

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Anaya, Berg, Fech, Flowers, Konecky, LaCost, Lindquist, Nickerson, Shea, Stock

Absent: Franti, McCollough, Schubert

Date: Wednesday, May 5, 2010

Location: 201 Canfield Administration

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

Lindquist called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/Interim SVCAA Weissinger

2.1 Efficiency Committee Status

Lindquist noted that LB 935 requires that all state agencies develop an efficiency plan and asked if there will be a university-wide efficiency committee or a UNL efficiency committee. If there is a UNL committee, when will it become active? Chancellor Perlman stated that the law applies to the University of Nebraska and Varner Hall has not yet decided how it will act on the law. He pointed out that in his State of the University address last fall he stated that he wanted to create an efficiency committee. His plans are to create a framework for this committee when he gets the opportunity to work on it.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger reported that there is a small pre-task group that is doing some preliminary work. She noted that the efficiency plan is so complicated and so difficult to imagine and envision that a small group has been formed to try and develop some initial ideas for the upcoming task force. She stated that Dean Manderscheid and Dean Waller are heading this small group along with some department chairs.

Fech noted that the Chancellor had a document from the University of Missouri that discusses ideas for efficiencies at that institution. He asked if any ideas have been generated from the document. Chancellor Perlman reported that the administration is looking at many different universities to see how they are restructuring to deal with severe budget cuts. He stated that the efficiencies task force will be geared as a budget cutting exercise.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that it is important to realize that there might be some efficiencies that can be made, but most of the university's budget is in salaries and benefits. She stated that figuring out what efficiency means in the academic context is challenging. She stated that the goal is to be more efficient but to maintain or enhance faculty morale, maintain or enhance learning, and create efficiencies where possible.

Chancellor Perlman stated that to be fully candid, what Interim SVCAA Weissinger pointed out is true, but that assumes that the budget is constant. He stated that he does not think assurances can be given on the first two principles if the magnitude of the predicted budget cuts materializes. He stated that he does not think many faculty members feel that their lives are getting better and we could not take a 15% cut and make people think their lives are better. There would have to be some significant changes in the way we do business.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that to meet the three goals, even with having modest reductions, will cause us to change many of our practices and this means that some people will have to accept different kinds of assignments. She noted that we may have fewer resources and maintain our jobs, but the curriculum will need to be delivered differently. She stated that some people may have to teach more and some people will have to get more grants.

2.2 NSF Training

Lindquist asked if all students, or just graduate students, will have to receive training from NSF or only those with NSF funding. Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that NSF is the vanguard of funding at UNL and the university has to accept the obligation of assuring that research and academic ethics are adhered to and this requires training. She stated that the administration is working with the Graduate Student Association on this issue and a project is being co-funded to have a graduate student build a one hour on-line training program to meet the NSF requirement. She stated that it is geared for broad based training in academic ethics. She noted that the on-line training program is about to go out for beta testing with students and faculty members. She reported that all department chairs were notified of the required training late last fall. She pointed out that departments and colleges with either current NSF funding or potential NSF funding will be the first targets for the training, but potentially any graduate student could have the training. She noted that the training covers all disciplines.

Lindquist asked if the training will be all on-line. Interim SVCAA Weissinger that it is a web-based program. Lindquist suggested that there are some courses that may not need to be offered once the on-line training is operating or there might be courses that could be offered in tangent with the program. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Research Office is creating a comprehensive listing of all ethics training courses taught to graduate students. She pointed out that we must show the NSF that we have courses available on campus for this kind of training.

2.3 Plans for Water for Food Institute

Lindquist noted that \$50 million has been donated to the university to create the Water for Food Institute. He asked if this money will be used as an endowment or for capital construction. Chancellor Perlman stated that some of the funds will be endowed but most of it will not. He stated that we hope to leverage the money for long term sustainability for the Water for Food Institute, but some endowment money might be set aside for distinguished chairs. He reported that the university is under some obligations to raise

additional funds for this Institute. He stated that currently the funds are designed to be expendable to allow the Water for Food Institute to be up and running as quickly as possible. He stated that about \$500,000 will be used for capital, to complete renovation of space to house the Institute in the Whittier building. He noted that some work still needs to be done to get the Institute up and running.

Chancellor Perlman stated that one of the key issues for the Institute is finding a director and we are already working hard on this search. He noted that the director needs to be someone of international significance and there were some suitable candidates at the recent conference held on campus. He pointed out that the Institute is a system operation, although it will be focused at UNL. He noted that the idea is to work collaboratively through partnerships with other global institutes. He reported that no other institutes focus on water for food and this will be the sole focus of the Institute here.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the vision of the Water for Food Institute might change once a director is in place. He noted that the Institute would be housed in Lincoln but would have some global reach with the possibility of students and faculty from around the world participating in the Institute. He stated that it is possible that international students could be here in Lincoln for part of their course work. He noted that there have been some initial discussions about what the partnership of the Institute might look like and the possibility of an on-line journal. He stated that there could be an Executive Director, a Director of Research, and a Director of Policy, although these would be faculty members with administrative responsibilities.

Chancellor Perlman noted that some of the presentations given at the recent Water for Food Conference were extraordinary and those who attended were very energized and enthusiastic about the Institute.

2.4 International Affairs Restructuring

Lindquist asked what changes will occur in International Affairs and how these changes will allow for future cost savings.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger reported that she had just met with current Director Harriet Turner and Dean of Admissions Alan Cerveny, to discuss the restructuring. She noted that the administration is looking for ways to increase the effectiveness of service offices on campus. The idea is to form a conglomerate of some of these services by putting Admissions, Extended Education, and International Affairs under the direction of one person. She noted that Dean Cerveny is a very professional manager who is available on campus to oversee this effort. In taking on this responsibility Dean Cerveny has been promoted to the Assistant Vice Chancellor position in Academic Affairs that was vacated by Professor Savory when he returned to the faculty. She noted that International Affairs should serve the campus for global education and extended education should serve the vision of the campus, and she believes that Dean Cerveny will build the vision in a way that is cost saving.

Chancellor Perlman noted that these changes may impose some additional obligations on the colleges, but some colleges have been assuming some of these obligations already. He pointed out that the way a college, department, or the faculty engage with the world and maximize their opportunities for global interaction is up to that department. He noted that study abroad programs are now often started within the colleges and departments.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he recently attended a meeting of university people who had recently gone to Singapore and Malaysia to discuss the creation of an alumni chapter and explore opportunities with universities in these countries. He stated that the idea is to take advantage of existing 2+2 programs offered by Asian universities where students that the first two years of their undergraduate degree in Asia with the intention of transferring to an American university for the last two years. There are also opportunities for students at UNL to study for shorter times at the designated universities.

Lindquist pointed out that there would need to be some coordination or communication with colleges about study abroad programs. Chancellor Perlman stated that the service function of International Affairs is to coordinate these kinds of efforts.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that International Affairs supports students with visa issues and will continue to do this, but a new structure will link undergraduate admissions, extended education and International Affairs together. She noted that Dean Cerveny is very connected to the colleges and with the Alumni Association.

2.5 Summer Session Enrollment

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she did not have the figures yet on enrollment but will send them to the Committee.

2.6 Budget

Lindquist asked if there was any new information on the budget and whether retirement buyouts will be made if the budget is as bad as it is being predicted. Chancellor Perlman stated that all options are being looked at as well as what other universities have done to deal with severe budget cuts. He noted that there will not be any news until after the Board of Regents meets in June.

2.7 Reappointment Process for Tenure Track Faculty Members

Lindquist asked what happens if the majority of the faculty members in a department recommend to keep someone but the chair recommends termination. He asked if the decision stops at the dean's level or if it goes further. He noted that the Board of Regents must make the final decision on tenure and asked if actions can be taken to appeal a decision of termination.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he believes if the faculty member has been here longer than a year the person would have to be given a one year notice of termination. He stated that unless prohibited by the rules and bylaws of a college, the chair would ultimately make the decision whether to terminate someone, although he assumes the faculty

member could appeal the decision to the dean or vice chancellor. He pointed out that a faculty member clearly has the right to file a grievance with the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee and a hearing could be held. He noted that if budget constraints were the reasons behind a termination, the decision would probably not be overturned. However, if it was a decision based on competency a peer evaluation would need to be conducted and faculty members would have more of a role in the decision.

Lindquist stated that a chair overriding the decision of a promotion and tenure committee undermines the committee. He asked if anything can be done about this. Chancellor Perlman stated that if a chair wants to raise the level of quality in a department he/she might want to veto some decisions, but these decisions are reviewed and the chair needs to have good reasons for not agreeing with the promotion and tenure committee.

Lindquist noted that in both cases reported to the Executive Committee, the promotion and tenure committee recommended retaining the individual but the chair decided to terminate the person. Chancellor Perlman stated that it would depend on why the chair decided to go against the promotion and tenure committee's decision.

2.8 Upcoming Issues

Chancellor Perlman reported that another dean's search needs to be conducted for the College of Engineering. He stated that he would like to get a search committee designated this spring and he will need a list of possible faculty members from the Executive Committee. He stated that he has already spoken to the search consultant who is ready to work on the search. He noted that two searches will be conducted next year.

Chancellor Perlman noted that approximately 1500 students will be receiving their diplomas on Saturday morning and that the ceremony will be long but should be interesting. He stated that it has helped to move the graduate ceremony to a different day. Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that this year's class of master degree students is larger than last year. Chancellor Perlman stated that Jeff and Ron Raikes will be recognized at the ceremony.

Konecky asked what the environment is on the arena issue. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is difficult to tell. He noted that the pro arena messages are dominating the airwaves but the polls show that the vote can be close.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Professor Hope to Meet with the Executive Committee

Griffin reported that Professor Hope, UNL faculty representative to the University-wide Benefits Committee, will be meeting with the Executive Committee on May 19th. She will report on issues that were discussed at the University-wide Benefits Committee.

3.2 Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee

Lindquist reported that the FCAC made its recommendations to the Chancellor on faculty salaries. He noted that the recommendations call for support of promotions first; for the Chancellor to continue to strongly support the Board of Regent's goals of making salaries

more competitive with our peer institutions; any salary increase money, after increases for promotions have been made, be distributed as 75% to department chairs and 25% to deans and vice chancellors; if salary increases are not awarded that an effort be made to provide office/service staff with a modest raise; and reasonable salary increases be given to those who are paid from grants. Fech reported that there were a lot of discussions on this point. Lindquist pointed out that most of the people on grant funding are post docs.

Lindquist reported that UNL's salary gap is 4.6% below its peers.

3.3 AAUP Summer Institute

Lindquist reported that the AAUP Summer Institute will be July 28 – 30, but he will be unable to attend it. He noted that there will be a fall conference on shared governance which might be of interest. LaCost stated that she will check to see if she can attend the conference in July.

Nickerson asked if the Faculty Senate had contacts at AAUP that we can consult with about legality precedence issues. The Committee did not know of any contacts.

4.0 Minutes of 4/28/10

No major changes were made to the minutes of 4/28/10.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Health Benefits

Lindquist reported that he has sent an email to the other Senate Presidents about supporting domestic partner benefits.

Lindquist noted that Professor Hope will be attending the May 19th Executive Committee meeting to report on the recent University-wide Benefits Committee. He suggested Committee members think of questions for Professor Hope. He stated that the issues raised at the Senate meeting should be discussed with her.

Fech reported that Professor Hope's email to him indicated that the University-wide Benefits Committee discussed the newly enacted health care and the impact it would have on the university.

5.2 Policy on Suspending Pay

LaCost stated that most of the information she found from the AAUP on pay suspension had to deal with suspensions imposed by a Chancellor and with faculty members being sanctioned. Nickerson suggested contacting AAUP to see if they have someone who can address this issue. LaCost stated that she will see if she can identify a contact person at AAUP who might be able to provide further information.

Shea stated that he reviewed the Academic Rights & Responsibilities AFT-B Procedures and did not see anything that would address this issue. He stated that there was nothing related to reductions in pay for not performing work. He noted that the AFT-B Procedures deals mostly with faculty members being terminated.

Stock pointed out that the recent case seems exceptional and unique and it is not surprising that there is very little information about this subject. He noted that he has served on many department committees and has never encountered a case where a faculty member was not doing their required work.

Shea stated that we should expect more of these cases. He noted that these cases could be initiated at any administrative level. He stated that there are indications that a person's performance in relation to job responsibilities might be scrutinized more carefully which could result in reduced pay. LaCost noted that as the budget becomes more severe, there will be an active effort on the part of administrators to look at cutting pay because some administrators might think some people are not doing the work they are supposed to do.

LaCost pointed out that the development of a policy for suspending pay has been placed on the faculty. At a recent national conference she discussed this issue with colleagues who expressed concern that the administration will use the policy and if complaints arise, the administration will state that it was a policy created by the faculty. Shea asked if someone should be paid for not doing their job. He believes that we need to be involved in the creation of the policy and pointed out that it is hard to argue against scrutiny. Stock stated that department personnel subcommittees should be doing this by conducting an annual review. Shea pointed out that there are big differences among units in how personnel issues are handled. He noted that the Chancellor had alluded that an administrator could suspend pay more often in the future and protections need to be put in place for the faculty. He stated that it is a faculty member's responsibility to request a change in their apportionment of duties if they feel their current apportionment does not match the work he/she are doing.

Nickerson pointed out that we need to be careful with creating a policy because we could set the precedent for firing someone for not doing their job. Lindquist stated that the policy will be used to deal with certain circumstances, but it could be taken beyond and abused if it is not written carefully.

Shea noted that the faculty has been arguing for more shared governance and to be included in creating policies. He pointed out that we shouldn't just pick and choose the policies that we want to be involved in because we need to be involved in the development of all policies. He stated that he shares the concerns of the other Executive Committee members but believes this is why we need the discussions.

LaCost reported that colleagues at some major universities have informed her that previously they only had to teach two classes a semester but are now being told they have to teach four classes per semester. Shea stated that universities appear to be moving towards a multiple class system with strong researchers bringing in large amounts of grant money and those not as effective in getting grants being moved into teaching pools. He pointed out that Interim SVCAA Weissinger alluded to faculty members doing more teaching at this meeting.

Lindquist asked if the Committee feels that we should do something to create a policy on suspension of pay. Konecky stated that the Committee should take up the Chancellor's offer to work on a policy. The Committee agreed.

Lindquist asked if the Executive Committee should work on the policy or if an ad hoc committee should be created. He stated that he thinks this kind of policy is clearly in the purview of the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee since it recommends actions to ensure the responsibilities and rights of faculty members. The Executive Committee agreed. Lindquist stated that he will make an assignment to the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee. He suggested that the deadline for completion of the policy be the end of the year.

6.0 New Business

6.1 AAUP Chapter

Nickerson stated that he thinks the university would be better off if we had a stronger chapter of AAUP on campus. He asked if there would be a conflict of interest with the Faculty Senate if there was a stronger AAUP. He stated that the only way he can see the AAUP working is if the Senate tries to beat the bushes to get younger faculty to attend the meetings. LaCost suggested that a proposal could be taken to the Senate encouraging participation in the local AAUP chapter.

Lindquist asked how the Senate would go about encouraging younger faculty members to participate in the AAUP. Nickerson stated that younger faculty members should be notified of meetings and encouraged to attend them. Stock reported that flyers used to be sent out to the faculty about meetings.

Flowers noted that there was more interest in the AAUP in the early 1970's, particularly when the collective bargaining unit at UNO was formed. Shea stated that he does not believe there have been any meetings at UNL for some years. Nickerson stated that he attended last year's statewide meeting and there was only one faculty member from UNL at the meeting. Berg asked if the local AAUP chapter is composed of predominantly faculty from Wesleyan University or whether the meeting was just held there. It was noted that there is a state-wide chapter that usually holds its annual meeting at Wesleyan.

Anaya stated that as a new faculty member she is unaware of what AAUP is.

Anaya wondered how many new faculty members are aware of AAUP. Griffin stated that faculty members have attended Senate meetings in the past to promote the AAUP but did not have much success in recruiting new members. She pointed out that some of the new faculty members might need to be educated about the AAUP.

Nickerson stated that many faculty members do not have an incentive to join, are discouraged by administrators, and kept too busy. He stated that he has seen some significant interest in the AAUP when he speaks to younger faculty members in his department.

Lindquist suggested that encouraging membership in the AAUP local chapter could be a Senate goal for next year.

Shea stated that the question of whether promoting membership in the AAUP is appropriate for the Senate and needs to be discussed. He wondered how much interest there is in the AAUP. He stated that people need to be aware of what the AAUP represents and stands for. He questions whether a majority of his peers supports the principles of the AAUP. Lindquist pointed out that people would probably not be supportive of it if it was being considered as a bargaining unit, but they might if they knew its focus is to support academic freedom.

Shea stated that he isn't even sure that a majority of faculty members feel tenure is important. Nickerson noted that one of the major themes of the AAUP has been to track the reduction of tenure track faculty lines. He pointed out that many of these tenure track lines are being replaced with non-tenure track positions because they are cheaper and allow more flexibility for administrators. Berg stated that this is an important topic to discuss because more faculty members have expressed concern with there being more on-line courses and specialized courses which might develop into a different concept of tenure in the future.

The Committee agreed to discuss the issue further.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, May 19 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 Pat Shea, Secretary.