EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: **Guevara, LaCost, Lindquist, Rinkevich, Schubert, Shea, Varner, Wysocki**

Absent: **Anaya, Purdum, Struthers**

Date: **Wednesday, January 25, 2012**

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

LaCost called the meeting to order at 3:04 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

3.0 Approval of 1/18/12 Minutes

Guevara moved for approval of the minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Wysocki. The motion was approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Report on Meeting about Honorary Degrees (Anaya)

Anaya was unable to attend the meeting.

4.2 Survey Questions for Professor of Practice

LaCost noted that the Executive Committee had discussed last semester issues facing professors of practice, and last week the Committee decided it would conduct a short survey of professors of practice and lecturers to see if there are common issues facing these faculty members across the campus. She noted that Woodman drafted a set of questions that could be used in the survey. Shea noted that the questions are very good and that they seem to cover all areas for professors of practice.

Schubert asked if the survey should be expanded to include research professors or whether a separate survey should be developed. Wysocki stated that the surveys should be separate. Schubert noted that both categories of these faculty members are equivalent to each other. Guevara asked if research professors can be on a tenure track line. Schubert stated that they are not. Woodman pointed out that research professors can be promoted similar to professors of practice.

Woodman asked if research professors completely paid through a grant have to go through a department process for obtaining a salary increase. Schubert pointed out that this is a good question and recently he had a conversation with his Chair about this issue. He was informed that the person would need to go through an evaluation process. Shea

stated that he believes that research professors have to go through the same process as tenure-track professors for promotion in his unit. Varner reported that extension educators, regardless of how they are paid, have to go through the same evaluation process as those educators paid through state funds. Shea noted that there may be some difference among departments in how they do the evaluations, but a person should be evaluated on the responsibilities they were hired to do. Schubert pointed out that research professors may also teach.

Shea noted that he reviewed the November 8, 2006 documents on the professors of practice positions and prescriptions from the senior administration team (SAT) to deans and directors state that they "strongly encourage you (deans and directors) to integrate those holding these appointments as fully as possible into the unit." For example, "those full-time professors of practice with contracts of more than 1 year would normally have voting rights on all department issues except personnel issues involving tenure track faculty." He believes the problem is that the message from the SAT only encourages departments to accommodate professors of practice in this way and does not require it. As a result problems have risen. Lindquist pointed out that the faculty committees within the college writes the college bylaws and they can make the decision whether to give voting rights to professors of practice. Woodman stated that he is not sure that professors of practice were written into all of the colleges' bylaws and that most units operate on how things were handled before these positions were created.

Schubert stated that he will try to make changes to the survey created by Woodman so that it is applicable for research professors.

LaCost stated that she will have the questions put into a survey format and will have it ready for the Executive Committee to review at next week's meeting.

4.3 Latest Draft of Conflict of Interest Policy

LaCost reported that the Office of Research & Economic Development has asked the Executive Committee to review the latest draft of the Conflict of Interest Policy. She noted that there will be open forums to discuss the policy in mid-February. Wysocki and LaCost both stated that they have asked their colleagues to review the document. Lindquist noted that feedback on the department needs to be submitted by February 24.

Lindquist suggested that a note be sent to Senators asking them to make sure they review and encourage their colleagues to review and make comments on the COI policy. He stated that the policy is on the web at http://research.unl.edu/orr and can be viewed by clicking on the link.

Shea stated that he is glad to see the policy being vetted in so many places and that the faculty will be available to make comments on it. He feels that the Executive Committee should make comments as a group since we were specifically contacted about it.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Meeting with VP Dietze

LaCost reported that she will be meeting with VP Dietze after the Board of Regents meeting on Friday and asked if there were any specific issues that the Executive Committee wanted her to discuss with him. She noted that she will ask him about the family medical leave policy for faculty members and what can be done when a person makes an error in filling out the enrollment form.

Varner suggested asking to what extent it is the responsibility of the administrator or the Human Resources department to interact when someone has run out of time for a medical leave. He pointed out that Human Resources is very helpful when first hiring employees but he is not sure how helpful they are once people have been employed for awhile.

Woodman suggested asking how the new health care law will affect the university and what the repercussions will be.

5.2 Restructuring of Departments within a College

LaCost reported that she recently was asked by a faculty member whether a Dean can restructure departments without faculty consent and if faculty governance extends to college restructuring. Guevara pointed out that when 68% of faculty members who responded to a survey conducted by the Chancellor in 2003-2004 approved vertical budget cuts we accepted that departments can be eliminated. Schubert stated that there was shared governance involved in his college when a department was recently eliminated. He noted that the faculty was asked for input about the elimination before it occurred.

LaCost noted that Regents Bylaw 2.10 states that "the department chair may make recommendations to the Dean and the faculty of the college concerning the welfare of the department or its relations to other departments. Before making such recommendations, the department chair shall consult with the appropriate department faculty." Shea pointed out that this allows for very limited faculty engagement in the process. He stated that how faculty consultation is defined is the issue. He noted that the bottom line is the way the Bylaws are written in that the Dean has the authority to restructure the college, but is it right for the Dean to do this without faculty input. He stated that the faculty should have input into something that is going to have significant changes affecting the faculty. He noted that the Executive Committee could respond to the inquiry on two levels: are the Dean's action consistent with the Bylaws and it this the way the matter should be handled. LaCost wondered if the faculty has the right to appeal the decision to the Board.

Griffin asked if the restructuring would result in any changes to the academic programs. She noted that if an academic program would be eliminated or added it would need to go to the Academic Planning Committee for approval. LaCost stated that she does not believe that any program changes will be made and that it appears to be a redistribution of the faculty into more focused areas. She noted that splitting the department also splits up the advising load. Shea said that in most cases he believes faculty would be supportive of this kind of change.

Schubert pointed out that if the majority of the faculty members in a college or a department are against a change they should raise the concern with the Dean. Guevara pointed out that if a Dean can create a department, they can also eliminate it which is where the concern comes in. He stated that it appears that there is concern in this case that one of the departments will eventually be eliminated. Schubert stated that a Dean won't create a department without the support of the faculty. Shea agreed and stated that he did not think this could happen without the faculty's support.

Shea pointed out that if there is consensus among the faculty that something is not right, the faculty as a group should speak up. LaCost reported that she will contact the faculty member and relay the Executive Committee's response.

5.3 Faculty Senate Forums on Enrollment Plan

LaCost noted that SVCAA Weissinger asked if the Faculty Senate would host faculty forums to discuss the enrollment plan being developed by the Enrollment Management Council. Shea stated that he supports the idea but he would like to actually see the plan before committing the Senate to hosting the forums.

Lindquist asked if the enrollment plan is looking at issues beyond the scope of the colleges. Griffin stated that Director of Admissions Hunter stated that issues such as teaching facilities, impacts of increased enrollment on student services, and other issues are all supposed to be addressed in the report. Varner asked if this is a comprehensive plan for increasing enrollment by 5,000 additional students. LaCost reported that it is. Lindquist stated that it certainly sounds like an issue that the Faculty Senate should be involved with.

Varner noted that the list of contact people in the colleges sent by Director Hunter seemed incomplete. He reported that he received a much larger list of contact people in IANR from Laura Frey in CASNR. He noted that this list had the names of a contact person in each unit of CASNR. He stated that he believes Admissions is making a huge mistake in not embracing the Extension personnel in efforts to recruit students. He pointed out that many of the Extension people deal with a large number of prospective students through interactions with 4-H and other groups. Shea suggested that Varner speak directly to Director Hunter because she seemed receptive to the idea of getting assistance from extension educators in recruiting students.

Woodman noted that he lives in Nebraska City and when his daughter was looking at universities to attend Peru State and Doane College had major contact with the students, but there was very little contact from UNL. Varner pointed out that the Admissions Office is missing out on rural community students. He noted that these students can be overwhelmed by the size of the campus and to be successful in getting them to come here they need to meet people at the local level and to visit with professors.

5.4 Issues for VC Paul

LaCost noted that VC Paul will be speaking to the Faculty Senate on February 7. She asked if there were specific issues that the Executive Committee wants him to address.

Shea stated that it would be helpful to know how the overhead on grants is used by his office. Schubert suggested asking VC Paul how his Office plans to reach the 2017 goal of doubling our research funding.

Shea noted that less overhead money is going back to departments and this is causing a burden on the units. Schubert noted that it is up to the colleges and departments on how they want to use the overhead money they receive. Shea pointed out that the faculty members in his department want to know how the overhead money is being spent and they want a fairly detailed accounting of it. Schubert wondered if we can identify a group of faculty that needs the overhead money to get instrumentation to conduct further research.

Shea stated that he has concerns relating to how the core analytical facilities are being managed. He pointed out that it is becoming increasingly difficult for faculty with smaller grants to cover analytical costs. The faculty members can't afford to buy the required analytical equipment and as a result some faculty members are being squeezed out of research. He stated that he thinks the university should subsidize, to a certain degree, these facilities to help keep costs down for faculty members. Varner asked if there were any private facilities that can do the testing. Shea said it depends on the kind of analyses required, but the cost of analysis at private facilities is also high. Schubert pointed out that VC Paul pays for the core facilities through the overhead money. He stated that the facilities have to generate reports each year to show how well the facility is being used and to examine their costs. He noted that faculty members who collaborate with other faculty members can typically get access to these facilities. He pointed out that these facilities are expensive to operate.

Shea suggested inviting VC Paul to an Executive Committee meeting for more detailed discussions.

5.5 Executive Committee

LaCost reported that Struthers continues to have conflicts with courses she is teaching and the Executive Committee meeting time. She noted that Struthers is willing to step down to allow a new member to attend the meetings. The Executive Committee discussed possible Executive Committee members. Varner noted that he is resigning from the Executive Committee due to a change in his position which will make him ineligible to serve on the Senate. He reported that Senator Zoubek is interested in serving on the Executive Committee as the Extension representative.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, February 1 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Pat Shea, Secretary.