

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Adenwalla, Belli, Dawes, Hanrahan, Konecky, Lee, Leiter, Peterson, Purcell, Rudy, Vakilzadian, Woodman

**Absent:** Fech

**Date:** Tuesday, May 2, 2017

**Location:** 201 Canfield Administration

**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 (*Purcell*)

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

### 2.0 Chancellor Green/EVC Plowman

#### 2.1 Update on the Legislative Budget and Possible Additional Cuts

Chancellor Green reported that the Legislature has begun debating the budget and while the Appropriations Committee has recommended a \$13 million cut to the University over the next biennium, \$10 million the first year and \$3 million the second year, there could be more cuts due to the recent forecasting board's report. He noted that the Governor has proposed additional cuts of \$23 million. He stated that we are doing everything that we can to advocate for the University, and noted that if the University receives additional cuts, it will impact tuition rates and academic programs. He stated that the Legislature will still be debating the budget over the next few weeks.

Chancellor Green noted that the administration has been modeling all of the possible scenarios for budget cuts and he has had serious conversations with President Bounds about how we need to be careful with tuition increases so impact on our enrollment growth is minimized. He reported that enrollment is down slightly from last year's May 1<sup>st</sup> deposits. Adenwalla asked if international student enrollment is down due to the current political climate. Chancellor Green stated that first-time international student enrollment is down, but other international enrollment appears stable.

Woodman asked if all of the University campuses will have the same tuition increase. Chancellor Green stated that this issue is currently being considered. Lee asked if UNO's enrollment numbers are increasing. Chancellor Green stated that it is really too early to tell what enrollments will be like at the different campuses.

Purcell noted that the Legislature's last day in session is June 2, but the Board of Regents is scheduled to determine any tuition increase when it meets on June 1.

She asked if the Board will set the tuition increase regardless of whether the Legislature has finished its work on the budget. Chancellor Green stated that the Board will set the tuition increase on June 1 because it has to be in place for the upcoming academic year. He pointed out that the University's appropriations from the Legislature will probably be determined before June 1.

Chancellor Green stated that tremendous support is being shown for the University, but there are a lot of dynamics that need to be considered with the budget, one of which is the tax relief bill which does not seem to have the support it needs to get passed.

**2.2 Purdue University's Purchase of Kaplan University - Potential Impacts for UNL?**

Chancellor Green noted that Purdue University is buying the assets of Kaplan University with the exception of the educational testing component. He pointed out that Kaplan University used to have 32 campuses, but they are now down to 15. He stated that Kaplan University is a for profit venture that was originally owned by Kaplan, Inc., a subsidiary of the Graham Holdings Company. He pointed out that Purdue University does not have a large presence in the online market and the purchase of Kaplan University might be an effort to get more involved with online courses. He stated that there will probably be minimal, if any, impact to our online enrollment and reminded the Executive Committee that Kaplan has been in place in Lincoln for some time now.

Lee pointed out that a degree from Purdue University is more prestigious than Kaplan University. Chancellor Green reported that he understands that there is concern from the faculty of Purdue and others that the purchase of Kaplan is dilution of the Purdue brand. Lee asked if Purdue plans on holding classes at the Lincoln campus. Chancellor Green stated that he will learn more about the situation at the administrators' Big Ten conference this summer.

**2.3 Chancellor Gold's Appointment as Interim Chancellor of UNO - potential merger? If so, how would this impact UNL?**

Chancellor Green reported that he was previously aware of the possible interim appointment of Chancellor Gold because the search for a Chancellor of UNO was unsuccessful. He stated that he spoke to President Bounds about the idea and told the President that he was supportive of the approach and appointment. He noted that UNO has some challenges that need to be confronted quickly and Chancellor Gold can come in and help without additional costs. He stated that there has been some valid questions on whether Chancellor Gold will be able to handle both roles and he pointed out that Chancellor Gold has had experience in dealing with dual administrative roles. He noted that people are automatically asking if there will be one campus formed in Omaha, but as far as he knows that is not planned.

Chancellor Green reported that there are plans to consolidate some services across the university campuses and some services will probably be in Omaha.

Woodman noted that there was considerable discussion in the President's Steering Committee regarding consolidation of services. He reported that geographical proximity was a contributing factor. He pointed out that there is concern in the biological sciences at UNL that the combined UNMC/UNO campuses could pull the pre-med students away from UNL. Adenwalla noted that parents and future students do not always look at the quality of education at a university and might choose UNO for other reasons. He stated that he is more concerned with the perception that Omaha is the "metro" campus and we are the "non-metro" campus. Lee pointed out that most good universities are not located in a major city.

Lee asked if Chancellor Gold serving as Interim Chancellor of UNO will hurt our ability to include UNMC research dollars when reports of research expenditures are made. Chancellor Green pointed out that we cannot count UNMC's research dollars because each of our campuses has a Chancellor, and therefore, they must report research dollars separately by federal guidelines.

Vakilzadian stated that the faculty of the Engineering College are concerned that UNO engineering faculty members will have more input into doing collaborative research with UNMC and that this could have significant impacts for the Engineering program in UNL. Chancellor Green pointed out that it is virtually impossible to get two engineering colleges accredited in the state.

Lee asked if the reason for failed searches at the administrative levels is because the University is getting a reputation of hiring only internal candidates. Chancellor Green stated that in regards to the UNO Chancellor's search, there are currently over 100 searches nationally occurring for this kind of position and given the state's current economic situation, it makes it more challenging to recruit good candidates. He pointed out that VC Boehm was an external candidate and EVC Plowman originally came to Nebraska as an external candidate. He stated that there are several administrative searches that will need to take place here at UNL in the near future.

Belli asked the Chancellor could elaborate on his comment regarding UNL being considered a "non-metro" college. Chancellor Green stated that the campus is already trying to address this issue. He pointed out that the performing arts are better in Lincoln than in Omaha, we have more start-up companies, and new downtown development. He reported that we are marketing heavily the advantages of Lincoln, which are tremendous if we can get people here to see them.

#### **2.4 Idea to Change Final Exam Schedule and Eliminating Distribution of Diplomas at Graduation**

EVC Plowman noted that as the campus has grown and more sections of courses have been offered, a problem has arisen with some final exams being scheduled simultaneously which has caused conflicts for some students. She stated that the

current policy to deal with these conflicts is for the student to make a request of an instructor to take a final exam at a different time.

EVC Plowman reported that her office wants to explore other ways to schedule the final exams. She noted that there are currently no exams on Friday afternoon because diplomas are handed out at graduation on Saturday and there needs to be adequate time to process the grades and prepare the diplomas. She pointed out that the University Registrar would like to discontinue the handing out of diplomas at graduation which would allow the use of Friday afternoon to schedule finals, although this is not supported by the Chancellor. She stated that another alternative would be to reduce the actual time of final exams. She pointed out that that this would result in additional time slots for exams, but she did not think the Deans would accept this idea.

EVC Plowman stated that another alternative would be to expand the final exam week. She pointed out that exams could begin earlier and noted that some universities have final exams on Saturday and Sunday. She stated that she is committed to finding a way so that exams are not double booked. She reported that the Deans' preference would be to not distribute the diplomas at graduation, but there are issues associated with this change, one of which is the cost of having to mail out the diplomas.

Rudy reported that he is a member of the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee and the vast majority of the members of the Committee want to continue giving out the diplomas at graduation. He noted that the Committee is aware that the graduation ceremonies have increased in size due to the number of students and there are logistic difficulties that need to be addressed. EVC Plowman stated that the Associate Deans have been working on the issue and recommended not giving out the diplomas on stage. Konecky stated that some universities give the students the cover for the diploma during the graduation ceremony and then the student picks up the actual diploma immediately after the ceremony in a behind the scenes area at the graduation ceremony location.

Peterson noted that dead week was revised in 2005 to make it a real study week for students and no final exams are to be given during the 15<sup>th</sup> week. He pointed out that there are only 14 Mondays during a semester due to Labor Day and Martin Luther King's birthday and suggested shortening the semester by having only 14 classes on the other days of the week. This could allow final exams to begin earlier. He noted that there would probably be strong resistance by faculty members to this idea, but other universities have shorter semesters. Adenwalla stated that she would object to shortening the semester and feels that she needs every week to teach her courses. Leiter suggested moving graduation back one week, but EVC Plowman stated that this was not favored at all. She stated that she hopes there will be a recommendation on how to deal with the commencement problem by the fall.

Adenwalla asked how many more slots of exam times would be needed to resolve the final exam problem. EVC Plowman reported that three more slots would be needed if exams could be given on Friday afternoons. Griffin pointed out that final exams used to be scheduled for Friday afternoons, but the Faculty Senate approved a resolution to replace the Friday afternoon exam time with two evening sessions for final exams in April 2005. It was believed at that time that the change would possibly minimize the number of students who would have conflicts of having three or more exams on the same day and it would allow the faculty more time to grade the exams of those students scheduled to graduate on Saturday.

**2.5 Currently, approximately one-third of the faculty at UNL are non-tenure track. Is this foreseen as the optimal mix moving forward? As tenure is seen by many in U.S. academia as the backbone to the academic freedom, what is foreseen as the implications of this type of faculty mix to academic freedom?** Chancellor Green reported that approximately a third of the faculty members are non-tenure track and two-thirds are in tenure track ranks. He noted that comparative data of Big Ten peers and regional universities show that we are in the middle in terms of the number of non-tenure track faculty members. He pointed out that 70% of the faculty at Rutgers University are non-tenure track, at Penn State it is 60%, and Michigan is 54%. He noted that Extension Educators were not included in the comparative data.

In addressing the question on academic freedom, Chancellor Green stated that most of the shifts in non-tenure track faculty members has been converting Lecturer positions to Professors of Practice, and while these positions are still non-tenure track, they have greater rights and most of them are full-time employees. He stated that he does not think we will see a gradual shift towards fewer tenure track faculty members.

Lee asked if most of the non-tenure track faculty members are in teaching or research positions. EVC Plowman stated that most are teaching positions and the growth has been in areas where there has been the greatest student growth. She noted that the Professors of Practice position is a career path where they begin as Assistant Professors of Practice and can eventually become a full Professor of Practice. She pointed out that it is not possible to hire all of the needed faculty as tenure track faculty members. Belli noted that it would be logical to cover the courses with tenure track faculty members, but resource wise it is not practical. Chancellor Green stated that the cost is so high for tenure track faculty members in some areas due to the competitive market and we simply don't have the resources.

EVC Plowman stated that academic freedom is a different issue and she does not see a threat to it if non-tenure track faculty members are hired. Belli pointed out that the AAUP guidelines advocate for two kinds of contracts that imply a long-

term relationship with a University, probationary tenure track and continuous tenured and he thinks there should be discussion in terms of how contracts for Professors of Practice should be perceived with regard to academic freedom as it is a tract that is not in agreement with AAUP guidelines. Chancellor Green stated that he would hope that our Professors of Practice do not have any less degree of academic freedom, in actual practice in the classroom or research lab, but understands the difference in contractual terms. He pointed out that we operate on a campus that highly values academic freedom.

Adenwalla stated that she does not believe that Professors of Practice have the same security of being able to teach as freely as tenure track faculty members. Chancellor Green stated that he thinks Professors of Practice still feel they have the ability to teach freely based on academic freedom. The separate question is whether they have protection of tenure. Rudy noted that the Professor of Practice positions are still being defined, it is the Lecturers that are more vulnerable.

Belli asked if the recommendations for best practices for non-tenure track faculty members has been completed yet. Rudy stated that the report has not been presented yet to the Faculty Senate, but will be given at the September Senate meeting.

## **2.6 Campus Security Issues**

Purcell reported that a faculty member from East Campus has raised concerns to the Senate about East Campus not receiving alerts of possible dangerous situations. She noted that Chief Yardley of the campus police spoke to the Senate and was asked about the problem, but his response was not satisfactory and vague. Hanrahan noted that when security questions were asked they have been addressed by people who are not knowledgeable. He pointed out that employees and students should not have to sign up to be on an alert system, rather they should automatically be enrolled in the program. Chancellor Green noted that alerts are sent out when there is a person that is a potential threat in the vicinity. Leiter stated that another concern on East Campus is the lack of sidewalks in some areas. He noted that there are sidewalks that suddenly end which forces the pedestrians to walk in the street.

## **2.7 Issues on the Horizon**

Rudy inquired about the two interim appointment announcements last week and what the search processes will be for these positions. EVC Plowman reported that the search for the Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Graduate Education position will begin in the fall. She noted that this will be an open search for both external and internal candidates and announcements will be made during the fall semester.

EVC Plowman reported that the plan is to consult with a search firm about the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs position and to start a national search a year from now. She noted that Interim Vice Chancellor Laurie Bellows' directive is to

help the Student Affairs office to determine what directions it wants to go to in the future and how it can be better organized. Lee asked what kind of vision EVC Plowman has for the position. EVC Plowman stated that research shows that the most successful Student Affairs Offices are when they are more integrated with academic affairs and the enrichment of student life compliments what is going on with the classroom. She pointed out that the campus needs to have more activities going on throughout the day/week, particularly for out-of-state and international students who often remain on campus during campus breaks.

Adenwalla asked if consideration is being considered to having more residential colleges. EVC Plowman stated that these are great ideas but very expensive. She reported that everything is being considered including having more living and learning communities on campus. She noted that it would be beneficial if we focused our growth in some areas rather than all over, perhaps have more STEM undergraduate opportunities available. Chancellor Green stated that another area is the Honors Program. He reported that the Honors Program is being further conceptualized and consideration is being given to a residence college concept. He pointed out that the program currently has about 1500 students overall, but we want to increase the number of students and opportunities in the honors program.

Vakilzadian noted that learning communities seem to be successful for students and asked if there was any data to support their success. EVC Plowman stated that the learning communities are hard to staff because advisors and faculty are needed for them, but out-of-state students really like them and this is an area where we want to grow. She reported that data shows that if you can keep students on campus past Labor Day you can keep them for the semester. Belli suggested that the colleges need to have more social events in the beginning of the semester for students. EVC Plowman pointed out that students need to be able to find a sense of community when they come to campus. Lee noted that the learning commons is being heavily used by students. EVC Plowman stated that female students in particular feel safer going to the Learning Commons in the evening. Konecky asked if a campus security officer will still be on site at the Learning Commons when the hours change. EVC Plowman stated the Learning Commons is being underutilized during the 2:00 A.M. to 7:00 A.M. hours and will not be open during those hours after this semester. EVC Plowman stated that she does not know if there will be a change with the security officer and will check. Adenwalla pointed out that out-of-state students, particularly minority students, can be very lonely. She stated that it would be helpful if there was training to help these students feel included.

### **3.0 Announcements**

#### **3.1 LB327 Resolution**

Purcell reported that the Senate's resolution on LB327 was sent to Speaker Scheer and that Assistant to the Chancellor for Community Relations Michelle Waite, was very pleased that the Senate passed the resolution. Waite stated that she will forward the resolution to Senators Morfeld and Pansing Brooks.

### **3.2 Faculty Senate President Designee to Academic Planning Committee 2017-18**

Purcell reported that she has appointed Woodman as the Faculty Senate President Designee to the APC. She noted that the designee is typically the outgoing chair of the APC, but she wanted the Senate Executive Committee to have direct input to the Committee because of the budget cuts. She stated that she contacted Professor Wagner, current chair of the APC, to inform him of her decision and to thank him for his service.

### **4.0 Approval of April 18, 2017 Minutes**

Rudy moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Vakilzadian and approved by the Executive Committee.

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **5.1 Update on Faculty Survey**

Purcell reported that over 630 faculty members have responded to the faculty questionnaire that was recently sent out. She stated that she will work with Dawes and Hanrahan to help compile a list of themes identified in the comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:19 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, May 16 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Konecky, Secretary.