

**UNL ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES**  
**East Campus Union, Great Plains Room**  
**January 15, 2008**  
**Presidents Steve Bradford, and Ali Moeller, Presiding**

**1.0 Call to Order**

President Bradford called the meeting to order at 2:41 p.m.

**2.0 Announcements**

President Bradford welcomed everyone back to the spring semester.

**3.0 Chancellor Perlman**

Chancellor Perlman stated that he wanted to alert the faculty about a few topics that will be relevant to them. He reported that the Board of Regents will be meeting on Friday and they will conduct an initial review of the budget for the next fiscal year which is the second year of the current biennium. He noted that all of the budget figures are known except for the tuition figures and other items that the Board might be considered but overall the figures are fairly well fixed.

Chancellor Perlman stated that people might see numbers that show a fairly significant deficit for the University in the next fiscal year but because UNL is the beneficiary of the hard work of the faculty members and Admissions we will be able to manage the deficiency because of the increased enrollment here. He noted that the increased tuition will allow us to make some additional investments in the University.

Chancellor Perlman announced that he has authorized a significant amount of funds to increase tenure and tenure-track faculty positions. He pointed out that these positions will be in departments that are experiencing demands because of an increase in the number of students enrolled in courses. He noted that these positions will be used to fill teaching gaps in departments, not research gaps. He stated that this does not mean that the positions are for teaching only but he is expecting Deans and Chairs to build faculty capacity because of increased enrollment.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the Governor gave his State of Address that morning. Chancellor Perlman stated that the University made two requests for additional funds to the State Legislature. The first is for additional funds to help with the clean up of the Mead facility and the other request is for \$24 million for a new student information system. He noted that the state colleges also requested funds for a new system and the Governor has encouraged the University and state colleges to purchase a single platform system that will work for all. He noted that the Governor is supporting the purchase by recommending an initial \$10 million investment with the rest of the funds coming in the next biennium. He pointed out that if the Legislature approves these funds the University will be on its way to getting a new system. He stated that getting a new student information system is critical because the current system will no longer be supported by the manufacturer in a couple of years. He noted that the current system significantly lacks functions that we could be using and it impacts our ability to respond to our students. He pointed out that this puts us at a moderate disadvantage to some other schools. He stated that a newer system will allow students to check their grades and pay tuition as well as allowing other functions.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there are fears with the transition to a new system because it will impact so many things at the University and it is inevitable that something will probably go wrong. He pointed out that the other fear is that because it is going to be a state-wide system, there may be some restraints to what we can do with the system on our campus. He noted that there are no intentions of driving every campus into a single system when it comes to decision making but the single platform system will impact the Faculty Senate. He pointed out that we will need to preserve the Senate's ability to approve and control curriculum policies.

Chancellor Perlman reported that President Milliken has indicated that any system like this could require investment of unlimited resources. He stated that we need a system that is competitive but not necessarily the premium standard. He noted that the campus will get a system that is workable but if a system that provides more capabilities is desired the costs will have to be covered by the campus. He stated that the additional capabilities would have to be justified before they would be considered for purchase. He pointed out that he does not know how much the new system will impact the daily lives of the faculty.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he wanted to congratulate the faculty on approving the revisions to the general education program. He pointed out that the Senate played a strong role in advocating the new program. He stated that he appreciates that there will be some investments that will be needed in order to implement the new program and he will try to make one time investments for some of the courses that will need to be developed.

Chancellor Perlman reported that he was slightly amused with some of the responses he received in response to his email message about wellness. He noted that some people felt that it was inappropriate for him to get involved in people's personal lives by suggesting that they eat healthy. He pointed out that there is a strong belief that there could be a legislative bill that will deprive state employee's of health insurance if they do not participate in a wellness program. He noted that the state and many private employers are slowly moving towards a system that will require people to pay attention to their wellness. He pointed out that the employees of the university are in the same health insurance pool and an individual's health choices do have an impact on other people's pocket books. He stated that there are a variety of committees that are looking at these kinds of programs and we can expect to see more of them.

Professor McCollough, Anthropology and Geography, reported that she was recently asked by neighbors who learned of the cost of football programs if the increase in tuition is because of supporting the football program. Chancellor Perlman stated that the University has one of the few intercollegiate athletics program in the country that is entirely self-supporting. He reported that no state funds or tuition money is used to support athletics and they in fact pay for half of their scholarships, take care of landscaping for the athletic fields and in addition, they have contributed \$1 ½ million each year to the academic side of the institution for the past ten years. He noted that he approved increasing this contribution to \$2 million this year. He pointed out that athletics is not entirely independent because they must conduct themselves according to the rules of the University.

#### **4.0 Approval of 12/4/07 Minutes**

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

#### **5.0 Committee Reports**

##### **5.1 Curriculum Committee (Professor Walklin)**

Professor Walklin pointed out that the curriculum is at the heart of faculty control and it takes the leadership of senior faculty members to keep the faculty going. He noted that it was worthwhile to have many former members of the Curriculum Committee on the ACE committees.

Professor Walklin stated that the Curriculum Committee has been using a computer driven program to approve course requests. He noted that it is working very well and helps to keep the Committee functioning smoothly. He stated that he would answer any questions anyone might have.

President Bradford stated that he hopes the Curriculum committee keeps the Senate informed as it moves forward on the implementation of the ACE program. Professor Walklin pointed out that the administration decided to create an independent committee from the Curriculum Committee to set up the initial phase of the implementation of the ACE program. He reported that a person has been hired .75 FTE to coordinate the implementation process and he understands that some faculty members will be given release time for working on it. He stated that eventually the recertification of the ACE programs will revert back to the Curriculum Committee. He stated that the recertification will more than likely be done on-line.

##### **5.2 Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (Professor Maxey-Harris)**

Professor Maxey-Harris reported that the IAC just met and approved the subcommittee report on academic support services. She reported that there was the idea to integrate the athletic academic support services with Academic Affairs but it was decided to keep it under athletics and under the direction of the Athletic Director.

President Bradford noted that under the summary of additional activities there is mention of a new policy dealing with students being enrolled in courses that are being taught by someone with close ties to the Athletic Department. He asked if there was a specific reason for this. Professor Maxey-Harris stated that the policy was drafted by Professor Potuto and it was written to prevent any possibility of perceived favoritism.

##### **5.3 UNL Representative to NCAA Report (Professor Potuto)**

Professor Potuto stated that she has asked the Senate President every year for a number of years if they would like her to give an independent report to the full Senate. She reported that she has always worked with the

IAC although in recent years the Coalition on Intercollegiate Athletics (COIA) felt that the NCAA Institutional Representative should provide a separate, independent report from the IAC. She noted that when COIA started making recommendations she began asking the Senate President if they would like her to give a separate report to the Senate and this is the first time that she has been asked to do so.

Professor Potuto explained that as the NCAA Institutional Representative she looks out for the well being of student athletes, makes sure that UNL follows compliance rules, and practices academic integrity. She noted that she also attends the NCAA conference each year and focuses on tracking down any athletic/academic issues. An example is the recent article in the Daily Nebraskan about student athletes getting preferential treatment in getting books. She pointed out that the NCAA rules specifically state that student athletes cannot get preferential treatment. She stated that what actually happened is that student athletes who receive scholarships must have the books they purchased monitored. Because this can take some time to do, the Bookstore set up a time to deal with the student athletes.

Professor Potuto stated that national issues deal with an increasing concern over the commercialization of college athletics and the amount of money being paid to coaches. Another concern is the amount of time that student athletes can spend on practice and playing.

Professor McCollough stated that she agrees with State Senator Chambers' idea of paying student athletes because they generate so much revenue for the University. Professor Potuto stated that programs like football and basketball generate awareness of sports but the money coming into the University is for all sports. She stated that it would be difficult to distribute to the other sports if athletes were paid. She noted that other factors that would need to be dealt with are the federal labor laws.

President Bradford asked if there was something that happened that prompted the new policy on favoritism in the classroom. Professor Potuto stated that no incident prompted the policy. Rather as a component of institutional control the Athletics Department realized that some of the spouses of coaches were teaching courses and the Department felt that some policy should be put into place to avoid any potential problem. She pointed out that a policy was written that would not interfere with a student's ability to take a course.

## **6.0 Unfinished Business**

### **6.1 Motion on Changes to the UNL Bylaws**

President Bradford noted that the motion was made and seconded at last month's meeting. He asked if there was any discussion on the motion.

Professor Shea, School of Natural Resources, stated that there are some issues that need to be addressed with the motion. He asked if the changes are consistent with the rest of the UNL Bylaws and the Regents Bylaws. Another issue is that there is no indication of who the Dean of the Graduate College would report to. He stated that this should be made clear in the Bylaws.

Professor Ledder, Mathematics, stated that removing the reporting lines is exactly the purpose for the change. He stated that the Chancellor spoke with the Executive Committee about what is actually happening with the position. Currently the Bylaws state that the Dean of Graduate Studies shall report to the SVCAA of Academic Affairs. What is actually occurring is that the Dean is reporting to the VC of Research. He stated that the Chancellor felt that this was a level of micromanaging that did not need to be in the Bylaws. By removing the language it gives flexibility to the Bylaws. President Bradford pointed out that whoever is in that position needs to be made aware to whom they are to report.

Professor Shea stated that it seems that the Senate needs to decide whether to leave the reporting line up to the will of the Chancellor or make clear in the Bylaws to whom the Dean should report. He stated that flexibility sounds good but sometimes it can turn into something that wasn't anticipated. He noted that questions are being raised about the process that is being used to create some of the new deans' positions that are cropping up on campus. He stated that he has some concerns that without the specification of the reporting line that too much control is being turned over to the discretion of the upper administration without the involvement of the faculty. He stated that he believed the faculty should be aware of the reporting line for this type of position.

Professor Ledder pointed out that the administration did not try to push this on the Executive Committee. He stated that the members of the Committee agreed that having flexibility in the Bylaws would be helpful. President Bradford noted that the amendment to the Bylaws was not drafted by the faculty. He stated that the Chancellor raised the changes to the Executive Committee and there were no objections.

Professor McShane, Representative from the Emeriti Association, stated that he would like to address the Senate. His own personal concerns are that the changes would accomplish the removal of the reference that the community at large and the faculty in particular, are removed from the appointment of Deans. He stated that it concerns him that the Dean of Graduate Studies would no longer be responsible to the Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs. He noted that there is a big difference between receiving a report and having to report to a specific person. He pointed out that the Dean of Graduate Studies would only be responsible to the VC of Research who is a non-academic officer.

Professor Ledder noted that this was a strong argument. He suggested that perhaps a suggestion should be made to the Chancellor that this position needs to report to the SVCAA rather than the VC of Research.

Professor Shea stated that the Dean of Graduate Studies has been reporting to the VC of Research for some time. He stated that he does not think this makes sense. He stated that he is in favor of separating the VC of Research from the Dean of Graduate Studies and now that the two positions are being separated it should be considered carefully about to whom they should report to.

Associate to the Chancellor Poser stated that it is her understanding that the Dean of Graduate Studies will have dual reporting responsibilities, to the VC of Research and the SVCAA. She stated that the flexibility of the language will provide the opportunity to see how the dual reporting works. She stated that there is justification in having the VC of Research involved because graduate students come to the University to do research. She pointed out that the Bylaws can always be amended later on if the dual reporting system does not work.

Professor Peterson asked what section 2.4.2 of the UNL Bylaws states. President Bradford stated that it is a cross reference to the Board of Regents Bylaws that relates to the selection of Deans. He noted that the proposed changes to the UNL Bylaws do not change the selection process of Deans at all.

Professor McShane stated that section 2.4.2 states that there will be an elaborate committee to select Deans. He stated that recently there seems to be a rash of different types of Deans, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, Dean of Students, and now Dean of Graduate Studies. President Bradford stated that independent of how people vote on these changes there is the issue of how Deans are appointed that needs to be discussed.

Professor Leiter, Law, asked how the VC of Research fits into all of this. President Bradford stated that the VC of Research is currently serving as the Dean of Graduate Studies as well.

Professor Chouinard, Mathematics, asked if there is particular importance in dealing with this issue now. President Bradford stated that the Board of Regents will be looking at the changes at their January meeting. Professor Chouinard asked whether the Senate not acting on this issue precludes the Board from acting on it. President Bradford stated that it probably wouldn't preclude them from acting. Professor Chouinard stated that he is inclined to suggest that the Senate postpone the motion so the Executive Committee can reconsider it. He stated that he has not heard that the Senate has fully discussed the issue. He stated that he moves for re-committal of the motion to the Executive Committee. Motion seconded by Professor Carlson, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences. Motion approved 33 in favor, 4 against.

## **6.2 UNL Strategic Compass**

President Bradford stated that he asked the Senate to review the document that was distributed last month. He noted that the document comes from Academic Affairs and the Chancellor's office. He stated that the Executive Committee has reviewed the document and come up with a series of comments on it. He asked if there was any discussion. He asked that anyone with comments contact him. He noted that he is in the process of drafting a letter that will be sent to Academic Affairs with comments about the document.

President Bradford stated that one of his concerns is the use of the word engagement and what it entails. He noted that the document predominantly mentions undergraduate education and research but leaves other things out. He pointed out that there are several references to serving young people which makes the assumption that all of the undergraduates are young when in fact this is not true.

Professor McCollough asked if this is going to be another thing that departments will need to put their strategic plans into. President Bradford stated that the question was raised about what this document really is. He stated that the Executive Committee was informed that this was an elevator conversation piece. He noted that the Committee is suggesting that the document be redrafted and exposed again to the faculty for review.

## **7.0 New Business**

### **7.1 Honorary Degrees Ballots (Associate to the Chancellor Poser)**

Associate to the Chancellor Poser noted that the Honorary Degrees Committee takes nominations for people to receive an honorary degree from the University. She noted that the ballots are of people the Honorary Degrees Committee has put forward for voting. The nominees for the degrees will then go to the Board of Regents for approval. Once approved, the nominee is eligible to get an honorary degree for a period of three years. She asked that the ballots be kept confidential.

Professor Flowers moved that the meeting be adjourned. Motion seconded by Professor Stock, English. Motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 3:51 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, February 5, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Richard Alloway, Secretary.