

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Guevara, Joeckel, Konecky, Nickerson, Purcell, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Rudy, Sollars, Steffen, Woodman

Absent: Wysocki

Date: Wednesday, August 27, 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

Nickerson called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Committee Assignments

Nickerson reported that Sollars will be serving on the Enrollment Management Council and the Academic Scheduling and Planning Advisory Group as the Senate representative. Woodman asked what the difference is between the two committees. Sollars stated that the Enrollment Management Council has not met yet so she does not know the specific differences between the two committees, although they are probably related. She asked how often the Executive Committee wants her to report back on the committees. Nickerson suggested that it could be monthly but would leave it up to Sollars if there are items of interest.

Nickerson noted that Dean Cervený would like to meet with the Executive Committee sometime during the semester.

Nickerson stated that a position has opened on the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee and he needs to appoint someone to fill it. He stated that he is seeking someone from the College of Arts and Sciences to fill the term because there is no one from the college on the Committee. He asked that anyone with suggestions please contact him.

2.2 ACE Recertification Procedures

Nickerson reported that he has met with Director Mitchell over the summer to discuss the changes made in the protocols of the recertification process and the minor changes made to the ACE Governance Document Four. He noted that a document has been created, and will be on the web (<http://ace.unl.edu/certifying/certification>) that provides a guideline for faculty members going through the recertification process. He suggested the faculty see how the new protocols work for two years before reviewing it again to see if further tweaks need to be made to the procedures. However, if anyone has any questions or concerns they should raise them to the Executive Committee so we could explore the

issue now. He pointed out that the ACE Subcommittee changed their protocols based on concerns raised by the Senate.

Woodman stated that the ACE programs were to be assessed at some point and asked if this will still occur. Sollars noted that the ACE website shows that the assessment is scheduled for the 2015-16 academic year. Woodman stated that he thinks the Executive Committee should be asked to participate in the assessment. Nickerson stated that he will meet with Director Mitchell to see if the assessment is broader than just the College of Arts & Sciences.

Nickerson reported that he received an email from Professor DeFusco, chair of the University Curriculum Committee, in which he stated that the Committee wants to examine their entire syllabus and to examine how the ACE Subcommittee fits in. He noted that the Senate's representative on the UCC is Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, who is well positioned to discuss the issue because he was on the original committee that helped develop the ACE program.

2.3 Update on Incident Reporting Program

Nickerson stated that he received a message from Associate to the Chancellor Nunez regarding the Incident Report Program. He noted that the Executive Committee provided some feedback regarding the possible team members and Nunez's message stated that another female member has been added to the sexual harassment team. He stated that team members are going through a training session and the rollout of the program will take place next week. He suggested that the Senate ask that a report on the program be given either at the end of the semester or next semester.

Guevara pointed out that his work on the implementation committee is complete. Nickerson noted that Guevara was part of the implementation of the reporting program but is not a member of any team. Guevara stated that he did not want any part of being on a team and doesn't think a faculty member should serve on any team. Woodman asked why a faculty member should not be on a team. He stated that he is worried that without faculty representation the faculty would be left without any contribution and ability to respond to protect the faculty interest. Rudy wondered if there was a way to advocate faculty rights without a faculty member being on a team. He noted that a faculty member being on a team could put the faculty member in a difficult position. Konecky pointed out that the Executive Committee is confusing the reporting system with the response. She stated that the faculty's response to possible complaints is through the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee.

Woodman questioned what happens after a complaint is made through the Incident Reporting Program. He noted that it is on record and on the internet but questioned what happens next and what due process is guaranteed from it. Guevara stated that he understands the concerns but pointed out that seven different faculty members would be needed to serve on the different teams. Woodman asked if there is any avenue of appeal. Guevara stated that if a complaint involves a faculty member the person needs to be notified and the procedures that already exist on campus need to be followed. Nickerson

suggested that these concerns be discussed with Nunez in January. He stated that there should be a review of the incidents that are reported to see if a pattern is evolving. Joeckel stated that it strikes him that this program has been implemented relatively quickly and he wondered if the campus is prepared to deal with this kind of system properly. He stated that the Senate needs to keep tabs on how the program unfolds. Nickerson thinks this can and should be done.

Steffen pointed out that any incidents of a criminal nature will be forwarded to the University Police. He stated that the program is not really any different than what is currently being done now. The program provides a central system where people can file an incident. Guevara stated that there are already some safeguards in place, but the Executive Committee should keep alert on the functioning of the program.

Woodman wondered how many anonymous complaints need to be received before a pattern of complaints is established. Rudy noted that most of the categories listed do not deal directly with academic issues.

Purcell asked who the woman will be on the sexual harassment committee. Nickerson stated that he was not given this information and he does not think the members of the team will be publicized.

2.4 Report on Meeting to Discuss Extension Educators Delivering Non-credit Courses through Distance Education

Purcell reported that, with Nickerson's help, a meeting was arranged with Executive Director Barber, Online and Distance Education; Assistant Director Karr of Online Worldwide; Director Cotton of Extension Integrated Technologies and CASNR Online; Professor Weitzenkamp, and herself to discuss how non-credit extension courses can be delivered. She noted that currently two courses are being offered through the eXtension moodle server and one through the EdMedia moodle server, but the future of Ed Media is uncertain. She pointed out that there is a need for a comprehensive plan for distance delivery for non-credit courses. Currently there are approximately 7,000 young Nebraska students (4-H and FFA) who are involved with one Extension non-credit online course. She noted that these are potential university students who could have an interest in going to any college on campus, not just CASNR. She stated that Executive Director Barber indicated VC Green's suggestion for using Great Plains IDEA will not work because it is not a learning management system.

Nickerson stated that there should be some mechanism that would make these courses available. He asked if Purcell had the sense that this issue was going to be addressed. Purcell stated that she would think that UNL would want to be involved because of the potential for recruiting more students. Barbara Shousha, Director of University of Nebraska High School was going to be contacted regarding the possibility of going through their system. Executive Director Barber also suggested pulling all of the UNL deans together to develop a non-credit system for online courses. She noted that currently the courses are run through Extension. Rudy wondered if Southeast Community College offers non-credit courses and whether it would be possible to partner

with them. Woodman pointed out that learning management systems are based on per head unit and if the students were not university students someone would have to pay for them to use the system. Purcell reported that using Blackboard was discussed but Executive Director Barber stated that it wouldn't work.

Woodman stated that managing the cost would be the question for the university. He stated that the Information Technologies and Services Committee (ITSC) recently discussed what the cost would be for students involved with Extension courses. He suggested that Purcell talk with Heath Tuttle, Director of Learning and Emerging Tech & Analytics, about the possibilities of using a learning management system.

Nickerson asked when the decision will be made on whether or not to renew the Blackboard contract. Woodman stated that this decision won't be made for some time. He reported that RFI's have been issued asking companies to provide information on the abilities to provide a learning management system. He stated that the ITSC will be meeting next week and CIO Askren and Pam Holley-Wilcox, Director, Academic Tech and App Solutions, will be making a presentation and probably discussing the next step in the process. He noted that CIO Askren will be interacting with IT people from the other campuses to coordinate activities and once that is accomplished negotiations with purchasing will start to take place. He stated that there will also be potential faculty showcases and afterwards there will a pilot study conducted in either the spring or summer. Woodman stated that he sent messages to UNK and UNO about the possible change but did not get any response. Nickerson stated that the Presidents of the Faculty Senate discussed it and the other Presidents stated that they would follow UNL's lead.

3.1 Topics for Interim President Linder

Nickerson noted that Interim President Linder will be speaking to the Senate on September 9. He stated that Interim President Linder might have his own topics he wants to discuss, but the Executive Committee might want to suggest some other topics. The future of stem cell research at NU and long range plans for getting faculty salaries to the median of their peers were suggested as topics as well as providing Interim President Linder with our goals.

3.2 Executive Committee Goals for the Faculty Senate

The Executive Committee revised the draft of the goals that were developed at the Executive Committee retreat.

3.3 Composition and Functioning of Executive Committee's Subcommittees

Nickerson stated that the subcommittee working on revising the UNL Bylaws should provide updates to the Executive Committee periodically. He stated that he assumes it will be a year-long process. Members of the subcommittee are Bender (Chair), Steffen, Griffin, and Nickerson. He asked if anyone else wants to be on the subcommittee. Guevara volunteered to serve on the subcommittee.

Nickerson stated that Woodman and Rudy have agreed to work on developing the follow-up survey on non-tenure track faculty members. Ruchala volunteered to serve on the

subcommittee and Griffin recalled former Executive Committee member Allison Reisbig saying that she would help. She stated that she will contact Reisbig to see if she is still interested in helping out with the survey. Rudy stated that they have some suggested changes to the survey that they would like to bring to the Executive Committee.

4.0 New Business

4.1 Executive Committee Summer Report

The Executive Committee reviewed and suggested changes to the summer report which will be presented to the Faculty Senate at the September 9 meeting.

4.2 The University of Illinois Academic Freedom Issue

Woodman noted that an offer was made to a potential faculty member at the University of Illinois, but the offer was not put forward by the Chancellor after the potential faculty member tweeted his views on Israel. Guevara stated that it was his impression that what the potential faculty member did was not irresponsible, but rather not well thought out, he was merely expressing his views. He pointed out that this is an extremely scary incident for faculty rights and academic freedom, particularly when comments are made that are not related to work. He noted that discussions can easily become politically charged.

Nickerson stated that his impression was that the name was not put forward to the Board of Regents because the Chancellor thought the Board would not approve the hiring. He stated that this is an issue that the Senate and the AAUP should be concerned with. Bender stated that the AAUP issued a statement about the incident but was taking a cautious approach because the facts are not fully developed yet. Woodman stated that as individuals people have the right to free speech, but as a recognized faculty member you should be protected to take on a politically charged issue. Joeckel pointed out that the individual was not actually on the University of Illinois faculty yet. Bender stated that the individual was offered the job and had resigned from his current position to accept the University of Illinois position.

Nickerson suggested that UNL faculty members should discuss the issue with their colleagues and administrators and should stay alert to this happening elsewhere. Bender pointed out that this incident is very similar to the issue that occurred at the University of Kansas. He noted that even indiscreet comments should have protection and faculty members have the right to be passionate about issues. Steffen suggested that the Executive Committee should look into the free speech protection with the university.

Ruchala stated that she believes the faculty should be made aware that these kinds of cases are occurring. She stated that faculty members need to be aware that there are some people who are making an effort to stifle speech. Nickerson questioned whether a faculty member would want to sign their name and affiliation with the university if they were writing a letter to the editor of a paper expressing their opinion on a subject. Steffen pointed out that this is a real problem for university employees because the newspapers will always point out that a person is associated with the university.

Nickerson suggested that the revisions to the UNL Bylaws could include language to strengthen the protection of a faculty member in regards to freedom of speech.

4.3 Guest Speakers for Senate Meetings

Item postponed due to lack of time.

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