

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Anaya, Berg, Fech, Franti, Konecky, LaCost, Lindquist, McCollough, Nickerson, Shea, Stock

**Absent:** Flowers, Schubert

**Date:** Wednesday, September 29, 2010

**Location:** Faculty Senate Office

**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

Lindquist called the meeting to order at 2:59 p.m.

### 2.0 Associate Vice President for University Affairs Ron Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor Michelle Waite

Lindquist noted that the Executive Committee is interested in knowing how the Senate as a body can help in moving the University forward.

Associate VP Withem stated that the budget outlook is as bleak a picture as he has ever seen in the last thirteen years he has worked for the university and that in the recent past we have had more bad years than good years with the budget. He pointed out that this is the first time he has seen the revenue for the state been down for two years in a row, with revenue even less in the second year. He reported that preliminary reports are that there will be a \$750 million budget gap and that the legislature will use this figure to determine funding for all of the state agencies.

Associate VP Withem stated that the university has submitted its biennial budget request which is now in the hands of the state's budget office where it will be analyzed with all of the other budget requests. He stated that in mid January the Governor will make his budget recommendations which will be based on the forecasting board's predictions.

Associate VP Withem reported that the legislature will go back to work the first week in January and this is the year that they will be reorganizing and forming the legislature's committees, although it is possible some committees may have members reappointed. He stated that through March and April the appropriations committee will formulate their budget which the legislature will vote on in May. He stated that the university will not know its budget for the next biennium until June.

Associate VP Withem reported that the legislature is trying to get every legislative committee to look at its budget to see how they can get by with a 10% decrease in their budget. He noted that the Education Committee is already meeting to discuss this.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite reported that she is the contact person in the Chancellor's office for community relations and she tries to keep people on campus informed throughout the year of what is going on with the legislature and the outside community. She pointed out that timing is everything with the legislature.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite noted that faculty members are occasionally asked to testify before the legislature on issues that pertain to the faculty member's expertise. She stated that she can advise faculty members about speaking to the legislature. She pointed out that if a faculty member is not speaking to the legislature on the university's agenda they would need to state clearly that they are speaking on their own behalf. She stated that it is helpful for the administration to know if a faculty member is speaking in front of the legislature.

Associate VP Withem stated that his office is once again conducting the university ambassador program. He stated that this program identifies individuals who would like to help the university by contacting their state senator about issues that are facing the university. He distributed cards and asked Executive Committee members to fill out and return them if they are interested in participating. He noted that people can go to <http://www.nebraska.edu> to sign up for the program (sign up cards will also be available at the October 5 Faculty Senate meeting).

Associate VP Withem stated that people who participate in the university's grassroots network will receive information periodically throughout the legislative session. He pointed out that people will be contacted no more than two or three times during the legislative session to ask that they contact their state senators. He stated that participants can call or email their state legislator to discuss how the legislator's decision would affect the university. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite noted that participants might also receive emails from her to inform them on how UNL will be affected. Shea asked who currently receives information. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite reported that she sends messages to deans and directors, UAAD, UNOPA and the President of the Faculty Senate.

Nickerson asked how old the ambassador program is. He stated that he knows of many faculty members in Biological Sciences who wanted to testify before the Senate or speak to a state legislator. He pointed out that in the past faculty members were strongly discouraged from doing this and were told that the university should just have one voice. Associate VP Withem stated that this thinking has changed, although actual testimony in front of the legislature should be handled by himself or Assistant to the Chancellor Waite.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite noted that representation from the sister campuses will be called to testify in front of the legislature as well as UNL. She noted that the university could use your help with the legislature in other ways.

Lindquist asked if those speaking on behalf of the university should always act as a private citizen. Associate VP Withem recommends that people use their personal email accounts and personal letterhead when contacting a state legislator. He noted that it is

more effective when remarks come from individuals so it doesn't seem like the university is making a concerted effort. He suggested that people identify themselves professionally and state how the budget cuts can impact faculty work load and student efforts.

Shea asked Associate VP Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor Waite what their primary role or activity is. Associate VP Withem stated that his job is with Central Administration and he is the university's only registered lobbyist. He noted that he is the Director of Government Relations and he works on legislative issues that impact the university.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite reported that she works for Chancellor Perlman and she deals with external relations to the campus. Aside from her responsibilities as liaison with the legislature, she noted that she also interfaces with the Alumni Association, is the liaison for the ROTC, and has a number of other responsibilities.

McCollough asked if the other campuses have their union representatives helping them with the legislature. Associate VP Withem stated that his primary contact with the other campuses is the Faculty Senate. McCollough asked if the union representatives actually meet with the legislature. Associate VP Withem stated that he did not think so, although UNO did have someone years ago who was more active with the legislature.

McCollough asked how faculty issues are being brought to the legislature. Associate VP Withem stated that the Provost Office in Central Administration speaks with the Chancellor and gets input from them. He noted that VP Lechner knows how business is being impacted at the university. He reported that President Milliken receives information from the government relations sections, the financial sections, and public media sections of the campuses.

Nickerson asked how faculty members can convey to Central Administration the impacts the budget cuts are having on faculty work. He pointed out that faculty members are spending huge amounts of time to justify travel expenses and trying to get the lowest prices on airfare. He noted that faculty members are spending half their day trying to save very small amounts of money. He stated that all of this time consuming work is taking away a faculty member's ability to generate money for the university. He pointed out that he is hearing more and more complaints of this nature than ever before. He stated that accountability issues makes faculty less able to do their job.

Associate VP Withem stated that it his job to carry this message from the faculty to the legislature. He noted that one of the problems is that some legislators do not understand the work of the faculty and how increased accountability tasks limit the work the faculty can do. He pointed out that most legislators appreciate the university and like the university, but the legislature is dealing with a situation where there is not enough revenue being generated. He noted that raising taxes would help with the state's revenue but this will probably not happen.

Nickerson stated that he understands that budget cuts have to happen but the rules that are now being added in addition to the budget cuts are making the situation worse at the university and interfering with faculty member's ability to get grants. He noted that morale is being affected. He pointed out that there are requirements from the state auditor's office that could be eliminated. Assistant to the Chancellor agreed. Associate VP Withem stated that this is an area where his office could be more productive. He noted that there is a state law that says that all state property needs to be tagged but this has not been done for years because the cost would be so prohibitive. Franti stated that a simple thing that can be changed has to do with the meal stipend requirements. He noted that administrators and faculty members are spending time translating receipts they received in a foreign country for buying a meal that costs only a few dollars. Associate VP Withem stated that the university had sponsored a bill about expense reimbursement requests being due in 60 days, but an amendment was later added to the bill requiring clarification on all receipts submitted for reimbursement. Nickerson asked if this is being considered for elimination. Associate VP Withem stated that the legislature has asked state agencies to identify requirements that are costly and the new requirements for travel reimbursements is one of the things the university is identifying as being costly and time consuming.

McCullough asked if information is given to the legislature about how we compare with our peer institutions in terms of salaries and benefits. Associate VP Withem reported that the legislature is given this information, but he is not sure how aware the legislators are about it. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite pointed out that the legislature can be very insulated. She stated that there is a good core of the legislators that do not understand how the university impacts not only our state, but the whole nation. She noted that some of the legislators do not understand the impact of UNL being in the Big Ten. She reported that several years ago one of the university's efforts with the legislature was about faculty salaries. She pointed out that term limits makes a big difference with the legislature because every four years new senators need to be re-educated about the university and its importance.

Shea stated that it is his perception that most people feel that the university is wasteful and that faculty members are overpaid. He suggested that a message about what the university does needs to go out not only to the legislature but to the public as well. Associate VP Withem stated that a couple of years ago he would have agreed with this statement but recent marketing research shows that the people of the state do have a positive attitude towards the university and don't believe it is wasteful. He noted that many people believe that the university is an economic driver for the state.

Associate VP Withem stated that the legislature is requiring all state agencies develop an efficiency plan. He noted that there is some assumption that we aren't being cost effective. He stated that we need to get the message out that we aren't wallowing in extra cash. He pointed out that in years past when a position became open a search was immediately conducted to fill that position. Now questions are asked whether that position really needs to be filled. Shea noted that this has been going on for awhile now. He wondered whether legislators are assuming that we are conducting business as usual.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite pointed out that if a legislator, or a member of his family, has had a bad experience with the university, they don't forget it. She stated that people would be surprised with what some state senators ask the university to look into but they are advocating on behalf of their constituents.

Fech asked what the perception is of the average legislator towards the voluntary separation incentive program and whether it is viewed as a way to be more efficient. Associate VP Withem stated that it is probably not on legislators' radar screen right now because the legislature is not in session. He stated that he thinks it would be viewed positively and understands it will be a cost saver.

McCullough asked if the university's biggest competition for state funds is with the state colleges or K-12. Associate VP Withem noted that the university just receives a lump sum from the state and these funds are distributed by Central Administration. He stated that the current argument with the legislature is that we haven't been funded to the extent that we should have been, particularly in comparison with K-12. He noted that the state colleges received a higher percentage of increase but their base budget is much smaller than the university's. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite pointed out that the university tries hard not to pit ourselves against K-12. She noted that K-12 has a very big lobbying pool.

McCullough stated that the legislature needs to hear the benefits of higher education, not just the cost. Associate VP Withem stated that President Millken and Chancellor Perlman have been talking about this point a lot to the legislature.

Associate VP Withem pointed out that higher education isn't something that is discretionary for people anymore. He noted that the new jobs for now and future decades are going to require some kind of advanced degree. He reported that Nebraska is 7<sup>th</sup> in the nation in terms of new jobs requiring at least a bachelor degree.

Associate VP Withem distributed a copy of the University of Nebraska Agency Efficiency Plan Summary. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite noted that the document is to advocate to the legislature how efficient we have been. Lindquist pointed out that the cost of a four year degree from UNL is a remarkably inexpensive \$28,000, and that most students will make up that entire amount in increased income potential within the first or second year of graduation. Shea stated that the message about how the university is making their lives better as a family needs to be conveyed. Fech pointed out that this was the reason behind the creation of the faculty success stories.

Shea noted that it is hard for people to see the connection between the work that the university is doing and how it benefits the economy of the state. He pointed out that some industries are here because of the accomplishments and contributions of the university. He stated that these kinds of testimonials would be good for the public to hear.

Lindquist asked why Medicaid is never a topic discussed when the budget is being discussed. Associate VP Withem reported that there are some discussions about it. He noted that the Governor recently sent a letter to state educators about not supporting the health care reform. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite pointed out that historically older people are the ones who vote in elections and talking about taking money away from Medicaid is a very touchy subject.

Associate VP Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor Waite thanked the Executive Committee for meeting with them and asked that anyone with questions should contact them.

### **3.0 Announcements**

#### **3.1 President Milliken Meeting with Executive Committee**

Lindquist reported that President Milliken will be meeting with the Executive Committee on October 20. He noted that the President will also be meeting with the full Senate sometime during the academic year.

### **4.0 Minutes of 9/22/10**

The minutes of 9/22/10 were approved with revisions.

### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **5.1 Changes to APC Syllabus**

Lindquist noted that the Executive Committee accepted a motion to accept the letter and rationale from APC to add two faculty members to the APC. He suggested that the rationale and letter, along with an addendum from the Executive Committee, be presented to the Senate. He pointed out that he suggested some changes to revising the syllabus, one of which is for the Faculty Senate President to appoint a designee who is typically the past chair of the APC. He stated that this would allow some flexibility.

Shea agreed with Lindquist's suggestions. He stated that the syllabus will also need to be changed to reflect the revised budget cutting procedures once they are completely approved. He noted that the current syllabus does not include the Vice Chancellor for Research as a non-voting member.

Franti recommended that the suggested revisions go to the APC for review before it is presented to the Senate.

Lindquist stated that he will make the suggested changes and the Executive Committee can review them at next week's meeting.

#### **5.2 Response to Further Questions from CIO Askren**

Lindquist noted that an email message to CIO Askren was sent asking additional follow up questions from his previous meeting with the Executive Committee. He stated that CIO Askren replied stating that alias email addresses will not change if LotusNotes is removed. A change in an email system will likely affect only those who use the real

email address. Konecky noted that people will get to choose their email name rather than it being assigned.

Lindquist reported that CIO Askren also clarified the discussion about computer scans and mentioned the virus protection programs. He noted that there should be conversations about security programs that people on campus can use.

### **5.3 Lake Discussion on Effective Student Code of Conduct**

Griffin reported that Flowers was currently attending a conference but informed her that the location of the meeting had been changed and he was never notified. She stated that Flowers tried for some time to find the proper location but was not given accurate information.

### **5.4 Status of Research Misconduct Policy**

Griffin reported that she had been informed that the policy was reviewed by the General Counsel's Office but will not have to go to the Board of Regents for final approval. She stated that a letter is being sent to Associate VC Espy from the General Counsel regarding the policy.

## **6.0 New Business**

### **6.1 Petition for Employee + 1 Benefits and Requests for Personal Stories**

Lindquist reported that he was informed by Pat Tetreault, Assistant Director of LGBTQA Programs/Services, that a petition drive was being conducted to change current benefits to support employee + 1 benefits. He stated that personal stories are also being sought by the group.

Lindquist noted that he is working on a draft of the Senate's resolution to support employee + 1 benefits. He stated that he would like to present President Millikan with a draft of the resolution when he meets with the Executive Committee on October 20.

McCollough asked if the petition and request for personal stories should be sent to colleagues. Fech noted that this is not a Senate entity and it should be made clear that this is being done by a committee of LGBTQA, not the Senate. Lindquist suggested that it could be sent to the Senators as an information piece.

Franti asked where the petition will be going once it is done. Lindquist stated that it will probably go to the President. He noted that the LGBTQA committee will be meeting with him.

### **6.2 Declining Budgets and a Faculty Driven vision for the Future of the University**

Lindquist stated that the chancellor has indicated that faculty members should be involved in developing a vision of the future of our university. Therefore, he asked for discussion about how to go about having a campus-wide conversation about such issues.

Shea stated that he appreciated the Chancellor's openness in our discussions last week, but noted that there are some trade-offs with this. He opined that the Chancellor was floating ideas with the Executive Committee to gauge the reaction of the UNL faculty. McCollough viewed the Chancellor's ideas as ideas for serious consideration.

Shea suggested that the Executive Committee create a framework to respond to the issues that were raised. He noted that the Chancellor indicated that his only choice is to go to the academic side of the university in order to deal with the possible upcoming budget cuts. Shea stated that if we don't become proactive and try to work to come up with possible solutions we could be seeing changes that could compromise the quality of education at UNL.

McCollough stated that she would like to see a report that looks at salary differentials, benefit differentials, and parking differentials between the faculty and the administrators. She noted that Interim SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Executive Committee is welcome to look at this information. Lindquist stated that this information would probably be made available to the Executive Committee but he needs a specific list of what information is wanted. McCollough stated that she will create the list.

Franti stated that we need more visionary thinking of where the university is going to be in five or ten years. He noted that we need to focus on issues that are important to the academic side rather than thinking of who gets paid more. He pointed out that if we do not get beyond the thinking of the faculty versus the administration then we aren't going to get ahead. He stated that there needs to be a joint effort to create a vision for the campus. Griffin noted that the 2020 report has been used for the vision of the campus (<http://www.unl.edu/svcaa/documents/2020report.pdf>.)

Lindquist asked what the faculty wants the university to look like, knowing that the budget future isn't very bright right now. He noted that the administrators made comments that the university needs to grow in order to compete with the CIC schools, but that there will be fewer faculty teaching. He asked if fewer people teaching more students is the right way to go for the campus. He stated that the only way we are going to make inroads into the Big Ten is by expanding, but what does it mean for the faculty and where we fit in. Anaya pointed out that quality of teaching needs to be considered in this as well. She stated that a faculty member's quality of teaching needs to be assessed.

Fech noted that the administrators reported that when the administrators begin to craft a budget these days their opening mindset is to reduce. Shea stated that he believes administration wants more rearrangement and restructuring. McCollough stated that when the administration is now talking about budget cuts they are talking about making them in the academia and those who are supervising the faculty are looking at ways to be more efficient. LaCost stated that her dean's message is that the college administration was going to be looking at vertical cuts.

Shea stated that there will be some vertical cuts no matter what is done but he thinks the Chancellor is trying to look beyond this and is looking for ideas for restructuring the

campus. He stated that there will be changes in how the faculty does things. He stated that the idea is to make some changes that can make things more efficient and less costly while being as effective. He pointed out that often faculty work has been traditionally done for in a certain way, but needs to change to deal with the current economic times.

Lindquist asked if the Executive Committee has a responsibility to bring this discussion to the Senate or to just let the departments do it. McCollough stated that this is a great directive but asked who has the time to work on it. Shea pointed out that we are in a crisis so it becomes a priority because unless it is resolved faculty cannot do the rest of their job well. McCollough suggested having discussions outside of the Senate as well.

Shea stated that it could be argued that the APC should have a role to play in this. He pointed out that this is the Senate's golden opportunity to demonstrate to the administration that we can work with them and come up with a solution. He stated that if we can make constructive and effective suggestions it will improve our relationship with the administration and will have very positive outcomes for the university.

The Executive Committee discussed possible ways to discuss the issue at a Faculty Senate meeting.

Franti suggested that it would be helpful to review what other institutions have done to deal with similar situations. He noted that many universities were hit with budget cuts before us and they may be able to help us deal with the crisis.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 6, 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.