform. She pointed out that a solidly faculty driven general education program reform is needed. She stated that the recent open forum on the general education program had good attendance and there was good discussion.

President Moeller stated that the Executive Committee is working on establishing a policy on academic dishonesty, played an active role in the accreditation process, worked with ASUN to develop a syllabus policy,

met with the press, and is working with Michelle Waite's office to identify faculty to spread the word about the good work of the faculty.

President Moeller stated that as President she also attended the Deans and Directors meetings, met with President Milliken and other campus Senate Presidents, and conducted a three hour team building workshop for UNOPA.

8.0 Unfinished Business

8.1 Syllabus Policy

Professor Ledder, Mathematics, stated that the initial draft of the policy was written by ASUN representatives but since then the drafts have been written by the Executive Committee with input from ASUN. He noted that besides the rationale listed in the motion, education is a cooperative enterprise and the syllabus policy needs to adequately communicate expectations of the course for students and also what instructors expect from students.

President Elect Bradford stated that he wanted to propose an amendment. He suggested that under "Other Useful Information" the word should be changed to may. Professor Ledder accepted the friendly amendment.

President Elect Bradford stated that he wanted to propose another amendment in the second paragraph. He noted that how the course documentation is disseminated does not include email. He stated that he would like to see this option included in the language. Professor Ledder stated that the policy is written to put the full burden on the student. He pointed out that if the documentation is on a web page the instructor knows it is out there but there is no way to know for sure whether students receive an email message. He stated that it would be easy for a student to claim that they never received the email message if they wanted to dispute something that was on the course documentation.

President Elect Bradford moved to amend the syllabus policy to include "by email." Motion seconded by Professor Zorn.

Professor Chouinard, Mathematics, stated the he has concerns that the policy requires dissemination of the syllabus by the end of the first week of classes. He pointed out that students can still add a course in the second week of the semester. President Elect Bradford stated that it is the students' responsibility when adding a course to get the syllabus.

Professor Eccarius, Special Education and Communication Disorders, stated that she works with distance education courses and email is not a reliable enough means of communication. She pointed out that she has gone almost entirely to using Blackboard because of the problems she has encountered with email. She stated that email should not be expected to be the only way to disseminate the syllabus.

President Elect Bradford pointed out that it is the students' responsibility to get the syllabus. He noted that they should ask for a syllabus if they do not receive one. He pointed out that he does not think this is putting any additional burden on the student.

Motion to amend the policy by adding the language "by email" failed.

Professor Shea, School of Natural Resources, stated that Professor Reichenbach, Computer Science and Engineering, had to leave the meeting but wanted to bring forward an amendment to remove the word "not" from bullet number five in the policy. He stated that the removal of the word would make it more positive

sounding than negative. Professor Ledder stated that he would not accept this as a friendly amendment. He stated that the policy is to notify students of particular burdens that they may expect in the course and the idea is to clearly list what the students can expect with the course.

Professor Fuller, Art & Art History, seconded the motion to amend the language by removing the word not.

President Elect Bradford pointed out that the assumption is that collaboration is not permitted in a course. He stated that he thinks the special policy section for the course is appropriate.

Motion to amend the policy by removing the word “not” was approved, 21 in favor and 15 against the amendment.

Professor Shea stated that Professor Reichenbach suggested amending the policy by including a “tentative list of papers” rather than a list of papers. The reasoning is that this detracts from the purpose of having a syllabus. Professor Shea stated that he was not in favor of this change. No second was made on the motion.

President Elect Bradford stated that he would like to amend the second footnote to state that “violations of this policy should not be a basis for a grade appeal.” Professor Ledder asked if ASUN would think this is a reasonable amendment. Greg Gifford, ASUN representative, stated that he is concerned that the syllabus could not be used as evidence if an instructor violates something that was clearly stated on the syllabus. President-Elect Bradford stated that the change is not designed to eliminate the responsibilities of the instructor of providing students with fair notification of when an exam will be given or to change the rights that already exist for students. Gifford stated that he thinks that ASUN would accept this rationale. Professor Ledder stated that he accepted this as a friendly amendment.

President Elect Bradford pointed out that undergraduate courses are very different than graduate courses and it is often not possible to specify in advance some of the things being required in the syllabus. As a result he moves that the policy only be applicable to undergraduate courses. Professor Chouinard seconded the motion.

Professor Shea noted that the policy opens with Regents Bylaws 4.1 which requires all faculty members to inform students about the requirements, standards, objectives and evaluation procedures of each course. He noted that the Bylaw does not state that it is applicable to undergraduate courses only. President Elect Bradford stated that the Bylaw was very general and a policy would not be needed at all if the Bylaw was strictly followed.

Professor Archer, Anthropology and Geography, noted that the policy refers to traditional classroom settings. He asked if graduate courses are considered traditional classroom settings. Professor Ledder stated that it would. He noted that the policy should apply to any course where specifics about the course need to be provided to the students. Professor Peterson asked about distance education courses because they are in non-traditional settings. Professor Ledder stated that this is really not an issue for distance education courses because they rely on much more documentation than a regular course.

Professor Ledder stated that he is against the proposed amendment. He noted that the policy is not overly prescriptive and changes can be made to a syllabus to make it applicable to a graduate course. Gifford agreed stating that graduate students deserve the same protection as undergraduate students. He stated that he did not think ASUN would accept this motion.

Professor Zorn noted that graduate courses might require additional flexibility for their syllabus. He suggested

adding language that recognizes the difference between graduate and undergraduate courses. Professor Alexander, Electrical Engineering, stated that this could cause problems for 400/800 level courses where you have both graduate and undergraduates in the same course. He pointed out that some of the students in a course would get a syllabus while others would not.

Professor Chouinard pointed out that requiring the policy for undergraduate courses does not bar instructors from providing a syllabus for graduate courses if they wish.

Motion to require the policy for undergraduate courses was defeated.

Motion to approve the syllabus policy was approved.

9.0 New Business

9.1 Resolution on Professor Ari

Professor Garza, History, stated that the resolution is similar to the one issued by Georgetown University. He noted that currently there is a lawsuit against the U.S. government to respond to the visa request made in 2005 for Dr. Waskar Ari. Professor Garza pointed out that the timing is crucial to have a resolution passed since the lawsuit is currently being heard. Professor Ledder seconded the motion.

President Moeller declared the motion as an emergency motion. President Elect Bradford challenged this ruling. Professor Ledder asked if the motion was being declared as an emergency motion because of a time limit on the lawsuit. President Elect Bradford stated that this motion would not qualify as an emergency motion according to the language of the Senate Bylaws. He pointed out that he does not think the lawsuit will be resolved by the end of April and there is a Senate meeting on April 24th when the resolution can be voted on.

The challenge to the emergency motion passed 18 in favor and 13 against. The motion will be voted on at the April 24th meeting.

Professor Peterson asked who will be getting the motion. He asked if the motion will be directed to someone in particular. Professor Garza stated that it will be reported to the student body and will be added to the History department's website (<http://www.history.unl.edu/news/ari/ari.html>). He noted that this is a clearinghouse for information about Dr. Ari's case.

9.2 Safe Assignment Policy

Professor Flowers stated that the policy was drafted by a committee last fall. He noted that a number of people from the campus community, including students, were members of the committee. The policy is to protect students' rights and to provide guidelines on the proper usage of Safe Assignment. He pointed out that the Safe Assignment program is a citation checking tool that can be used by both instructors and students. It also keeps a temporary database of papers to make sure that the same papers are not being used again. He stated that the Libraries will develop a lab so students can use the program to check their papers.

Professor Flowers stated that one area of concern with the policy is in dealing with papers that contain personal information. He noted that these papers can be excluded from the database.

President Moeller asked if other universities have similar policies. Professor Flowers stated that they do and the committee looked at these policies before they wrote the draft.

President Elect Bradford seconded the motion.

President Moeller stated that the policy will be voted on at the April 24th meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be held on Tuesday, April 24th, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Richard Alloway, Secretary.