

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Bolin, Fech, Flowers, Franti, LaCost, Lindquist, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Schubert, Stock

**Absent:** Konecky, McCollough, Shea

**Date:** Wednesday, May 27, 2009

**Location:** Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace

**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 to Order

Fech called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

### 2.0 Nancy Mitchell, ACE Update

Mitchell stated that she wanted to give the Executive Committee an update about the progress that is being made with the ACE program. She stated that she wanted to acknowledge that the ACE program is the result of the work of many people, both inside and outside of the university. Dean Rita Kean, Academic Transfer Coordinator JoAnn Moseman, and Mitchell visited every community college in the state last year to inform them of the program and to get feedback and input. She pointed out that the academic advisors from UNL's colleges also provided very useful input.

Mitchell reported that last year the bulk of the effort of the interim ACE committee was on certifying courses for the program. She noted that the only people who could actually approve courses were the curriculum committees of the colleges and the University Curriculum Committee. She stated that information technologists on campus designed a computer program that would allow faculty members to submit changes to courses on line which greatly helped with efficiency.

Mitchell stated that the interim ACE committee has met weekly since last summer and discussed very carefully and thoughtfully the proposals that were submitted for the ACE program. She reported that proposals that were returned to submitters were accompanied with suggestions on how they could be revised for resubmitting. She noted that usually a proposal was being returned to get clarification or that the proposal didn't speak to the outcome. She stated that another example of a proposal being returned is if the ACE committee felt that the focus of the course needed to be narrower so the assessment process at the end of the course would not be overwhelming for the instructor.

Mitchell reported that 461 courses have been certified so far. She noted that it was estimated that before the ACE program, 70% of the courses for the ES/IS program came from the College of Arts & Sciences. She pointed out that with the ACE program, 64%

of the courses are now from Arts & Sciences and the rest of the courses are from other colleges. She stated that all submitted proposals were reviewed and considered.

Mitchell stated that the ACE committee worked with advisors this year, particularly those in Arts & Sciences and General Studies. She pointed out that the ACE program cannot be a program administered only by the faculty; otherwise it would merely be a list of courses that a student would just check off. She stated that it was very important to have advisors understand the intent of the program. She noted that guidelines were created collaboratively with advisors for dealing with transfer courses to assist the advisors in upholding the integrity of the program.

Mitchell stated that working with the advisors as collaborators helped to deal with some of the inconsistencies that exist across campus. She pointed out that advisors are on the front line level and could foresee issues that could arise. She reported that there is still some inconsistency, mostly with transfer courses, but they are discussing these problems with the deans. She stated that another issue that varies from college to college is whether ACE courses can be taken to meet deficiencies as well as general education requirements.

Mitchell reported that the ACE committee also worked with New Student Enrollment to see if we have enough courses for the fall. She stated that we should be okay, although outcome 2 and 8 are somewhat light. She stated that the ACE committee is making a good effort to make sure that these outcomes are covered.

Mitchell stated that Powerpoint slides have been created to help each college with New Student Enrollment. She stated that there was some thought of giving new students a memory stick with information on the ACE program but budget constraints have put this on hold. An information sheet about ACE and student services will be distributed instead. She noted that students are being encouraged to keep their information sheet and have been told about the ACE website. She pointed out that the campus has received calls from institutions around the country which are interested in seeing what we are doing with the program.

Mitchell reported that she and Dean Kean have met with Megan Collins, the new ASUN President, to work on plans to help ASUN promote the ACE program. She stated that she believes the best promotion will come from the students. She noted that the work of the students will be showcased in the program but the test will be whether the program is making a difference in their education.

Mitchell stated that currently the campus is in the transition stage and is moving away from the ES/IS program. She stated that work is being done with the University-Wide Assessment Committee to develop tools or procedures that will help faculty members with the assessment components of the program. She reported that Director of Assessment Jessica Jonson and herself have gone to each college to see if the college could identify specific things that could be used in assessment.

Mitchell stated that the next step will be recertifying courses and sustaining the program.

Fech pointed out that the problems with transfer courses will affect everyone and that these need to be addressed. Mitchell agreed and stated that a UNL team has visited all community colleges, state and private institutions to make an effort to build some good relationships to help address problems with transfer courses.

Fech asked if the ES/IS program has been dissolved. Mitchell stated that current students remain in the program but she is getting a number of students enrolled in the ES/IS program who want to switch over to the new ACE program. She reported that new students will be enrolled in the ACE program in the fall unless they are transfer students who have more time to begin the program.

### **3.0 Announcements**

#### **3.1 Faculty Senate Mission Statement**

Fech read the Senate's mission statement: "To actively work with all levels of university governance to formulate and implement educational policy, specifically: to create a productive and rewarding academic environment for faculty and students; to protect the ability of faculty to pursue independent, scholarly research; and to protect the freedom of faculty to openly present and discuss scholarly ideas." He suggested that the Committee discuss the statement during its annual retreat.

### **4.0 Executive Committee Minutes**

Due to the Memorial Day holiday, the Committee needed more time to review the minutes.

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **5.1 Form for Interviewing Administrators**

Flowers reported that the subcommittee working on this form was unable to meet due to some members being out of town. He noted that for some positions, like the CIO, a more specific set of skills are needed, and therefore the questions might be different.

Rapkin stated that it would be helpful to have the job description for each position. He pointed out that dean positions can be different, not to mention more specialized administrative positions like the CIO. Flowers agreed that having the job description would be useful. Prochaska-Cue stated that the Committee should suggest to the Chancellor's office that the job description be included with the vita's that are sent out.

Fech wondered if there was a set of basic questions that would relate to a vice chancellor or dean interview. Other questions could be adapted for specific disciplines. Flowers pointed out that the interview is also an opportunity for candidates to learn more about the university and faculty governance. He noted that the interview could be helpful in the recruiting process.

Prochaska-Cue suggested that the Committee could ask the search committee if there are specific questions that the Executive Committee should ask the candidates. Lindquist

disagreed and stated that the purpose of the search committee is to ask specific questions. He noted that the Senate represents the faculty and we should address questions to the candidates about faculty issues. He stated that the question is whether we could develop a list of questions that would help with interviewing all candidates. Fech suggested maybe having four or five templates of questions to use. He pointed out that there is really no time to create a tailored set of interview questions for candidates due to the short notice that the Committee receives regarding candidate interviews.

Schubert suggested having a mission or statement from the Committee. Each candidate could be asked how they would be supportive of the Senate's mission. Rapkin noted that the Committee's role in interviewing candidates is an easy way of vetting candidates about their views on faculty governance concerns. .

Franti asked if feedback on the candidates should come from the Committee as a group response. Prochaska-Cue stated that the feedback is intended to be individual responses. Griffin noted that at times the Committee has responded back as a whole rather than individually. Lindquist asked what issues would make the Committee respond as a group. Griffin stated that in one case the Committee strongly opposed a candidate for a position and spoke up collectively about it.

Lindquist stated that having a guideline on issues that should be discussed with candidates would be helpful. Fech noted that informing candidates of the Senate's mission would be helpful.

Fech stated that the subcommittee should work on creating a set of guidelines and report back to the Committee.

## **5.2 Chief Information Officer Interviews**

Fech noted that there will be open forums for all those who are interested in speaking with the candidates for CIO. Flowers reported that the search committee will be meeting with the candidates as well as members of the Executive Committee and the Computational Services and Facilities Committee.

Fech asked if the Committee wanted to provide feedback as a group or individually. Flowers suggested that given the timing, it will be better to give individual feedback.

Lindquist stated that we need to ask if we can see the position description. Griffin stated that she will contact the Chancellor's Office and get a copy of the position description.

## **5.3 Response to Professor Ball on Possible Visit of Dr. Ayers to Nebraska**

Fech noted that he and Prochaska-Cue had been contacted by Professor Ball to see if the Senate is considering on inviting Dr. Bill Ayers to come to Nebraska to speak. Fech stated that apparently AFCON (Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska) is considering inviting Dr. Ayers for a visit to Omaha.

Fech pointed out that the UNL Faculty Senate, to his knowledge, is not involved in any such effort. He stated that he spoke with the Senate President from the other three sister campuses and no one has been contacted about this issue. He noted that UNO did pass a resolution deploring the cancellation of the visit of Dr. Ayers this past year.

Fech stated that he will contact Professor Ball to inform him that the Executive Committee is working on academic freedom in general but there is no plan to be involved with inviting Dr. Ayers to come and speak.

#### **5.4 Life Sciences Review Discussion Session**

Fech noted that there was good discussion at the life sciences review session and it was pointed out during the session that the life sciences permeates much of the campus and is not exclusively IANR as some people have felt. Lindquist stated that he thought it was a great session. He noted that Chancellor Perlman clarified things and had this information been available sooner, it would probably have quelled a lot of rumors.

Fech noted that there were some negative comments made but mostly a lot of positive comments were made. He reported that there are groups of people on campus who are looking at models of the life sciences at other institutions where the scientists are meeting in a very interdisciplinary manner.

Lindquist stated that the major discussion centered on breaking down the administrative barrier between east and city campus. He noted that there was a task force several years ago that looked at this problem. He reported that some people who attended the discussion session felt that if the administrative structure does not change than the life sciences effort will not work. He stated that the Chancellor declared that the administrative structure would not change, but acknowledged that some things need to be fixed and the Chancellor recognized that there were communication problems.

Lindquist stated that he got the sense that most people felt pretty good after the meeting. He noted that there was open discussion with faculty involvement and people were able to say what they wanted to say. Fech reported that there was a good turnout for the discussion.

Franti noted that the report from the outside consultants states that there is a communication problem between the campuses. He stated that he is concerned that this is not being addressed. Lindquist reported that some positive but critical things were said at the discussion session. He pointed out that there is not a personal communication problem between east and city campus, but there are clearly some communication problems that need to be fixed. He noted that there is a response committee that is planning to have comments drafted by the end of the week.

#### **5.5 Update on Invitation to Professor Savory to Discuss UN Online Worldwide**

LaCost distributed a copy of a handout given to faculty at a recent presentation on the UNL Online Worldwide. Fech reported that Professor Savory, Interim Director of UNL Online Worldwide, will be meeting with the Committee on July 8<sup>th</sup>. He noted that it is

important for the Committee to meet with Professor Savory because there could be a lot of questions regarding intellectual property rights of faculty members and their courses. LaCost stated that she has access to the Steering Committee's report on distance education and will read it and report back to the Committee.

#### **5.6 Update on Letter to SVCAA Couture and VC Owens on Outside Reference Letters for Promotion & Tenure**

Fech thanked the Committee for suggesting feedback on the draft letter about the outside reference letters. He reported that he sent the revised letter to SVCAA Couture and VC Owens on May 15<sup>th</sup> but has not received a response yet. He stated that he will follow up with them about it.

### **6.0 New Business**

#### **6.1 Reporting**

Fech reported that he was invited to attend the meeting of the Academic Planning Committee when they met with the Chancellor on the budget. He noted that a campus wide email message would be coming out with salary guidelines for deans and directors.

#### **6.2 Composition of the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (FCAC)**

Fech reported that the FCAC spoke about four different salary scenarios. He noted that the amount available for raises this year will be very small. He noted that the FCAC talked a lot about how much of the distribution is taken off by administrators.

Prochaska-Cue stated that she tried to take the message to the FCAC that people who meet expectations and get a satisfactory performance have not been given the allotted salary increase. She stated that she presented an argument, since the increases will be so small, that merit be put on the back burner for this year but this was voted down. Fech stated that there needs to be some communication from department heads that satisfactory performance is meritorious.

Prochaska-Cue noted that there are a lot of administrators on this committee. Fech reported that the Senate Past President serves as chair of the committee. Griffin noted that the Past President and the four appointed faculty members are voting members. The voting administrators are the SVCAA or designee, VC of IANR, or designee, the two deans, and the department chair. Any other administrators who attend the meeting are there only to provide administrative support as needed.

Prochaska-Cue stated that the FCAC is scheduled to meet twice during the academic year.

Fech stated that Bill Nunez, Director of Institutional Research and Planning, provided data on whether there is any discrepancy in salaries with minorities and women. He reported that there is some minor discrepancy but it so little it is not believed to be an issue.

Fech reported that Nunez is happy to provide any data that he can to the Senate. Fech suggested getting a median of the salary increases similar to that of last year. Flowers stated that he would like to see data on salary compression.

Flowers stated that for nearly forty years departments have had to redistribute salary increases from within by rewarding some faculty members more and giving some faculty members less. He stated that evidence can be shown that if a department has super stars, salary increases for the rest of the faculty in a department go down while those faculty members in a mediocre department get a better raise.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, June 10<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Rapkin, Secretary.