

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bradford, Fech, Franti, Konecky, McCollough, Prochaska-Cue, Schubert, Rapkin, Zimmers

Absent: LaCost, Lindquist

Date: Wednesday, December 10, 2008

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.

1.0 Call to Order

Prochaska-Cue called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Couture

2.1 Budget

Prochaska-Cue asked if there were any updates to the budget since the Chancellor spoke to the Senate on December 2nd. Chancellor Perlman stated that the Governor announced today not to expect any growth in the state budget for the next few years. He noted that the budget is causing concerns for everyone but what is happening at other public and private universities is tragic. He stated that he will start the formal process to identify what permanent cuts can be made to the budget after the first of the year.

McCollough asked who is involved in the budget cutting process. Chancellor Perlman replied that he has to meet with the Executive Committee, Academic Planning Committee (APC), and Deans to lay out the budget reductions. He noted that the process requires him to notify the APC of his recommendations. The APC will then hold hearings based on what is impacted by the cuts and the APC will then make recommendations to him. He stated that in the past he has tried to keep the Executive Committee apprised of what is going on with the process. He pointed out that there might be some issues beyond cutting units such as questions about salary increases but he will be having conversations about this with the Executive Committee.

Franti asked if the restrictions on hiring apply to grant funded positions. Chancellor Perlman stated that the restrictions do not apply to grant funded positions. He pointed out that we will have to make cuts in state funds and approval will be needed for all state funded positions. He stated that units can do what they want if they think they can meet the budget cuts. He noted that the senior administrative team will not second guess the deans and chairs but a convincing argument must be made to the administrators that a hire is critically needed. He pointed out that the Advance grant that the campus received does have some requirements which includes the hiring of some faculty on state lines.

Bradford asked if the deans can go ahead and hire as long as they go through SVCAA Couture for authorization. Chancellor Perlman stated that this is correct but deans need to understand the consequences the hire will have on their budget and consider the possibility of upcoming budget cuts.

McCullough asked what the definition is of a unit. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is traditionally a department but once outside of the faculty it can be all different kinds of things. SVCAA Couture stated that units could house many different kinds of programs.

2.2 Searches for Dean of Law and Dean of College of Business Administration

Prochaska-Cue noted that the two deans' positions are probably deemed as critical positions. Chancellor Perlman stated that these are crucial positions that need to be filled and funding already exists although he acknowledged that one of the deans will be returning to a faculty position.

Prochaska-Cue asked if search committees are being formed for these positions. Chancellor Perlman reported that the search committee for the dean of the Law College has been completed and he will contact the Executive Committee for input on the members of the search committee for the College of Business Administration.

2.3 Chief Information Officer Position

Chancellor Perlman stated that he has received responses from ASUN, the Senate Executive Committee, and the Academic Planning Committee to go forward with this position. He distributed a list of faculty members to possible serve on the search committee and asked the Committee for input on the list.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there has been some question of where the money is coming for the position. He pointed out that funding is already available for this position which was once held by the late Kent Hendrickson.

Franti asked if only faculty members will serve on the search committee and how many will be appointed. Chancellor Perlman stated that four or five faculty members will be on the search committee but there will be a total of ten or twelve people. Other members will be from IANR Communications, information services and from the senior administrative team. He reported that he is considering using an outside consultant to assist in the search. He noted that we have been more successful in hiring when we have used an outside consultant for these specialized positions.

2.4 Upcoming Issues

Chancellor Perlman pointed out that Initiative 424, the Nebraska Civil Rights Initiative, goes into effect on December 11th. He stated that it is still uncertain what this will mean for the university although there are a couple of things that we are currently doing that we clearly will not be able to do under the initiative. He stated that there will be more of an impact on admissions to graduate and professional programs rather than on undergraduate programs. He noted that the admissions criteria in some departments might need to be changed to comply with the initiative.

Chancellor Perlman stated that race cannot be used as a factor in awarding scholarships. He reported that there are some scholarships that are race exclusive.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there is still a lot of uncertainty as to what we can and cannot do. He reported that recently we have had a Hispanic Empowerment Conference and an African American conference and there will be a Native American conference on Friday but he does not believe these will be impacted because anyone can be invited to attend them.

Zimmers asked if scholarships that go through the foundation would be a problem. Chancellor Perlman stated that as long as the foundation makes the decision on who is awarded the scholarships he thinks it will be okay although this still needs to be investigated.

Rapkin questioned the impact the initiative will have on hiring. Chancellor Perlman stated the he does not know of any university policy that states that race is a factor in hiring. He noted that race, gender and other protected classes are a factor in developing a pool from which candidates are hired but this is not prohibited by Initiative 424 because it falls under federal obligations.

Rapkin noted that the Chancellor did not mention opportunity hires. He asked how the Initiative will affect these hires. Chancellor Perlman stated that he did not think there will be an impact as long as the hires are based on a decision to hire a person in a protected class. He pointed out that he does not think trailing spouses will be affected by the Initiative. He stated that it will have to depend on the units as to what the criteria is for hiring, if the hiring is based on gender or race it cannot be done. He stated that if a unit is concerned with opportunity hires it might want to formulize the merit of the opportunity hires.

McCullough asked if the Initiative will affect administrative levels. Chancellor Perlman stated that it will absolutely affect administration.

SVCAA Couture reported that, based on the recommendations made by the Advisory Board which the university has a contract with, a draft proposal to adopt best practices to recruit and retain a diverse faculty has been created. She noted that the proposal outlines how to implement some of these best practices. She pointed out that one of our core values is to have a diverse faculty and staff.

SVCAA Couture stated that the proposal outlines a series of practices that the administration wants to highlight on this campus. The practices relate to scouting for new faculty, search processes, support for new faculty members, and retention of faculty. She noted that the deans have reviewed the proposal and feel that they can work with the departments to cultivate these practices. She stated that the idea is to ask individual units how they are doing within their own units and colleges with regard to achieving and

maintaining faculty diversity. She reported that the administration wants to go forward with this plan.

SVCAA Couture stated that she wants to get comments from the Senate Executive Committee and other university groups on the proposal.

Franti asked if there is a standard the administration is trying to reach for diversity. SVCAA Couture pointed out that we do not have quotas and our standard is to look at the processes that would allow us to be successful and to see if we are engaged fully in implementing them.

Fech asked if the proposal is looking more at the process rather than the outcome. SVCAA Couture stated that the outcome would appear in reports to the Board of Regents but we will need to take a look over time to see if these practices are indeed working. Chancellor Perlman noted that federal standards can also be used to determine if we are successful.

Schubert asked when a pool of candidates is considered diverse enough. Chancellor Perlman stated that there are some tools that may be able to measure this and there are some things that we are required to do under federal law. Schubert asked if eventually there will be a committee that would evaluate a pool of candidates to see if it is diverse enough. SVCAA Couture stated that the idea is to create a faculty advisory committee that would help develop best practices, not to have this committee check on how searches are doing. She noted that department heads, deans, and members of the senior administrative team will be responsible for reviewing search processes for individual searches in their units and on the committee as well and the committee will be asking important questions on whether certain obligations have been met by the university.

Bradford asked how the faculty advisory committee will be selected. SVCAA Couture stated that she welcomes the Executive Committee's suggestions regarding this issue but for now she is just looking for feedback on the proposal. She stated that she welcomes suggestions from the Committee and would like to get something started next semester, hopefully by mid-January.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Update on Investigation into the Cancellation of Dr. Ayers' Visit

Prochaska-Cue reported that she spoke with the President of FIRE who stated that the organization was very supportive of the investigation but due to the lack of staff they will not be able to take on a full investigation. She reported that the President of FIRE recommended that she speak with two people at AAUP to see if they will conduct an investigation. She stated that she hopes to hear something from AAUP by the end of next week. McCollough suggested that the Committee might want to write a letter to the Chronicle of Higher Education if AAUP turns us down.

Prochaska-Cue stated that another option would be to get an outside consultant to conduct the investigation. She stated that she will ask FIRE for suggestions on a

consultant. Rapkin asked if we would have to pay a consultant. Griffin stated that foundation funds could be used. Rapkin stated that he is concerned with hiring a consultant because of how people may view the nature of the relationship. McCollough pointed out that hiring a consultant might look biased because they would be working on behalf of the faculty.

Fech wondered if AFCON could do it. Bradford stated that many of the members of AFCON are faculty members at UNL. Prochaska-Cue stated that suggestions were made about the possibility of bringing in the Senate President from some of our peer institutions to do the investigation. Fech suggested past presidents since they may have a little more experience. Bradford pointed out that we do not know what their expertise is and it might be better to find someone nationally who deals with these kinds of issues. Prochaska-Cue stated that she will keep the Committee posted if anything further develops.

4.0 Approval of 12/3/08 Minutes

Fech moved and Bradford seconded approval of the minutes as amended. Motion approved.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Faculty Salary Survey

The Committee reviewed and revised the draft survey and agreed that the responses are to be anonymous. The Committee thanked Franti for his work in drafting the questions.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Search Committee for Chief Information Officer

The Committee reviewed the names suggested by Chancellor Perlman to serve on the search committee for the CIO. The Committee recommended eight faculty members.

6.2 Proposal to Adopt Best Practices to Recruit and Retain a Diverse Faculty

Franti questioned whether the proposal is supposed to be a diversity plan for the university and he wondered where we are in regards to the timing of a plan. Bradford noted that the definition of diversity has never been clearly defined. Schubert questioned whether this might be another layer of work being imposed on the faculty. He asked whether the faculty advisory committee will be able to come in at any stage of the search process and say that the pool is not diverse enough. Fech noted that the Office of Equity, Access, & Diversity Programs reviews the pool of candidates to make sure it is diverse before the search can move further.

Schubert reported that most of what is in the proposal is covered in the search committee training. Rapkin stated that he did not see anything new or innovative in the proposal. Bradford noted that there was very little on retention in the document.

The Committee decided to work on the proposal at its January 7th meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, January 7th at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Rapkin, Secretary.