

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Konecky, Rinkevich

Date: Wednesday, July 30, 2014

Location: 201 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

Nickerson called the meeting to order at 3:12 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Weissinger

2.1 Prospects for University Health Insurance Coverage of Contraceptives

Chancellor Perlman reported that this is an issue for Varner Hall that has been raised in the past. He noted that faculty members should raise their concerns with the Senate which could bring the issue to the attention of Senior Vice President Lechner. He suggested the Executive Committee discuss the topic with Director of Benefits Greg Clayton prior to going to Senior Vice President Lechner.

2.2 Budget Outlook

Chancellor Perlman reported that the budget for the current academic year is fixed and balanced. He pointed out that the budget figures change during the year and as of right now the budget looks balanced and he is currently not expecting any surprises.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the freshmen enrollment looks very strong, but it is too early to know the total enrollment for the fall semester. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that enrollment numbers for sophomores and above are not available until we get closer to the start of the fall semester. She noted that our retention numbers have improved and that our freshmen enrollment has just recently increased again. She reported that new student enrollment has been very busy.

Nickerson stated that the campus is quiet this summer and said that he has been asked whether summer enrollment is down. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the final summer enrollment figures are not available yet. She pointed out that the trend has been for more residential students to take distance education courses during the summer rather than attending classes on campus.

SVCAA Weissinger noted that we need to distinguish between digitally delivered courses to residential students as opposed to true distance education students who do not take classes on campus. She pointed out that the residential students may take on line courses

in addition to their on campus courses. She stated that the difference is in terms of revenue, true distance education students bring in new revenue to the university.

Guevara reported that if a faculty member decides to change his/her summer sessions class to an online course it changes that way the faculty member is paid. He noted that faculty members receive 50% pay on a class that face-to-face would amount to full compensation. He stated that in Arts & Sciences the dean will take 30% of the distance education revenue, the department takes 10%, and the university takes 35%, and the faculty member only gets paid from the remaining tuition revenue. He pointed out that this policy affects classes with enrollments of fifteen students that normally generate enough revenue to compensate faculty fully. With such a policy a class must have thirty to forty students for a faculty member to get full pay has led to cancellations of viable classes and less class offerings available to students. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that this was a college specific policy, but the new policy with distance education tuition no longer creates a revenue stream for the departments and colleges.

2.3 Projections on Budget and Enrollment

Nickerson asked the Chancellor what he thought the prospects were for Interim President Linder's budget being approved by the Legislature. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that it is much too early to tell and the budget presented to the Board of Regents is just a framework to start conversations on the budget. He stated that he thought the budget is structured correctly. He stated that we need to separate out our core functions that need to be covered from our economic development undertakings. He noted that Interim President Linder has set an aggressive agenda in regards to the budget.

Nickerson asked if the current enrollment projections for this year create prospects for a restoration of the partial salary increase. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is too early to tell whether the revenue from enrollment will be enough to cover an adjustment in the salary increases for this year. If it does happen it will not take place until January.

2.4 Mechanisms in Place to Accommodate Increased Enrollment in Core Courses

Nickerson noted that for some departments there are several key courses which create a bottleneck due to the high demand. He asked if there are mechanisms in place to help identify these courses and whether resources are available to departments to help alleviate the problem. SVCAA Weissinger reported that New Student Enrollment knows how many students are coming through their office and a predictive model is being used to try to alleviate these kinds of problems. She stated that typically the Deans and Associate Deans deal with the high demand problems when they arise. She noted that we are now getting more and better data to help predict high demand for courses which will hopefully allow us to notify departments in April or May that certain courses are in high demand. She stated that she is confident that we have built a group of faculty leaders on campus who know how to handle new student enrollment. She pointed out that we have become experts at reducing the size of our campus due to the budget constraints of the past, but we have a lot to learn about growing the campus.

SVCAA Weissinger reported that the mechanism in place for helping departments with high course demands lies within the college. She stated that she is confident that there are sufficient resources in the colleges and departments to accommodate enrollments this year.

Woodman stated that a larger issue is that the campus is lacking large lecture rooms and the few large classrooms on campus are booked solidly. He asked if there are any plans to build a facility that will have large classrooms. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the short term plan has been to rent out the Grande Theater which had a facility that could hold 400 students. She noted that this worked well and the assessments that were done showed that the students did just as well in comparison to other sections of the course. She pointed out that it takes a special professor to be able to teach in a large facility. She reported that the Grande Theater is no longer available for rental because that room can now be used to serve alcohol.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that Kimball Hall is being considered for use as a large lecture room. She noted that it seats 800 and the School of Music pays for the facility, but there are some real barriers with using the Hall. She stated that she believes the barriers have been worked out with Dean O'Connor and two courses per term might possibly be offered there.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that when Brace Hall opens there will be a 165 seat lecture hall and the new Business College building will have some larger classrooms. Chancellor Perlman noted that the new Business College will have one room that is large along with a very large lecture hall. He reported that the Whittier Building has a large auditorium that could be renovated into a large classroom. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that there are some things that need to be taken into account with a classroom at Whittier such as whether city or east campus will handle the scheduling, the cost of renovation, and the location of the building, but the space could seat up to 500 students. Nickerson noted that in previous discussions there was talk about having a building with several large classrooms. He asked if this idea is off the planning stages. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is still on the capital plan but there is no traction to move it along.

SVCAA Weissinger noted that the current Business College will eventually be available for repurposing, although when this will happen is unknown. She pointed out that it is considered prime real estate on campus with about 124,000 square feet of space.

2.5 Overview of the University of Maryland and Rutgers Impacting the Big Ten
Nickerson asked what implications we will have with adding two more universities to the Big Ten. Chancellor Perlman stated that increasing the number of universities in the CIC will open up more opportunities for all of the member institutions. SVCAA Weissinger stated that although Rutgers and the University of Maryland are composed differently they fit solidly with the CIC. She reported that the Provosts from these two schools have been a part of the CIC Provost group this past year.

2.6 Upcoming Academic Initiatives

Nickerson asked if there were any upcoming academic initiatives for the new academic year. SVCAA Weissinger stated that two new important initiatives are welcoming two new deans to the campus, Dean Francisco of Arts and Sciences and Dean Marron of Journalism and Mass Communications. She pointed out that they are both very good academicians and she thinks they will be aggressive in moving their colleges forward.

SVCAA Weissinger noted that conversations were initiated this past spring about creating a new college by combining Fine and Performing Arts with Architecture. She reported that the faculty of the two colleges have created a series of task forces to address issues and they plan on having a proposal on the new college for the Academic Planning Committee in October. Ultimately, the Board of Regents must approve the proposal. She pointed out that the APC has been involved from the start of the process in combining these two colleges and has been embedded in the process. She stated that the new college could really change things in an exciting way. She noted that in part the thinking of creating the new college was influenced by the master plan as the area of campus where the two current colleges reside is the arts and design area of campus so the new college would have a geographic imprint. Nickerson stated that he thinks this is a good idea because physical proximity is critical for collaboration.

SVCAA Weissinger reported that the College of Engineering may be receiving some new funds that are contained in the proposed 2015-2017 NU budget to the legislature. She pointed out that having a vibrant College of Engineering is an essential component for the advancement of the campus in the next decade. She stated that efforts will be made to continue enhancing the size and quality of the College. Nickerson asked if the funds would go both to the UNO and UNL campus. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the funds would go to both the Omaha and Lincoln locations of the Engineering College, and growth in Omaha will be faster and larger proportionately because of the big opportunities to connect to Omaha industries and jobs. The UNO College of Information Science and Technology would also benefit from this funding initiative. She pointed out that the nation needs more engineers and research and development directly impacts the state.

SVCAA Weissinger reported that she will be conducting a deans' retreat. She noted that the change to the distribution of distance education funds means that the campus will have additional funds to use. The intermediate question is how we want to use this money. She noted that funding is needed to address increased bandwidth need and security storage. She stated that investments also need to be made to the student information system. She stated that we need to determine what our highest priorities are for faculty hiring.

Woodman reported that the Dean of his college has sent a letter stating that the college will receive a certain amount of money and the Dean encourages faculty members to offer on line courses, but ultimately the Dean can use the money however he wishes. SVCAA Weissinger noted that initially the on line students came from all over the U.S. and the colleges and departments received a significant portion of the tuition, but over

time this changed and it was determined that most of the on line students were from our own campus which resulted in less tuition for the campus as a whole. She reported that after discussing the problem with the Deans she decided to give each of the colleges a 35% increase in their permanent budget. She pointed out that the good thing about this is that the college has a new static increased budget but it is not receiving as much revenue as before because the main revenue for on line courses is coming into the central campus.

Woodman noted that for many faculty members teaching on line courses is an overload, but his department is encouraging faculty members to teach certain classes on line because the courses are in such high demand. He asked how we are going to make sure that on campus courses maintain their enrollment. SVCAA Weissinger reported that she had already told the Deans that they must deliver the same or more credit hours as before the increase in their permanent budget. She noted that it can be complicated to figure this out, particularly with Arts & Sciences because of its large size but it will allow us to examine the elegance and efficiency of our curriculum.

Bender asked what is meant by a more elegant and efficient curriculum. SVCAA Weissinger said that each department and college is best prepared to answer that question, and she gave examples such as specialized courses that are being taught so often that the enrollment numbers for these classes is small. She stated that by looking at the curriculum to see if some of these classes can be offered less often or combined into a larger section it could help deliver the course more efficiently and leave more time for the faculty. She stated that she is trying to inspire colleges and departments with this idea so they can find money for their new priorities that is spent now on a less efficient curriculum.

SVCAA Weissinger noted that we want to extend our expertise and have connections around the globe. She stated that we need to find ways to incentivize our significant growth in new or larger “true distance” programs so they attract true distance education students.

Nickerson asked if it is possible to teach lab courses on line. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is possible in some disciplines but very expensive. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the key with distance education is for groups of faculty members to say what their area of expertise is and where the nexus of possible student markets is for them. She pointed out that the distance education market is very crowded, but there are niches in certain disciplines where distance education courses are needed. The challenge is to identify these programs. Nickerson noted that the Board clearly is pushing distance education and Interim President Linder has asked the four Senate presidents to help with the effort. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the challenge is determining the best way to do it. Nickerson stated that there needs to be a focal point for identifying the niches. SVCAA Weissinger stated that this has to come from the departments and colleges. Nickerson stated that most units are not sure where the market is for these niches. SVCAA Weissinger noted that this is where the staff in distance education can help.

Woodman asked if having differential tuition rates for distance education courses is part of the discussion. SVCAA Weissinger stated that this is already being done in some areas. She stated that she is not convinced that our pricing is optimal. She stated that the key is to maximize our profits we price true distance education courses and programs because those revenues can help fund residential education and research.

2.7 Representative from the Chancellor's Office to serve on the Subcommittee to Revise the UNL Bylaws

Nickerson reported that the Executive Committee has created a subcommittee to draft revisions to the UNL Bylaws. He noted that Professor Bradford, Law College, suggested having someone from the Chancellor's office who can offer input during the revision process. Chancellor Perlman stated that he will check with Associate to the Chancellor Nunez to see if his office could find a way to provide iterative comments to the committee's work.

2.8 Possibility of Having a Coordinated Campus-wide Tutoring Program

Nickerson stated that even though the Explore Center has been helpful with students he still believes there are students who can fall through the cracks. He pointed out that there is still no one person or office in charge of tutoring programs on campus and when he suggested this at a conference held by VC Franco many of the Deans were in agreement. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she thinks tutoring programs need to be under the governance of the faculty in the area of expertise. Nickerson stated that he thinks some tutoring programs are asking departments if they can identify students who could be tutors. SVCAA Weissinger reported that Associate VC Goodburn is having a meeting with the heads of tutoring programs across the campus to see if they have any similarities and what issues they are facing.

Nickerson asked if the Enrollment Management Council would discuss tutoring programs. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Enrollment Management Council wouldn't be the forum for this and that this is something that Associate VC Goodburn would oversee. She noted that having a conversation with the heads of the tutoring programs is a good start.

2.9 Considerations on a Tri-semester Calendar

Nickerson stated that the idea of having a tri-semester calendar came up in an informal conversation because of the perception that summer enrollment was down. He asked if this has ever been considered. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the campus calendars have to be coordinated system-wide. He stated that it is not clear to him that it would be advantageous particularly since many of our students work during the summer. He noted that the system-wide calendar might be able to accommodate a change in the summer schedule of the three-week and two five-week courses. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that there was a summer session task force that looked at whether there was a possibility of having a 10 or 13 week semester but it did not fit into the university-wide calendar.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Update on the Incident Reporting System

Guevara reported that the committee working on implementing the system has met three or four times. He noted that members of the Committee are: Associate to the Chancellor Nunez, Vice Chancellor Franco, Chief Yardley, Assistant Vice Chancellor Currin, and himself. He stated that they have streamlined the categories down to seven to make it less confusing for users. He reported that some of the categories are personal safety and security; discrimination, disrespectful conduct and intolerance; sexual misconduct; violations of University policy; workplace concerns; acts of kindness; other/non listed.

Guevara stated that people will submit their complaints and it will be routed to one of several people on campus nominated by the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellors. Anything of a criminal nature will go to the Chief of Police. He noted that he has requested that a faculty member and the chair be informed if a complaint is made involving the faculty member. He pointed out that confidentiality needs to be followed. He stated that all departments have procedures on how to deal with these issues. He reported that the committee will be discussing the implementation of the program.

Steffen asked if the person reporting the complaint has to identify themselves. Guevara stated that they can be anonymous if they choose. Woodman stated that one of the issues is whether there is an expiration date on the complaint, otherwise the complaint could remain on line indefinitely and security is not guaranteed. Guevara stated that as far as he knows the resolution will not appear in the system. Joeckel asked if someone can make a complaint on a previous incident. Guevara stated that the complaint is supposed to report what and when the incident took place.

Nickerson asked that Guevara give a report at the Executive Committee's next meeting regarding the program.

4.0 Approval of July 9, 2014 Minutes

Steffen motioned to approve the minutes as revised. Joeckel seconded the motion. Woodman suggested that the language be changed to read "*some* non-tenure track faculty members would not want to be involved in promotion and tenure decisions" in section 5.3. The minutes were approved with the additional revision.

5.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Topics of Discussion for Meeting with VC Green

Due to the lack of time the suggestion was made that Executive Committee members send in their list of topics for the upcoming meeting with VC Green.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, August 13, 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 Tad Wysocki, Secretary.