

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Berg, Fech, Franti,

Date: Wednesday, February 16, 2011

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.

1.0 Call to Order

Lindquist called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman/SVCAA Weissinger

2.1 Event Honoring Retiring Professors

Lindquist noted that SVCAA Weissinger previously discussed holding an event to honor the retiring professors with the Executive Committee. He asked if anything is happening with it. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Chancellor, VC Green, and she will host an event for any faculty member who retires this year. She noted that the event will be at 5:00 p.m. on April 21, at the Lied Center. She stated that the honorees and their guests, department chairs, and deans will be invited to the event and while there is no limit to the number of guests that a retiree can have, the event is not open to the entire campus.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that the emeriti process has been sped up to coincide with the event. She reported that there will be a brief program and information will be provided on each of the retiree's unique contribution to the university.

2.2 Update on Budget

Chancellor Perlman reported that there was really nothing new at this time on the budget. He stated that it appears that the Appropriations Committee is going to accept the Governor's budget recommendations.

Lindquist asked if the Chancellor will be presenting the budget framework on April 6 when he reports to the Deans and Directors. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that there will be some budget reductions and the quicker you can make the reductions, the less cash flow problems you will have. He stated that he does not want to overwhelm the Academic Planning Committee with numerous budget cuts at one time, but he will make some recommendations this spring. He noted that it is still early and that the university will not know its final budget until June.

2.3 Update on Dean of College of Engineering Search

SVCAA Weissinger thanked the Executive Committee for participating in the interviews and providing feedback on each of the candidates. She noted that there was a good pool of candidates and she thinks the search was a positive experience for the college to see the quality of people who are interested in coming to UNL.

SVCAA Weissinger stated she has reviewed all of the feedback and met with the department chairs and search committee. She stated that three candidates were identified as acceptable and one person has been selected as the finalist. She reported that this person will be back on campus on March 31 to further interact with faculty.

2.4 Administrator Needed for April 5 Faculty Senate Meeting

Chancellor Perlman reported that President Milliken has called a meeting of the Chancellors during the Senate meeting on April 5, but if the meeting gets over quickly he will be able to attend the meeting. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she will check to see if she is available to meet with the Senate on that day.

2.5 Report on CIC/Team Visit

SVCAA Weissinger stated that the CIC team had a completely positive visit to the campus. She noted that the team met with members of the Libraries to discuss how UNL will connect to the CIC and the possible cost savings that could result of the connections. She reported that the team also met with CIO Askren to discuss compatibilities. Other discussions were held about student and faculty exchanges, and purchasing agreements that could help reduce costs. She stated that the University Communications filmed brief interviews with some of the team members and these will be available on the web.

SVCAA Weissinger reported that the team members overall felt that UNL was an interdisciplinary campus with high energy that will succeed with the CIC. She stated that the reception held for the team on March 1 was fantastic with approximately 200 faculty members attending.

Lindquist stated that he learned that the CIC facilitates a consortium of the Faculty Senates of the Big Ten each year. This year's consortium will be in October and will be hosted by Purdue University. SVCAA Weissinger noted that we want to be hosting meetings at the earliest opportunities. She reported that she recently learned that we will be hosting one of the faculty development seminars in 2012.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that the deans have been asked to quickly inventory our strengths and opportunities to see how these might fit with the schools in the Big Ten. She stated that the deans will review the information that is gathered and find ways we can help our faculty members to expand into the CIC. Nickerson stated that his department received the request but was unsure what should be done with it. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the intent of the exercise is to show our strengths, which will help tie us to opportunities with other CIC universities. She noted that this is just a beginning, but this effort will occur over the next several years.

2.6 Specific Goals for First Year as SVCAA

SVCAA Weissinger stated that her focus as interim was quite different than it is now and even though she has been on campus for over 25 years and served as Dean of Graduate Studies, she really wants to spend the next three to six months talking more deeply with faculty at the local level to hear and understand what our hopes and goals are for the future. She stated that she wants to deepen her knowledge of the campus and she wants to build a base that will allow her to build an office that will be helpful to the campus. She noted that she will be busy doing the normal work required of her position and she has already made some changes in the personnel of the Academic Affairs Office. She stated that she plans on connecting with the CIC provosts during this time.

2.7 Ranking Journals for Faculty Evaluations

Lindquist reported that this issue came up a few weeks ago. There is concern that as we move into the CIC that impact factors of journals will be used in faculty evaluations. He asked if there is a push from administration to do this and if so, how it will be implemented. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she is aware that there are some local efforts, led by the faculty and departments, to use impact factors but she has not heard of any new conversations. She noted that CBA has been conducting evaluations this way for some time and she does not think it is a negative process. She pointed out that faculty members govern these lists and changes in the evaluation process are happening because the faculty members in a department want it.

Shea reported that he knows of a faculty member who has been told that the journal he/she is publishing in does not have a high enough impact factor. He pointed out that the conversations the faculty had about the quality indicators when they were first created raised the concern that the ranking of journals would creep into the evaluation process. He stated that he is hearing of specific cases that faculty members are being told that their publications do not have as much of an impact and that the pressure for ranking journals for evaluations is coming down from administrators. He asked if there are any specific changes that are being made in the faculty evaluation process because of our moving into the Big Ten. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that faculty members know that some journals are more competitive than others. She noted that this is an old discussion and one that is very common.

Shea asked what role the deans have in the annual evaluations. SVCAA Weissinger stated that it is the faculty members in a department that really evaluate faculty. She noted that promotion and tenure decisions are dominated by the faculty but most chairs and deans have a direct vote and some influence. She noted that a dean's role is to move the college to the highest expectations possible and the dean should ask the question of how a college can get better.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that she believes becoming a member of the Big Ten has already had an impact on the campus. She noted that we are now being compared to universities that are larger and more established as being nationally significant. The Big Ten universities have created a signature for themselves and have national or global premier programs and have broad reputations across many disciplines. She stated that we

need to aspire to do the same while determining how we can be more meaningful to the people of Nebraska. She pointed out that these things cannot be accomplished unless we push ourselves. Shea stated that he does not argue this point, but there are large differences with the Institute's evaluation process and Academic Affairs' process, yet consultants have told us that the division between the Institute and Academic Affairs should be more seamless. He stated that faculty members in the Institute seem to have a much lesser role in promotion and tenure decisions than city campus faculty members.

McCollough pointed out that there is the assumption that faculty members in departments all agree on the ranking of journals, but in reality this can cause great rife within a department. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the ranking of journals is a very personal discussion in departments. She stated that she is glad that the issue is being raised and that VC Green has a group working on improving the evaluation process within IANR.

Shea noted that one of the differences with the Institute is that there are heads of departments while on city campus a faculty member takes on the role of chair. He stated that it seems that heads view their job as working for the deans, but chairs still consider themselves as part of the faculty. He questioned whether having heads is the best way to manage departments. Chancellor Perlman reported that there has been some discussion on this issue in the past and that it is unfortunate that the expectations about the responsibilities of the heads were not conveyed accurately. He pointed out that the Institute needs to give the new administration the opportunity to evaluate and make its own position clear.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he knows that some external academic program reviews have reported that the faculty members at UNL are not publishing in high enough ranking journals. He pointed out that most departments do not argue about what are considered the five top journals in a discipline. He noted that the role of an administrator is to push the faculty to do their best work. Nickerson stated that he believes everyone wants to publish in the best journals but the system has an unintended consequence; a huge amount of time is wasted for both editors and reviewers when authors start with an unrealistically high impact factor and then go down the pecking order until they finally find a level at which their work is accepted. He noted that this is a problem that is outside of UNL.

McCollough pointed out that people can write an article with high ambition but it isn't appropriate for the top journals in a field because of the subject matter; however, the subject matter might have great impact in specific areas. Chancellor Perlman stated that this is why he is not enamored with the rigid scoring system used in getting articles accepted for publication.

Shea stated that he agrees in general with what is being said. He noted that if people are performing their jobs as they have been hired to do, it should be easier to apply an overall standard of evaluation. He pointed out that people who are hired to perform in a very applied field won't be publishing in the top journals of a discipline and should be evaluated on how well they perform, not whether they publish in the top ranking journals

of their department. SVCAA Weissinger pointed out that this is why it is important that a person's apportionment is accurate. She stated that an accurate apportionment will allow the faculty member to contribute the best that they can. She stated that she is not aware of any conversations at the administrative level about having a rigid evaluation system. She stated that any conversation about this comes from the faculty. Stock reported that his department has very specialized areas and he does not recall any faculty member not being given credit for publishing an article. He pointed out that the possibility of evaluating faculty members based on the ranking of a journal is the reason why the English department had great consternation over the quality indicators.

Schubert asked if there are models on apportionment of duties. SVCAA Weissinger stated that colleges and departments are locally determining what counts as a unit of apportionment for teaching, research, and service. She noted that some departments have very defined measures of apportionment.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that apportionment will be played out in two ways. As we move forward and become more publicly engaged and globally active and focused on our students we will need to make new hires that support our priorities and everyone we hire should be better than we are as we move forward. She stated that as we hire new faculty members, we will need to make sure that our apportionment reflects the fact that we are a research university. Secondly, the other reality is that as faculty members move throughout their careers there should be variations in their workload. Schubert asked if this means that faculty members could enter into an agreement with their chair or deans to reassign or shift their responsibilities. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she thinks that these changes will occur on an individual level but the aggregate contribution of an individual has to add up to where we as an institution are going and she wants to encourage every faculty member to approach the apportionment conversation in that way. She stated that we need to reward the different contributions faculty members can make but we need to resist the idea that taking on more teaching or research as being considered negatively. McCollough noted that there is an appeal process that faculty members can invoke if they do not agree with changes to their apportionment.

2.8 Professors of Practice and Voting Rights

Lindquist reported that he has recently had conversations with some faculty members concerning the voting rights of professors of practice. SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Regents Bylaws uses the term equivalent rank faculty members when defining who is considered faculty and uses the term again in the section relating to the governing authority of the faculty. Nickerson asked if this includes professors of practice. SVCAA Weissinger stated that professors of practice and research professors are defined as equivalent rank faculty in the documents we agreed to when we created the new rank. However, we have well established norms about limiting the voting rights of faculty members to particular matters that are most relevant to different faculty groups. For example, only tenured faculty members are eligible to vote on tenure decisions. She stated that colleges are authorized by their bylaws to have conversations about what groups of faculty members are eligible to vote on issues that the faculty governs. She

noted that this kind of conversation is taking place in CBA and she believes that faculty will need to have a rational justification for their decision on who has voting rights.

Lindquist stated that the wording in CBA's bylaws gives the assumption that a faculty member is defined as a person in a tenure track position, but he thinks this should be clarified. SVCAA Weissinger stated that all college bylaws must follow the Regents Bylaws, but she believes that colleges have the authority to limit voting rights on some issues to groups of faculty members most qualified to make that particular judgement. Colleges would have to develop a clear justification for limiting the eligibility vote.

McCullough asked if the voting rights should be standardized across the campus. SVCAA Weissinger stated that colleges should have the right to decide on this issue and the college bylaws should govern these voting issues. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the college bylaws could delegate this decision to the departments. SVCAA Weissinger noted that the department and college bylaws require approval by the faculty.

Shea noted that he served on the ad hoc committee that created the professors of practice positions and the recommendation of the committee was that there be uniform voting rights for professors of practice across the campus, but UNL administration obviously decided not to implement a uniform policy. SVCAA Weissinger stated that she spoke to faculty members about this issue and they differ on who they think should have voting rights. She stated that discussions will need to take place in departments and colleges, but it is important that we engage in the conversations in a way that is not disrespectful to our colleagues who are in equivalent ranked positions. She pointed out that the goal is that equivalent rank faculty members will play an important component of the campus. Shea stated that the committee talked about how the very act of deciding how these people will be engaged in departments could disrupt the whole intention of the positions. SVCAA Weissinger noted that the differences in voting rights among the colleges won't cause difficulty, but the conversations within the colleges will be difficult. She stated that it might help the conversation if people stay focused on the rationale behind the creation of these positions.

2.9 Upcoming Issues

Dean of Graduate Studies

SVCAA Weissinger stated that an internal search will be done to find the Dean of Graduate Studies. Nickerson asked what the Dean of Graduate Studies position is like at the other CIC institutions. He noted that the position here has been split off in the past. He pointed out that this Dean will have to meet with the other Graduate Deans and he is wondering whether the administration is seeking the best prestigious person or someone who will make Graduate Studies run smoothly.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that the Graduate Deans are structured differently at the other Big Ten institutions. She reported that in some areas the Graduate Dean is strong because they have a lot of resources and this person runs the whole graduate college. She stated that UNL's model is that the Dean of Graduate Studies is a highly collaborative

expert. She believes there are people on campus that can walk into the Graduate CIC meeting and hold their own and can move us forward.

Anaya stated that she thinks the Dean of Graduate Studies is a critical position for us and it will be an important position as we try to attract more graduate students. SVCAA Weissinger agreed and stated that as the campus becomes more interdisciplinary the Graduate Dean will have to find ways to lead the campus in this area.

Shea stated that an issue that is related to this subject is that many faculty (and some administrators) lose sight of or are not aware that Executive Vice President and Provost Linda Pratt is Dean of the Graduate College and UNL has a Dean of Graduate Studies. He noted that we have a unified graduate college in the NU system and he does not want to see this eliminated.

SVCAA Weissinger stated that another component of Graduate Studies is the postdoctoral program. She pointed out that we need to find someone who can work with all the different parts of Graduate Studies. She stated that she would like to see the position renamed to Dean of Graduate Studies and Postdoctoral Studies but acknowledged that it may be too late to do this.

Nickerson stated that many postdoctoral researchers are trying to support themselves by submitting grants to cover their salary. He asked if there is a way of helping postdoctoral students who are “between grants”, who are no longer on university pay, to have a mechanism for submitting further grants. SVCAA Weissinger reported that the Office of Postdoctoral Studies is working on a professional development series which tries to help postdoctoral students to find jobs. It was later found that this problem could be solved by having the department in question make the post-doc an Adjunct Research Assistant Professor.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 No Executive Committee Meeting

Griffin reminded the Executive Committee that there will not be a meeting during spring break.

4.0 Minutes of 3/9/11

The minutes were approved with revisions.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Health Care Coverage

Lindquist stated that he recently was contacted by a faculty member who was upset that the university requires an employee’s child, age 19 or older and employed elsewhere, to have health care coverage from their employer. It was pointed out that this policy has been in place prior to the health care audit.

LaCost asked how common law marriages are documented. Lindquist stated that some states have documentation for common law marriages. He pointed out that Nebraska is

not a common law state but it does recognize common law marriages from other states where it is recognized.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Search Committee for Dean of Graduate Studies

McCollough stated that more colleges should be represented on the search committee. The Executive Committee recommends that there should be a representative from each college and suggested that the representative could be the graduate chair of the college. Lindquist stated that he will convey this message to SVCAA Weissinger.

6.2 UNL's Painting Policy

Schubert stated that he is sending a message to VC Jackson to inquire about the painting policy. He noted that in the past people could paint their own office and get reimbursed for the cost of the paint but now they are being told that it must be done by facilities at the cost of \$45 per hour. He stated that the painting issue was raised as a possible way to reduce the college's budget. Nickerson pointed out that Facilities Services was made a self-supporting unit because of the budget cuts so people are now paying for their services.

Lindquist asked Schubert to report back to the Executive Committee when he gets a response from VC Jackson. He noted that indirect costs from research should be coming back to the departments and this should help cover some of these expenses. Shea said that faculty members are asking what the Office of Research does with all of the money that comes back from research grants. Schubert stated that, as per UNL's F & A distribution policy (<http://research.unl.edu/sp1/policies.shtml>) 1/3 of the overhead is held by administration centrally, the Office of Research and Economic Development gets 1/3, and 1/3 goes to the relevant colleges for distribution according to college policy.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, March 30, 2011 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.