

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bradford, Fech, Hachtmann, Lindquist, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin

Absent: Franti, LaCost, Ledder, McCollough, Schubert, Zimmers

Date: Wednesday, October 22, 2008

Location: 201 Canfield Administration Building

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 3:12 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Couture/VC Owens

2.1 Security Concerns

Prochaska-Cue noted that with the help of the Executive Committee she sent a letter to the Lincoln Journal Star and Omaha World Herald about the cancellation of Dr. Ayers' visit. She pointed out that the letter basically states that if there was a legitimate security concern the Committee agrees with the Chancellor's decision but it does not understand why the decision was made so quickly. She stated that it appears that no other alternatives were considered. She stated that in a meeting of the College of Education and Human Sciences good suggestions were made about how the incident could have been handled differently. A suggestion was made that Dr. Ayers' presentation could have been done via teleconferencing or through some other alternative means. She stated that faculty members wondered why time was not taken to consider possible alternatives.

Chancellor Perlman noted that these are fair questions. He stated that the situation was made more awkward by the fact that he was 13 time zones away and would be spending most of his time on planes to get back to Nebraska since he was in China at the time. He stated that he felt from the advice he received that there was a legitimate security risk. He stated that he realized that people would be skeptical about this but his concern was not just for Dr. Ayers but for any person participating as well. He stated that he honestly didn't think about distance communication or videotaping but that such a solution would not necessarily protect the security of those on campus. He noted that the advice he was given was that the security concerns would not diminish and that they could be sustainable for a period of time.

Rapkin stated that it would be understandable if Dr. Ayers' speech was provocative or offensive but the fact is that he would be heard to speak on mundane educational policies that he has expertise in. Rapkin noted that this was not raised and was missing from the consideration of free speech and academic freedom issues. He pointed out that there was a month to educate people about this unless the threat was so severe that an educational

approach wasn't possible. He asked why the educational aspect was not pursued since there was a month to do this. Chancellor Perlman stated that the emails he read and the comments he has heard from the security experts suggests that it is not possible to have a rational debate with these people. He pointed out that his analysis is the same and that this is not a free speech case. He stated that the threats were not an objection to what Dr. Ayers was going to say rather it was based on his character background. He noted that some people find Dr. Ayers' previous actions to be so reprehensible that they feel he should not even be allowed on campus.

Lindquist noted that the irony of the situation is astonishing because people apparently threatened violence against the university and/or Dr. Ayers because they disagree with his use of violence against those he disagreed with in the 1960's. Chancellor Perlman stated that probably only .1% of 1% of the population is dangerous in this case but these are the people that you need to worry about. Bradford pointed out that by giving into terroristic threats you send that message out to that threats can shut the campus down whenever someone disagrees with something that we do.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he was not going to risk the safety of this campus and this is why he made the decision that he did. Bradford noted that faculty members teach controversial issues all of the time. He asked if faculty members are now going to be told that they won't be protected for what they teach. Chancellor Perlman stated his instincts are that this would be a very different case. He noted that at some point the core mission of the university has to be protected and Dr. Ayers' visit was not a part of the core mission.

Prochaska-Cue asked if this incident means that we will now need to clear all external speakers with the administration before allowing anyone to come to campus. Chancellor Perlman stated absolutely not and people can invite anyone they want.

SVCAA Couture pointed out that there are external issues beyond Dr. Ayers that exacerbated the situation and heightened the event. She noted that the election is still on the top of people's minds and the nation as a whole is getting far more heated about it and Dr. Ayers and his potential connection to a presidential candidate was even written about in the newspapers in China in their reporting about our election. She stated that the Chancellor responded accordingly given the way that some people were reacting to his visit.

Prochaska-Cue pointed out that Dr. Ayers has been in the state before in the 1990's without any incidents. Chancellor Perlman noted that a month and a half ago nobody would even know who Dr. Ayers was. He stated that the election is a very passionate one with a lot of themes and a lot of it is emotional rather than rational. He stated that if he thought it was possible to educate a reasonable number of people to at least get them to back away from their position he might have made a different decision. He stated that experience has now shown him that his decision was the right one.

Bradford asked if anyone had seen the Governor's transcript from his interview with Fox News. He pointed out that the Chancellor is agreeing with the Governor's statements. Chancellor Perlman stated that he has been clear that he does not agree with the Governor on this and in fact his decision was made long before the Governor spoke on the matter.

Prochaska-Cue stated that she wanted to go on record thanking Dean Kostelnik for dealing with this situation as well as she has. She noted that Dean Kostelnik has really been in the cross-fire but has tried to be as open and honest with the faculty in the college as much as she could about the situation.

2.2 Metrics of Success

Prochaska-Cue stated that at first thinking the Committee was concerned that the Metrics of Success were similar to the Quality Indicators. SVCAA Couture stated that the Metrics of Success can be separated from the Quality Indicators which are actually annual reports. She noted that some of the Quality Indicators report on benchmarks that have been set by the Board of Regents.

SVCAA Couture explained that the Metrics of Success are directly related to the requirements set out in Chancellor Perlman's 2004 address when he asked for unit strategic plans. She noted that the colleges and departments set their own strategic priorities and a timeline for achieving these benchmarks thereby setting their own Metrics of Success. In making a new request for these metrics this year, we are looking specifically at student enrollment and research productivity.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the administration is trying to increase accountability. He noted that up until now we have had some very generalized campus objectives such as wanting to get enrollment and research up but the administration wants to ask departments what they think their research activity is going to be, what their expectations are, and what their enrollment should be, and then test them to see if they reach these goals. Prochaska-Cue noted that these would be quantitative measures of success to which the Chancellor and SVCAA agreed.

Lindquist stated that the Metrics of Success makes good sense as described though the last time his unit was asked to address metrics of success, they were provided with how the unit ranked within the college and asked how they would improve that ranking. He pointed out that ranking departments within a college is not appropriate. Chancellor Perlman stated that departments are going to be evaluated against the same department at other institutions, not within the same college here.

SVCAA Couture stated that the Metrics, designed by departments and colleges, will reflect how departments want to move in a particular direction. If a department wants to move into another direction such as emphasizing grant writing or taking a specific direction in faculty hiring, the metric could be an individual measure of success for a department in each of these areas. The point is that everything that gets looked at or measured results in better attention to these areas and focuses people on how they are accomplishing their goals.

2.3 Faculty Salaries

Prochaska-Cue stated that the Committee was discussing faculty salaries and the state of the economy. She noted that the Committee is thinking that there will not be much money available for raises next year and a suggestion was made to give an across the board raise rather than merit raises. She noted that if the salary pool is really small there will not be much to give out for merit. She reported that she has seen examples of faculty members who have met their expectations but received only 1.8% of an increase and not just for one year but for several years. She stated that this has happened in IANR and is the reason for the discussion on faculty salaries.

Prochaska-Cue stated that the other part of the topic is how the criteria are set for distributing salary increases. She asked what happens to the money that is not given to the units.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he receives recommendations on the distribution from the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee which faculty members sit on. The distribution can vary based on the size of the increase that we receive. He noted that promotion stipends have to be taken out of the salary pool. He stated that part of the problem is psychological because people hear in the news that university employees will receive say 4.4% but not everyone gets this amount. If they don't receive it, they consider this to be a negative message.

Chancellor Perlman stated that it is his intuition that we actually give greater differential rates in years of less money than in good years. This is done to keep people here who might have other options elsewhere. He noted that these are the most product people. He stated that he is not inclined to think about flattening out the salary increases and stated that the Committee should not be so pessimistic in thinking whether we might have small salary increases. He pointed out that the salary increases will depend on a number of things. The economy is not the best but Nebraska is holding its own. He stated that much will depend on the legislature and the Board of Regents.

Rapkin noted that to keep people with outside offers here the administration has to take a bigger slice out of a small pie. Chancellor Perlman stated that no matter how high or low your salary is if you are productive you will get a better increase. He stated that he can understand the arguments that are being presented but he does not subscribe to them. He noted that there was one case when across the board increases were given but they were nominal.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he does really worry about the lower scale employees because the percentage of increase is low to begin with and their base salary is so low. VC Owens noted that this is a big problem and department heads and chairs frequently make a case to deans and to him about it. He stated that the problem is compounded because there is not much money available.

SVCAA Couture pointed out that all money that comes in for salaries goes back into salaries. Chancellor Perlman stated that money is not being taken out of the faculty salary pool to do other things.

Bradford stated that one of the problems is the issue of transparency. He stated that it is not known what happens to the amounts held back by Academic Affairs and deans. He noted that not even the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee sees these figures. He stated that he believes that most of the money held back by deans is done to help out departments that are far below their peers but he does not know this for sure. He stated that more transparency is needed and it would be nice to have a general sense of where the money goes. He reported that one of the extension faculty members indicated that he receives a letter each year breaking down specifically where his salary comes from. Bradford stated that this would be helpful to everyone.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he thinks most of the money held back is used for individuals rather than departments. SVCAA Couture stated that deans are usually looking to give increases for merit to individual faculty members. She reported that the deans have a sense as to how much they will be getting from the vice chancellors' pools, but some deans make a better case for getting more money in order to retain faculty members, for instance. But the overall distribution from the SVCAA pool usually comes out pretty even amongst the colleges. She stated that in some cases she has discussions with the deans about individual decisions, and she has had discussion, for instance, about whether some salaries at the lower end need to be higher. She stated that deans do have an opportunity to weigh in on how the vice chancellors distribute their pool of money across the colleges.

Fech asked, with the economy being the way it is, and many people in the general public seeing faculty members with "guaranteed jobs", to what extent is that largely to become an issue if faculty make a case for keeping up with faculty salary peers. Chancellor Perlman stated that it will make it harder. He noted that we might catch up a bit this year with the increases we received because ours were higher than many other universities in the Big 12.

2.4 Chancellor's Commission on Environmental Sustainability

Prochaska-Cue asked if the Commission has been officially announced yet. Chancellor Perlman thought it was and noted that it has already met. He stated that he will make sure that there is a public announcement about it.

2.5 Cross-Listed Course Policy

Lindquist noted that in last week's meeting McCollough had stated that student credit hours for cross-listed courses were not necessarily being assigned to the department that was teaching the course. He stated that it is his understanding that if a student signed up for the course under a different (cross-listed) department code than the home department of the instructor, the other department will receive the credit hour production. He stated that apparently the credit hour production is calculated both ways; but it is not clear which approach is used to assign credit hours to units.

Chancellor Perlman stated that there has not been any policy change. He stated that Institutional Research and Planning generates reports that shows that credit hours produced for cross-listed courses are counted for both departments. He pointed out that the administration does not reward money or do anything significant with credit hour production.

Lindquist stated that if units will be evaluated based on their credit hour production, then the method of calculating and assigning those credit hours is important. SVCAA Couture stated that she assumes this is a conversation that is occurring between deans and departments because the deans are not having that conversation with her. She stated that she will look into how credit hours are being counted with cross-listed courses and will get back to the Executive Committee about this.

2.6 Update on Child Care Facility

Prochaska-Cue asked if we are breaking ground this fall for the child care facility. Chancellor Perlman stated that the facility is part of the Whittier project. He reported that bids were opened in late September and we received a good bid on the project. The problem is that the building was going to be bonded and currently there is no money in the credit markets due to the poor economy. We have until early November to sign with the contractor. Bradford asked if we will have to reopen bids if it is not signed by November. Chancellor Perlman stated that we would and as a result the project may be delayed but they are working hard to try and get the project bonded.

2.7 Wellness Program

Chancellor Perlman stated that he doesn't think anything has been decided yet but it looks like there will be something attached to the medical plan for next year. He noted that it will probably be discussed at the President's Council.

Prochaska-Cue reported that she and the other Senate Presidents met with President Milliken last week and he talked about NU credits and the wellness program but did not go into detail about it.

Chancellor Perlman stated that there will be some incentives but he does not know what the details are.

2.8 UNL Beverage Contract

Prochaska-Cue asked if this is the year that the Pepsi contract expires. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is and new contracts are being sought. He noted that a process has been designed and approved by the Board that will act something like an auction where the two top bidders will have the opportunity to re bid. He stated that he hopes to have comparable bids. He stated that the bids are due in December and the current contract goes through June.

2.9 Other Issues

SVCAA Couture reported that the NSF's Advance Program grant is a one-time, five year grant that supports several strategies to help promote women in academic science and engineering careers. She stated that Professor Mary Anne Holmes, Geosciences, is the grant coordinator and Jill Hochstein is the project manager.

SVCAA Couture stated that one of the primary aspects of the grant is to facilitate dual career hiring. She stated that research has shown that this is a primary barrier in getting women into the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. She stated that the grant will help address faculty recruiting of female candidates for these specific fields.

SVCAA Couture stated that there will be two committees in place to accomplish the goals of the grant. She stated that she needs the Senate Executive Committee's help in identifying members for these committees. She stated that they are looking for members who will be sympathetic to the goals of the project.

SVCAA Couture stated that the two committees are Recruit-NE Committee and Promote-NE Committee. The committees will consist of six faculty members including a chair. The goal for the Recruit-NE committee is to be helpful in finding possible candidates for faculty positions in the STEM fields. She stated that faculty members serving on the committees will receive \$2,000 and the chair will receive \$4,000.

SVCAA Couture stated that Promote-NE Committee will do some light research on successful strategies and will provide a set of materials to help departments in these fields in hiring.

SVCAA Couture stated that she is looking to appoint people quickly to these committees and additional inquires can be made to Professor Holmes. Time commitment for these committees will be worked out between the chair and the members of the committee.

Prochaska-Cue asked if the committee members can be from any colleges and male or female. SVCAA Couture stated that they can be from any college and any sex as long as they are sympathetic to what the committee is trying to accomplish.

3.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

4.0 Approval of 10/15/08 Minutes

The Committee was unable to approve the minutes due to the lack of a quorum.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Faculty Salary Survey

Item postponed due to lack of time.

5.2 Election to Executive Committee

The Committee discussed possible candidates to run for election to the Executive Committee to fill the position vacated by Professor Jackson.

5.3 Office of Research Policy on Misconduct

Prochaska-Cue stated that she will draft a letter to Associate Chancellor Poser outlining the concerns the Executive Committee has with the Research policy on misconduct. She will send the draft to the Executive Committee for their input.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Meeting with President Milliken

Prochaska-Cue reported that she and the other Faculty Senate Presidents met with President Milliken for lunch. She stated that there was some discussion about the wellness program and it was reported that there may be something coming out about the NU credits although no details were provided.

Prochaska-Cue stated that President Milliken reported some concerns with the funding for the new SIS program. She noted that the legislature only funded part of the new system.

6.2 Cancellation of Dr. Ayers' Visit

Prochaska-Cue reported that all of the email messages she received on the op ed piece submitted to the papers by the Executive Committee have been positive. Bradford suggested that the transcript from Fox News of the Governor's comments should be looked at. He noted that in the transcript the Governor stated that he ordered the administration to cancel the visit. Bradford pointed out that this is a very different story from what the campus is being told.

Lindquist stated that he hopes Nebraska Attorney General Jon Bruning will pursue those who made terroristic threats to the university as aggressively as he opposed Dr. Ayers' visit.

Rapkin stated that he thinks UNL has taken a long term hit on its reputation as a result of this cancellation. He noted that this kind of hit against academic freedom has a tendency to stick around for a long time. Prochaska-Cue noted that the campus could possibly be sanctioned academically.

Bradford pointed out that canceling the visit of Dr. Ayers encourages people to make these kinds of threats whenever something comes up that they do not agree with.

Lindquist stated that he can understand on the one hand the cancellation for genuine security reasons but it was incredibly disappointing that this happened. Rapkin noted that the administration had a month to deal with the situation. Bradford pointed out that if the President came here we would have great security concerns and we would not have been canceling his speech. Rapkin stated that some years ago when meetings to discuss the controversial topic of nuclear waste disposal were threatened the solution was to add additional security.

Prochaska-Cue stated that she wanted to thank the Executive Committee for the comments made in drafting the op ed piece. She stated that she has heard a lot of good things from people about the piece. Rapkin thanked Prochaska-Cue for getting it written in such an expeditious manner.

6.3 Request to Change the Time of the Senate Meetings

Prochaska-Cue stated that a senator asked if it was possible to change the time of the Senate meetings. Bradford noted that changing the time would conflict with a lot of classes. Griffin pointed out that this has come up in the past and the Senate felt that the current start time of 2:30 was the best for most people's schedule.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 29 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Rapkin, Secretary.