

UNL ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES
East Campus Union, Great Plains Room
September 11, 2007

Presidents Steve Bradford, Kathy Prochaska Cue, and Ali Moeller, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Bradford called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Announcement

2.1 Welcoming Dr. Waskar Ari

President Bradford noted that Dr. Ari was hired in 2005 and although the University applied for a visa for him, nothing happened for a long time. He reported that a request went to Homeland Security to investigate the delay but it was not until a lawsuit was filed by UNL that a visa was finally issued. He announced that Dr. Ari is finally here and teaching. President Bradford reported that he received a letter from Wayne Davis, President of the Faculty Senate and Jo Ann Hoepfner Moran Cruz, Associate Professor of the History Department, at Georgetown University thanking the UNL Faculty Senate for their support of Dr. Ari through his difficult two year visa application process.

President Bradford introduced Professor Ari and welcomed him here and stated that he hopes he has a long and profitable career at UNL.

2.2 Two Forums on ACE Proposals

President Bradford reminded the Senate that the ACE committees have produced drafts of proposals three and four and have revised proposal one. There will be two forums for people to provide input on the documents. September 14th and September 17th will be the dates of the open forums. He strongly encouraged Senators to attend the forums and asked that they encourage their colleagues to attend as well.

President Bradford suggested that as faculty members evaluate the proposals they should keep in mind, to not let the perfect be the enemy of the good. He pointed out that not everything in the proposals will be 100% acceptable to everyone but the question needs to be asked whether the ACE program will be better than the existing ES/IS program. He asked people to provide feedback to the ACE committees if they cannot attend the forums.

2.3 Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee

President Bradford stated that an issue arose this summer with an Academic Rights and Responsibilities case regarding confidentiality. As a result he has asked the Committee to review their procedures. He pointed out that those involved in the case did an excellent job but the Committee is being asked to look at incorporating additional steps in the procedures to ensure confidentiality.

2.4 Welcome Associate to the Chancellor Poser

President Bradford wanted to welcome the new Associate to the Chancellor, Dr. Susan Poser. He noted that she has replaced Dr. Howe who retired this summer.

3.0 Vice Chancellor Owens

Vice Chancellor Owens reported that Chancellor Perlman sends his regret that he cannot attend the meeting. He stated that the Chancellor is out in the State speaking with the people of Nebraska.

Vice Chancellor Owens noted that the Board of Regents met last Thursday. He stated that during the meeting the Board decided to require all residence halls on campus to have fire sprinkler systems installed within the next ten years. He stated that the largest fiscal impact will be at UNK. The cost for UNL will be approximately \$2.3 million.

Vice Chancellor Owens stated that enrollment figures were made official yesterday and UNL's enrollment is just below 23,000. He pointed out that this is a 3.9% increase and gave special thanks to the Admissions Office and the faculty and friends of the University. He stated that UNL's student population is growing in the number of non-resident students which is essential because Nebraska's student population will not be increasing in the future. He pointed out that the University needs to be attractive to out of state students.

Vice Chancellor Owens pointed out that it is the first time in the history of the University and the State of Nebraska that veterinary medicine is being taught on campus. He noted that this fall 25 students started the new veterinary medicine program. He reported that the first two years of the program will be taught here and the next two years will be at Iowa State. He noted that there will be approximately 50 students in the program next year. He stated that this program is important to our state because animals fall into the economy of the state and pets have become so important in peoples' lives.

4.0 Approval of 4/24/07 Minutes

Professor Zorn, Finance, made a correction to the minutes. Professor Meyer, Biological Systems Engineering, moved that the minutes be approved as amended. Motion seconded by Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics. Motion approved.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee (Professor Vigna)

Professor Vigna reported that 408 students, or 55% of the graduating class, attended the August commencement. She noted that the August commencement always has the lowest attendance which is not surprising since many of the graduates are graduate students who have left the campus to begin their careers. She reported that the average attendance at commencement is 66%.

Professor Vigna stated that one of the highlights of the commencement ceremony this year was the use of close captioning. She reported that a request was made by the parents of a graduate student to include the close captioning rather than using sign language. She stated that close captioning will be used from now on during the commencement.

Professor Vigna reported that the international flags used during commencement had become tattered and torn but have recently been replaced thanks to a donation from Herman and Helen Wiebers in memory of their daughter Edythe Ann Wiebers.

Professor Vigna pointed out that the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee were just recently merged. She noted that the report is based on last year's activity which is why it is focused on the activities of the Commencement Committee only.

Professor Vigna stated that the committee is exploring the concept of using college banners during commencement.

President Bradford thanked the committee for all of its work. He noted that he has now had the opportunity to see how well the committee operates after attending the spring and summer commencements.

5.2 Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (Past President Moeller)

Past President Moeller stated that she thought the Senators might enjoy a more thorough report so she included more information regarding the meetings. She noted that the FCAC serves as an advisory committee to the Chancellor on faculty salaries and benefits. She pointed out that it has been helpful to have people with a certain amount of expertise in statistics on the committee. She thanked Professor Peterson for being the champion on the committee in this area. She asked if there were any questions and suggested that people can email her with questions as well.

5.3 Executive Committee Summer Report (President Bradford)

President Bradford noted that a copy of the report is in the Senator's packet. He stated that the report is self explanatory and highlights the activities of the Committee during the summer.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Resolution on Safe Assignment Policy

President Bradford noted that the current document contains revisions from the original document presented to the Senate in April. He asked for a motion to accept the revisions. Professor Flowers, Psychology, moved to accept the revisions. Motion seconded by Professor Ledder, Mathematics. Motion approved.

Professor Flowers reported that he and Professor Ledder had discussions over the summer with students from ASUN to talk about the students' concerns with the policy. He stated that the revisions made to the policy clarify some of the concerns. He noted that the main issue of concern is the availability of Safe Assignment for students. He reported that there will now be an introductory course conducted by the Libraries on the program. This will allow students to have full use of the program for draft submissions. He stated that once students go through the introductory course, the program will be available to them through Blackboard.

Professor Ledder stated that he would like to make minor amendments to the policy. He noted that after conversations with students and the Executive Committee he felt that there were parts of the policy that needed to be strengthened. He moved that the word “should” in the second sentence under Use by Students be changed to “will” so it reads, “The draft review installation of Safe Assignment will be established independently from the SA software used in academic courses, and *will* be available to all UNL undergraduate and graduate students.”

Professor Jackson, Food Science & Technology, pointed out that Safe Assignment is a subscription based service that the university pays for and the university could discontinue use of it in the future.

Past President Moeller seconded Professor Ledder’s amendment. Amendment failed, 31 to 13.

Professor Ledder stated that another amendment he would like to make is to change the word “should” in the last paragraph under Use by Faculty and Other Instructional Staff to “is expected to.” He pointed out that the word should does not impose a requirement and he believes that instructors need to be required to have a paper removed from the local database if the instructor fails to notify the students that he/she will be using Safe Assignment in the course. Professor Flowers seconded the motion.

Secretary Alloway asked if an instructor has the ability to remove a paper from the local database. Professor Flowers stated that the instructor can initiate the process to have it removed by contacting Information Services.

Professor Ledder argued that the word should implies that there is a moral imperative to remove the paper from the local database if a student makes this request but the current language does not require the instructor to do this.

Professor Peterson stated that he has a problem with requiring the instructor to notify students of the use of Safe Assignment. He pointed out that he has checked for plagiarism for many years without the students’ knowledge and he does not think an instructor should be penalized if they do not inform the students of the use of Safe Assignment. He stated that he believes the decision should be left up to the instructor and he is opposed to most of the paragraph pertaining to this in the policy.

Professor Flowers pointed out that the issue has to do with the deposition of a student’s paper into the local database and the sentence is in the policy to protect the privacy of the student. Professor Peterson stated that there needs to be clarification regarding whether a paper put into the local database becomes part of the public domain. Professor Flowers noted that the paper goes into the local database where it is checked against other papers for plagiarism but the instructor cannot see the papers that are being checked. He pointed out that a paper can be withheld from being entered into the local database by checking a box when the paper is being submitted.

Professor Ledder stated that there are two different ways of using Safe Assignment. One is to use it for everything that is submitted. The other is to not use the program unless a paper is submitted that seems suspicious.

Motion to amend the policy passes, 31 in favor and 11 against.

President Bradford asked for further discussion of the policy as it is amended. Professor Zorn asked if the point of the policy is to prevent plagiarism or to help students to plagiarize without getting caught. He stated that the policy needs clarification.

Professor Ledder agreed that there are parts of the policy that make it easier for a student to plagiarize without getting caught but it allows instructors to catch some forms of academic dishonesty. He pointed out that the program can be an instructional device for students who submit a draft paper. He stated that he believes that students need to be protected from anyone abusing their work and they should have the freedom to be able to write anything they want without fearing that their paper would be entered into a local database.

Professor Schacht, Agronomy & Horticulture, asked if there was a provision in the policy for a student to be able to use their own work for a second time. Professor Flowers stated that he has requested students to notify him if they have used the paper before. He does not see this as a serious problem if the paper is just kept in the local database. He noted that if the paper is published it could come up as plagiarism.

Professor Ledder pointed out that Safe Assignment strips away any identification of who wrote the original paper. He noted that once the Safe Assignment policy is done he will be chairing a committee on Academic Dishonesty. He asked if a student reuses a paper is it considered academic dishonesty. He stated that he would like to get people’s opinion on this.

Greg Gifford, Graduate Student Representative to ASUN, stated that he has worked closely on this issue. He reported that the policy has been drafted to protect students. He pointed out that a student's paper is digitally copied and loaded onto a database but there is no assurance that the student's work is not being used elsewhere. He noted that it is important for students to be able to reject having their paper submitted to the local database.

Professor Zorn stated that he totally agrees with students having the right to request that their paper not be submitted into the local database. He pointed out that this is entirely different from allowing the students to check their papers to see if they are plagiarizing. He stated that he is shocked that academicians are in favor of doing this because it can encourage cheating. He argued that instructors should be teaching students about what constitutes plagiarism.

Professor Flowers stated that the policy deals with an issue that Professor Zorn raised. He pointed out that draft papers are not checked against the local database and the draft paper is not submitted to the local database. He stated that only the instructor will be able to use the local database.

Professor Peterson stated that he has been trying to use the Safe Assignment program for some time. He pointed out that instructors will need to keep in mind that the program is not very good at catching plagiarism and he has found more cases by checking things out on his own. He noted that just because a paper receives an okay from Safe Assignment does not mean that a student is immune from being punished if plagiarism is detected. He pointed out that the important thing is for students to understand what constitutes plagiarism. President Bradford noted that the ad hoc committee on Academic Dishonesty will be addressing issues of academic dishonesty more broadly.

Professor Jackson stated he would like to amend the motion to include Student Judicial Affairs in the last sentence under the section Use for Academic Assignments Not Associated with Formal "Class" or Instructor. He noted that as a member of the University Judicial Board it occurred to him that some cases of plagiarism bypass the department and college level and there needs to be an appeal process for these cases. Professor Peterson seconded the motion. Motion approved 42 in favor of it.

Ledder stated that he has the sense that most students know what plagiarism is but there are some areas where this is not as clear. He pointed out that it is not easy for students to learn what should and shouldn't be cited. He stated that he thinks it is important for us to allow the Safe Assignment to be used as a learning tool, not just for punitive purposes.

Professor Chouinard, Mathematics, asked what the costs is for this program and is it worth the cost given that it does not catch a lot of plagiarism. He suggested that if there are any doubts about the program that it might be best to delay approving the policy. Professor Peterson stated that he thinks the program can be useful as a first step in the writing process. He noted that he is not aware of the cost but pointed out that the faculty did try it out last year and were polled about whether they liked the program. He stated that the feedback on the program was positive which is why the university purchased it.

Past President Moeller stated that she used the program this summer for a graduate course. She reported that initially the students had a lot of anxiety about using it but it turned out to be a wonderful diagnostic tool that the students enjoyed using. She pointed out that it showed the students how to format references and helped to clarify how to properly cite references. She stated that it was seen as a great learning tool for the students which they wanted to use once the course was completed. She reported that she has used it as a faculty member and it has been a great tool.

Professor Woodman, School of Biological Sciences, noted that he supervises large laboratory sections and the local database plays a large role for these large sections. He reported that the standard is 40-50% of plagiarism is detected. He pointed out that the program allows an instructor to look at papers that have major problems with them.

Greg Gifford reported that the program scans Pro database, web sites, paper mills and scans the local database. He noted that the cost of the program is \$10,300 for an annual subscription.

Secretary Alloway suggested that the committee that recommended the draft evaluate the program to see how well it is working. Professor Ledder pointed out that some other body than the committee determined that a policy was needed. He noted that the responsibility of the committee was to decide how to regulate use of the program.

President Bradford called for a vote on the motion. Motion to approve the Safe Assignment policy is approved.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Resolution on Committee on Committees Membership

President Bradford stated that the Executive Committee is asking that this motion be treated as an emergency motion. As President he rules that the motion be declared as an emergency motion but it can be challenged. No challenge was made.

President Bradford reported that Professor Chouinard detected a discrepancy in the membership of the Committee on Committees. The syllabus states that no more than two people on the committee can be from the same college but there are three faculty members from Libraries on the committee. President Bradford stated that the motion waives the requirement, for this year, that no more than two people can serve from the same college on the committee. Motion approved.

7.2 Committee on Committee Election

President Bradford noted that an opening still remains on the Committee on Committees for a member from the Senate. He stated that Past President Moeller has agreed to be a candidate for the position. He pointed out that no other nominations have come forward but asked if anyone would like to nominate themselves or anyone else at this time. No other nominations were made. Past President Moeller was elected by acclamation.

7.3 UNL Wellness Program (Angela Frederick, Campus Recreation)

President Bradford asked if this is part of a system-wide program. Angela Frederick stated that it is only for UNL. She reported that the program is based on a seven dimension model and wellness is a lifelong process. She pointed out that the wellness of the employees at UNL is something that will be considered and supported more in the future. She noted that Chancellor Perlman mentioned in his State of the University address a need for a wellness program. She pointed out that if wellness is not addressed today, it will have to be dealt with at some time when health problems start arising in people.

Angela Frederick stated that it is important to note that health care costs are rising and worksite wellness is one way of containing these costs. Consequently, Chancellor Perlman has agreed to implement a health risk assessment. She stated that the assessment will be available on line from September 24th through October 12th and the information provided will be completely confidential. She pointed out that the assessment is separate from Blue Cross/Blue Shield but the information gathered from the assessment will be benchmarked against other communities in Nebraska.

Angela Frederick stated that the information gained from the assessment will help to shape wellness programming in the future. She noted that there will be incentives to get people to participate in the program. She pointed out that there are a lot of things available for wellness on campus but people need to be made more aware of them.

Professor Weiss, Textiles, Clothing and Design, asked if students are going to participate in the program. Angela Frederick stated that at this time the program will not include students. She pointed out that their wellness programs are through the University Health Center.

Angela Frederick stated that employees can register for \$1 at the campus recreation center to be a part of the UNL Winning With Wellness Program. She stated that when people register they will receive a score card which will focus on three areas: physical activity, nutrition, and smoking cessation. She noted that the program will run through the month of October and registration for it ends in September. She reported that there will be free smoking cessation classes and a nutrition class will be held down in the Haymarket on October 6th. Professor Ledder stated that he heard that people who are not a member of the campus recreation center will be able to use the facility for free. She stated that the members of the program can go to any YMCA and gain free access by showing their score card and UNL employees will have a free membership in October. She pointed out that only non-members of the campus recreation center will have free access in October.

Angela Frederick stated that every person enrolled in the program who gains 10 out of the 12 points on the score card is eligible for prizes. There are a number of prizes and some include up to \$2500 in travel prizes. She noted that the drawing for the prizes will be held on October 27th.

7.4 Executive Committee Goals 2007-2008

President Bradford reported that the Executive Committee had its annual retreat to determine the goals for the Senate this year. He noted that some of the goals are continued from last year and some have been added. He stated that some of the goals will have an end point while others are on going. He stated that these are goals that the Executive Committee wants to emphasize for this academic year. He asked that anyone feeling there are goals missing should contact him.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, October 2nd, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Richard Alloway, Secretary.