

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Joeckel, Konecky

Date: Wednesday, September 10, 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 3:04 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Intercollegiate Athletics Committee

Nickerson reported that the open position on the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee has now been filled. He noted that anyone interested in serving on the IAC in the future should indicate their preference to the Faculty Senate Office.

2.2 Open Faculty Senate Seats

Nickerson stated that the attempt to fill the remaining open Faculty Senate seats is starting to make progress. He noted that he has received an immediate response from the Chair of the Chemistry department and is optimistic that there will be at least one, if not two, Senate representatives from that department. He stated that English might be able to fill its two open seats as well. He pointed out that it appears to be a more effective search if current Senate members can identify people they know in the various departments. Woodman suggested that Nickerson contact the department chairs to see if they can help find someone who would be willing to serve.

2.3 Common Cause Nebraska “By the People Award”

Nickerson reported that Common Cause of Nebraska is awarding President Elect Bender and the UNL Faculty Senate with the “By the People Award” on September 25 for his and the Senate’s efforts to provide testimony to the State Legislature against the effort to restrict the names of the final candidates for the President of the University. He noted that both he and Bender will be unable to attend the event because they will be attending the CIC Faculty Leadership Conference at The Ohio State University.

2.4 TIPSPrevention

Guevara announced that a meeting has been scheduled on TIPSPrevention. He noted that the members of the implementation committee and the monitoring teams will be meeting together. Nickerson stated that it would be good to have the two groups merged together into a committee because it would be good to have a faculty member, at least as an

observer, on the committee. Woodman pointed out that since the Faculty Senate is the most active faculty representative committee it should have a representative on the committee. Guevara noted that the Chancellor wants input from the faculty on the program.

2.5 Information Technologies and Services Committee (ITSC)

Woodman noted that the ITSC met last week and reported that four companies have responded to the RIF. He stated that members of the ITSC will review the requests and will use a rubric to evaluate the programs. They will then submit their responses and the Committee may try to rank the companies and will review the differences between them. He pointed out that a pilot study would more than likely be conducted in the spring and summer to test out one or more of the LMS systems. He noted that the ITSC looks forward to Associate Vice Chancellor Perez and CIO Askren coming to the meetings because their input into the process is valued.

Nickerson asked if the ITSC will have the companies evaluated and ranked by the end of the month. Woodman stated that the goal is to have this done by the next meeting. Wysocki asked how likely it is that UNL will go to a different company; that would depend on the assessment of the RFI's at least in the first instance, Woomdan replied. He noted that CIO Askren has said that he spoke with the IT people at our sister campuses and said that they would all work together on this issue and Nickerson had reported that the other Senate Presidents said they would likely follow UNL's lead.

2.6 Guest Speakers for Faculty Senate Meetings

Griffin reported that VP Niemiec will be speaking about distance education at the October 7 Faculty Senate meeting. She noted that there will also be a presentation by Associate VC Goodburn, Assistant VC Batman, and Assistant Dean Bellows, on the upcoming accreditation process. She reported that Director Clayton of Benefits will be speaking at the November 4 meeting on changes to the health care benefits. She noted that Chancellor Perlman is scheduled to meet with the Senate on December 2.

3.0 Approval of 9/3/10 Minutes

Guevara moved for approval of the minutes as revised. Purcell seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Discussion Topics for VP Niemiec

Nickerson noted that he sent notes to the Executive Committee from the conversation he had with VP Niemiec. He asked the committee for topics they would like VP Niemiec to address.

Woodman suggested asking whether UNL students taking online courses at the sister campuses negatively impact online distance education numbers at UNL. Rudy stated that there should be discussions about system credit and how these credits can be captured system wide. Steffen pointed out that we shouldn't be developing courses that parallel with our sister campuses. He noted that it shouldn't make a difference if a student takes

English 150 here or at another campus. He suggested asking what is being done to coordinate distance education courses between the campuses so we are not competing against each other but complimenting one another.

Rudy wondered about curriculum development and what we are doing to foster curriculum development as opposed to just course development. Nickerson noted that there is an audience craving for a distance education program in computer science. He pointed out that there are grants available through VP Niemiec's office for the development of online courses. He stated that there are a number of very good people available to assist faculty members in developing a course.

Purcell suggested asking about distance education for non-credit courses.

Nickerson pointed out that VP Niemiec cannot address the money that departments and colleges receive for distance education courses because that is determined by the campus administrators.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Review of Senate Meeting

Guevara noted that just like the previous reviews done in previous years, the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee report showed that many UNL faculty members are not being paid the same as their peers. Some are paid far less while others come a bit closer. Overall, UNL ranks at the bottom for faculty compensations. He pointed out that administrators compete a bit better, but also are on the low side, except for the hire of a college dean who now commands the highest salary among our peer institutions. He pointed out that there is no plan at all to systematically better the situation for the faculty. He indicated that the standard rule is that these faculty members need to get a better job offer from elsewhere to have a chance to improve their salary. Woodman stated that it is important that the FCAC continues to point out the salary discrepancies for faculty members.

Steffen stated that it would be helpful to have data to show whether the departments that pay less than their peers have more failed searches, decreased productivity levels, and retention problems. He noted that having this kind of information would make a good argument for faculty members to receive salary increases. Guevara pointed out that you need to ask how many quality applicants apply for open positions in these departments. Nickerson stated that he is not sure how this information would be documented, although the department chairs could be asked.

In regards to the change in tuition distribution of distance education courses Guevara stated that he believes classes that are being cancelled were being taught as an overload. Woodman stated that the College of Arts & Sciences received a memo from the dean stating that the departments were to receive \$50 per student for an online course with the maximum not to exceed \$15,000 per year. It would then be up to the departments to figure out how to pay the instructors who teach these courses. Guevara pointed out that the department has the option of keeping some of the money. Nickerson noted that the

\$15,000 maximum was likely responsible for the cancellation of some of these courses, especially if several of these courses have large enrollment.

Woodman stated that the definiteness of the distribution plan did not emerge until July. He pointed out that Arts & Sciences lost a total of \$3 million in online tuition funds, but the College was only given \$1 million to cover the loss. He noted that SVCAA Weissinger stated in previous meetings with the Executive Committee that the colleges would have enough money to pay the faculty for teaching these courses. He stated that it appeared that the College of Arts & Sciences would honor the courses already established for the fall semester but that many online courses were being cancelled.

Guevara stated that another problem in Arts & Sciences is that no contracts have been given to faculty members if they teach an online course as an overload and this is a huge issue. He stated that faculty members must have 35 students enrolled in order to get paid the same amount for an overload course as for a regular course, but some departments have courses capped at 22 students. Griffin asked if this policy was being practiced in other colleges. Rudy suggested speaking to Professor LaCost, Educational Administration, to see if her department is having the same kind of impacts.

Nickerson asked what the Senate could do to help the departments that are facing a substantial budget cut due to the change in the distribution of online tuition. Steffen pointed out that one possible solution is to push for a standardization of how faculty members are paid for teaching these courses. Nickerson suggested that there be a standard approach for overloads.

Steffen pointed out that the Senate has not been shown yet the specificity as to what is going on with distance/digital education classes in the departments raising concerns. He noted that departments should be offering classes that fit into your institutional goals and curriculum and avoid offering distance education just for revenue. Support for classes that fit those goals should be easy to justify when making a case to administration. Wysocki stated that the Executive Committee should ask the Chancellor and SVCAA if they are aware of how the changes are creating problems in some departments. Nickerson noted that English now has 40% less budgeted money since the change to the distance education tuition.

5.2 Agenda Items for Chancellor Perlman and SVCAA Weissinger

The Executive Committee identified the following items for its upcoming meeting with Chancellor Perlman and SVCAA Weissinger:

- Hardships departments are facing since the change in the distribution of distance education tuition. Were any instructions given to the deans on how the money they were given to increase their base budget must be used.
- Update on the Health Center. Would they provide a campus-wide service, not just for students?
- 1% of salary money held by Central Administration to fix discrepancies in pay rates.
- 5% administrative fee.

- Likelihood of salary adjustment since enrollment is now over 25,000.
- Tech fees for each credit hour is now \$9.75. How is this money going to be used?
- Non-tenure track faculty members in Centers – do they have a home department, are they on a limited contract?

5.3 5% Administrative Fee Applied to Lab Fees

Woodman noted that there is a 5% administrative fee being applied to all non-tuition generated fees. He pointed out that previously the special fees were used to pay for supplies needed for the semester and to maintain the computers and equipment and for repairs. He stated that taking away 5% of the lab fees will not allow departments to do this and pointed out that departments may try to increase their special fees in order to cover the costs. Steffen asked why students taking labs with lab fees should have to pay tax to support deferred maintenance or infrastructure than students taking other labs or non-lab classes. He also wondered if the tax is in conflict with any Regents policy on lab fees. Woodman noted that it really amounts to a tuition increase.

Purcell stated that VC Green previously reported that IANR's 5% fee is to go towards deferred maintenance. Sollars pointed out that VC Green said the fee is not intended to damage functional operations and that if 5% was too much for units to bear, it was possible that less could be taken. Steffen pointed out that the tax is based on the gross amount earned by units.

5.4 Senate Representatives for Centers?

Griffin reported that she had been asked by a non-tenure track faculty member if the various Centers on campus have representation on the Senate. She noted that when many of the Centers were first created the faculty members associated with them were faculty in a home department, but since then some of the Centers have grown and have research professors and other non-tenure track faculty members. She asked if these Centers should be represented on the Senate. Rudy pointed out that the Centers often have research faculty that are paid through grant money. He noted that most of the Centers that he is aware of have two or three tenured professors as well.

Nickerson stated that he wants a question added to the upcoming survey of non-tenure track faculty members to assess how many of these faculty members are on campus. Woodman asked if the criteria for being a Senator would be the same for these faculty members as it is for other non-tenure track faculty members, a .50 FTE or greater and three successive years of employment. Nickerson suggested that these faculty members could be grouped together and then have representation. Steffens stated that the Senate bylaws could be changed to make a district for the Centers so they have representation because they might have issues that are different that need to be addressed.

The Executive Committee agreed to address the issue further.

5.5 Article in the Daily Nebraskan

The Executive Committee agreed that Nickerson should send a letter to Dan Shattil, General Manager of the Daily Nebraskan to address the many inaccuracies that were in the September 10 Daily Nebraskan article on the Faculty Senate meeting. Bender stated that the letter should be copied to Don Walton of the Lincoln Journal Star who advises the students.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, September 17, 2014 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in 201 Administration. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Tad Wysocki, Secretary.