

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Guevara, Joeckel, Nickerson, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Sollars, Woodman, Zoubek

Absent: Anaya, Ruchala, Schubert, Wysocki

Date: Wednesday, October 23, 2013

Location: Faculty Senate Office

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

Guevara called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Possible Staff Positions on University Judicial Board

Reisbig reported that she followed up with Dean Hecker regarding the possibility of adding a staff position to the University Judicial Board. She stated that Dean Hecker contacted both UNOPA and UAAD and received positive responses from both. She stated that UAAD is interested and willing to forward nominations, but UNOPA wants to wait until their next meeting to ask the general membership about having a representative on the Judicial Board. She stated that she will report back to the Executive Committee when she receives further information. Griffin pointed out that the University Judicial Board syllabus will need to be changed and will require approval of the Senate and ASUN.

2.2 Update on Work of Information Technologies and Services Committee

Woodman reported that the ITSC will be revising the KACE policy because a different software program will be used that is less invasive. He stated that the ITSC will be starting the process to see whether or not the Blackboard contract should be renewed. He stated that will be reviewed and in general their functions are very similar to Blackboard's.

2.3 Humanities Concerns

Guevara reported that some faculty members in the Humanities are concerned with how the Dean's Office of Arts & Sciences is viewing courses because the question is being asked as to whether some of these courses are profitable. He stated that the Humanities' faculty members who contacted him about the concern hope that the Executive Committee can raise this issue with SVCAA Weissinger. He pointed out that this is an issue of serious concern that needs to be addressed in the search for a new dean. He stated that the faculty members will write a formal letter to the Executive Committee addressing their concerns. Nickerson noted that some faculty members who attended the meeting with Dean Poser about the search for a new dean raised the same concern.

Guevara asked what Dean Poser's reaction was to concerns that were raised. Nickerson stated that Dean Poser was non-committal but stated that all suggestions were welcome. He pointed out that this is an issue that needs to be considered when interviewing candidates for the Dean's position. Woodman noted that the Executive Committee will interview the candidates for the Dean of Arts & Sciences and it needs to make sure that the members are well prepared for the interview. Guevara stated that it is important to get someone who doesn't want to run the college strictly as a business.

Woodman noted that an outside consultant, who the university has hired in the past, is being used to assist in the search. He wondered how many of the previous searches the consultant was involved in were successful.

Joeckel asked if others were concerned with the corporate profitability way of thinking in terms of courses. Reisbig asked him to define profitable. Joeckel stated that at many other universities there seems to be an attempt to have courses based on how much revenue they can produce, resulting in what he considers to be the de-intellectualizing of the university. He stated that he finds it shocking that the "courses for profit thinking" is occurring on campuses. Nickerson pointed out that it is understandable to see a slight preference in having courses with high enrollment, but the university needs to maintain a wide breadth of courses.

Guevara reported that none of the Humanities courses that are raising the concerns are stand-alone programs. He stated that he has concerns regarding SVCAA Weissinger's comments from a previous meeting that there will not be any backfilling of faculty positions for some units. He pointed out that the administration is not giving full support to departments that are providing a lot of required courses.

Joeckel stated that one way to kill off a department is to not allow that department to hire young faculty members. He noted that not allowing departments to hire faculty encourage the faculty in those departments to worry about their own programs and what will happen. He stated that he is aware of this happening in a program here at UNL. Guevara pointed out that this selective hiring in just certain departments will weaken the university over time.

3.0 Approval of October 9, 2013 Minutes

Bender moved for approval of the minutes as revised. Joeckel seconded the minutes. The minutes were approved with one abstention.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Changes to Student Code of Conduct

Bender reported that the committee working on changing the Student Code of Conduct reviewed Coordinator Giesecke's draft of proposed changes and had only minor suggested changes which she incorporated into the draft. He stated that the draft will now go to Deputy General Counsel Wiltse for review and feedback and then will be sent to the committee. He noted that eventually the changes will be presented to the Senate and ASUN.

Nickerson asked if Giesecke's current draft was from the previous draft presented to the Executive Committee or whether parts of it are from the existing document. Bender reported that Giesecke took parts from a model code of conduct and the original draft of proposed changes. He stated that the disciplinary procedures, academic dishonesty, and violations have been changed the most. He stated that Giesecke has done a good job of organizing the document and the committee is basically pleased with it.

Woodman asked if updates have been made to address the use of electronic technology and the internet. He pointed out that the old version did not address plagiarism and the use of the internet adequately. Bender stated that the language is general enough to cover the use of the internet. Woodman stated that he is concerned that if it is too general students will not see the regulations as being pertinent to the internet. He suggested that specific language needs to be included pertaining to the use of electronic information. Bender stated that he will mention this to the committee.

Reisbig stated that there will be a footnote stating that the model code came from the Journal of College and University Law. Woodman pointed out that there were a lot of problems with the last draft. Reisbig stated that she thinks this is because the students were trying to take the new information and put it into the old format and the new draft is much better.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Report on CIC Faculty Leadership Conference

Guevara reported that he and Woodman attended the conference which was held at Indiana University. He noted that the host institution has the freedom to do as they please with the conference and Indiana chose to have presentations made by administrators on how things are handled at Indiana. He stated that while it was interesting and nice to know there was no opportunity for the faculty leaders to consult with each other and to discuss best practices of their Senate and issues they are dealing with. Woodman pointed out that this is what has happened at some of the other leadership conferences in the past four years. Guevara noted that this did not happen when the conference was held at Northwestern. At that conference the faculty leaders met and talked about a variety of issues they were facing.

Guevara stated that one problem with the conferences is that more than likely those who attended the conference will not be there the next year because they serve one year as President. This does not allow for any growth in the conference. As a result those who attend the conference more than once find it very frustrating because they do not see the conference as growing. He noted that one of the people in attendance stated that he has gone for four years and he has not seen the program evolve.

Nickerson asked if the presentations covered any of the issues that the UNL Senate is concerned with. Guevara reported that topics such as tenure, shrinking revenue, how trustees are appointed or selected, and parking concerns were raised. He stated that there was also a presentation about publications and MOOCs which was interesting.

Nickerson asked if the other institutions have a ranking order for publications in order for faculty members to receive tenure. Guevara stated that the presentation focused on the humanities. He stated that the question raised was whether electronic publications will be viewed equally for tenure since the number of printed journals is shrinking.

Guevara reported that the Senate from the University of Iowa meets with their Board of Regents each month before their monthly meetings. Joeckel stated that the Executive Committee should investigate meeting with the Regents. Woodman stated that this would allow the Regents to understand what the faculty is thinking, particularly since there are no faculty representatives on the Board like there are student representatives.

Nickerson asked if Guevara and Woodman sensed that the other Faculty Senates have a sense of power with their administrations. Guevara stated that some seem to have a lot of power while a few others had a lot less than us. He noted that one of the presentations was about how faculty members could be more effective in shared governance. He reported that staffing various committees and having a quorum at committee meetings was a challenge for all of the universities. Woodman noted that it was pointed out in the presentation that the slowness in how the faculty operates to provide feedback is viewed detrimentally by administrators which can result in administrators being secretive about proposed changes to policies or the creation of new ones. He stated that the administrator giving the report felt that it was better for the faculty to hear about proposed changes while they are still being formed rather than waiting until the changes are completed because the latter option creates a level of secrecy which is not good for relationships with the faculty.

Woodman reported that the administrator also talked about incentives for involvement in faculty governance and recognition for their work. Sollars pointed out that service work towards faculty governance is discounted in many units. Woodman suggested that having a drop down box on the form faculty members use to record the work they accomplished (when available) could be used to help indicate the shared governance service of a faculty member. Guevara noted that the departments decide how to value service work and if the departments don't value it, why should administrators. Sollars stated that this is true, but peer review committees can value the service work at other levels. She noted that the reporting goes through to the dean although it is the chairs that ultimately make the decision on salary increases and performance.

Sollars wondered who organized the faculty leadership conference. Guevara stated that he is not sure but suspects that whoever is providing the funding probably has a lot of say in how the conference is organized. Sollars pointed out that it would be more interesting if the conference would be a reflection of shared governance at the university that is hosting the event.

Guevara reported that Woodman did ask Mark Sandler from the University of Michigan why the CIC can't propose some guidelines on the focus of the conference. He noted that this could be done while still giving the hosting institution some independence. Woodman adds, after the meeting, that Sanders stated that the CIC central office

essentially worked for those who footed the bills, like the SVCAA/Provosts of the conference, or the libraries etc. As such the CIC could not devote time to facilitating the senate leadership meetings. Sollars stated that there is certainly value in having the faculty leadership conference, but suggested that it could be improved if there wasn't so much faculty turnover each year. She suggested that a possible solution might be to have a CIC representative for three years so there is some continuity. Guevara noted that this can be done without appointing someone. He pointed out that he attended the conference last year and this year. Bender stated that the conference could be more meaningful if people were involved who had more experience in attending the conference. Nickerson suggested that the CIC institutions could request that there be more discussion among the faculty leaders from the different universities at the conference. Reisbig wondered who decides to allow the institutions to make their own presentation. She stated that someone should suggest to the CIC that a basic outline or syllabus for the conference be created.

Woodman stated that he was able to make some inquiries on how non-tenure track faculty members are classified. He reported that the Wisconsin representative noted that only tenured faculty members were considered faculty and at Iowa non-tenure track faculty members cannot be involved in the Senate, yet at Penn State all non-tenure track faculty members are considered faculty. Bender noted that Wisconsin and Iowa both have a high wall between the faculty and non-tenure track faculty members. He asked if they are all experiencing high growth in non-tenure track positions. Woodman reported that all of the Big Ten universities are experiencing this growth.

Woodman reported that some of the universities have a large support staff to support the Senate and some of the support staff members were in attendance. Reisbig stated that she liked this idea and stated that we should consider sending the Senate Coordinator to the conference.

Griffin noted that the Faculty Leaderships Conference is scheduled to be held at UNL in 2020.

5.2 UNO Senate Resolutions

Guevara noted that UNO's Faculty Senate recently passed a motion opposing the merger of the Computers and Electronics Engineering department and the Electrical Engineering department and called for the creation of a College of Engineering at UNO. However, Schubert pointed out in his email that these departments are UNL departments and not UNO departments and therefore the UNO Senate does not have a say in what should happen with these departments. Woodman noted that the CEEN department is housed at UNO and there are connections. He pointed out that the resolution does not actually state that the students are UNO students, rather that they are UNO based. Joeckel questioned how the merger of these departments really affects the UNO campus.

Bender wondered if the students who complete these engineering programs go through UNL commencement or UNO commencement. He stated that when Criminal Justice students go through the UNL commencement it is acknowledged that while they went to school at UNL they are actually graduating from a UNO program.

Woodman questioned if the Executive Committee wants to take any action. Nickerson stated that the Executive Committee can support the administration's program. He reported that the Board of Regents acted on the issue and left it pending whether there will be a merger of the departments. He pointed out that the Chancellor did not want to mislead anyone but did intend to have the departments merged at some time.

Guevara stated that he would like to officially support our administration for the effort they made to create a plan that will allow the Engineering College to move forward. He noted that he sent an email message and called UNO Faculty Senate President Bacon to talk to her about the resolutions but has not received any response. He stated that he does not see this issue as a purview of the UNO Senate since this involves UNL faculty members and students.

The Executive Committee agreed that a message should be sent to the President of the UNO Faculty Senate stating that the resolution is inapplicable because it pertains to UNL faculty and students, not UNO faculty and students.

5.3 UNL Bylaws

Guevara noted that the Chancellor will share his proposed changes to the UNL Bylaws when he is finished making his suggested changes. He pointed out that the Chancellor has stated that the Bylaws are important for faculty members because it places restrictions on administrators. He suggested that the Executive Committee wait to see the changes before taking on the task of reviewing the Bylaws. Woodman stated that the Executive Committee and the Senate should take a more proactive role in considering changes in the Bylaws rather than just respond to changes proposed by the Chancellor. He also noted that the Chancellor had invited the active participation of the Senate in the process and that we should take advantage of that offer.

5.4 November Senate Meeting

The Executive Committee suggested that Guevara make an announcement that the Executive Committee is soliciting views from faculty members regarding changes they would like to see made to the UNL Bylaws.

Nickerson stated that he would like to see time set aside at the Senate meetings where individual faculty members can bring concerns to the Senate. He suggested that Senators be encouraged to raise issues at the Senate meetings. He noted that he is interested in the Biotechnology related core facilities and has heard considerable comments and questions about these facilities. Griffin suggested that VC Paul should be asked to speak to the Senate to address these concerns.

5.5 Midwestern Higher Education Compact's 9th Annual Policy Summit – The Rise of MOOCs

Guevara noted that Interim Provost Fritz sent an email message about the policy summit which will be held in Omaha on November 18 and 19 and asked if anyone is interested in

attending. Sollars stated that she plans to attend and will be happy to report to the Executive Committee about it.

5.6 CIC Academic Leadership Program

Woodman pointed out that the Faculty Senate President-Elect at many of the other Big Ten institutions was automatically included in attending the CIC's Academic Leadership Program. Guevara noted that SVCAA Weissinger selected five faculty members from UNL who are all current administrators. Nickerson stated that regular faculty members might want to get some training on shared governance and faculty leadership. He questioned whether any members of the Senate have ever been sent to the Academic Leadership Program. The Executive Committee agreed to request that the SVCAA include sending the Senate President-Elect to the CIC Academic Leadership Program.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:03 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 30 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Toni Anaya, Secretary.