

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Anaya, Flowers, Konecky, LaCost, Lindquist, McCollough, Nickerson, Schubert, Stock

Absent: Berg, Fech, Franti, Shea

Date: Wednesday, November 10, 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

Lindquist called the meeting to order at 3:02 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/Interim SVCAA Weissinger

2.1 VSIP Update

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that faculty members who applied for the VSIP have had their agreement delivered to them. She noted that these individuals now have 45 days to sign the agreements. She stated that the separation will not be executed until Vice Chancellor Jackson has signed it over to the Board of Regents and they have approved the agreements.

Nickerson asked if the names of these people will not be public for awhile yet. Chancellor Perlman noted that some people might be known because the deans are trying to work the cash flow into their budget in order to accommodate those retiring.

Lindquist asked if numbers on how many have signed up for the VSIP will be released. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the figures will not be released yet because the number can change given that the people still have 45 days to decide whether to accept the agreement. She reported that the deans and chairs are highly engaged in planning the teaching schedules for next fall and spring since departments will have a reduced workforce due to the retirement of these individuals. She stated that the administration has done as a good a job as it can to help departments and colleges to deal with the current economy.

Flowers noted that several weeks ago Interim SVCAA Weissinger mentioned having an event for the retiring professors. He asked if the timing of this event has been decided and whether local events, in the colleges, will also take place. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she hopes that departments and colleges will do something to recognize and thank the retiring professors. She guessed that an event will probably take place in March or April and could be combined with an existing event that draws a large part of the campus community. She noted that she has talked to several friends who are retiring and they are pleased with the idea of having an event. Flowers asked if the event

would be in the middle of spring or at the end of the semester. Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that often time events in March or April are a time to happily recollect the occurrences on campus.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger reported that Associate Vice Chancellor Jacobson suggested that departments act in an expeditious manner on emeritus status for the retiring faculty members. She noted that she has reminded chairs of the process for giving emeritus status and suggested that departments start moving forward with the process. She noted that Academic Affairs has volunteered to do all of the PAF's for the emeriti faculty members.

Konecky stated that she has heard that some of the retiring professors can teach part time after they retire but others have been told they cannot. She asked which is correct. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the possibility of doing some part time work has been left open, but having someone come back to campus to work will have to be allowed on a case by case basis. She pointed out that having this flexibility will allow the campus to be in the best shape possible. She noted that a person might be rehired for a specific task and for a specific period of time.

Chancellor Perlman stated that there would have to be unique circumstances in order to rehire a retired faculty member. He noted that an example of such a circumstance would be if only two faculty members in a department teach a particular subject and one of them retires and then the other one goes on leave for a semester. The retired faculty member might be hired back to teach the course for the time the remaining professor is on leave. He pointed out that there has to be justification for rehiring any retired faculty member on a temporary basis.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that she thinks it will be rare if any of the retired faculty members are rehired. She noted that the conversations on this issue have been very transparent with the chairs and deans. She reported that the Chancellor, VC Green, and she have looked at all of the recommendations made by the deans on this. She noted that the most important criteria is whether it helps the university to temporarily rehire the individual.

2.2 Budget Planning

Chancellor Perlman noted that the budget deficit for the state has doubled, according to the forecasting board and now stands at \$1.4 billion. He reported that he thinks January will be an intense political time for the university, and that it will be critically important to have friends and faculty members speaking to senators in support of the university. He stated that the administration will get talking points out. He stated that we will have to see what the Governor recommends in January for the budget. Lindquist noted that the budget process will go into full swing during the spring semester.

2.3 Update on SVCAA Search

Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that this search committee was very good and worked well together. She reported that the semi finalists were interviewed last weekend and at

the end of the process there was a deliberation about the four candidates that will be brought to campus for interviews. She stated that the names will be made public soon, probably on Monday, November 15. She noted that the four finalists have significant responsibilities at their current home campuses and are currently in the process of notifying their administration that they are on the short list for this position. She stated that the four candidates are confirmed in the commitment to come to the campus and there will be a presentation and public reception for each of the candidates. She stated that they are very different candidates but they are all very good.

Lindquist stated that he loved the experience of being on the search committee and interviewing the semi finalists, even though the process was exhausting. He noted that it was fascinating to see their different perspectives. Interim SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that the first question asked to each of the semi finalists was why Nebraska and why now. She reported that they all had very interesting responses.

2.4 Update on CIC Activities

Interim SVCAA Weissinger reported that originally the CIC staff was to visit the campus this fall, but everyone involved felt that spring would be a better time. She stated that tentatively the CIC staff is scheduled to be in the last week of February. She noted that a lot more information will be sent out to the campus about this when the time gets closer. She noted that the visit will be the beginning of make the formal connections to becoming a member of the CIC.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there are parts of campus that are already engaged with some parts of the CIC. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that people across the campus are receiving invitations, both formal and informal, to participate in various ways. She noted that Professor Berger, Director of the Honors Program, has been invited. She reported that ASUN is inviting the Big Ten student governments to campus next year.

Lindquist asked if the Faculty Senate should be making contact with the Faculty Senates at the Big Ten schools. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that if people invite you to participate then you should do so. She noted that she could ask the CIC office to ask the Faculty Senates to get involved with the UNL Faculty Senate.

2.5 Problems with UNL Today Emails

Konecky stated that she shared with the Executive Committee that it has been frustrating to not get information on events taking place on campus in a timely fashion. She noted that it seems like events aren't being put into the UNL Today emails until it is too late to participate. Interim SVCAA Weissinger asked if more pre-notification is needed. Konecky pointed out that the previously used format provided more advanced notification. Anaya stated that the only way she knew about the international food day on campus was because of a flyer she happened to see. She pointed out that even the calendar of events does not show a lot of things occurring on campus.

Lindquist asked who is putting the UNL Today emails together. Chancellor Perlman reported that University Communications is doing it, but he is not sure where their plans

are for allowing people to put information on it. He noted that ultimately it is up to people to get the information into University Communications.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the group who works on the UNL Today emails is willing to hear any suggestions about it. Lindquist pointed out that today's EN Thompson forum was not even listed.

Konecky noted that people can obtain the same information in the UNL Today email that they can see on the UNL home page. She stated that the email needs to provide more value because it is not serving people the way it is currently being done.

2.6 Chancellor's Commission on Sustainability-Recommendations?

Chancellor Perlman reported that the Commission has not completed all of its recommendations. He noted that most of the recommendations are very general at this point and most of them relate to facility planning. He stated that one of the most controversial recommendations relates to smoking. He reported that the recommendation calls for a smoking ban of up to 25 feet from campus buildings. He noted that those buildings that are LEED certified have this ban in place already, but the recommendation is to make the policy campus wide. He stated that the goal is to have a smoke free campus by 2015.

Nickerson noted that he asked Dean Drummond at the Senate meeting about the Commission's recommendation and wondered if sustainability efforts would impact the possible reorganization of campus or would provide some money saving ideas that would affect campus wide restructuring. He reported that members of the Executive Committee are meeting with members of the APC to work on getting discussions started on campus about a faculty driven vision of the campus. He stated that he did not know if any of the recommendations from the Commission would have an impact on these discussions.

Chancellor Perlman reported that other recommendations were about eliminating the use of single car operations. He noted that the campus has already made efforts to encourage and support carpooling efforts but they were not very effective. He pointed out that the new stickers being used by parking now allow people to transfer the parking permit between cars which assist with efforts towards carpooling. He stated that bus transportation is also being encouraged.

Chancellor Perlman stated that another recommendation is to have a bike loan program on campus. This program would allow people to use bikes to get destinations on campus. The rider would then leave the bike for someone else to use. He stated that other campuses use this program effectively.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the Commission wants to educate faculty and staff about sustainability issues. He noted that there are huge piles of broken concrete on the Innovation Campus grounds and pointed out that that this will later be used for the road construction of this campus.

Chancellor Perlman reported that some of the recommendations from the Commission have already been implemented.

2.7 General Discussion on Universities Eliminating Humanities

Chancellor Perlman stated that he found the article (“The Crisis of the Humanities Officially Arrives” by Stanley Fish in the New York Times, October 11, 2010) disappointing and that it seemed more like a rant. He noted that the core humanities are English, history, and classics. He pointed out that interest in languages changes over time, and there are interesting experiments going on around the country regarding instruction of the languages; rather than face to face instruction, immersion programs are showing to be more effective. He stated that he has no intention of picking on the humanities and pointed out that the humanities are the core of what a university is about.

Lindquist noted that the semi finalists for the SVCAA position were more excited about the breadth of the university as compared to other universities. He pointed out that the comprehensiveness of the university was an exciting draw for many of the candidates. He stated that it was an eye opening experience for him to realize just how comprehensive we are. Chancellor Perlman stated that this is a result of the university’s decision to have a comprehensive, land grant university.

LaCost stated that the Committee did a brief search to see if eliminating humanities was happening elsewhere and the idea was just to see what the Chancellor thought of the idea. Chancellor Perlman stated that the elimination of the humanities at universities is troublesome. He pointed out that Texas A & M University is now calculating teaching efficiencies by determining how much revenue a faculty member is bringing in based on the credit hours produced. He noted that not all subjects are the same and that people need to think more holistically about the university. He stated that the humanities feel more vulnerable because it is not as easy to count the work that they do. Stock pointed out that the people in the humanities here on campus are legitimately concerned because of the past history of trying to eliminate classics and speech communications in 1993.

Chancellor Perlman stated that everyone ought to be anxious because of the budget situation. He noted that if one department has to be picked over another, research will more than likely be a high priority, but we cannot generalize what we have to do. He pointed out that we have to do what is best for the university as a whole. He stated that there is a lot of misunderstanding about the role of the university and what we are supposed to be doing, yet generically, people in Nebraska are very supportive of the university, but they are not quite sure how we do what we do.

Nickerson stated that in the 2003 budget cuts the Chancellor expressed a vision of the core university and some of the non-core items were eliminated. He wondered if the Chancellor was staying with the same view of what a core university is or if this has been redefined. He asked if the definition of what constitutes an academic program has been redefined or whether it is still flexible and ambiguous.

Chancellor Perlman stated that an academic program is defined in the rules. He pointed out that the faculty felt that if he defined a program too narrowly he would be considered as picking on specific individuals which would be equated with numerous implications and academic freedom issues. He stated that the real test was to convince the faculty objectively that he was not in fact picking on any individuals.

Chancellor Perlman stated that his core attitudes have not changed, although they might be more defined. He pointed out that undergraduate education and research are the two critical priorities. He noted that there are dilemmas in research. He stated that research can be measured in productivity and if we are going to build a research enterprise on the scale that the university might have, we need to pick some things that aren't as productive and some things that we can build a national reputation on. He stated that when looking at the priority of undergraduate education, you have to think differently. With undergraduate education you cannot limit yourself to niche programs because we have a lot of students with very broad interests and we have to provide them with a sampling of what the opportunities are here.

Chancellor Perlman noted that there was a recent article in the New York Times on what universities are doing. In this article it was reported that an instructor found that he could teach 1200 students, rather than only 100 or 200, by having the course streamed. He pointed out that on our campus we struggle with even finding classrooms that can hold more than 150 students. McCollough noted that it was recently revealed at a meeting that we could get a private channel through Roku. Chancellor Perlman stated that he does not want the only choice in June to be what programs are going to be eliminated and he hopes that discussions on campus regarding restructuring can help to alleviate the budget cuts.

Nickerson asked when the one time grants for teaching will be announced. Chancellor Perlman stated that the announcement will be made soon. Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that a component of the funding is to fund faculty members who want to propose innovative ways of teaching that make more efficient use of faculty time or ways that lower the cost of instruction while maintaining quality. Nickerson asked if the money will be received in the spring with the intent that it can then be spent during the year. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the funds are really intended for planning of supporting specific pilot projects and could be used flexibly this year or next. She pointed out that we are limited by the physical space on campus and there are serious conversations taking place with professors about how they could teach more students in one space rather than having two separate classes. She stated that we have been having some serious conversations with the Grand Theater to see if we could teach some classes there. She stated that this could be a one-time thing or it could be longer. She pointed out that the idea came from a faculty member because it would be more efficient for faculty members to teach one course. Nickerson stated that he recently mentioned these one-time grants at the Biological Sciences retreat and there was definite interest. Interim SVCAA Weissinger noted that the real bottleneck in undergraduate life science curriculum is the limitation of our physical classrooms and teaching labs. She asked if there are virtual teaching methods that could help, or whether we are creatively utilizing

all of the other kinds of physical spaces on campus that could be used to teach life science courses.

Lindquist reported that the four Presidents of the Faculty Senate recently met with President Milliken and there was a long conversation about the budget and what potentially could happen. He noted that the possibility of people losing their jobs is real and the Presidents kept on saying that the way to make the budget situation most successful is to carry out elimination of positions as humanely as possible. He stated that how the budget cuts are handled is going to be critically important. Chancellor Perlman agreed and stated that one of the big opportunities for doing the cuts humanely is the voluntary separation program. He pointed out that with this program people are leaving voluntarily.

Nickerson reported that there are a lot of discussions about having more interdisciplinary programs between east and city campus but some of the obstacles for doing this are financial. He stated that investing in establishing new offices that can help with these interdisciplinary programs could be more cost effective because these programs could attract more students.

2.8 Upcoming Issues

Chancellor Perlman reported that the faculty advisory committee for Innovation Campus has been established.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that Academic Affairs is looking more into how we can do a better job of dealing with transfer credit evaluation. She pointed out that trends suggest that we will have a lot more transfer students. She noted that we have not fully exploited this opportunity with transfer students. She reported that transfer students bring in more first generation students. She stated that she wants to engage discussions with the faculty about the process for accepting transfer credits.

McCullough noted that the process is very tedious and can be time consuming. Interim SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that some of the Big Ten schools can inform students in real time whether their credits will transfer. She stated that she is devoted to the idea that the faculty owns the curriculum but she thinks we can find a better way to deal with evaluating courses for credit transfers.

Nickerson asked how the Big Ten deals with transfer credits. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that in some colleges there is someone, often a professional staff member, who oversees advising and they are usually empowered to make many of the decisions to transfer credits. This provides them with the ability to more quickly tell a student whether their credits will be transferred. She pointed out that there will need to be conversations about this with the faculty, but that she thinks faculty do not necessarily need to be directly involved with evaluating every course that is presented for transfer credit and that this is often not a good use of faculty time.

LaCost reported that the data she has seen shows that 15% of community college students are transferring to four year institutions. She pointed out that given the economy and the emphasis of going to a community college we need to start earlier in telling them what courses will transfer. She stated that if you have a handle on evaluation you can have a more forward thrust to your program.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that 25% of our students are transfer students. She noted that the campus gave up the idea long ago that students need to take all of their courses here in order to be successful. She stated that there are bottlenecks in the curriculum that can actually be eased by allowing transfer credit and there will be a lot of benefits to the campus if we have conversations on this topic.

Nickerson asked if the obstacles with credit transfers are with the faculty. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the problem is that faculty members understandably do not always make this a top priority, and so it can take a long time to get an answer back to the prospective student. She stated that we need to clarify why we evaluate transfer credit and what criteria we ought to use. When she evaluated courses in her department, she often asked “could I teach this better, or is this course a perfect match to the way I teach it?” She stated that she thinks our current system is built on these questions rather than focusing on the more realistic question of whether the student will be minimally prepared to have a successful career here. She stated that she wonders whether some of the decisions could be made by professional staff who are trained by the faculty and are connected to the department or college. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that we delegate many of our decisions to other colleagues or professional staff because we trust them to come to us with questions.

Chancellor Perlman stated that there are some instances in which we have to assure a fairly precise kind of preparation in order for a student to succeed at UNL, but in most cases we could safely accept transfer credit from other accredited universities and be assured that students have a fair chance to do well in our degree programs. Interim Senior Vice Chancellor Weissinger noted that our Transfer Coordinator stated that even after faculty members spend time evaluating courses, we very rarely decide not to accept the credit, and so in most cases this may not be a good use of faculty time.

Anaya asked whether we share this kind of information with other universities. Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that we loan or rent many of our decisions to other colleagues or professional staff because we trust them to come to us with questions.

Interim SVCAA Weissinger suggested that we might want to get a consultant in to help with this issue. She pointed out that the interest is to free up faculty time.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Email Message about Expansion of Faculty Members on APC

Lindquist reported that he received a message from Professor Chouinard regarding the APC expansion and faculty representation on the committee. Professor Chouinard

suggested that Biological Systems Engineering should represent biological sciences rather than the physical sciences discipline area.

Konecky pointed out that she has served on the Committee on Committees and the problem is the number of volunteers. She stated that this is more of an issue than the representation on the committee. She noted that the culture in departments either encourages or discourages service on committees. She pointed out that representation changes can be made to committees, but until the culture of valuing service is changed in departments, representation will be moot. Schubert stated that this is what is behind his argument for not supporting the expansion on the APC; that not enough faculty members volunteer to serve on committees. He stated that the general notion is that the work is time consuming.

Lindquist asked if the argument is that if people don't want to serve on committees then we shouldn't have committees. He stated that ultimately committees serve a good purpose at that. He stated that if we can't get volunteers this does not mean that we shouldn't do everything we can to get the committees set up the way they should to be.

Schubert stated that we need to encourage people to participate on committees. Konecky pointed out that if the workload is excessive a lot of people won't sign up to serve on a committee. She noted that the whole point is that the workload of the APC falls on the faculty members. She stated that having more faculty members on the committee will allow the work to be more distributed.

Schubert asked if the APC was doing work that they shouldn't be doing. Nickerson stated that he does not think so. He pointed out that the APC does more than just deal with budget cuts. They are involved with five year program evaluations and other things.

Lindquist stated that we need to get deans on campus who encourage faculty members to contribute to the university and serve on committees.

Lindquist noted that there is a motion on the Senate floor to expand the APC by two faculty members. He asked if any friendly amendments were made at the last Senate meeting. LaCost reported that no friendly amendments were made but she told the Senate if they have friendly amendments they should forward them to either Lindquist or Griffin so that they are included in the December Senate packet.

Nickerson noted that the Chancellor suggested including the Vice Chancellor for Research & Economic Development as a voting member on the committee.

Lindquist suggested that the issue be put on the agenda for next week as well as reviewing the definition of disciplines.

4.0 Minutes of 11/3/10

The minutes of 11/3/10 were approved with revisions.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Draft List of Administrative Duties for Faculty Members

Nickerson noted that most of the issues on the list are related to travel. Lindquist suggested that the Executive Committee discuss the list next week and then invite Vice Chancellor Jackson to a meeting to discuss them.

5.2 UNL Faculty Handbook Update

LaCost reported that the matrix has been divided into five quadrants and she has worked through one of them. She stated that she will bring this to the Executive Committee next week.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Faculty Members Needed for James Griesen Award for Exemplary Service to Students Committee

Lindquist reported that he received an email from Assistant Vice Chancellor Alvarez asking for a faculty member to serve on the committee. Anaya volunteered to serve on the committee.

6.2 Letter for Chair of Parking Advisory Committee

Lindquist reported that at the Deans and Directors meeting Associate to the Chancellor Nunez spoke about where the campus is going and that parking will be an issue. He noted that the plans are to take the A lot out east of the Knolls Residence Center, further reducing surface parking. He pointed out that Cather Pound will be renovated and another 1100 bed dorm is planned for R Street. He reported that the master plan also calls for another parking garage east of the 17th and R Street garage.

LaCost wondered where the additional revenue is going for parking on football Saturdays. She noted that in past years the charge was \$10 for football parking but it has now increased to \$15. She stated that the Executive Committee was previously told that the money was used to clean up after the games but she speculated that there isn't any more garbage after the games now than there was before.

Anaya asked if there has been any talk of having off campus parking with bus service provided to city campus. Griffin pointed out that perimeter parking has been tried but was not very successful.

Nickerson pointed out that APC is supposed to participate in all building plans on campus and wondered if they have input into the parking plans.

Lindquist stated that he still questions the resources for parking, particularly money that is set aside to replace parking when a building is constructed on an existing parking lot. He pointed out that he has asked to see this information in the past, but it has never been shown. He stated that when plans for a new building is approved by the Regents we need to make sure that the plans specifically state how much money will come for replacing parking spaces and where this money is going.

Lindquist stated that the Parking Advisory Committee has the authority to deal with these issues and can more easily monitor what is happening with parking. He suggested that we bring Professor Lee, chair of the Parking Advisory Committee, in for a conversation.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, November 17, at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Pat Shea, Secretary.