

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Fech, Flowers, Franti, LaCost, Konecky, Lindquist, McCollough, Rapping, Shea, Stock

**Absent:** Bolin, Prochaska-Cue, Schubert

**Date:** Wednesday, April 21, 2010

**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 3:03 p.m.

### 2.0 Announcements

#### 2.1 Interview Schedule for Candidates for VC of IANR

Fech reminded the Committee that the four interviews for the candidates of Vice Chancellor IANR will be held on April 28, May 7, May 12, and May 14. He encouraged the Committee members to attend the interviews.

### 3.0 Minutes of 4/14/10

There were no major problems with the minutes other than some corrections.

### 4.0 Unfinished Business

#### 4.1 Senate Election Update

Griffin reported that there is now one person running for President Elect, one person for Secretary, four people for the three open spots on the Committee, and two people for one spot on the Committee on Committees.

### 5.0 New Business

#### 5.1 Report on the Deans and Directors Meeting

Fech stated that the report from the Chancellor was sobering. He reported that the Chancellor announced the remaining budget cuts for this year bringing the total of cuts to nearly \$5.2 million. He stated that the identified cuts can be found on the Chancellor's webpage

[http://www.unl.edu/ucomm/chancellor/2010budget/FY\\_2011\\_Budget\\_Spreadsheet\\_Combined.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/ucomm/chancellor/2010budget/FY_2011_Budget_Spreadsheet_Combined.pdf)).

Fech reported that some of the cuts included eliminating the position of Director of International Affairs, elimination of the Centrex, reducing support for the Scarlet, and decreased support to the Campus Unions from the VC of Student Affairs office. He reported that another cut is a reduction of approximately \$185,000 for Graduate Teaching Assistants in the College of Arts & Sciences. He noted that this could mean larger

classes. Flowers stated that he is guessing that the cuts for each department in the College will probably depend on the size of the department and teaching loads.

Fech reported that the College of Engineering is getting a \$200,000 cut. He noted that part of this cut might be with the merging of three departments and the possible elimination of the Industrial & Management Systems Engineering program.

Fech pointed out that these cuts bring us to the end of the first year of the biennium budget. He stated that July 1 begins the second year of the biennium and it is anticipated that there will be no salary increase and no money for new Programs of Excellence. He stated that this combination should cover our budget cuts for this next fiscal year. He pointed out that the Board of Regents will need to make the final decisions about salary increases.

Fech stated that the Chancellor reported that the 2011-2013 biennium budget looks very bleak. He stated that assuming there is a 5% tuition increase and no salary increase, the university system cut could be as high as \$168 million, half of this cut would be for UNL. This figure is based on the assumption that there would be a 4.2% growth rate and a 5% increase in health insurance. He noted that a second assumption is that even with a 15% increase in state revenue, UNL would receive a \$60 million shortfall.

Lindquist noted that last week the Chancellor stated that some of this year's cuts are going to allow us to save more money in the future. He asked if the Chancellor elaborated on this. LaCost stated that the savings would come from putting various units, such as International Affairs, under the direction of Dean Cerveny, thereby eliminating some directors, but there could be other savings elsewhere.

## **5.2 Report on Board of Regents Meeting**

Fech stated that a Powerpoint presentation was made to the Board about the budget. He noted that the Board was particularly interested in comparing our tuition rates with other universities.

Fech reported that Innovation Campus was discussed and a motion was passed creating the governance board for the Campus. He noted that the Board approved an amendment to the motion stating that the governing board shall get input from a faculty advisory committee. Shea stated that this was a very important change that he was happy to see and he wondered how the faculty members to the advisory committee will be appointed.

McCollough noted that UNO faculty members received a fairly large salary increase this year compared to UNL faculty members. She asked if there has been any information on how UNO is cutting its budget to cover the salary increases. Lindquist stated that the Board was asking questions about this at the meeting. Shea pointed out that more than likely, UNL will not see salary increases for at least the next three years.

Flowers stated that a recent article indicated that faculty salary increases nationwide is the lowest amount ever with an average of only 1.2% increase.

McCollough questioned whether UNL was still going to try to hire high-end professors given the upcoming budget situation. Lindquist stated that this would be a good question to ask the Chancellor when the Committee meets with the Committee on May 5.

### **5.3 Process for Suspending Pay When Work is not being Performed**

Fech noted that the Chancellor brought this issue up last week and asked the Committee to create a policy to help deal with the issue of suspending pay for a faculty member when work is not being performed. He asked the Committee whether a subcommittee should be formed to work on this policy. Lindquist wondered whether this is an issue that the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee should deal with. He noted that something needs to be done because these kinds of cases could happen in the future. The question is how we do it. He pointed out that the Committee needs to think about this issue carefully.

Shea stated that the real concern is with those gray areas. He stated that he appreciates the Chancellor alerting the Committee to this issue and expects there will be greater scrutiny of faculty members in the future.

Franti pointed out that a faculty member's salary should only be altered after an evaluation of performance has been conducted. He stated that in cases of emergency, a performance evaluation can be done immediately. Flowers stated that performance evaluations should be done every year, but this is not always the case.

Lindquist stated that a policy should be created to deal with these kinds of situations. He noted that faculty members in IANR have a percentage of work that they are to do in research, teaching, and extension. Shea stated that people not fulfilling their percentage of work, whether it is in research, teaching, or extension could be docked for pay.

McCollough pointed out that faculty member's work is so idiosyncratic for each faculty member that having a broad policy raises concern for her. Shea suggested that a policy could state that if a faculty member is not doing their apportionment of work, they could lose a portion of their pay. He pointed out that with budget constraints as they are, the administration may be looking at ways to save money.

Lindquist questioned how a policy could influence a decision if someone could not teach their course(s) due to illness. He noted that serious illnesses could have a huge impact on a person's ability to perform well. LaCost stated that someone with a serious illness should be put on disability for a period of time. McCollough pointed out that people could be put on family leave in some incidents. Flowers noted that there could be a difference in how to deal with these cases depending on whether a faculty member is on a 9- month or 12- month appointment.

Lindquist suggested that the committee look at existing policies and the Bylaws to see where a policy would fit. The Committee agreed to work on this issue over the summer. Rapkin cautioned against creating rules that are unnecessarily binding.

#### **5.4 Summer Session Executive Committee Schedule**

Griffin stated that she will send the summer session schedule to the committee.

#### **5.5 Ideas for Dealing with Budget Cuts**

Fech reported that the Chancellor sent him a copy of a letter from the University of Missouri on ways they are dealing with their budget cuts. The letter indicated that the University of Missouri is centralizing operations by creating a shared services model. Flowers noted that the language in the letter sounds like the bullet points in LB 935 which states that all state agencies must develop an efficiency review plan.

Fech stated that at the Deans & Directors meeting the Chancellor reported that Central Administration is going to be looking at efficiency plans and each Chancellor will do the same thing. He pointed out that it is difficult to develop these plans when many people are gone for the summer. He stated that he believes the Chancellor will be making a case for why a four day work week will not work for the university.

Fech reported that the Chancellor had stated that the university has not had a legislative committee overseeing it except for the Appropriations Committee. He stated that there are some indications that the Education Committee, which currently just looks at K-12, might be looking over the university in the future. LaCost pointed out that research has shown that if legislatures go to a more seamless approach of kindergarten through college for education, more attention needs to be paid to distribution of funds.

#### **5.6 Domestic Partner Benefits**

Lindquist stated that he received a letter from the English department about the Senate and the issue of domestic partner benefits. He noted that the letter did not ask for anything specific to be done and he stated that the Senate has passed resolutions in the past supporting domestic partner benefits. He asked if there is anything the Senate can do to instigate a change in the existing policies to cover domestic partners.

McCullough suggested working with the other campuses to press for the issue. Fech stated that he believes the UNO Faculty Senate recently passed a resolution on domestic partner benefits. He suggested trying to work with the University-wide Benefits Committee on the issue. Griffin pointed out that Professor Bradford tried raising the issue with the University-wide Benefits Committee several years ago, but the U-wide Committee did not want to deal with it.

Lindquist pointed out that the problem may be at the state level. He stated that if the state allowed benefits for domestic partners it would happen at the university. He wondered if there is a way to take the issue to the legislature.

Shea stated that if the Senate believes it should go forward on this issue than it should continue to bring up the issue. He suggested that the Committee look for avenues to promote such a change.

Fech questioned what the requirements are for civil unions. Lindquist pointed out that most states that allow domestic partner benefits have strict guidelines in defining a domestic partner and these states do not necessarily support civil unions.

Shea suggested that the Senate might want to declare its position on this issue again.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, April 28 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.