

UNL ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES
City Campus Union,
October 2, 2007
Presidents Steve Bradford, Kathy Prochaska Cue, and Ali Moeller, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Bradford called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

3.0 Chancellor Perlman

Chancellor Perlman stated that he hoped the faculty took some measure of pride in seeing the enrollment figures for this fall semester. He noted that this was the largest class since 1982 and the most talented class ever admitted as well as the most diverse. He pointed out that there are more non-resident students than ever before in the history of the university. He reported that the enrollment figures demonstrate the efforts of the Admissions Office, Dean Cerveny, and the faculty.

Chancellor Perlman stated that parents and students unanimously commented on how warm and embracing the campus was when they came to visit. This included not only the recruiting staff but faculty, staff, and deans as well. He noted that years ago these comments would not have been made but there has been a change of attitude on campus which is important for us. He pointed out that enrollment needs to continue to be a significant issue for us because it is important for the university.

Chancellor Perlman wanted to clarify the budgeting process in regards to enrollment. He stated that when enrollment figures went down it created a deficit for UNL that we are currently still dealing with. As a result we do not have a lot of slush money to work with even though enrollment is up this year. He noted that legislative money has been cut but the money from enrollments has prevented further budget adjustments.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he appreciates the Senate's engagement in the efforts to revise the general education program. He pointed out that the campus is getting to the finish line and it is very important for us to get the program revisions completed. He noted that a sensible general education program can make a big difference to the campus. He stated that he thinks we are well on our way to completing the process of creating a new general education program. He stated that he wanted to thank all of those who have worked on it and he appreciates all of the efforts that have been done to revise the program.

Chancellor Perlman reported that there will be a formal opening of the Confucius Institute on October 30th and he hopes that members of the State Department will be able to attend. He pointed out that some upfront investments have been made in the hopes that the third and fourth year of the program will pay off for UNL. He noted that some students from China are already here because they are so excited to come to UNL and there are a substantial number of students who are hoping to come here next year.

Chancellor Perlman reported that there are some struggles with the increased enrollment. He stated that the struggles can be felt in housing, class rooms, campus recreation, and in dining halls. He noted that the campus did a good job of dealing with the increased enrollment last year and the deans and departments are working this year to accommodate the students in classes.

4.0 Approval of 9/11/07 Minutes

Professor Lawson, Geosciences, moved and Professor Flowers, Psychology, seconded approval of the minutes. Motion approved.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Academic Standards Committee (Professor Gregory)

President Bradford noted that Professor Gregory was unable to attend the meeting. President Bradford stated that anyone with questions on the report should contact Professor Gregory (dgregory1@unl.edu).

5.2 Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee (Professor Bryant)

Professor Bryant wanted to acknowledge the good work of his colleagues on the Academic Rights &

Responsibilities Committee. He pointed out that Professors Bender, Chouinard, and O'Hanlon sat on the Committee last year. He noted that the Committee had a fair amount of work last year and he wanted to recognize the work of Professor Diamond who co-chaired the Committee, was a wonderful colleague and who did the work with a great deal of tact and poise.

Professor Bryant noted that the report lists the work that was done over the past year. He pointed out that a high profile case this past year was the Belot case and the way that it unfolded over time resulted in President Bradford asking the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee to develop a way for hearing committees to deal with publicity. Professor Bryant reported that the Committee is working on instructions for the hearing committees so that the members understand that confidential information is not to be leaked to the press. He noted that the Committee hopes to get these instructions to the Senate before the end of the year.

President Bradford asked when the changes to the language of the procedures for cases of Academic Freedom and Tenure will be coming. Professor Bryant stated that the changes should be coming soon. He noted that the changes are being verified with the Chancellor's Office and with Varner Hall. He pointed out that the changes deal with having a more realistic timeline for the Board of Regents to act on deciding whether to fire a tenured professor. The timeline would better coincide with the Board's schedule.

Professor Zorn, Finance, stated that while he understands the need for confidentiality, he believes the person being considered for termination should be able to make an appeal beyond the university if he or she chooses to do so. He stated that he would like to see this reflected in the procedures. Professor Bryant pointed out that there is nothing in the procedures that would prevent the professor who the complaint is against from revealing what is going on. He stated that the confidentiality issue pertains to the faculty members serving on the hearing committee.

6.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

7.0 New Business

7.1 ACE Draft Proposals 3 and 4 (Associate VC Wilson and Professor Janovy)

Professor Janovy wanted to thank the Senate for allowing the ACE Committees to present the proposals. He noted that the efforts to revise the general education program began nearly five years ago; two years ago the ACE committees were formed. He stated that the consensus was to create a general education program that was outcome based. He reported that the ACE committees received an enormous amount of input from faculty members, particularly from the Faculty Senate and the Senate Executive Committee. He stated that hopefully the proposals will be turned over to the colleges in a couple of weeks for approval.

Professor Janovy reminded the Senate that proposals 1 and 2 defined the list of institutional objectives and the outcomes. He noted that these proposals were approved last year but there was a lot of discussion about proposal 1 which resulted in some revisions. He reported that the GEAC committees reviewed the concerns that were raised about the proposal and decided that some wording needed to be reconciled to deal with these concerns.

Professor Janovy stated that students will see Proposal 2 which is pretty clean and straight forward. He noted that Proposals 3 and 4 have been on the web and they too have generated considerable discussion.

Professor Janovy stated that the ACE committees have a little more work to do and then the proposals will be sent to the colleges for a vote. He stated that he believes that we will have a very good program which will be unique across the country. He noted that the program has the potential of being a model for other institutions.

Professor Janovy stated that Associate VC Wilson, Professor Mitchell, and Professor Goodburn from the ACE committees were also in attendance to answer any questions that anyone might have.

President Bradford asked for Professor Janovy to speak about the committee structure that is outlined in Proposal 4. He asked what committee will be responsible for handling the recertification of courses for the ACE program. Professor Janovy stated that in discussions with the GEAC committees it became obvious that the body that should deal with the ACE issues should be the Curriculum Committee. He pointed out that the ACE committees realized that there would be a flood of work early in the process of getting the ACE program up and running so the decision was made to create a temporary committee to help with the work.

Professor Janovy noted that there are some voting recommendations in Proposal 4 which might cause some

concern, particularly the ACE certification requiring a unanimous vote. He stated that there has been a lot of discussion about this but the ACE committees felt that the recommendation is the least of several evils. He pointed out that at most there are probably only 12 courses that might evoke discussion. Everything else is fairly straight forward.

Professor Janovy stated that the ACE Committees have tried to develop a form to deal with co-curricular activities. He noted that there are a lot of UCARE projects and other things going on that would qualify as meeting an outcome in the program.

Professor Janovy reported that the ACE committees had a long discussion with Professor Moshman about transfers. He stated that after the committees looked at the statistics on transfers they realized that they are not much of a problem as originally thought.

Professor Janovy stated that the expectations are that courses being taught for a particular outcome will be evaluated every four or five years. He noted that a university wide assessment committee will make assessments in the future. He stated that programs will be assessed, not individual people.

Professor Janovy reported that there are a lot of people who are concerned about getting courses off of the list. As a result the committees wanted to give departments the ability to withdraw a course and this is why this has been included in the proposals.

President Bradford asked if the idea is that the university wide assessment committee collects the data and then the ACE committee reviews it. Professor Janovy stated that he believes this is correct but pointed out that there is a fair amount of reliance on existing programs within departments.

Secretary Alloway stated that in Section 5 of Proposal 4 co-curricular activities are mentioned. He asked what kind of time frame is envisioned for the approval process for these activities since many of them are to be completed in a semester. Professor Janovy stated that this has not been discussed thoroughly. He noted that there have been some informal talks about having an activity form similar to what would be used for UCARE projects. Secretary Alloway pointed out that the approval process needs to be done quickly because of the short time frame for the projects. Professor Janovy stated that the intent is to put the responsibility and the power for these activities in the hands of the faculty and the students.

President Bradford stated that he does not see anything on the form or in Section 5 of the proposal that states that a form needs to be submitted before the activity begins. He asked if the activity doesn't need to be approved in advance. Professor Janovy stated that this has not been discussed yet and it should be put on the agenda for the ACE committees.

Secretary Alloway noted that the form asks to describe the assessable product. He pointed out that in some cases, such as in Broadcasting, it may be difficult to be specific about the project until it is actually completed. Professor Janovy stated that the assumption is that the faculty members know how to mentor these students and will be able to decide what can be assessed.

Professor Sarroub, Teaching, Learning & Teacher Education, asked about the logistics of incorporating the new program in the coming year. She pointed out that Proposal 3 states that course proposals will be reviewed in late spring. She asked if the ACE program will then be implemented in the following fall semester. Professor Janovy stated that if everything goes as planned the whole program would start in the fall of 2009.

Professor Sarroub noted that courses are scheduled almost a year before they are taught. She asked how the coordination will be for submitting the proposals and when the courses will actually begin. Professor Janovy stated that the departments need to have a discussion about what they want to do about having courses submitted for the ACE program. He pointed out that departments will have several months to work on getting courses certified for the program.

Professor Pederson, Construction Systems, stated that the ACE program will need to be compared with other programs and will have to work with pre-professional programs. He noted that this will take some time and hopes there will be enough time for departments to react. Professor Janovy pointed out that if departments decide the ACE program is too much work then we are in trouble.

Professor Ledder, Mathematics, noted that last year the ACE committees were criticized for the process that was used in developing the proposals. He stated that he thinks the process has been very good this year. He

pointed out that the rough drafts of the proposals were made available to the faculty earlier and there has been more flexibility in getting changes made. He noted that the latest revisions are improved and he believes that the campus is getting really close to getting the proposals completed. He stated that he thinks there may be a little more resistance in approving some of the courses for the program. He noted that the Curriculum Committee reviewed approximately 80 proposals and there was about a 10% negative vote. He stated that ACE courses may create a lot more discussion.

Professor Janovy thanked the Senate for its time and effort.

President Bradford reported that the Executive Committee is presenting a resolution to approve Proposals 1 through 4. He noted that the vote will take place at the November meeting and the floor will be open for debate prior to the vote. Professor Pedersen asked if Proposals 1 and 2 were endorsed by the Senate last year. President Bradford pointed out that Proposal 1 has been revised and needs to be approved again.

Professor Ledder noted that last year the official ruling was that the Senate did not need to actually vote on the proposals but the Senate is now being required to because of the proposed changes to the Curriculum Committee.

Professor Zorn asked if each college needs to approve the proposals and if so, why does the Senate need to approve them. President Bradford stated that there are two reasons why the Senate needs to vote on the proposals. The first is that any changes to a Senate committee must be approved by the Senate. Secondly, the Regents Bylaws state that any academic matter that cuts across the colleges needs to be approved by the Senate. He pointed out that Senate approval alone is not enough to put the program into place. Each college must also approve it.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:21 p.m. The next meeting of the Academic Senate will be held on Tuesday, November 6th, 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union, Great Plains Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Richard Alloway, Secretary.