

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

**Absent:** Berg, Fech, Franti, Shea

**Date:** Wednesday, September 8, 2010

**Location:** Faculty Senate Office, 420 University Terrace

**Note:** These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

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### 1.0 Call to Order

Lindquist called the meeting to order at 3:07 p.m.

### 2.0 Announcements

#### 2.1 College of Engineering

Schubert reported that Interim Dean O'Hanlon has been keeping the faculty of the Engineering College informed on current news pertaining to the College. He noted that Dean O'Hanlon announced a recent meeting attended by President Milliken, Chancellor Perlman, some faculty members, and the College External Advisory Board. The meeting was to develop a plan for the College and how it will tie into Innovation Campus. He noted that most people in the College are of the consensus that no definite plans will be made until a new dean is hired.

### 3.0 Minutes of 9/1/10

Minor corrections were made to the minutes.

### 4.0 Nebraska Alumni Association – Shelley Zaborowski and Carrie Myers

#### 4.1 Faculty Lounge

Lindquist noted that a survey about a faculty club was sent out in the spring to the faculty. Zaborowski reported that the Chancellor has been approached about UNL having a faculty club, but with the current economic climate funding has not been available to create one. She stated that the Chancellor approached Diane Mendenhall, Executive Director of the Alumni Association, asking for assistance with this issue. The Alumni Association staff started exploring ideas and put together an unscientific survey to determine if there was interest in a faculty club. Stock noted that there have been several unsuccessful attempts to revive a faculty club.

Zaborowski stated that 82% of the nearly 400 people who responded indicated they were interested in having a faculty club. She stated that responses to how the faculty club would be used varied greatly. She pointed out that the Alumni Association could not provide a full service restaurant due to the facilities and catering contracts, but faculty luncheons could be provided occasionally.

Zaborowski stated that the survey shows that many faculty members are interested in having a quiet place, away from students, that has a nice atmosphere. The space could also be used for meetings with candidates or visiting faculty members.

Myers reported that there are a number of multiple spaces within the Wick Alumni Center that could be used, particularly the library which houses historical documents and books. She stated that this is a space where people can go and which could be used for a general meeting place. She stated that the thought is to convert this area into a faculty lounge where coffee, water, and snacks would be provided along with free Wi-Fi service.

Myers suggested that the faculty club could be promoted through a couple of different venues, such as UNL Today and an email message from the Chancellor. She stated that the Alumni Association could provide the space and allow faculty members to use it. If there is significant use for the space it could be expanded later. She pointed out that specific programming for faculty could be conducted there as with catering provided, although a minimum level of participation would be needed for the catering service. Nickerson asked if the catering would include beer and wine. Myers stated that it would if the required minimum number of participants is met.

Zaborowski stated that the Alumni Association would like to do something for the faculty but is not sure if the proposed idea begins to fill the need for a faculty club. She stated that another possible option is to contact the Nebraska Club to see if faculty members can use the facility without having to pay membership dues.

Griffin asked what the hours would be if the club is at the Wick Alumni Center. Myers stated that it would be from 8 – 5 with coffee, water, and snacks provided.

Nickerson asked where the impetus came from for this idea. He stated that he remembers why the old faculty club at the University Lincoln Club folded, but he hasn't heard of anyone mentioning the idea to create a new faculty club. He noted that many faculty members and departments are seeking places where they can take a guest speaker or candidate out to lunch.

Lindquist pointed out that it is hard to know how many faculty members would go to the Wick Alumni Center for a faculty club. He noted that he wouldn't necessarily use it unless something specific was taking place there. He stated it would be good to bring candidates to it but how well it is used would depend on how it is advertised. Nickerson stated that he likes the idea that it would be an informal setting. Stock noted that the last faculty club at the Lincoln University club was costly, but the faculty club that was previously located where the Wick Alumni Center is was very informal. He wondered whether the proposed lounge would fill the need that faculty members are looking for.

Konecky wondered if another possibility would be to get some restaurants to participate in a discount for faculty members. She noted that faculty clubs at some other institutions have a separate room in the campus union that is set aside for faculty members.

Nickerson suggested having a coffee house for faculty members which would be easy to do with little cost. Myers stated that this could be possible at the Wick and if the demand increases it could be moved to a larger space.

Schubert pointed out that centrality is an issue. He stated that he doubts people from Engineering and the north side of campus would use it much due to the distance of the lounge. Konecky stated that she doesn't think the walking would be as much of an issue as the fact that perceptions of the Wick Center is that it is only for special events, not for everyday use. She pointed out that there is really no where to have a centrally located facility because we have two separate campuses. She asked how east campus faculty would be factored into the plan. Zaborowski stated that the staff of the Alumni Association wants people to feel welcomed into the Wick Center.

Myers asked if the people who coordinate the EN Thompson Forum or other events have some kind of special event for the faculty and staff. McCollough stated that those who plan the EN Thompson Forum usually have a hand in planning the dinner for the guest speaker.

Konecky pointed out that some kind of draw would be needed to get faculty members to habitually go to the lounge. Lindquist noted that the survey shows that faculty members are interested in interacting with other faculty members in an informal way. He stated that having a luncheon might be a good thing to do occasionally. He pointed out that something will be needed in order to draw the faculty into the lounge.

Zaborowski asked if there was some kind of existing series, like a brown bag series, that could use the space. Schubert stated that the Engineering College has a series but he does not know if the faculty members would go from the Engineering building to the Wick Center. Flowers noted that many departments have made renovations and have a room large enough to allow for seminars. He noted that the Union will usually be used if there is a need for a larger room. Konecky pointed out that many seminars are geared to students as well as faculty members. She suggested having Benefits or Credit Union seminars held in the faculty lounge.

Konecky stated that advertising for use of the Wick Center could be posted on Blackboard. McCollough suggested offering some kind of social event such as hosting a bridge club for faculty members. Zaborowski asked if this is something that people would want held in the evening.

Schubert asked who will pay for hosting events. Zaborowski stated that the Alumni Association would pay for coffee, water, and snacks but if the cost becomes more substantial other sources would need to be found. Griffin stated that she recalls some past Faculty Senate Presidents speaking of some money in the foundation for a faculty club. Zaborowski stated that she will check to see if there is an account at the Foundation for a faculty club.

Anaya stated that she would use a faculty club if it was located near the union. She noted that this could be a benefit for many faculty members. Konecky pointed out that having a faculty club might be helpful for east campus faculty members who come down for meetings on city campus and have time in between meetings.

Zaborowski and Myers thanked the Executive Committee for the input and stated that they will work on the possibility of creating a faculty club.

## **5.0 Unfinished Business**

### **5.1 UNL Key Policy**

Lindquist noted that Nickerson sent out a copy of the key policy. He stated that it is his understanding that all buildings will eventually have at least one door that is key card accessible. He noted that these doors will be open during regular business hours, but that all keyed doors will remain locked 27/7.

Stock asked if people will still be able to easily exit through these doors. Lindquist stated that they all should have easy exit even when locked.

Lindquist pointed out that key card access will have to be a phased in process because of the lack of funding.

The Executive Committee agreed to invite someone from the Police in to speak about the key policy and the future plans of making all buildings key card accessible.

### **5.2 Possible Future Tax Hikes**

LaCost reported that she contacted Director of Benefits, Greg Clayton, to ask whether or not health insurance funds given by an employer will appear as income on the 2011 W-2 tax forms. She distributed information that claims that this information can be found in Title IX Revenue Provisions-Subtitle A: Revenue Offset Provisions, section 9001, as modified by section 10901) Sec. 902.

McCullough stated that she read something much differently in the Inside Higher Education article on Health Care and Higher Education. Konecky stated that she would like to see the subject accurately vetted by someone.

### **5.3 Faculty Handbook**

LaCost reported that she is working on a matrix that will compare what the old UNL Faculty Handbook has in it with the AAUP suggests should be in a handbook. She reported that she will provide a copy of the matrix to the Executive Committee when it is completed.

### **5.4 Comparing Health Care Benefits with Other Institutions**

McCullough reported that the Chronicle of Higher Education conducts surveys of institutions on health care. She noted that the 2008 figures were the last figures that can

be obtained for free. She reported that 42% of 516 institutions, both private and public, that were surveyed permit same sex partner insurance. She noted that the number for a domestic partner was less. She stated that most of the institutions provide some type of retirement benefits but a little less than half of the institutions have a defined retirement plan. She reported that health care coverage varied greatly among the institutions surveyed.

McCollough stated that 15% of the institutions have conducted audits to see if ineligible people are being covered by the university's health care plan. Lindquist pointed out that this kind of audit is going to be conducted here this fall according to VP Dietze.

### **5.5 Nebraska Union Board**

Lindquist reported that no faculty members contacted to serve on the Board have responded back positively. He noted that Charles Francis, Director of the Nebraska Unions, has indicated that Professor Schinstock might be willing to serve on the Board. The Executive Committee agreed that Professor Schinstock should be contacted about serving on the Board.

## **6.0 New Business**

### **6.1 End of Tenure Article**

McCollough noted that the article about the end of tenure demonstrates that the Chronicle's data show a decline in the number of tenured faculty members and that a number of universities are eliminating tenure. She pointed out that when tenure is lost there is a loss of governance issues because the faculty has lost its voice.

Flowers questioned if the data was filtered for Research 1 institutions. He pointed out that there are a proportion of new kinds of institutions, such as the University of Phoenix, that could be included in the data. He noted that in order to get accurate figures filters must be used.

Nickerson stated that the reason for pushing for more participation by UNL faculty members in AAUP is to provide the faculty with a stronger position for protecting tenure. He stated that he feels the tenure situation is eroding and a stronger AAUP presence would help retain it.

Nickerson wondered what percent of tenure track faculty members in the Big Ten belong to the AAUP. He stated that he is hoping that most of the Big Ten schools will have a higher percentage of tenured faculty members. LaCost reported that she has asked someone from AAUP to provide this information but it will take some time to get it.

Schubert asked if there are any administrative efforts here to reduce the number of tenure track faculty members. He asked if there are any figures available on the number of tenured and tenure track faculty members at UNL. Griffin stated that the information should be in the UNL Fact Book that is available on the web.

Nickerson stated that it is his perception that tenure track lines are decreasing. Lindquist pointed out that this depends on the field. He noted that tenure track lines will be offered to people who have the potential to bring in a lot of grant money. McCollough stated that there appears to be fewer opportunities for tenure track lines. Schubert stated that the number of students per year versus the number of tenure and non tenured faculty members should provide a good indication of where UNL is going. He pointed out that if the numbers of tenure track lines are decreasing, the Faculty Senate should do something about it. Nickerson stated that he would like to see how the Big Ten universities are treating tenure.

Flowers noted that there has been a lot of public discussion about university employment and tenure. He noted that a recent article written by Mark Taylor makes a strong case for eliminating tenure and reinstating mandatory retirement age to bring younger faculty members into universities and to prevent stagnation.

Stock pointed out that when the professor of practice positions were first developed it created a real division of opinions. Some felt it was an erosion of tenure but others thought it provided an option for keeping some good people. Nickerson noted that his department has found professors of practice to be very useful. He stated that most of these people teach large classes, but if there were too many professors of practice the department could lose its certification, grants would be lost, and the overall quality of academic rigor would decrease because the department would be composed of strictly teachers.

Lindquist stated that there is a danger in expanding the distinction between those that do research and those that teach because it will weaken the university. Flowers stated that a balance is needed. He pointed out that there might be some disciplines that need some readjustment with tenured faculty members. He stated that there needs to be a balance between variable teaching load demands and research.

## **6.2 Upcoming Board of Regents Meeting**

Lindquist noted that the Chancellor will make a presentation about a Voluntary Separation Incentive Program to the Board of Regents. He stated that an update will be provided by Academic Affairs on the student information system.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, September 15, 2010 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.