

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Guevara, Nickerson, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Sollars, Woodman, Wysocki

Absent: Anaya, Joeckel, Ruchala, Schubert, Zoubek

Date: Wednesday, April 23, 2014

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 3:00 p.m.

2.0 University Registrar Richard Morrell and Assistant Registrar Keith Dawson

Guevara stated that there are some problems with the scheduling of courses on Tuesdays and Thursdays between east and city campus because there is not enough time between classes for students to travel between the two campuses to get to their next class. Consequently, students are leaving classes early or coming to class late. Dawson stated that he can see the problem because there is only 15 minutes between classes, although the course schedule has been in place for a long time, and as far as he knows the issue has not been raised before. Guevara pointed out that it has been a problem for some time and seems to be increasing. Dawson reported that when the original class time schedule was created problems between Monday, Wednesday, and Friday classes were identified, but he is unsure why they were not addressed for the Tuesday and Thursday schedule.

Nickerson stated that a problem arose in the Beadle Center this semester when some classes were scheduled outside of the permitted class times. He noted that the Executive Committee discussed the issue with SVCAA Weissinger and some of the problems were fixed. He stated that he is aware that some of the problems that exist are faculty generated. He pointed out that courses that are scheduled outside of the permitted class times take up two time slots for the whole week, even if the class actually only meets once or twice a week thereby making the classroom unavailable. Dawson stated that this issue will need to be addressed. Nickerson suggested that the Registrar's Office needs to be more firm with faculty members who want to teach outside of the permitted times.

Dawson pointed out that these issues pertain to general purpose classrooms. He noted that classrooms that belong to departments and colleges can schedule classes as they like, but not adhering to the set class schedules does create conflicts for students.

Dawson noted that the Registrar's Office has allowed more flexibility with Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes, especially for those on east campus. He pointed out that if a

student is trying to take back-to-back classes with one of the classes being on east campus and the other on city campus there will be difficulties because there is only 15 minutes between classes.

Morrell stated that since coming here in August Associate Vice Chancellor Cerveny and SVCAA Weissinger have formed the Task Force on Coordination of Course Offering Times to look at classroom issues. He noted that there are a number of good faculty members on the Task Force and they are looking at well-established national best practices such as adhering to a uniform time block for classes. He reported that the guidelines for scheduling general purpose classrooms is for everyone to follow, but there is no hard policy in place to make faculty members adhere to it.

Woodman asked if east campus times are being scheduled for city campus courses. Dawson stated that he has not heard of this but wants to take a look to see if it is occurring. Nickerson pointed out that some honors courses were scheduled in general purpose classrooms in the Beadle Center during prime time even though they were not related to Biological Sciences at all. He stated that these courses were seminars meeting once a week and he was told that honors courses have priority in getting the classrooms. Morrell pointed out that the best practices is for once a week courses to be scheduled either early in the morning or later in the afternoon so they do not disrupt the class schedules during the prime time. He noted that other best practices call for scheduling rooms along a bell curve pattern with 25% scheduled for early morning, 50% mid-day, and 25% later in the day. Morrell stated that the Task Force is preparing a report to give to SVCAA Weissinger.

Woodman asked if there are priorities in determining which courses are scheduled in particular rooms. Dawson stated that general purpose classrooms are usually scheduled on a first come, first serve basis. He noted that spring term classes usually roll over to the next spring in that they are scheduled at the same time and in the same place. He stated that if there are questions the Registrar's Office will take a look at the type of class, a regular lecture class will have priority over a recitation class. He reported that in most cases if a change in schedules is requested the departments involved are encouraged to talk to each other about it. Nickerson pointed out that some Biological Sciences courses for the fall semester that have been taught in the same room for a long time were bumped out of their spot.

Guevara asked if the problem with course scheduling between the campuses could be resolved by simply not allowing students to register for back-to back classes that are taught on the different campuses unless there is a half hour time in between the classes. This would allow sufficient travel time so students are not leaving or arriving late to classes. Dawson stated that he is not sure whether MyRed can handle this kind of programming. Woodman pointed out that students will want an override to get around the system.

Dawson pointed out that changing class times to avoid course conflicts between the campuses will have to be discussed with Associate VC Perez. He wondered how many

students are being affected by this problem. Guevara noted that probably most students needing courses on both campuses have run into this problem. Reisbig reported that this would often occur when she was teaching classes and noted that it is very disruptive to the class when students leave early. Guevara noted that faculty members have been accommodating but would prefer a resolution to the problem.

Dawson asked if the problem seems to have increased since the university switched its transit services over to StarTran. Reisbig pointed out that there is better bus service now. Griffin suggested that the travel time between the campuses has increased due to the increase in the population of Lincoln resulting with heavier traffic around and between the campuses.

Dawson reported that he will do some research on the Tuesday, Thursday class schedules to see if there could be a viable option to move class times. He pointed out that this could impact the final exam schedule. He stated that he will look into the class schedule for the Beadle Center to determine what is going on with the schedule there.

Morrell stated that other institutions where he has worked do not hand out a student's diploma at the graduation ceremony. He reported that the compressed time for professors to grade final exams, report the grades, and prepare diplomas for the next day puts a tremendous amount of pressure on the staff of the Registrar's Office. Woodman pointed out that it puts a lot of pressure on the faculty members as well.

Woodman asked if it is possible to have the enrollments displayed when professors do a schedule of classes search. He noted that this would be beneficial to the faculty member, especially if providing an override. He noted that currently each section of a course or recitation must be viewed separately. Dawson stated that this issue is controlled by Central Administration and changes would need to be made in the program which would require testing and all of the campuses would have to approve the changes. Woodman wondered if anyone would object since it would be helpful to the instructors to know what their enrollment is for a course. Dawson stated that Central Administration is looking at making major modifications to the students' layout screens which will bring a different look to the students. He noted that testing will begin next week and goes live at the end of May.

Guevara asked if a waiting list is available in MyRed for departments and faculty members to use. Dawson stated that this is up to the departments. He noted that a wait list is great for individual classes but not for lecture labs. Woodman asked if departments will be charged to opt into the wait list function. Dawson stated that there is not a charge.

Morrell stated that he was surprised to learn that UNL does not charge for transcripts. The Executive Committee noted that student fees are used to cover the costs of transcripts.

Nickerson stated that it would be good to have a Senate Executive Committee member on the task force looking at classroom use and scheduling. Morrell stated that he will send a

list of the members on the task force to the Executive Committee along with the entire list of best practices the task force identified. He pointed out that some of the best practices are that we need to utilize individual classrooms at least 30 hours a week and to fill rooms to 2/3 of its capacity.

Guevara asked if any changes implemented would apply to those classrooms not designated as general purpose classrooms. Dawson stated that they may apply to some rooms. He noted that some classes need more time, but this can cause scheduling problems for students. He pointed out that there are only 10 general purpose classrooms on east campus.

Dawson stated that he will let the Executive Committee know what he finds out when he researches the course schedules between east and city campus.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Student Code of Conduct

Reisbig reported that the new Student Code of Conduct was approved by the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Regents and will go to the Board of Regents for final approval at the May 30 meeting.

4.0 Approval of 4/16/14 Minutes

Wysocki moved for approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Reisbig. The motion was approved.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Revisions to ACE Recertification Procedures

Nickerson asked if Guevara has received any word about whether the UCC's ACE Subcommittee has met to complete the revisions to the ACE recertification procedures. Griffin reported that they are meeting next week and will check with Director Mitchell to find out what the Committee decided. She noted that they were unable to meet earlier in the semester because they did not have full attendance and the procedures state that there must be a unanimous vote on matters such as the proposed revisions.

Nickerson noted that the Subcommittee's structure is set up to make it dysfunctional if it cannot meet or act when only one person is missing from a meeting. Reisbig pointed out that requiring a unanimous vote can paralyze the committee. She suggested making the colleges aware that the Subcommittee cannot function if their representative is not present. Wysocki suggested that the college be responsible for providing a replacement on the Subcommittee when the college representative is unable to attend a meeting(s). Woodman noted that this is an important committee that needs to function well. He suggested that the Subcommittee have a panel of members, similar to some other committees, where each college has a few people on the panel thereby allowing someone from each college to attend a meeting. Having more than one representative should help alleviate the problem of not being able to meet because of one person not being able to attend. Griffin pointed out that this kind of change would probably require a vote from

each of the colleges. Woodman noted that each college has a curriculum committee and those members could be alternative members to the ACE Subcommittee.

Nickerson stated that one of the things the Executive Committee should do this summer is to examine the various committees to make sure the people serving as chair know what their responsibilities are and how the committee functions.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Academic Planning Committee – ACE Subcommittee Questionnaire

Guevara noted that he sent the Executive Committee the results of the questionnaire sent to the faculty members of the Computer and Electronics Engineering (CEEN) department and the Electrical Engineering (EE) department regarding the proposed merger of the two departments.

Wysocki reported that Professor Chen of CEEN sent a letter to the APC stating that the proper steps were not followed in the merger procedures from when the proposal was first made to merge the departments. He stated that the APC was asked to postpone any discussion of the merger until the issue could be investigated.

Guevara pointed out that the responses show that an overwhelming number of faculty members, particularly those in CEEN, disagree with the merger yet it seems as if there is an attempt to put a positive spin on it by identifying the number of votes in favor or opposed as CEEN and EE. Wysocki noted that some faculty members in CEEN have resigned and he wouldn't be surprised if more resign due to the uncertainty of a merger. Nickerson stated that his impression is that there was more support for the merger about six months ago when it was promised that there would be new hires with the merger, but the promise of new hires has been rescinded. Wysocki stated that the departments were told that EE and CEEN would each get five new hires. Sollars stated that she would like to see the results of the questionnaire broken down further. Guevara stated that one can always read a lot into poll results to favor or oppose a particular outcome.

Woodman asked how many faculty members were in each department. Wysocki reported that there were 12 CEEN faculty members and about 18 in EE.

Wysocki noted that it will be interesting to see whether the APC approves the merger and what next steps will be taken.

6.2 Report on Non-Tenure Track Faculty Forum

Woodman reported that approximately 40 people attended the forum and there was a good mixture of teaching and research non-tenure track faculty members in attendance. He stated that all of the speakers gave good presentations and there were a lot of questions for Associate VC Perez who responded very openly and frankly. He stated that he thinks the forum helped people to understand their role at the university better.

Woodman stated that he did not think the forum dealt with the research issues as expansively. He reported that one comment that was made by a researcher was that

she/he was told that there was a policy that research faculty members were to be paid lower salaries. He noted that Associate VC Perez stated that he over looks all letters of appointments and would let chairs know if their offer was too low.

Woodman reported that Bender spoke about the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee and the information was well received and very informative. Professor Moshman talked about academic freedom. He stated that there were many questions, some of which pertained to supervision of non-tenure track teaching faculty members and who has the authority to decide what text to use for a class.

Woodman noted that all of the handouts for the forum were sent out afterwards to all non-tenure track faculty members.

Woodman pointed out that when the survey of non-tenure track faculty members was originally done it was with the idea that it will be conducted again in two years. He noted that this means the survey should be conducted again this fall.

Bender stated that he was asked afterwards if there was any consideration of putting non-tenure track faculty members on the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee and the Panel. He pointed out that these people could not deal with tenure cases, but thinks the Executive Committee should discuss this idea and perhaps work with the ARRC about it.

Nickerson stated that it is clear that the forum was needed and it provided these faculty members with information they needed to know. Woodman stated that the people participating in the forum were very interested. He noted that east campus has been having workshops for professors of practice this semester. Guevara wondered who was organizing these workshops. Sollars reported that the IANR Liaison Committee notified the faculty of the workshops.

6.3 Agenda Items for Chancellor Perlman and SVCAA Weissinger

The Executive Committee identified the following agenda items for its meeting with the Chancellor and SVCAA next week.

- Follow up from APC Meeting on the CEEN and EE Merger
- Update on Dean of Arts and Sciences' Search
- Update on Presidential Search Committees
- Decision on CIC Academic Leadership Program
- Opinion Regarding ACE Subcommittee and Possibly Have Alternative Representatives from the Colleges
- Administrative Participation on Committees
- Enrollment Numbers
- Update on Budget Cuts
- Obtaining a Copy of the Suggested Revisions to the UNL Bylaws

The meeting was adjourned at 4:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday April 30, 2014 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.