

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Rinkevich, Sollars, Joeckel

Date: Wednesday, November 19, 2014

Location: 212 City Campus Union

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 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

Nickerson reported that the search committee for the SVCAA replacement has been finalized, and that the final list is significantly different from the list of potential faculty members that was forwarded to us earlier.

Woodman reported that the survey for non-tenure track faculty has been prepared, and Karen will be asked to put it into a Survey Monkey format. The forthcoming survey should be mentioned in the President's Newsletter.

Nickerson stated that because there will be no Executive Committee meeting before the next full Senate meeting and the meeting with the Chancellor Perlman and VC Green, the questions to them should be sent either to him or Karen.

Rudy asked for inclusion of the issue of consulting and board membership by extension educators and other non-tenure track faculty to be raised again during that meeting.

3.0 Approval of November 12, 2014 Minutes

Konecky moved to approve the minutes and Guevara seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

4.0 CIO Askren and Heath Tuttle, Director, Learn & Emerging Tech & Analytics

4.1 Update on learning management system situation

CIO Askren reported that the Blackboard license expires on July 1. In addition to renewing Blackboard, two other platforms are being considered: *Canvas* and *Desire to Learn*. Canvas is an open source platform with a company support and because of its adaptation by several CIC members, UNL is inclined to switch to it. Desire to Learn platform has received high scores among the institutions that decided to use it. The

decision will be made to satisfy the UNL faculty needs. However, the choice of Canvas has another benefit because it would smoothly allow UNL to participate in the *Unizin* system created by some of the CIC members. The Unizin consists of 3 segments: LMS – contracted to Canvas for 6 years (could be changed in the future), Student Success management, and Digital Depository. Universities that are founding members of Unizin, will share data and success guidelines among themselves. Since Unizin has selected Canvas, if UNL decides to join Unizin, it will force the choice of Canvas as the Blackboard replacement. The cost of becoming a member of Unizin is \$1M but CIO Askren reckons it will be leveraged in a few years from the savings on the included analytics, UNL has to pay for now.

Woodman added that a long term view will be the most important aspect in making the choice as UNL wants to engage with the peer CIC institutions. Unizin is driven by the provosts of the CIC members. CIO Askren added that Canvas is a much more disruptive technology than Blackboard and should serve the UNL for longer than Blackboard.

Rudy asked where the complaints about Blackboard were coming from. Tuttle answered that these were coming from faculty. Askren added that the new LMS should be tailored to faculty needs. That position was supported by Guevara. In opinion of Askren, the students will easily adjust to whichever LMS is implemented. Woodman mentioned that during a pilot stage, it is likely that students would be exposed to more than one LMS.

Nickerson asked if the decision were made for UNL to participate in Unizin, would the other campuses come to line. Askren answered that he does not expect other NU campuses to join Unizin, but quite likely they will adopt Canvas. Woodman added that UNO ranked all tested LMS's equally while UNK and UNMC liked Canvas more.

Pilot trial of Canvas will be run next year at the UNL. The pilot run should test and validate conversion of the teaching material from Blackboard to Canvas. CIO Askren stressed that UNL will choose the best product.

Nickerson asked if, given the cost involved, the choice will need to be approved by the Board of Regents. CIO Askren confirmed that this would be the likely course of action.

Rudy asked what lessons were learned from the transition from Lotus to Microsoft mail systems. CIO Askren answered that the main problem was with the Office Calendar and that such a transition requires a good training of IT personnel before. In addition, time to a full roll out might be long – about 2 years.

4.2 Provide a brief prospectus of general ideas of where technology is going in the classroom

Because of a very limited time, Heath Tuttle, Director, Learn & Emerging Tech & Analytics addressed only briefly this issue. CIC is supporting initiatives that focus on students' needs and is involved in tailoring technology to address this. One of the key aspects is a solid and easy to use LMS. It should be a place to share data, provide

analytics if the universities are successful and facilitate collaborative learning, group discussions and case studies. Classrooms should have group spaces to facilitate learning and teaching. Students are expected to bring their own laptops/tablets and be able to project their work onto the main screen.

Bender asked if it would be possible, at the beginning of each semester, to provide faculty with an overview of what IT capabilities are available for use in the class and how to best utilize them. Askren and Tuttle agreed that this would be productive.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m so that the members could attend the public presentation of Dr. George Ross, the first NU Presidential Candidate. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, December 3 at 3:00 pm. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Tad Wysocki, Secretary.