

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: **Fech, Flowers, Franti, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Shea, Stock**

Absent: **Bolin, Konecky, LaCost, Lindquist, McCollough, Schubert**

Date: **August 19, 2009**

Location: **Faculty Senate Office**

Note: **These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.**

1.0 Call to Order

Fech called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Childcare Center Open House

Fech reported that the childcare center is having an open house this week. He noted that he recently spoke with Professor Wunder who reminded him that former Senator Gayle Buck and others were strong supporters and worked to get the center open. Fech stated that the childcare facility will have drop off hours available for faculty/staff members who need to have their child watched for a few hours as well as full-time day care.

2.2 Report on Ayers Dis-Invitation Committee

Rapkin reported that the committee is completing its final report which will be presented to the Faculty Senate at the September 1st meeting. He noted that the committee is recommending that UNL sponsor a conference or symposium on academic freedom.

2.3 APC Budget Hearings

Fech reported that the APC will hold its second budget hearing on September 18th. He stated that this hearing will be on academic cuts being proposed by the Chancellor.

2.4 Email Regarding Resolution on Stem Cell Research

Fech reported that he received an email message from Professor Elder, UNO Faculty Senate President, inquiring whether the UNL Faculty Senate was working on a resolution on stem cell research and the new NIH policies. Prochaska-Cue stated that the Executive Committee was working on a resolution this past spring. She noted that the UNMC Senate President originally requested that UNL pass a resolution, but later rescinded his request. She suggested that Fech get an update from UNO and UNMC on the current situation.

Shea pointed out that we were informed that the university policy is to follow the federal guidelines on stem cell research. Prochaska-Cue stated that there has been some concern

that if the university changes its policy it could be detrimental to the university because it could result in the loss of research funding and professors.

2.5 Tuition from Distance Education Courses

Fech reported that he received an email message from Kristin Grosskopf, Distance Education Specialist, stating that Central Administration is getting closer to simplifying the process for departments to receive tuition money for distance education courses that they teach. Grosskopf will provide more information once it is finalized.

2.6 Follow up on Five Year Evaluations of Administrators

Fech reported that he discussed with Associate to the Chancellor Poser the Committee's request to have a mechanism in place where faculty-at-large can provide feedback during the five year evaluation of an administrator. He noted that Poser suggested that Senators be a conduit for disseminating information about evaluations and the Executive Committee could be used as a faculty group to interview.

Shea asked if the Executive Committee has participated in these kinds of evaluations in the past. The Committee stated that it has, particularly for those administrators who have broad constituencies such as the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.

Fech reported that the Chancellor has stated that he would probably include the Executive Committee in the process. Shea pointed out that it would be good to include the Committee in the process because it is a group selected by the faculty, not one selected by administrators.

Franti asked if the changes address the concerns of allowing faculty-at-large to provide input. Fech stated that as long as faculty members are aware of the evaluation process it would address it, but not to the extent that Franti wanted. Shea stated there should be an open solicitation for people who want to express comments. Fech noted that it is being proposed that the Faculty Executive Committee and the Senators will be involved, to a certain extent, as well.

Shea stated that he would want to hear a strong argument against faculty-at-large providing input. He pointed out that simply stating that most faculty members do not respond is not a good argument and it is important to have a process that allows for input, regardless of whether it happens or not. Stock agreed.

Franti stated that it should not be the responsibility of the Senate to get the word out that a five year evaluation is being conducted on an administrator. He noted that faculty need to know the review is being conducted and they should have the opportunity to make a comment if they wish to do so.

3.0 Minutes of 8/5/09

Shea noted that the minutes were shorter than usual. Rapkin pointed out that Griffin was on vacation.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 FCAC Structure

Fech stated that the Executive Committee has been contemplating the structure of the voting and non-voting members of the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee. He pointed out that there are many non-voting people who attend the meeting to provide information, but there seems to be some uncertainty as to who can vote. Prochaska-Cue stated that the voting committee members need to be identified at the meeting. She also recommends that the syllabus be revised so it clearly states who are voting and non-voting members.

Griffin pointed out that while the Senate needs to approve any changes to the syllabus, this is not a Faculty Senate Committee, and proposed changes need to be discussed with the Chancellor since it is an advisory committee to him.

Shea stated that if the faculty feels that this should be a faculty committee than we should continue to raise the issue with the Senate. He stated that this is something that should be discussed with the Senate.

4.2 International Programs Advisory Council (IPAC) Feedback

Fech noted that the Committee has been asked by Associate VC Fritz to provide feedback on the IPAC charge and objectives.

Rapkin stated that the Committee provided a lot of feedback at its August 5th meeting on the document. He pointed out that the document is so vast and grandiose that it is difficult to provide any meaningful feedback. Stock agreed and stated that the document is confusing.

Shea stated that associated with this is the concern that the IPAC is heavily weighted with administrators. He noted that there are only two faculty members on this Council. He stated that the document is just setting administrative goals and much larger faculty involvement is needed. He stated that the document is vast and unrealistic and the question needs to be raised as to why there are only two faculty members on the Council.

Shea stated that the question also needs to be asked whether the objectives are appropriate and which of the benchmarks are more important. Rapkin stated that it appears that there is a default option of increasing all efforts by 20% in five years.

Franti stated that the benchmarks should be focused on the faculty since it's the faculty that lead programs. He stated that there is nothing about providing funding for faculty sabbaticals, leaves, or seed money to get some of these international programs up and running. Flowers pointed out that if focus is given to faculty efforts it will likely stimulate other opportunities for students.

Rapkin noted that his field is in international relations and he finds this document confusing. He stated that the document needs to move from the general to the specific and then develop a strategy.

Shea pointed out that a benchmark is a measurement to show productivity. He stated that setting a goal of a 20% increase in five years is setting the university and faculty up for failure. Franti noted that no baseline data is provided, so it is impossible to know where the university stands currently in some of the areas mentioned in the document. Rapkin stated that the document was written as if there were no financial constraints.

4.3 Research Advisory Board

Shea stated that there is confusion on campus regarding the Research Council and the Research Advisory Board. Flowers stated that they are two separate groups. He believes that the Board deals with global policy and is a policy advisory group that deals with the direction research is going on campus; whereas the Council is involved in distributing awards of research, grants-in-aid, fellowships for research, etc.

Shea questioned how members are appointed to the Board. Flowers stated that the Board came out of an administrative idea. Shea noted that it is not clear who is even on the Board. Flowers stated that he believes it is mostly comprised of faculty members who have brought research funding into the university.

Griffin stated that she will check with the Office of Research to get more information on the Research Advisory Board.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Email List of Big 12 Faculty Senate Presidents

Fech reported that an email listserv of the Big 12 Faculty Senate Presidents has recently been created. The idea is to share information on issues affecting the campus of each of the Big 12 schools. He asked if the Committee wants him to participate in the listserv. The Committee agreed that it could be helpful in getting this kind of information.

5.2 Graduation Attendance

Fech asked whether attendance at graduation is considered service by faculty members. Flowers stated that at liberal arts colleges it is customary for the faculty members to attend graduation, but not all of the faculty at a university this size could attend graduation due to lack of space.

Rapkin asked what could be done to encourage faculty members to attend graduation. Franti noted that if world-class speakers were invited to speak at the ceremony faculty would attend. Stock suggested that if it was presented to faculty members as part of their professional responsibility more faculty members might attend.

Fech suggested that each department have one representative at graduation. Rapkin stated that this sounds like something that would be mandatory. Prochaska-Cue pointed out that this already occurs in some departments. Flowers noted that many people from his department attend the hooding ceremony.

Shea noted that it is reasonable to expect or want to have one representative from each degree program. He stated that Franti's point of having a very good speaker might get more attendance.

Griffin reported that she has heard professors complain that the seating is very tight and uncomfortable. Prochaska-Cue stated that this is definitely true at the undergraduate ceremony.

Fech wondered whether the Committee should ask the Vice Chancellors to encourage people to attend the graduation ceremony. Prochaska-Cue pointed out space limitations may be pushing us to the point of having graduate ceremonies by individual colleges.

Franti noted that faculty members are not getting paid to attend graduation. Rapkin suggested providing some kind of incentive for faculty members to attend. He suggested providing \$100 in travel money could be helpful.

Franti suggested asking the other Big 12 universities if they have a similar problem and what or if they have done anything to resolve it.

5.3 Nebraska Union Board Faculty Representatives

Fech stated that he was contacted by Charles Francis of the Nebraska Union about appointing two faculty members to serve on the Union Board. He noted that Professor Harriet MacLeod and Professor Deb Pearson previously served on the Board and might be willing to do so again. The Committee suggested contacting these faculty members.

5.4 Presentation to the Senate on Blackboard Changes

Griffin reported that Heath Tuttle from Information Services is requesting to speak to the Senate this fall regarding the upcoming changes to Blackboard. She stated that the training plans for the changes will be finalized in mid-September and Tuttle would like to inform the Senate of these plans. The Committee agreed to have Tuttle speak at the October 6th meeting.

5.5 Senate Representative to the Committee on Committees

Griffin reported that the Senate needs to elect someone to serve on the Committee on Committees. The Committee agreed that an email message should be sent out to the Senate seeking candidates to run for election.

5.6 Law College Search Committee

Fech reported that a new search committee is being formed for the Dean of the Law College. He noted that the Office of Academic Affairs provided a list of possible search committee members. The Committee suggested an outside member for the search committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:23 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, August 26th 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.