

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: **Bolin, Fech, Flowers, Franti, Konceky, LaCost, Prochaska-Cue, Rapkin, Schubert, Shea**

Absent: **Lindquist, McCollough, Stock**

Date: **Wednesday, February 3, 2010**

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

Fech called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m.

2.0 Vice Chancellor Owens/Interim SVCAA Weissinger

2.1 NU Online Worldwide

Fech stated that the online program could be a good teaching tool and has a lot of potential but there seems to be strong top down development of it. He stated that he has been told that NU Online is offering a political science master's program but this was done without any consultation with UNL's political science department. He pointed out that it appears that different programs have been selected from each campus for the program.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she does not believe this to be true. She stated that President Milliken feels that we are not fully taking advantage of the distance education program which could bring potential students and revenue to our campuses. She stated that a solution to enhance our footprint in distance education is to create one brand which would be the University of Nebraska. To be effective the NU Online Worldwide needs to be marketed under one brand as a great opportunity for people as a distance education learner.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the one brand implies that there should be one website. She pointed out that today's students focus on accessing information by going to a URL on the internet. As a result, an online worldwide website has been created by the university with the intention of listing every online course and program that is available on any of our campuses. She stated that, as far as she knows, there has been no selection regarding what courses and programs will be put online. She stated that if people look at the site they will see all online programs, regardless of campus, and if they drill down further they will see all the available online courses.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she believes the creators of the NU Online Worldwide want all of the campuses to get more and better students. She pointed out that in early discussions there was talk about trying to avoid unnecessary duplication and

competition with courses and that there could eventually be some kind of decision making regarding what courses would be part of NU Online Worldwide. When she heard these discussions, as Dean of Graduate Studies she raised the issue that the faculty has governance of the curriculum.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that deans and chairs can always decide to fund a course and one could argue that this creates significant oversight for delivery of distance education courses. She stated with the new model it is not clear how governance issues regarding the curriculum will be dealt with.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she does not see any problems with having a centralized marketing effort and this should be advantageous, but the faculty needs to look out for issues of governance of the curriculum.

VC Owens asked about the funding for the program. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that it is very complicated and not all of the details have been determined yet.

VC Owens asked about the pricing model. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that because distance education has been developed separately at each campus there is a difference in the campus rates for courses. As a result students currently entering the online website can see courses in the same discipline but at a difference price because of the campus where the course is being delivered from. She pointed out that this can cause a lot of confusion for the student and creates a competition of the worse kind between the campuses. She noted that this is clearly an issue that needs to be addressed. She stated that she has spoken with the chief academic officers at both UNK and UNO and they are very sensitive to the fact that this issue needs to be resolved. She pointed out that the optimal collaborative environment will need to be created among the campuses.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she and Dean Giesecke have met with Provost Pratt to discuss the tuition differential and were assured that the system is moving at the fastest pace possible to normalize the differences in the tuition rates. She pointed out that Central Administration understands the problems that this could cause. She stated that the idea is to use the unique resources found on each campus to create a strong distance education program and there may be collaboration of the campuses in some areas.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger reported that Professor Savory is no longer Associate Vice Chancellor of Extended Education & Outreach. She reported that Dean Giesecke is acting as Interim. She stated that she has asked for a review of the extended education program first so we can determine what direction we will be going before a national search is conducted to fill this Associate Vice Chancellor position.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that the Bylaws are on the side of the faculty in regards to faculty governance of the curriculum. She pointed out that there is already a good model in place on how this can be done with the Graduate College which is an elected faculty body with representatives from each of the campuses. She noted that this elected body reviews and approves new programs. She stated that if something is going

to be created with the online program that is more than a centralized marketing entity than a faculty governance structure must be created to meet it.

Rapkin pointed out that this conversation wouldn't be happening if the chair of the political science department hadn't discovered the online program. He questioned whether some kind of selection had been done to put the master's program online. Interim SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that UNO had previously created an online master's program.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the online program is a potential revenue source which could provide assistance with the difficult budget situation the university is in. She noted that departments have self-selected their effort into online courses over a period of time. She stated that the URL address for the online program has been sent to the deans with the encouragement that they share this information with the chairs. She stated that anyone interested in it should check the website out and provide feedback to Varner Hall on it. (The NU Online Worldwide website:
<http://onlineworldwide.nebraska.edu/>)

Rapkin stated that no one solicited the political science department for proposals for an online program. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that grants have been handed out for years to develop distance education courses. She noted that the College of Arts & Sciences hasn't been as interested in developing some of these programs for legitimate reasons. She stated that online course and credentials have not been a strategic priority for some departments and a decision needs to be made as to what role distance education courses play for a department. She stated that the reason distance education has become more of an interest is because it is a potential revenue source.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she encourages the Senate to have discussions about the program with the administration. Griffin noted that the Executive Committee will be meeting with Dr. Bateman, Director of Online Worldwide, on February 24th. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she would like to attend this meeting.

2.2 Implications of CIT Merger

VC Owens stated that the merger is still a work in progress and there are details that need to be worked out. He pointed out that he really doesn't want to have to make another cut but it comes down to a matter of cutting a service center or an academic program. He noted that there is not much left to be cut at this point. He reported that when CIT is merged with Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communication, there will be partnering with NETV and the Hixson Lied College of Fine Art and Performing Arts and the larger partnership will be with the College of Journalism & Mass Communications.

Fech asked if there is any sense of when the proposed merger will go to the Academic Planning Committee. VC Owens stated that he does not know the exact date. He stated that a public announcement could be made in mid-February. He pointed out that he wishes this round of budget cuts was not happening and noted that the entire time he has been at UNL he has had to deal with budget cuts.

Fech noted that Extension relies heavily on CIT for assistance in teaching by helping to produce such things as the NEBGuide which has been a traditional teaching tool for extension specialists and extension educators. He noted that there is a cost for producing these teaching tools and CIT would help with the cost. He asked how units are to pay for these costs once CIT has been merged. VC Owens stated that some reserve funds could be made available for units. Fech noted that there is a push to create more websites but help is needed to accomplish this but units are charged for the help. He noted that merging CIT will make limitations on the capacity of units to provide teaching tools. VC Owens agreed, but stated that in the absence of something else to cut it was either to make cuts in a service center or to reduce faculty members. He pointed out that there is not much money to be saved from merging other academic units together.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Discussion Items for Luncheon with President Milliken

Fech stated that he plans to talk to President Milliken about a health savings account versus a health reimbursement account for the university as well as extending the time for using the health reimbursement account. He stated that he also plans to discuss NU Online Worldwide.

4.0 Minutes of 1/27/10

No major changes were made to the minutes.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 BRRRC Document

The Committee continued working on possible revisions to the BRRRC document.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Increasing Faculty Attendance at Graduation

Fech stated that he is pursuing an idea of trying to increase faculty participation at graduation ceremonies. He stated that the goal is to recruit one faculty member from each department to attend a ceremony. He pointed out that faculty presence at graduation could be a tool to recruit new students. It is also a great networking opportunity, especially for new faculty members.

Fech reported that he has spoken to all of the deans about this idea. He stated that he was asked by the chair of the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee to help recruit more faculty members. He pointed out that going to graduation could also be an easy way to satisfy the service component of a faculty member's responsibilities. He noted that each department is provided with a free cap and gown and faculty members get rock star parking by the Devaney Center.

Shea stated that chairs or department heads should have to go if someone cannot be identified in a department to attend the ceremony. Franti stated that chairs and unit heads represent administration not faculty.

Bolin stated that she thinks it's a great idea and participating in the ceremonies is a lot of fun. She pointed out that it would be helpful to have a goal so people would have an incentive.

Fech noted that improvements have been made to the ceremonies since the hooding ceremony was made into a separate ceremony. He pointed out that there is active participation by faculty members in the hooding ceremony. Flowers noted that those who attend the hooding ceremony are not typically going to want to turn around and go to another graduation ceremony.

Fech stated that he does not want to be put into the position of demanding that people attend the ceremony. He asked what would be the best way to get more participation by the faculty. Konecky stated that it should be an obligation for each department to have a representative at graduation.

LaCost stated that she has served as a marshal and it was exciting to participate in the graduation ceremony.

Shea pointed out that the only ones with any clout in having faculty members participate is the administration. He noted that if the Chancellor would ask each department to have a representative, it would help greatly. He stated that this is a reasonable request.

Franti asked how the other Big 12 universities handle this. Fech stated that at Baylor they are required to attend.

Bolin pointed out that the length of the ceremony makes a big difference in attendance. LaCost stated that it could be an easy way to satisfy the service requirement. She pointed out that having some incentive to attending would be helpful.

Franti asked if having faculty members at graduation is just so they can be seen. He pointed out that attendance is a cultural issue and the support for attending the graduation ceremony has greatly decreased. He suggested that the Chancellor should invite faculty members either before or after graduation to attend a party for those faculty members who participated in the ceremonies.

Konecky suggested that the Committee discuss the issue with the Chancellor.

6.2 Academic Honesty Committee Report

Agenda item postponed due to lack of time.

6.3 ARRC Special Committee Report

Fech noted that a copy of an ARRC special committee report and the response of the Chancellor were distributed to the Committee. He stated that the Committee will discuss the report next week.

6.4 Review of Senate Meeting

Agenda item postponed due to lack of time.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, February 10 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.