

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Guevara, LaCost, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Schubert, Woodman, Wysocki, Zoubek

Absent: Anaya, Purdum, Ruchala

Date: Wednesday, April 25, 2012

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

Schubert called the meeting to order at 3:09 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Emails Concerning Student Bereavement Policy

Schubert reported that email messages were received regarding the Senate's action to table the Student Bereavement Policy. One of the responses came from Lane Carr, Past President of ASUN, who was obviously disappointed in the policy not being approved. Another message came from Professor Eccarius who supports the policy as well. Wysocki pointed out that Carr did not provide rationale for why the policy could not be incorporated into the existing class attendance policy. LaCost noted that Carr provided a link in his email message to the Crisis Policy for employees of the university. Guevara pointed out that students are not employees and have different rights. He stated that employees could be fired if they missed a lot of work due to a crisis.

Schubert noted that Reisbig sent an email message about a study that was conducted that suggests that 30% of undergraduate students are faced with a crisis situation in a 12 month time span although he questions this data. The Executive Committee agreed to discuss the issue further under New Business.

2.2 Interview of Candidate for Dean of Extension

Griffin noted that the Executive Committee will be interviewing the Dean of Extension candidate on Wednesday, May 2 at 2:30.

3.0 Approval of 4/18/12 Minutes

LaCost moved for approval of the minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Guevara. The motion was approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Survey of Non-Tenure Track Faculty Members

Griffin noted that the survey closes on April 27. She asked the Executive Committee how it wants the data analyzed. The Committee decided to view the responses based on rank and to provide negative and positive responses separately.

LaCost reported that she drafted a memo to SVCAA Weissinger to provide information on why the Executive Committee decided to conduct the survey. She pointed out that SVCAA Weissinger stated at the April 18 Executive Committee meeting that she was expecting a memo providing an explanation for the survey. Woodman asked if having to notify the administrators of the Senate's intent to conduct a survey would set a precedent. Guevara pointed out that the Faculty Senate is supposed to talk to the faculty and is not required to inform the administration if it wants to interact with the faculty. He stated that it is bothersome to him that we have to explain ourselves for our action. He noted that the survey has been an item on the Executive Committee's agenda numerous times during this academic year. Griffin stated that the survey was briefly mentioned to the Chancellor and SVCAA Weissinger at the March 14 Executive Committee meeting but no information about why the survey was being conducted was provided.

Schubert stated that faculty members in non-tenure track positions are under the purview of the SVCAA and information to her would be a courtesy. Guevara stated that it should be clear that the memo is a courtesy update and that the Faculty Senate is not subjugating itself to the administration. Schubert pointed out that the Executive Committee wants to be proactive and establishing conversations with the administration provides opportunities for creating changes.

LaCost pointed out that the survey does not ask for demographics and it would be difficult to identify any person, department, or college in the responses unless the respondent provided the information. Griffin stated that preliminary data shows problems with yearly evaluation and promotion and lack of written resources for non-tenure track faculty members. Guevara noted that information gathered from the survey could be embarrassing for the administration.

Zoubek stated that Extension Educators know that they can get promoted in a 4-7 year period. He asked who would be responsible for providing non-tenure track faculty members with this kind of information. Woodman pointed out that there are no formal policies about this and people in these positions are not given a packet of information or provided a website to obtain information. He stated that when the Professors of Practice positions were created a new process was being developed. He stated that there is very diffuse information on Professors of Practice and while some colleges, such as Arts & Sciences, might provide information, this does not happen in other areas. He noted that every five years Professors of Practice have to create an entire portfolio to continue their contract. Guevara pointed out that the criteria for promotion is not consistent in departments or colleges due to diversity. Woodman stated that it would be helpful if some guidelines were available for non-tenure track faculty members so they know when

evaluations will be conducted. Guevara reported that he recently went to a meeting about promotion to full professor but the information provided was not very clear.

Schubert asked what will be done with the results of the survey. LaCost stated that the Executive Committee could share in aggregate form the responses of the survey with the Senate. Schubert stated that the Executive Committee will review the results over the summer. Wysocki suggested that the aggregate data be shared with the Senate and with senior administrators. LaCost pointed out that sharing the aggregate data with the administration was not included in the IRB and that she would have to file a protocol shift in order to do this.

Schubert and LaCost agreed to work on the memo to SVCAA.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Review of Senate Meeting

Schubert noted that the Senate voted and approved a clear motion to table the student bereavement policy. He asked the Executive Committee how it wants to continue with the policy. Wysocki pointed out that the Senate seemed to favor including the policy in the existing class attendance policy. Schubert noted that Lane Carr and Professor Eccarius supported creating a committee to look at the policy again. Zoubek asked if a committee has already looked at the policy. LaCost noted that an ad hoc committee was formed and suggested that there be a separate policy. She pointed out that this committee was purely an advisory committee.

Guevara stated that the policy was not flexible. He noted that as written in the policy, the administration would notify a faculty member of a student's crisis and the faculty member is required to accommodate the absence of a student. He stated that he thinks including the policy in the class attendance policy would be better and more palatable to the faculty.

Schubert asked for a different suggestion on what could be done about the policy. LaCost moved that the Executive Committee work with ASUN to incorporate the student bereavement policy into the class attendance policy. Bender seconded the motion. Schubert asked for discussion on the motion. LaCost suggested that the same ad hoc committee could be asked to work on adding a bereavement policy to the class attendance policy. Griffin noted that it might be difficult to get the same committee together over the summer and there will need to be new ASUN members as Carr is graduating. Wysocki suggested that a committee include Professor Peterson who raised objections to the policy being a stand-alone policy. LaCost suggested sending a message to ASUN President Kamler saying that if ASUN wants to pursue this policy it has to be included in the class attendance policy.

Rinkevich called the question. The motion was approved unanimously. Schubert stated that he will work with LaCost on drafting a message to ASUN about the policy.

5.2 Use of Google Calendar System for Executive Committee

Schubert suggested that the Executive Committee use the Google web based calendar system to schedule meetings of the Committee. He noted that the system logs into your email and reminds you of meetings or notifies changes to meetings. LaCost asked what problem using the system would solve. Schubert stated it is a tool that can help remind him and others on the Executive Committee of meetings and can assist in setting up meetings.

Woodman asked if the Google calendar system is compatible with Microsoft Outlook since the university's email system will by Outlook. LaCost pointed out that Microsoft will allow you to aggregate all of your calendars and emails.

Schubert stated that he and Griffin will look into using a web based calendar system further.

5.3 Executive Committee Summer Schedule

Griffin distributed a copy of the summer schedule and stated that she will also send it by email to the Executive Committee.

5.4 Conflict of Interest Policy

Griffin reported that she spoke with Interim Associate VC Hamernik about deadline dates for receiving comments from the Senate on the draft Conflict of Interest Policy and when voting by the Senate will be needed in order for UNL to be in compliance with federal regulations. She suggested that comments be received by May 4. Interim Associate VC Hamernik would then revise the draft policy and a final draft could be sent out electronically to the Senate on May 11. LaCost moved that the draft document be sent out to the Senate with dates defined in terms of bringing closure to the conflict of interest policy. Comments will need to be received by May 4, a final draft will be distributed by May 11, and voting on the policy will end on May 18. Wysocki seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

5.5 Attendance at Senate Meetings

Schubert noted that attendance at the Senate meeting was limited and that he thinks some people view the Senate as a cheap way to fulfill service duties because you only meet once a month. He stated that administrators will view the faculty as not valuing the work of committees if faculty members don't participate in committee service. He asked if this is something the Executive Committee wants to look into. He stated that there may be possibility of ways to evaluate or provide feedback on attending the Senate meetings. Wysocki suggested that we look into our Senate attendance policy. LaCost noted that there is a policy on attendance and people are notified if they miss too many meetings. She suggested that new senators should probably be told to visit the Senate web page to read the bylaws and responsibilities. Griffin pointed out that an email message was sent out to the new senators along with a PDF file which includes the bylaws, rules of order, schedule of meetings, a list of the Executive Committee members, and other information. She suggested that at the September meeting senators should be reminded to distribute the minutes of the Executive Committee and Senate meetings with their colleagues and to

ask that they be put on the department meeting agenda to report on activities of the Senate.

Schubert stated that having photos from the meetings would be helpful and these could be placed on the web. LaCost suggested that the Senate roster include a picture of each senator. Schubert pointed out that we would need to get permission from people to use their picture. Woodman suggested that an article about the Senate meeting be sent to UNL today after the meeting briefly discussing the work of the Senate at the meeting. Reisbig suggested starting smaller with including pictures of the Executive Committee members in the Committee's roster.

Guevara stated that Senators need to feel that they are accomplishing something by serving on the Senate. Reisbig suggested that Senators be given an incentive for attending the meetings. Schubert suggested asking Senators from the same college to report on an issue that is of particular importance to the faculty or the Executive Committee could create topics for the Senate to discuss. Wysocki pointed out that there are some departments that do not have a representative so some colleges may not have a lot of Senate members. He noted that these are good topics that could be discussed at the Executive Committee retreat this summer.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:07 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, May 2 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Woodman, Secretary.