

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Guevara, Lindquist, Nickerson, Purdum, Rinkevich, Schubert, Shea, Varner, Wysocki

Absent: Anaya, Irmak, LaCost, Schubert, Struthers

Date: Wednesday, November 2, 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 3:01 p.m.

2.0 Matt Hilgenkamp, Nolan Johnson, Kaitlin Mazour, Kirsten Wallace, ASUN Representatives

Hilgenkamp reported that he met with LaCost about a month and a half ago to discuss opportunities of collaboration between ASUN and the Faculty Senate and issues that impact both groups such as Blackboard, MyRed, and the ACE program.

Hilgenkamp stated that ASUN has a proposal on a student bereavement policy. He noted that there is already a policy in place for faculty and staff. He stated that the policy would be administered similar to the 15th week policy. He reported that the policy would excuse students for an absence from classes but the student would be required to make up the work that he or she missed.

Nickerson asked if faculty members deny absence to students for such things as a death in the family. Wallace stated that she has a friend that was not allowed by an instructor to miss a final even though the student had a serious E coli infection. Hilgenkamp stated that there is a general sense of tolerance but there is no standard policy that students could count on if there is a need to miss classes due to the death of a family member.

Lindquist stated that most faculty members would probably be supportive but the Executive Committee will need to look at the policy and discuss it. He pointed out that the Committee would be happy to work with ASUN on the policy and it will eventually need to go to the Senate for approval. He asked that Hilgenkamp send an electronic copy of the proposed policy to Griffin and the Executive Committee will then review it. Hilgenkamp stated that ASUN President Carr was wondering if an ad hoc committee could be created to work on the policy. Lindquist stated that this was a good idea and the Executive Committee will let ASUN know the faculty members who will serve on the ad hoc committee.

Nickerson pointed out that one problem with the excused absence for bereavement could be the length of time in between the death of a person and the funeral. He noted that an extended absence could create problems.

Purdum asked whether there was a sick leave policy for when a student is in a medical emergency situation. Johnson stated that he has not heard of any problems. Mazour stated that most professors are willing to work with the student but it would be helpful to have a policy. Lindquist stated that an issue with this is the burden of proof of illness. He pointed out that recently the Health Center reminded the Executive Committee that their policy is to verify that a student was seen at the Health Center, but they only provide more information if the student had a communicable disease and were kept from attending class due to public health reasons. Hilgenkamp stated that he hopes the issue can be resolved.

Hilgenkamp asked what steps the Faculty Senate has taken on the Employees Plus One Benefits. Lindquist reported that the Faculty Senate passed a motion on October 4, 2011 reaffirming its original motion made in December 2010 calling for these benefits. He noted that President Milliken recently made a presentation to the Board of Regents on the benefit. He pointed out that the Board is an elected body and people who support the benefits should indicate their support by contacting Board members from their district.

Hilgenkamp stated that ASUN is aware that retaining and recruiting good faculty members is essential for the university and one way to do this is by offering this benefit. He asked how the students can help. Lindquist stated that the students should keep up the effort in bringing the issue to the public and by contacting their representative Regents. He pointed out the Board is expected to vote on the Plus One Benefits proposal at their December meeting. Nickerson stated that it would be beneficial if the students, especially those from western Nebraska, would contact the Regents to help get the policy passed. Varner suggested that students' comments be direct rather than a form letter written by someone.

Hilgenkamp asked what the faculty thinks of Blackboard. Lindquist asked if ASUN is looking to recommend changes to Blackboard. He noted that it is frustrating that significant changes are made to it every year with few apparent improvements. He wondered if the students were aware of was a better program somewhere.

Hilgenkamp asked how the program can be used more effectively. He asked what students do with Blackboard that frustrates faculty members. Nickerson stated that he finds it very frustrating when he puts the notes on Blackboard and then students think they do not have to show up for class.

Johnson asked if the faculty receive training on Blackboard. Lindquist stated that there are some workshops but he does not know how well these are attended. Varner stated that he does not think the faculty use it as well as they could. Johnson noted that students don't use it as well either.

Lindquist stated that one recommendation that should be made is to improve the grading portion of Blackboard. He noted that he does not use the grading component because he cannot make the calculations to determine grades the way that he can with Excel. Varner asked how many faculty members use the grading option. Mazour noted that the grading portion seems to benefit the students more than it does the faculty. Guevara stated that Blackboard is an extension of a course syllabus and it is up to individual faculty members and how they use it.

Hilgenkamp asked if the Executive Committee members let students know that they can contact them to see their grades. Lindquist stated that he informs his student that they can contact him. He stated that what is most frustrating for the students is if a professor uses another grading option than Blackboard but does not inform the students of this difference. Purdum asked if students are frustrated because they do not know their grade or how they fit into the grade spread of the class. Hilgenkamp stated that it is mostly that they do not know what their grade is. Purdum pointed out that the grading policy of the class should be addressed in the course syllabus. Guevara stated that faculty members can inform their students that they can contact them directly to see their grade. Lindquist pointed out that it is sometimes difficult for faculty members to calculate a student's grade until all of the requirements for the class are completed. Nickerson agreed and pointed out that he does not have control or knowledge of the lab grades until the end of the semester so it is difficult to tell a student what their grade is during the middle of the semester. Varner stated that he can empathize with the students when they don't know where they stand in a course and suggested that better communication might be helpful. Purdum suggested that ASUN review the student affairs grading policy to see if there are any real abuses that are occurring.

Hilgenkamp asked if there were any technological components to Blackboard that faculty members find frustrating. Purdum stated that it is frustrating when some students won't look at Blackboard. Varner pointed out that the flip side is when a professor doesn't post information on Blackboard at the last minute. Hilgenkamp noted that some course announcements are sent by email, others are not. He stated that he will definitely check into the grading policy.

Nickerson wondered how much Blackboard costs and questioned whether other options are available that could help reduce the costs.

Hilgenkamp asked if the faculty has received much introduction to Starfish. The Executive Committee stated no. Lindquist noted that the Chancellor has specifically named Starfish and it appears that it is already the intent of the University to use it. Varner asked if it interfaces with PeopleSoft and MyRed. Hilgenkamp stated that Starfish is initially going to be used for advising students and the hope is that it will have a lot of capabilities.

Hilgenkamp asked what faculty use MyRed for. Nickerson stated that he uses it for filing grades. Lindquist noted that when he is advising a student, he uses the old DARS system to obtain a degree audit report because he hasn't figured out how to get it through

MyRed. He noted that he also uses the online UNL Bulletin to answer specific questions about courses, so he always has at least three programs running and the paper schedule for the next semester on hand during an advising session. Mazour stated that students have the same problem and need to look at the bulletin and MyRed at the same time. Hilgenkamp stated that he does not think things are fully implemented on MyRed yet and he thinks there is a committee that is still working on resolving problems with the software. Varner pointed out that the university has tried to hire additional expertise to work on MyRed but has had little success. Lindquist suggested that students could ask VC Franco about what work is occurring with MyRed. Wallace stated that being a UNMC and UNL student she really appreciates MyRed because it allows her to interact between the two campuses. Varner asked if it was the same system. Wallace stated that it is. Hilgenkamp noted that course credits can be transferred easily on MyRed.

Hilgenkamp asked what faculty members think of the ACE program. Rinkevich stated that there is difficulty with assessment and he does not think it will last long because of this problem. Nickerson stated that he has not heard anything good about it. Hilgenkamp noted that it is easier for students to understand. Lindquist stated that it is easier to advise students using the ACE program but he is not sure whether it is a better quality program. Hilgenkamp noted that a lot of classes meet the ACE criteria.

Mazour noted that she is on the Arts & Sciences curriculum committee that reviews ACE courses. She stated that ACE courses must have an assessment component. She pointed out that as a student the ACE program makes it easy to see what courses count for the different ACE requirements. Purdum stated that from the academic side we will not be able to get away from assessment. She noted that during the campus' recent accreditation review it was pointed out that we were weak on assessment.

Griffin asked if there is a bike policy on campus. Hilgenkamp reported that ASUN is working on a bike policy. The goal is to make the campus a bike friendly campus but a lot of regulations need to be in place. Griffin stated that ideally it would be great to have pathways exclusively for bike riders but the cost of it makes it unrealistic. She asked if there are any regulations regarding bikers racing through campus or courtesy for pedestrians. Nickerson noted that at one time the campus wanted to close 16 and 17 streets to facilitate getting around campus but this is now impractical.

Wallace reported that she is on the Student Alcohol Safety Committee and she is working with Linda Major, Assistant to VC Franco, on different alcohol related issues. She noted that she is working on a designated drivers program trying to get downtown bars to offer designated drivers a sticker. Only one sticker can be obtained per night and if someone accumulates five stickers they can get a free drink when they are not a designated driver.

Wallace stated that an effort is going to be revived to try to help control house parties in Lincoln. She reported that house parties in Lincoln are getting very large and becoming increasingly more violent. Varner asked if this is happening at Greek houses. Wallace stated that it is not, that the house parties are off campus.

Wallace reported that there have been over 300 DUI and MIP's issued since September. She stated that efforts to curb these numbers is difficult and about the only thing you can do is to try and educate students about the dangers and negative effects alcohol can have. Nickerson asked if there are any education campaigns going in the dorms or the sororities and fraternities. Wallace stated that this is being planned and the university is looking into teaming up with Husker Choices. Nickerson noted that Athletics Director Tom Osborne has spoken eloquently for many years on the danger of alcohol and suggested he might be someone to contact.

Wallace reported that the Student Alcohol Safety Committee hopes to help out the city of Lincoln with its efforts. She noted that the Committee is working with Wesleyan University on the efforts to decrease alcohol abuse.

Hilgenkamp stated that ASUN wants to create more dialog with the Senate. Lindquist stated that he thinks the Executive Committee is interested and excited about interacting with ASUN. He noted that if ASUN has anything specific it wants to discuss they should contact Griffin. Hilgenkamp stated that the goal is for ASUN and the Executive Committee to meet again in February.

3.0 Announcement

No announcements were made.

4.0 Approval of 10/26/11 Minutes

Varner moved approval of the minutes as revised. Nickerson seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 APC Responsibilities

Shea suggested that the Executive Committee wait to take final action on suggesting any changes to the APC responsibilities until LaCost returns from her family medical emergency. The Committee agreed. Shea noted that the Executive Committee wanted to hear about how faculty governance works at the other Big Ten schools before suggesting changes to the APC's responsibilities. He reported that he is reviewing the other Big Ten schools bylaws to see how they handle faculty governance.

5.2 Professors of Practice Issue

Purdum stated that one of the issues with professors of practice is in regards to expectations for promotions and evaluations. She noted that each department was to come up with criteria for promotions but it sounds like not all departments have done this and the fallback is that the same criteria is being used for professors of practice as for tenure track and tenured faculty members. She stated that the policy clearly indicates that these people are to do teaching, but in some units they are expected to do significant research as well. She stated that she has known of applicants for professor of practice positions that had to have references of publications in refereed journal articles and this was also a criterion for promotion.

Lindquist stated that cases such as these are definitely in conflict with the policy. He asked the Executive Committee what should be done. Guevara pointed out that some departments feel that a good teacher must have some background in research. He noted that if a person chooses to do research it would be of value, but if the person is hired for teaching they need to be evaluated on the teaching. He stated that how a person is hired is a key element in this issue. Shea noted that the criteria listed in the policy provided by Associate VC Perez are clear. He pointed out that there is nothing in the policy about research performance and if that is an expectation of a department than they are in violation of the guidelines. Guevara noted that each department puts forward the requirements that are necessary for an open position. Shea stated that this is not an issue but apportionment of duties and the evaluation of professors of practice are issues.

Purdum noted that promotion and tenure committees in departments are usually an elected committee of full professors. She wondered if some promotion and tenure committees evaluate professors of practice on criteria that should only be used for tenure track faculty members. Shea noted that there used to be workshops for promotion and tenure committee members. He stated that members of the committees should be instructed and should evaluate people according to their positions descriptions and what they were hired to do. Varner pointed out that it would be hard to evaluate people when you are not familiar with the work and responsibilities. Lindquist suggested that there may simply be a lack of knowledge of what the intent of the Professor of Practice positions were and that it might be helpful to send these policies to unit administrators and P & T committees.

Nickerson wondered if problems with the professors of practice position are widespread or just isolated. He suggested that the Executive Committee do some fact finding.

Griffin reported that she pulled information on the number of professors of practice from the academic faculty list she received from Institutional Research and Planning. She reported the following statistics: 38 Assistant Professors of Practice; 16 Associate Professors of Practice; 6 Professors of Practice; 172 Lecturers; 15 Senior Lecturers. She noted that all of these people had a .50 FTE or greater and have been here for at least three years. Guevara noted that a lot of the lecturers in his department were graduate teaching assistants that ran out of time to complete their degree and they were hired as lecturers but these are considered temporary appointments.

Purdum suggested that there could be a discussion at a Senate meeting about professors or practice and lecturer positions in departments. She stated that would enable the Executive Committee to gain information and to see if there are any problems.

Nickerson noted that if people did not want to speak at the Senate meeting they could send their information in by email. He stated that the Executive Committee needs to assess the situation and the policy needs to be more visible.

Shea noted that the policy states that departments must review and revise their bylaws to include these positions. He wondered how many units have actually done this. He noted

that appropriate administrators should insist that this be done. Shea questioned whether all departments have bylaws and stated that he believes they are required to have them.

Shea stated that the policy encourages departments to allow professors of practice to have voting rights on committees except on personnel issues. He stated that there may be some departments that do not allow the professors of practice to participate on committees.

Lindquist stated that the Executive Committee should come up with a list of questions that could be asked of the Senators regarding Professors of Practice in their units.

6.0 Report on CIC Conference for Big Ten Faculty Senates

Shea stated that he had hoped that there would be more discussion about faculty governance but there was a full agenda at the conference. He stated that he did learn that there is a wide range in terms of faculty governance among the Big Ten schools. Purdum asked how UNL fits in the range. Shea stated that from what he has been able to determine it seems like we are at the lower end of governance. He stated that there should be discussions among the Big 10 schools about faculty governance. Purdum asked if there was any extreme level of faculty governance. Shea stated that one of the universities requires faculty approval on almost any policy. He pointed out that what is stated in bylaws and what actually occurs at an institution can be quite different. He stated that the schools have different names for their faculty governing bodies. He noted that at one of the schools the Chancellor or President actually appoints the Faculty Senate President after the faculty makes recommendations for the position.

Shea stated that it would be a good idea for LaCost and him to write a report about the meeting. He stated that he will draft the report and ask LaCost to review it and add to it. The report can then be shared with the Senate and we could have some discussion about it.

Shea stated that Mark Sandler of the CIC put together a proposal which came out of discussion about on line resources and digital repositories. He noted that it was suggested that a panel be put together to discuss strategies relating to on line resources and related promotion and tenure issues. He stated that if the CIC puts together a panel we will be participating in it. Lindquist stated that faculty leaders should be included on such a panel rather than just having people appointed to it. Shea suggested that the Executive Committee discuss this with SVCAA Weissinger. Lindquist stated that he thinks we should weigh heavily on this issue because it is important enough to the faculty that the faculty needs to be involved.

Shea reported that Purdue University has a Board of Trustees and their senate and is proposing to include a faculty member on the Board. The question was asked at the conference whether any of the Big Ten schools has a faculty representative on its Board. None did but the group thought it was a good idea. He pointed out that a problem that all of the schools seem to have is that the Boards may not understand the scholarly or academic side of issues. A good way to improve this situation would be to have a faculty

member on the Board. He noted that there are student members on the Boards and the same mechanism for determining the student regents could apply to a faculty member.

Shea reported that at some schools the Chancellor or the President is a member of the Faculty Senate and in some cases presides over the meetings. He stated that some of the Faculty Senate Presidents or Chairs have a multiple year term that allows them more time to work through issues and accomplish things. He pointed out that might be something to consider here because this could make the work of the President more effective. He reported that it was asked how many of the participants will be returning next year and most were coming back. He noted that our President's term is for only one year and there is little chance that the same people will have the opportunity to participate in consecutive CIC meetings.

Varner wondered if there would be any interest in having a full time Executive Director. Shea stated that at several of the schools the Secretary of the Senate is appointed for a multi- year term.

Shea stated that information was gathered on compensation for leading the faculty governing body. He noted that there was a lot of variation, with some institutions providing no compensation while others provided considerable compensation. In some cases it was additional pay for a faculty member. He reported that the information on compensation was being updated and will be sent to participants. Nickerson asked if the faculty member gets a release from his/her duties. Shea stated that it varies and in some cases people were given release time and/or paid. He stated that there was discussion of the pros and cons for providing additional incentives for people to serve. He noted that at one institution the chairs of university committees are paid for their service. He pointed out that an issue would be whether people are doing this work because they value the service or whether they are doing it just to make more money.

Lindquist stated that he would not support the Faculty Senate President having a two year appointment, but he would support allowing for a person to be re-elected. He stated that he did like the idea of the secretary being appointed for a three year term.

Shea stated that he will continue to look at the bylaws and documents of the other Big Ten schools that describe faculty governance with the goal of being able to suggest some kind of uniformity of faculty governance among the institutions.

6.2 Report on Board of Regents Meeting

Lindquist noted that President Milliken gave a presentation on Employees Plus One Benefits.

6.3 Review of Faculty Senate Meeting

Varner reported that he checked out the streaming to see how it was working. He noted that it was working well but people must speak into the microphones in order to be heard through the streaming. The Executive Committee agreed to ask the Chancellor if he has any concerns with the streaming of the meetings.

Shea noted that the reports were not very specific. He suggested asking committee chairs to provide more specifics about the committee's accomplishments of the past year.

6.4 Hiring of Faculty Members and Other Issues

Purdum noted that some initiatives are coming up that will require the hiring of faculty positions but department input into these positions is not being sought. She stated that we need to be getting much more information on Innovation Campus. Nickerson stated that this is a major topic of discussion in his department. People are wondering how many faculty members will be hired for Innovation Campus.

Varner reported that CASNR has a list of unit contact persons for student recruitment. Nickerson stated that there should be a central list of contact people for recruitment purposes. He noted that the rearrangement of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs ties into this issue.

The Executive Committee identified student retention efforts as another agenda item for the administrators next week. Alerting faculty members of students who might be at risk and bolstering resources for faculty members who have students that fail exams would be helpful. Tutoring services should be better publicized. Guevara noted that funding is key in providing tutoring services

The meeting was adjourned at 5:19 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, November 9 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in 201 Administration. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Pat Shea, Secretary.