

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
East Campus Union, Arbor Suite
January 14, 2014
Presidents Guevara, Nickerson and Schubert, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Guevara called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Presentations on Blackboard, Canvas, and Desire to Learn

President Guevara reported that an email message has been sent to all faculty members inviting them to attend presentations by Canvas (1/17/14), Desire to Learn (1/31/14), and Blackboard (2/7/14) from 8:30 – 10:00 in 115 Burnett Hall to explore their virtual learning environment and course management system. He pointed out that faculty members can send their feedback about the different systems to CIO Askren.

3.0 Vice Chancellor Paul

VC Paul thanked the Senate for giving him the opportunity to speak today. He noted that the University needs the help of the faculty in today's environment, especially when the budget has not been as positive as it has been in the past given the government's sequester and other financial impacts.

VC Paul stated that the goals of UNL are to increase the total research expenditures to \$300 million, with at least \$150 million coming from federal agencies; to double the number of faculty receiving prestigious national awards; and to increase the number of faculty working with private sector partners to translate research into innovations and jobs. He reported that members of his department have had a number of meetings at the college and department levels to listen to the concerns of the faculty in meeting these goals.

VC Paul stated that the goal to increase research expenditures overall has been going fairly well. He stated that he thinks it is possible that the campus will reach the goal of \$300 million before 2018 even though federal research funding has decreased. He noted that the environment is tough though because the number of funds and the size of the funds from the NSF have decreased. As a result we need to work smarter and more efficiently in order to obtain these grants.

VC Paul reported that he has teamed up with SVCAA Weissinger and VC Green to look at faculty members who deserve a national prestigious award, through memberships and recognitions in national honorary societies, and they are in the process of hiring an awards coordinator to help with this effort. He noted that the campus has not been very proactive in nominating people for awards or membership into associations such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He pointed out that this year we have had a record six faculty members that have been successfully nominated for a national award. He asked the Senate to think about faculty members who might be good candidates for receiving these recognitions.

VC Paul stated that buildings are now being constructed on Innovation Campus and noted that Executive Director Dan Duncan and his team are working hard to build partnerships with the private sector. He reported that Brian Ardinger, Entrepreneur in Residence, and the NU Tech team are working together and he believes that next June one of the buildings will be open. He noted that the Water for Foods Institute will be moving onto Innovation Campus and ConAgra has been a great partner with this effort.

VC Paul stated that of critical importance is the research infrastructure. He stated that just this past year the Center for Brain, Biology, and Behavior moved into its new facilities on the east side of the stadium. He noted that the Center now has 28,000 square feet of lab and office space including a full body functioning MRI machine. He reported that faculty members from several departments that are associated with the Center have moved in and with the new facility we have been able to increase research efforts that include several different disciplines. He pointed out that the Center is the only collaboration between athletics and academics located in a stadium. He stated that the Center is looking at the impact of concussions but he believes we will have an impact in many areas through the work of the Center. He stated that new faculty members are being hired. He noted that Athletics also has a performance development lab which can help student athletes in nutrition and performance.

VC Paul reported that a laser core laboratory is in the final stages of being finished in the basement of Behlen

Lab. He stated that this has been made possible by an NSF grant of \$2 million as part of the stimulus dollars. He noted that this facility will have a state-of-the-art laser. He pointed out that there is another laser on campus, but the use of it is restricted to those working on a particular grant while the one in Behlen Lab will be available to interested faculty members. He reported that the laser should be available in late spring.

VC Paul stated that the nano-engineering facility houses a nano-science core facility on the north side of Jorgensen Hall. He noted that next July this core facility will be accessible which was made possible through NRI. He stated that \$4 million was invested to bring in state-of-the-art equipment to help in nanotechnology and the life sciences.

VC Paul reported that the Office of Sponsored Programs is being moved from the Alexander Building to Whittier. He noted that Whittier now houses the Transportation Center and Energy Center and the move puts the Office of Sponsored Programs in the research sector of campus.

VC Paul stated that the Office of Research and Economic Development wants to help faculty, especially those that have gone through the review process for funding and were close to receiving a grant but were not successful. He pointed out that two or three years ago these applications for funding would have been approved, but given today's environment they didn't receive funding. To help these faculty members his office has created the Revision Awards which can offer assistance to faculty in revising and resubmitting proposals that were reviewed, scored, but not funded within the past 24 months. He noted that individual awards will be made for up to \$50,000 for up to 12 months. VC Paul reported that proposals will be looked at as they come in rather than waiting to get a group of proposals since different agencies have different deadline dates. He suggested that a panel may be put together to review the proposals.

VC Paul stated that there is a new award program supporting faculty members for conducting preliminary studies or data collection for biomedical research seed grants. He noted that these are funds from the tobacco funds provided by NIH. He stated that the awards can be up to \$50,000 for up to 12 months and made available twice per year. He pointed out that proposals that do not receive funding the first time can be modified by 50% and can be resubmitted for funding. He reported that letters of intent are due March 3 and September 1, 2014 and application deadlines are April 4 and October 1, 2014.

VC Paul reported that there are two new Associate Deans in the Office of Research and Economic Development: Kurt Preston and Regina Werum. He stated that they felt that it would be good to listen to faculty members who have joined UNL in the past three years to learn about their research interests and breakfast meetings have been conducted to facilitate these discussions.

VC Paul reported that he has been talking to deans and department chairs to see how we can work together to improve research. He pointed out that Arts and Sciences is a very large and diverse college and his office is planning on interacting with them at least three times. He noted that the idea is that we need to be thinking about research every day and to work together to address the challenges we face.

VC Paul stated that the National Strategic Research Institute (NSRI), which provides research and development services to USSTRATCOM and other U.S. Department of Defense agencies, has resulted in \$5 million coming to UNL. He noted that research efforts involve UNL faculty members with expertise in nuclear detection and forensics, detection of chemical and biological weapons, passive defense against weapons of mass destruction, consequence management, and space, cyber and telecommunications law, but there are also research opportunities for people in other diverse disciplines.

VC Paul noted that in 2012 the Social and Behavioral Science Research Initiative (SBSRI) task force was formed to identify ways to enhance research excellence and competitiveness for funding and identifying gaps in faculty expertise and infrastructure needed for the social and behavioral sciences. Activities have included a session at the Research Fair, a faculty forum, needs assessment survey and meetings with chairs, directors and deans to discuss priorities and themes for SBSRI. He stated that a report outlining the vision for SBSRI is nearing completion.

VC Paul noted that we now have a new executive director of NU Tech Ventures, Brad Roth. He pointed out that Roth is a UNL alumnus and has experience in working in the private sector as well as in higher education at the University of Illinois. He stated that there are several searches are underway: Director of the Museum of Natural History, and a new director for the Biology Technology Center. He noted that faculty members are very much engaged with these searches.

President Elect Nickerson asked how long the tobacco money is going to remain with us. VC Paul stated that there has been discussion about the tobacco settlement funds expiring at some point. He stated that there is concern that there is not enough money in the pool and that funding should be reduced, but the stock market's improvement has helped to stabilize funding. He noted that it might run out eventually, but currently it serves multiple institutions which are helpful. He pointed out that some faculty hires and the development of some infrastructure would not have occurred without these funds.

President Elect Nickerson stated that a problem that has occurred with interacting on projects with the private sector is that sometimes the contracts do not allow a graduate student working on the project to publish their dissertation or thesis which can be based on data obtained through the joint project. He pointed out that being able to publish is very important for the student. VC Paul stated that this problem can extend beyond the private sector, although recently this has not occurred. He stated that most of the contracts ask for a review of the data to see if it needs to be protected for intellectual property rights. He pointed out that a bigger problem is that some of the contracts we enter into with the federal government may put restrictions on the use of the data. He noted that the work done with the National Strategic Research Institute is considered classified information. He pointed out that in these cases it is our responsibility to not put our graduate students into a position where they cannot publish their findings. He stated that Ryan Anderson, Director of Corporate and Foundations Relations, has an attorney to specifically deal with industry contracts and to help avoid these conflicts and to make sure our contracts with private companies are appropriate.

VC Paul asked the faculty to contact him or anyone in his office if they have any ideas, suggestions, or concerns that relate to research.

4.0 Approval of December 3, 2013 Minutes

Professor Bender, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, moved for approval of the minutes. Professor Joeckel, School of Natural Resources, seconded the motion. Professor Purcell, Southeast Research & Extension Center, noted that there needs to be a correction from 20th century to 21st century. The motion was approved.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Report (Professor Swenseth)

Professor Swenseth stated that the IAC is requesting the Senate to take action to update the language in the Committee's syllabus. He noted that these changes are basically housekeeping to reflect changes in titles. He reported that each year the IAC's Subcommittee to Assess Academic Support Services conducts a study and this year they looked at student athlete course enrollment patterns in online and independent study courses. He stated that this study was also conducted at a number of other universities because violations were occurring. He reported that no violations were detected here although the study revealed that independent study and online courses were thought not to be as difficult, but this is only the perception of the students and there is no real evidence to support these claims. He stated that the committee will continue to monitor these courses.

Professor Swenseth reported that the Scheduling Oversight Subcommittee did a study looking at student athletes' ability to attend classes with scheduling conflicts of team competitions. He noted that final exams have become more difficult for some student athletes since we joined the Big Ten. He stated that this Subcommittee plans to review the Senate's Missed Class Days Policy which has not been updated since 1995. He reported that there were no incidents of team scheduling that was in conflict with the policy although there were more requests for a waiver because some team competition schedules were already set in place before we joined the Big Ten.

Professor Swenseth reported that there was only one appeal this past year on athletic scholarship which was denied.

Professor Swenseth stated that ongoing activities of the IAC include updating and revising the Policy Regarding Student-Athletes Enrolled in Classes Taught by Athletics Department Staff Members, Family Members of Athletics Staff Members, or Others with a Close Relationship with Athletics Department Staff. He noted that the revisions eliminated some procedures that were deemed unnecessary and redundant, expands oversight to additional instructors that were not explicitly covered under the original policy, and expands oversight into some types of instructor/student interactions that were not explicitly covered under the original policy.

Professor Swenseth reported that UNL's concussion policy was reviewed and deemed adequate but that the

communication process between the Athletics Department staff and campus administration should be formalized. A specific path of communication and appropriate communication procedures were specified.

Professor Swenseth reported that another issue that the IAC is looking into is the graduation rates of student athletes. He noted that in the Big 12 we were fairly strong in our graduation rates for the student body as a whole, but we have one of the lowest rates now that we are in the Big Ten, both for the overall student body and for student athletes.

Professor Carlson, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences, asked for clarification on the missed class policy and how it relates to conflicts with competitive events or practices for student athletes. Professor Swenseth stated that the policy states that in all instances it is the student's responsibility to request permission for the absence (preferably in writing) from the instructor and to discuss how the absence will affect their ability to meet the course requirements. He noted that a couple of majors have had problems due to their course schedule and pointed out that the schedules of lab classes create the most difficulties for student athletes. He stated that there have been some instances where a student athlete has been hurt competitively because they can't get out of a lab class. Professor Carlson asked if a report is available about scheduling conflicts. Professor Swenseth stated that the report should be part of the public record. Professor Carlson asked if the report was available on the Athletics Department website. He noted that the information could be helpful in recruiting students and would be valuable for faculty members advising potential student athletes. Professor Swenseth stated that he will forward the information on where the report can be obtained.

Professor Rudy, Nutrition and Health Sciences, reported that CNN did a study on the policies of admitting student athletes that barely scored the minimum on the ACTs and inquired whether this has been looked at here. Professor Swenseth noted that we have a tendency to err on the other side in missing out on some good students because we haven't looked at them closely enough. He stated that the policy for the Big Ten is to accept fewer students that are on the line academically. He stated that UNL attempts to look at the whole package of information about the student and not just rely strictly on the ACT score. He pointed out that Big Ten schools can only have two marginalized students based on the number of student athletes you have on scholarships. Professor Rudy noted that the report shows that most of the Big Ten schools did not respond to the study. He questioned whether the thought is that there is enough integrity in the Big Ten that this was not a problem. Professor Swenseth pointed out that the Big Ten policies already in place might prevent this kind of situation from occurring here.

5.2 University Appeals and Judicial Board (Dean Hecker)

Dean Hecker reported that the report is very simple this year because there was only one case that actually went to the Board for a decision. Professor Woodman, School of Biological Sciences, asked if the lack of reporting to Student Affairs is due to the amount of time that is required of a faculty member given what is perceived as a less rigorous response to an issue. Dean Hecker stated that he suspects that under reporting is somewhat due to the amount of time involved and he understands that there is some uncertainty about how his office handles these cases. He noted that a little more time is required when a report is made because it is an official state action as opposed to taking action at a classroom level. He pointed out that part of the situation is that his office is seeing a lot of cases that are referred to as information only and is handled by the instructor.

President Guevara questioned why there was only one case of academic dishonesty listed when cutting and pasting from the internet occurs so often and there are so many programs in place to catch plagiarism. Dean Hecker pointed out that the one case is the only one that went to an actual case. He reported that his office receives about 40 notices a month about plagiarism which typically involves graduate students and dismissal is being sought.

President Guevara asked what exactly brought out the recent case of the intolerance issue due to comments made at an ASUN meeting. He noted that the Chancellor has indicated that a policy is now being created. Dean Hecker reported that there were a number of incidents that occurred in the fall, one of them happened during homecoming week involving acts that depicted racially insensitive stereotypes. Another incident involved a Greek house and their burrito bash and a similar incident occurred with a women's athletic team dressing up in racially insensitive attire. He reported that there was also an incident of a single word written on a sidewalk in chalk that occurred overnight. He pointed out that it is unknown whether it was a member of the university community that wrote it or someone else. He stated that this creates a struggle for us in how we better prepare our students to work and exist in the multi-cultural world we live in and what is racially insensitive. He noted that his office has very constitutional restrictions in terms of what can be done in these situations, but there are educational initiatives that we can take to better equip the students to go forward and we need to redo this each year with the new students that are enrolled.

Professor Weissling, Special Education and Communication Disorders, asked if a faculty member was involved in advising the Greek house on their event. She pointed out that a faculty advisor could have talked to the students about their idea. Dean Hecker stated that he is not directly aware of this. He pointed out that all Greek houses have chapter advisors and some have a faculty liaison. Professor Weissling stated that this needs to be an educational experience for faculty members as well. She noted that she has seen some student organizations with faculty advisors that are on the border line with intolerance. She stated that the entire campus community needs to be educated so they understand the issue and are able to identify sensitive issues. Dean Hecker stated that he believes that is part of the Chancellor's intent.

Professor Adams, Plant Pathology, stated that today's media creates problems because it is difficult to determine where the boundaries are for intolerance. Dean Hecker stated that this is the heart of the issue, what are the boundaries and where does one go to find out where the boundaries lie. Professor Adams pointed out that people grow up differently in different times and what is acceptable can vary.

Professor Carlson stated that if the administration is considering some sort of educational oversight responsibilities on the part of faculty members or staff members that act as advisors to student groups it will put an additional burden on these employees and they are not receiving any compensation for this service work. This could result in fewer faculty members and staff members willing to serve as advisors. He pointed out that if this starts to occur the campus needs to take a look at this issue.

President Guevara noted that what the administration is trying to accomplish is no easy task as we have a continually mutating group of people when we get students and faculty members from different parts of the world. He pointed out that it is how people are made to feel, not the intent of an action that needs to be considered. He noted that the meaning of a word can vary from language to language and this is something else that needs to be considered. He stated that this is a serious issue for academia.

Professor Eccarius, Special Education and Communication Disorders, stated that educational efforts may need to include how to react when someone feels that they have been attacked or feel uncomfortable or threatened. She wondered, once someone has that reaction, how we handle the situation and what are the normal ways of resolving the issue afterwards. She noted that it is not possible to avoid hurting everyone's feelings. She stated that the person or people need to be educated as to why their action(s) was insensitive. Dean Hecker agreed and stated that students seem to have this perception that the faculty and administration knows everything that happens on campus, but unless someone raises the issue, an act can go by unnoticed.

Professor Rudy asked if there was any clue as to the ethnicity of the writer of the chalk incident. Dean Hecker stated that there are no connections at all. Professor Rudy pointed out that the Daily Nebraskan seems to think it was a racial thing but if the ethnicity of the writer is unknown it can't be determined as racial. Professor Neal, Art & Art History, asked if the spelling of the word is any indicator. Dean Hecker stated that the spelling really did not provide any clues. Professor Neal wondered if it is conceivable that the word could have been some self-identifying marker. Dean Hecker stated that it could have, but the offended students did not see it this way. President Guevara pointed out that it is possible that it could have been written by someone not even involved with the university.

President Elect Nickerson noted that the Student Code of Conduct is currently being revised and asked if the revisions have been made in view of these incidents. Professor Reisbig, Child, Youth & Family Studies, stated that the revisions have no relation to the recent incidents and the work on the revisions has been going on for several years. Dean Hecker pointed out that the revisions have been finalized and should come to the Senate next month. If the Faculty Senate and ASUN approve the revisions the revised Code will go to the Chancellor for approval and finally to the Board of Regents.

5.3 University Curriculum Committee Report (Professor DeFusco)

Professor DeFusco noted that he came before the Senate last year asking to suspend the rules on the routine approving of courses. He stated that the UCC realized after suspending the rules that the system that was in place was working well. He reported that the positive aspect of the trial period is that it helped to move along the further development of the CREQ system. He stated that the idea was to change the CREQ system so departments could see more easily where their course request was in the process. He stated that the hope is that this will make things run much more smoothly. He reported that the UCC now assembles all of the course requests into a slate and votes on them as a group. He pointed out that members can still pull out any course that they might have concerns about, but most of the course approvals are routine matters. He stated that the UCC is not asking the Senate for any action at this time.

Professor DeFusco reported that the UCC only deals with ACE courses in May. He noted that there are eight faculty members from the different undergraduate colleges who serve on the UCC ACE Subcommittee which meets separately from the rest of the UCC because every ACE action has to have a unanimous vote of the Subcommittee. He stated that the big concern for the Subcommittee is to try to address the concerns raised about ACE recertification procedures. He noted that President Elect Nickerson attended one of the meetings and expressed the Senate's concerns on these procedures and the Subcommittee has been working to revise them. He reported that the Subcommittee hopes to wrap up the proposed revisions by January 27. A draft of the changes will then be sent out.

Professor Woodman noted that 246 ACE recertification were voted on and asked if each of the Subcommittee members had to look at each one. Professor DeFusco stated that the members read the reports but this last year it was broken down into sections to divide the work. He noted that if a member does not like something that he sees in the recertification he/she can post their opinion on Blackboard although this is not easy to do. He reported that the ACE procedures do not require faculty members to post their reports on Blackboard. They can simply collect the data and tell the Subcommittee about it. He noted that the Subcommittee wants to read the assessment of the ACE course. Professor Woodman asked if all 246 ACE courses were recertified. Professor DeFusco stated that they were. President Guevara pointed out that four were removed. Professor DeFusco pointed out that these were removed by the request of the department. He noted that the UCC is trying to gather information from DARVIS on how many of the ACE courses are actually being used to satisfy the ACE outcomes.

Professor Reisbig asked that colleges be notified if the UCC is not going to suspend the procedures for getting course approvals. Professor DeFusco stated that he will notify Nancy Mitchell, Director of Undergraduate Education, about getting the colleges notified. He noted that many of the colleges would like to have the new courses added immediately to the undergraduate bulletin, but it is important that they are reviewed by other people to make sure there are no conflicts with other courses.

President Elect Nickerson pointed out that the original intent of the UCC was to eliminate overlapping and competing courses. He stated that in looking at numerous new courses the descriptions are very similar. He asked if the UCC has a mechanism in place to avoid this duplication and competition. Professor DeFusco stated that there really is no mechanism. He pointed out that colleges have already approved a course and made allocations for the course. He noted that the UCC does not see the course approvals until the end of the process and there is no real way to prevent these duplications unless it is raised early in the process. President Elect Nickerson pointed out that some classes are not full because there are other courses that are very similar. Professor DeFusco agreed that this is an issue but is not sure how we can catch all of these duplications and he is open to any suggestions. He stated that new courses get approved unless there is a glaring reason not to approve it. Professor Barycki, Biochemistry, asked if there are any resources for department chairs to check monthly to see what is going on with proposed new courses. He pointed out that if the chairs are aware of some of these courses it might assist the UCC. Professor DeFusco stated that the only thing he knows of is CREQ which is open. He stated that he doesn't know how to get in front of this problem unless the rules are changed so that department chairs must notify the UCC earlier that there is a similar course.

Professor Carlson stated that he cannot imagine that the UCC can be asked to prevent duplication given the large number of classes offered by UNL. He stated that there could be some justification required that the course proposal does not unnecessarily cause duplication of courses. He stated that in CASNR classes are supposed to have a minimum of ten students per semester or the instructor has to justify why the course should continue. He questioned whether this is just a college or a university policy and wondered how the administration judges the justification. Professor DeFusco stated that he did not think there was a campus-wide policy.

Professor LaDunga, Statistics, stated that he cares that we are having individual, highly over-lapping courses rather than a well-developed broad course. He stated that it would be nice to have courses that are complimentary towards each other. He noted that having duplicate courses does not necessarily hurt the instructor, but it can hurt the university and the students and this is a concern. He stated that each and every course should have its interconnecting pieces in its application. He questioned what the possible duplications are and how other courses can feel anew. Professor DeFusco stated that he is not sure how this can be addressed. President Elect Nickerson noted that the UCC should try to avoid duplication but needs to find a mechanism that will enable it to do so.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Policy on Acceptable Use of Software Systems Management and Deployment Tools

Professor Woodman stated that a similar policy on KACE was presented to the Senate last year. The policy has since been revised and has been approved by the Information Technologies and Services Committee and is now going before the Senate for approval.

Professor Eccarius stated that she has received a lot of input from faculty members asking whether the opt out approach is set in stone because they feel that there will be a lot of people not paying attention to this option and they would rather not have the program on their computers. Professor Woodman stated that the original concern is that it will be put on your computer without your knowledge. He reported that the Information Technologies and Services Committee decided that faculty members should have the option of having the program on their computer if they want to, not that they have to have it on their machine. He pointed out that the information that is available on the Office of Information Services and Technologies is designed for the department or college information technology person to be aware of the policy. He stated that faculty members wishing to have the program on their machine just need to fill out a simple form found on the web.

President Guevara stated that the motion will be voted on at the February 4 meeting.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Motion to Review the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Syllabus

President Guevara pointed out that the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee is asking the Senate to approve revisions to the Committee's syllabus. He noted that these are minor editing changes and will be voted on at the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, February 4, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Toni Anaya, Secretary.