

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Bender, Guevara, Joeckel, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Schubert, Woodman, Wysocki, Zoubek

**Absent:** Anaya, Nickerson, Sollars

**Date:** Wednesday, October 9, 2013

**Location:** 201 Canfield Administration Building

**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 3:02 p.m.

### 2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Weissinger

#### 2.1 New Faculty Hires – How Will They be Distributed and Will Existing Departments be Able to Hire?

SVCAA Weissinger reported that she is working with the Chancellor to identify resources that will allow the colleges in Academic Affairs to do some moderate faculty hiring. She noted that both she and the Chancellor feel strongly that there needs to be demonstrated efforts to show that the campus wants to increase the size of the faculty. She stated that the same process that was used to replace VSIP faculty members will be used. Deans will be sent a notice asking for a ranking of their college ideas that would advance the research and reputational goals of the campus.

Guevara noted that some departments are desperate to hire faculty members even though the discipline may not represent the strategic goal of the colleges. He asked if these departments will be able to hire. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the initiative is not to back fill needs but to add to new or existing strengths in disciplines that have high value to research and reputation goals. She pointed out that at this time she is waiting to see what the Colleges are prioritizing.

#### 2.2 Clarification on College of Engineering Plan

Chancellor Perlman noted that there is one College of Engineering program that is located on two different campuses, UNL and UNO. He stated that at the recent Board of Regents meeting there was major discussion on the College's plan to move forward and how the Peter Kiewit Institute will work. He noted that the plan calls for a collaboration between UNL's Engineering College and UNO's Information Science and Technology College, and while many people think the program has been successful, it has not achieved its full potential. He stated that a plan is being developed and integrated for PKI that advances the objectives of the two campuses. He reported that an essential component to the idea is the formation of a council which will integrate the two colleges and PKI. He noted that this arrangement is similar to how centers function. He stated

that PKI has tended to regard itself as somewhat independent of the two colleges and has not served all parties to the best advantage. He stated that the plan is an attempt to get more coordination between the two colleges. Wysocki noted that it is no longer a situation that benefits PKI over the two colleges. Chancellor Perlman stated that this is the idea. He pointed out that there are significant advantages with the structure of PKI that can add to both colleges.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that the key difference with the program is the structure that Chancellor Perlman and Chancellor Christensen created. She noted that she and her counterpart at UNO, SVCAA Reed, are now the decision makers for the program. She pointed out that VC Paul and UNO's Associate VC Snyder, Research & Creative Activity, are also part of the council. She stated that with this new plan it is now clear who has oversight of the program and PKI. She reported that the council has met three times and it is a very collaborative group. She stated that she feels very optimistic that it can now be determined how the two colleges and two campuses along with PKI can work together to create great opportunities. Wysocki agreed and noted that previously there were some tendencies for PKI to grow in its own direction sometimes overlooking the perspective of the college.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that there is finally a structure that facilitates the building of a collaborative team for the program and there is a great deal of interest between the two campuses. She pointed out that PKI is valuable to us when we are recruiting undergraduate engineering students who are majoring in the disciplines housed at PKI because even though the student might be studying in Omaha, they are UNL students and become our alumna. However, they are also a part of the UNO campus and participate in the UNO campus community. She stated that the growth potential with this engineering program is fantastic and there is finally an opportunity to realize the full potential of the program.

Joeckel asked if collaborative efforts in other disciplines with UNO could emerge. Chancellor Perlman stated that this would not extrapolate to any other areas. He noted that there is a long history with the Engineering College and efforts to move it up to the UNO campus. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that our campuses do compete in some areas: recruiting students and faculty members, attracting attention from outside entities, all of which is natural. She stated that in her history with UNL she cannot remember a time when there has been as much collaboration between the two campuses as there is now. She noted that there is collaboration with information technology and that UNL often shares innovations with UNO. She pointed out that UNO takes good care of our engineering students as we take good care of their criminal justice students.

### **2.3 Update on UNL Bylaws – Will faculty members have the opportunity to suggest items they feel should be added?**

Chancellor Perlman stated that faculty members will be able to contribute to the changes made to the Bylaws. He stated that he has been looking at the Bylaws from a lawyer's standpoint, but his intention is to make changes that he can do and then give it to the

Executive Committee to work on. He pointed out that the faculty has the strongest interest in the Bylaws because they protect the faculty.

#### **2.4 Information on the Signals Software Program**

Woodman noted that the Signals software program is a data mining program which utilizes Blackboard to see if students are keeping up with their assignments. Guevara stated that the program has huge capacities including knowing if a student has opened a particular file and how long they viewed it, but students have to subscribe to the program. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she does not know the details of the program but will make an inquiry about it with her staff. SVCAA Weissinger reported after the meeting that the Signals software is not in use and is not being specifically considered at this time. A group of college representatives, including associate deans and advisors will review the software to see if we would want to pursue it at any future time.

#### **2.5 Policy for Hiring Faculty Spouses for Non-Academic Positions?**

Woodman noted that sometimes efforts are made to facilitate the hire of a faculty spouse for an academic position, but he was asked by a faculty member whether similar efforts are made to find a non-academic position for a faculty member's spouse. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she is not aware of any policy, but she does think the dual career hiring process can include non-faculty positions. She pointed out that dual hires typically happen at the time of hiring. Chancellor Perlman stated that he would check with VC Jackson on whether there is such a policy.

Guevara noted that this could be a faculty retention and recruiting issue. SVCAA Weissinger reported that in a dual career situation a chair or dean of the hiring unit initiates a conversation with the chair or dean of another unit to see if a position would be available, but if the position is non-academic a discussion would need to be initiated with the director of whoever heads the unit.

#### **2.6 How will Four-year Plans be Presented in the Undergraduate Bulletin?**

Reisbig stated that this is a question that came from faculty members and advisors in her department. She noted that they feel that the four-year plans are wonderful, but potentially can cause some difficulties for her department because most of their students do not begin their program in her department. She stated that there is concern that the plan will be viewed as a contract that the student needs to follow and the faculty want to make sure that it is understood that the plans are only a guideline. SVCAA Weissinger noted that this is a good point and the plan is merely a demonstration that the program can be completed in eight semesters. She pointed out that students and advisors need to determine the final path the student will take. After the meeting, SVCAA Weissinger reported that the new four year plans are not yet included in the on-line Bulletin, but when they are it will be very clear that the plans are merely one model to demonstrate that a student can graduate in eight semesters if they follow careful advice. This section will also emphasize the need for students to visit with their advisor frequently to create and refine a plan for completing their degree requirements and meeting their career goals.

Guevara noted that the correction roster is still received on paper and questioned how difficult it would be to receive it electronically since just about everything else is done electronically. SVCAA Weissinger stated that Dr. Morrell, the new University Registrar, was recently hired in part because of his expertise in digital processing of grades, transcripts, and other information pertaining to the Registration office. She stated that she will pass this information to Dr. Morrell.

## **2.7 Clarification on Priority Programs the Chancellor Emphasized in his State of the University Address**

Guevara noted that this was a question raised by Nickerson who was unable to attend the meeting and suggested that this be put on the agenda for the next meeting with the Chancellor.

## **2.8 Future Leadership of UNL**

Guevara stated that faculty members have read the Chancellor's comments about his eventual retirement and have asked questions about what the process would be whenever the Chancellor decides to retire. Chancellor Perlman stated that he acknowledges that at some point his term, like everyone else's term, will end at the university someday. He stated that in a different context, regardless of a timeframe, it would be ideal to have a succession plan, but this is difficult to do in higher education because of the tradition with search committees and the required procedures for filling these kinds of positions. He acknowledged that people are conscious of the issue, but so far he has not seen any negative consequences of this because he is still able to hire people for administrative positions and no one has asked or questioned how much longer he will remain as Chancellor. He pointed out that it is not uncommon for top administrators at universities across the country to remain in their position for only four or five years.

Guevara asked whether there would be an interim Chancellor. Chancellor Perlman stated that this would depend. He stated that his intention would be to give the President and Board sufficient notice so they could avoid the interim issue. He noted that he will try to ensure that the faculty's interests are fully protected. He pointed out that it is required by the Board that there be a vigorous search.

## **2.9 New Faculty Initiatives from Academic Affairs Office?**

SVCAA Weissinger reported that former Associate VC Narunalani has left Academic Affairs to return to the College of Arts & Sciences to serve as Associate Dean for Research to add talent to the College during its interim phase. She noted that this has left a hole in her office that has resulted in a slowdown in innovative ideas and at this time she is pondering whether to backfill this position with existing staff in her office, but she feels there needs to be an Associate VC that focuses on faculty programs. She stated that she is considering announcing a search to replace Dr. Narunalani to see if there are people interested in filling the position who would match the Office and its needs. She noted that the Office is still meeting its service needs to the campus but new programming is currently on hold.

## **2.10 Upcoming Issues**

Chancellor Perlman reported that NUTech Executive Director Conrad is leaving UNL to take a position elsewhere. He stated that Director Conrad has done an extraordinary job and has been very successful in capturing the trust of the faculty and he will not be easily replaced. He stated that the position requires a lot of skill sets, not only in terms of managing and working with the faculty, but in working with the private sector. He reported that he and VC Paul have been meeting to discuss what to do. He pointed out that the Executive Director of NUTech is one part of a three part equation that establishes relationships with the private sector. He stated that Executive Director of Innovation Campus Dan Duncan and Director of Industry Relations Ryan Anderson are the other parts of the equation and Conrad, Duncan, and Anderson have made an extraordinary effort to work together as a team even though they each have very separate functions. He reported that he is unsure at this time whether we will do some restructuring or to conduct an outside search with a consultant.

Chancellor Perlman reported that in regards to the physical facilities the renovation of Brace Laboratory is underway. He noted that the renovations will make Brace essentially a teaching facility which will have one large major classroom and some other significant classrooms and the renovation may be completed in one phase rather than two. He stated that it is possible that we could end up with some other opportunities for Brace.

Chancellor Perlman reported that bids have been opened for the demolition of the Textron Company on Vine Street. He noted that the demolition will take place over the winter and the campus will need to determine what will be built on the property.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there appears to be some faculty anxiety over the changes being proposed for Love Library. He recalled speaking briefly about the changes at the last Senate meeting but stated that Dean Busch is willing to engage with faculty to discuss their concerns. He pointed out that the changes are not a UNL centric idea and changes to university libraries are occurring across the country. He pointed out that hard cover books are not as important as they were 25 years ago. He stated that the central core of the library should be the core of the academic enterprise, but with changes in technology the library of the past is no longer the core. He stated that he thinks discussions are always fruitful, but he thinks the changes for the Libraries are an important initiative for us. He stated that if anyone has doubts about the physical changes with the Libraries all they need to do is come down to campus at night and walk in the vicinity of Love North. He reported that the blinds were removed providing greater lighting and it is stunning to see the transformation this has made to the interior part of the campus.

Guevara pointed out that Dean Busch is scheduled to speak to the Senate at the November 5 meeting. SVCAA Weissinger reported that Dean Busch is reaching out to many faculty members and she believes when the faculty speaks with Dean Busch their concerns will be resolved. She noted that we already have over 50,000 books in storage and the last time she checked out a book in high density storage she had it within 24 hours.

Guevara stated that one of the concerns is how the Libraries can accurately gauge how much a book is used. He noted that some books may get looked at frequently in the Libraries, but are not actually checked out. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she understands this concern but pointed out that the Libraries faculty are very connected to the rest of the faculty on campus and are committed to serving the faculty. She stated that she thinks the Library will remain relevant to the campus community once the changes are completed.

### **3.0 Announcements**

#### **3.1 November 5 Senate Meeting**

Griffin reported that Dean Busch will speak to the Senate about the changes to the Libraries and Greg Clayton, Director of Benefits, will speak regarding benefits and the upcoming NUFlex enrollment period.

### **4.0 Approval of October 2, 2013 Minutes**

Rinkevich moved for approval of the revised minutes. The motion was seconded by Ruchala. The motion was approved.

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

Schubert noted that recently the College of Engineering approved its bylaws giving non-tenure track faculty members voting rights within the college. He stated that he was informed that the college bylaws now only need to be approved by the Office of Academic Affairs and not by the Board of Regents if the faculty of the college approves the bylaws. He stated that the consequence of this is that the Board governs the university, but not the colleges. He pointed out that the Senate will need to be very careful when reviewing proposed changes to the UNL Bylaws. Joeckel stated that the Executive Committee will need to be well versed in procedures and needs to thoroughly research this matter.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 16, 2013 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.