

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

**Absent:** Anaya, Schubert

**Date:** Wednesday, March 5, 2014

**Location:**

**Note:** These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

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**1.0 Call to Order**

Guevara called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

**2.0 Chancellor Perlman**

**2.1 TIPS Prevention Update**

Chancellor Perlman reported that Chief Yardley looked and found that there are four or five other programs in use that are similar to TIPSPrevention and the administration wants to look at one of them a little more closely. He stated that there will be a demonstration on the program next week and his goal is to have a program implemented by September. He pointed out that policies will be put in place, with input from the Senate Executive Committee, to address concerns with the use of the program. Nickerson asked if the other program is in use at other universities. Chancellor Perlman stated that both TIPSPrevention and the other program are in use although TIPSPrevent is not yet used at a research one university.

Guevara stated that recently an incident on campus occurred that made him think of how people can file a report with these systems, and how the report can lack the context of what actually happened. He stated that he wants to make sure that there are safeguards in place so reports cannot get blown out of proportion. Bender stated that the incident refers to comments made by a faculty member during a lecture that were perceived as being negative, but were taken out of context because the comments were used to demonstrate how language was used in a different time period. He noted that there needs to be an investigation when credible concerns are raised, but it would be easy to mount a false campaign against a faculty member. He pointed out that this illustrates a need for policies in how the material is evaluated through a program such as TIPSPrevention.

Chancellor Perlman stated that putting a program like this may stimulate more reports of circumstances but doesn't necessarily add to the problem that we already face all of the time. For instance social media can be used to make negative comments about a faculty member and we wouldn't be aware of it. He pointed out that he is sensitive to the concerns but believes we can work around the issues to have a good working program.

## **2.2 Update on Student Health Center**

Chancellor Perlman noted that the current Student Health Center is still functioning but with less resources. He noted that he had a group from UNMC come down to look at the processes and practice styles used by the Health Center and they have provided a report which he will evaluate.

## **2.3 Regents Policy 4.3.1 on Reducing the Tenure Density Level – Is there a strategic plan in place?**

Guevara noted that the Regents' policy, last revised in 1998, says that the Board will take steps to reduce the density of tenure at the university. Chancellor Perlman stated that since becoming Chancellor 14 years ago he has never heard anyone raise this issue. He noted that at one point there was a tenure density issue as it related to the elimination of the mandatory retirement age and whether the change would affect the flow of young faculty members coming into the university. He stated that there are still tenure density reports provided to the Board and he has not seen any report that would cause concern. He pointed out that the issue that surfaces now is in regards to the number of non-tenure track faculty members being hired. He stated that he does not feel any pressure from the Board about this, but there are financial pressures. He reported that hiring non-tenure track faculty members can provide us with a less expensive way to accommodate some of the activities that are needed at the university which allows us to preserve other activities that are typically done by tenure track faculty members.

## **2.4 Updating on Efforts for a New College of Business Administration Building**

Chancellor Perlman reported that work is continuing on raising the funds necessary to construct a new CBA building and he is optimistic that in another six months these efforts will be positive.

## **2.5 Architecture and Fine Arts Faculty Concerns with the New College**

Guevara noted that after the Chancellor left the March 4 Faculty Senate meeting some senators stated that there is a lot of faculty concerns with the merger that are not being addressed. He asked if there is a policy in place to address these concerns. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that it is hard to address the concerns when you don't know what they are. He stated that a new college is being created consisting of the current College of Architecture and the Hixson Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts and Dean O'Connor will be the initial dean for the new college. He pointed out that all the other details, the curriculum, promotion and tenure criteria and decisions, will all be up to the faculty. How the money will be divided will be up to the administration. He noted that Hixson Lied has many endowments while Architecture has differential tuition rates. He stated that between the two colleges he thinks there is a lot synergy that will allow both colleges to be more successful. He pointed out that enrollment growth has been limited for both colleges in recent years but thinks we can design programs that will now help to increase enrollments.

## **2.6 Changes to How Online Tuition will be Distributed?**

Chancellor Perlman reported that SVCAA Weissinger is working with the deans to finish the plan. He noted that it is clear that we cannot continue to provide the incentives for

teaching online courses to our own students when the distribution of the tuition results in taking money out of the base budget. He stated that two things are being looked at: capturing resources from our on campus students who are taking online courses and to have stronger incentives to have courses that are taught to online students. He pointed out that he is not unhappy with the initial incentives to help develop online courses but we are at a time when we need to make changes with how the tuition is distributed.

Guevara asked if the new plan will be implemented in the fall. Chancellor Perlman reported that it will start in the fall, otherwise next year's budget will be impacted with another loss of revenue to the base budget. Guevara asked when faculty members will be informed of the change. Chancellor Perlman stated that there might still be some upfront costs available for new online courses, but faculty members will not have the incentives that were originally available. Guevara noted that some departments pay people to teach online courses and use the revenue from the online courses to cover the cost. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that not all of the tuition revenue will be taken away and he believes that the deans feel pretty comfortable with the changes that are being made. He noted that the colleges will be given time to adjust to the new system.

### **2.7 Impacts of the 120 Credit Hour Requirement on Graduation Rates**

Guevara noted that at the last Board meeting one of the Regents said that there has been an improvement in graduation rates because of the 120 credit hour requirement. Chancellor Perlman stated that he has not seen any data yet on the impact of the 120 credit hour requirement. He noted that we have had a couple of large graduation classes the last few years and it is possible that the 120 credit hours may have had an influence. He pointed out that the 120 credit hours decreases the cost for students to get a degree, although the average number of credit hours students are taking has increased.

Guevara asked if the students take less credit hours would it have a significant impact on our revenue. Chancellor Perlman stated that it could but if students graduate more quickly it allows for more students to enter and eventually it would balance things out. He pointed out that it is difficult to predict student behavior in why they take more or less credit hours.

### **2.8 Update on Proposed Skating Rink**

Chancellor Perlman stated that he is optimistic and thinks the plan will go forward providing a \$2 million contribution is approved.

### **2.9 Next Steps that will be Undertaken to Ensure a Successful Merger of CEEN and EE Departments**

Chancellor Perlman reported that the administration went through with the merger proposal and was presenting it to the Academic Planning Committee when a letter came from a faculty members who said that the majority of the faculty were opposed to the merger. He stated that it was decided that it would be better to let the faculty resolve the issue before the APC deals with it. Guevara asked if the merger proposal was actually presented to the APC. Chancellor Perlman stated that it had been but was withdrawn because of the letter. He noted that some faculty members are saying that everyone is

opposed while others say they are not opposed. He pointed out that the merger will not be subject to a faculty veto.

Wysocki asked what the current timetable is for the merger. Chancellor Perlman stated that he hopes that the merger will go to the APC this spring.

### **2.10 Upcoming Issues**

Chancellor Perlman reported that we should know more about an interim president at the March 21 Board of Regents meeting. He stated that the Board met in closed sessions this week and he assumes that they discussed the interim issue and the search process.

Nickerson noted that the Chancellor chaired the last presidential search which resulted in the hiring of President Milliken. Chancellor Perlman stated that he was co-chair and pointed out that the Board has some concerns over the search processes used in the past so he wouldn't be surprised if the search process is monitored more closely.

Wysocki noted that the Chancellor will be making his budget presentation on Monday. Chancellor Perlman stated that he will present his proposed budget cuts to deal with the \$4.6 million deficit. He pointed out that his objective is to protect the academic core of the university and he believes that we will be able to do this with his proposed cuts.

Guevara asked if the tuition freeze is contributing to the budget deficit and what would the impacts be if it is renewed. Chancellor Perlman stated that the tuition freeze is in place for next year and as far as he knows there are no proposals to renew it. He indicated it is not possible to conclude the freeze caused the deficit because without the freeze we may not have received as much from the Legislature. He pointed out that the real question is what expenses we will incur that will impact the budget.

### **3.0 Announcements**

No announcements were made.

### **4.0 Approval of 3/5/14 Minutes**

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

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **5.1 Nominations for CIC's Academic Leadership Program**

Nickerson noted that the deadline date for submitting nominations for the CIC's Academic Leadership Program is quickly approaching and he wants to make sure that the Executive Committee submits nominations. He pointed out that those interested, Wysocki and Guevara, need to submit a short paragraph stating why they are interested in participating in the program and provide a vita. He stated that he will then send the nominations to Associate VC Perez.

#### **5.2 Interview of Final Candidate for Dean of Arts & Sciences**

Guevara reported that five Executive Committee members attended the interview of the last candidate for the dean of Arts & Sciences. He noted that they had a very pleasant conversation with the candidate and were happy to have met him.

### **5.3 Executive Committee Elections**

Guevara reported that the Executive Committee elections were coming up soon and candidates are still needed. The Executive Committee agreed to have an email message sent to Senators encouraging them to nominate either themselves, or another Senator, to run for election.

## **6.0 New Business**

### **6.1 Executive Committee Report**

The Executive Committee reviewed and made suggested revisions to the Executive Committee report that will be presented to the Senate at the April 1 meeting.

### **6.2 Report on Information Technologies and Services Committee Meeting**

Woodman reported that the ITSC discussed the learning management system (LMS) presentations and recently conducted a survey and found that there are ample faculty members and others who are interested in the ITSC conducting further research for a new LMS. He noted that university procedures state that either an information request from Procurement Services or a proposal for a new system can be made, but this is a much more formal process. He stated that the ITSC decided it would be best, at this time, to request further information. The vendors will be contacted and they will provide information as to why they think their product is the best for the university.

Woodman pointed out that all of the other Big Ten schools have done pilot studies on LMS programs but this would require volunteers. He noted that volunteers could be individuals or an entire department and would require setting up a parallel system on their computer. He stated that he has concerns of people not volunteering to test a new program. He stated that the ITSC was trying to figure out how the Senate could help encourage participation with a pilot study. Griffin suggested that an email message could be sent out to faculty members to see if anyone would be willing to participate. Woodman pointed out that the LMS is one of the most important tools that faculty members use and it is important that we fully explore other LMS programs before we make a commitment to switch to a new system.

Bender asked what the timeline would be for making a decision on whether we will get a new LMS. Woodman stated that the Blackboard contract expires in June of 2015 so a decision would need to be made before then. He stated that the idea is to try to find people willing to participate in a spring 2015 pilot study. He noted that participants may have to create new content or transfer content from Blackboard.

Bender suggested that another way to get volunteers would be to have an IT representative give a presentation of the pilot study to department's at their initial fall meeting. Joeckel stated that this is a great idea that should be considered. Woodman suggested that an announcement could also be made at a Senate meeting encouraging people to participate. Guevara stated that he would be willing to be part of the pilot study.

Woodman reported that early in the fall semester the ITSC will be in the planning stages for the pilot study. He noted that possibly changing over to a different learning management system is a huge responsibility. The ITSC wants to make sure that everyone is aware that we could be changing the learning management system and to give them an opportunity to participate in the pilot study they are interested.

Guevara asked if Woodman knew if anything was going on with Maple TA. Woodman pointed out that this was a program developed here at UNL and is an add-on system. He stated that it can be adapted through Blackboard.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:21 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday March 19 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.