

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Anaya, Bender, Guevara, LaCost, Purdum, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Schubert, Woodman, Wysocki,

**Absent:** Nickerson, Reisbig, Zoubek

**Date:** Wednesday, September 12, 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.

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Members of the Executive Committee met at 3:00 to attend the Campus Master Plan open house.

### **1.0 Call to Order**

Schubert called the meeting to order at 3:45 pm.

### **2.0 Announcements**

#### **2.1 45 Years of Service**

Purdum reported that Professor Rinkevich was celebrating his 45<sup>th</sup> year of service at the University.

#### **2.2 Merging of Electrical Engineering and Computer and Electronics Engineering**

Wysocki reported that he has just recently learned of the proposal to merge the two departments. He noted that the faculty was told by the dean that the decision is not up for discussion. Harbison pointed out that if the faculty members of the departments feel that there are significant issues relating to the merger, they should pass these on to the Academic Planning Committee, as well as any substantive counter arguments the faculty might have regarding the merge. He noted that the APC has to approve the merger before it can go to the administration for approval. He recalled the APC recently seeing the proposal to merge Engineering Mechanics and Mechanical Engineering.

#### **2.3 Distribution of Survey Summary**

LaCost reported that she spoke with IRB and they said the Powerpoint presentation made to the Faculty Senate can be shared with the Senators. Schubert stated that he will get the information to Griffin to distribute.

#### **2.4 Distribution of Data Relating to the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee Report**

LaCost reported that she needs to verify with Associate to the Chancellor Nunez on whether data for the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee can be shared with the

faculty. She noted that while the data is public information, the way that it is currently laid out could identify some individual faculty members.

### **3.0 Professor Harbison, Chair of Academic Planning Committee**

#### **3.1 Review to Streamline the Promotion and Tenure Process**

Harbison noted that he recently took over as chair of the APC following Professor Bryant who now serves on the APC as the Faculty Senate President designee. He stated that the APC is trying to take on a more activist role. He reported that for a long time people viewed the APC as a committee that just rubber stamped the Chancellor's decisions but the APC is supposed to be a planning committee and is charged with recommending to the Faculty Senate, Chancellor, and colleges the goals for improving UNL in the areas of education and service. He stated that the APC realized that it did not have enough information to make coherent recommendations. Consequently, the APC is now trying to get information earlier so it can be more involved in the planning process. He noted that the APC now has a representative on the Enrollment Management Council and in the deans and directors meetings and the Committee is engaging the Chancellor more in order to have some role in the planning process. He reported that the APC has had lengthy conversations with the Chancellor on a wide range of topics about what exactly the APC can do to make things more efficient, and to get a broader faculty role in the planning process of the campus.

Harbison stated that the APC is trying to look at how to make the university run more efficiently and to look forward to what we can be doing on campus. He noted that Professor Morris of the APC was trying to see if the University Curriculum Committee can operate more efficiently. He stated that the UCC feels that their role in the approval process of course changes/addition/deletions was late in the process. The APC made a recommendation to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to revise the operating procedures of the UCC for a trial period of a year that would allow the UCC to try a new procedure that would streamline the process of making curriculum changes.

Harbison stated that a major and longstanding issue is the reappointment, tenure and promotion process. He noted that the Faculty Senate accepted the "Guidelines for the Evaluation of Faculty: Annual Evaluations, Promotion and Tenure" document (May 12, 1989) which was written by former Professors Wheeler and McShane and sought to provide a governing principle on promotion and tenure. The document provides an appeal process for faculty members and faculty subject to review are allowed to see any part of the materials that is being used as part of the review.

Harbison stated that the problem with the reappointment, promotion and tenure process is that the rules in some colleges have grown to be unwieldy resulting in enormous evaluation files that take hundreds of hours to prepare and even more to review. He stated that the APC wants to do some general fact finding and to query departments and colleges to determine how much work the reappointment, and promotion and tenure process takes and to see how uniformly the rules are applied. He stated that the goal is to try to streamline the process and to make it a paperless process.

Harbison reported that the College of Fine Arts had an automatic review system that is getting replaced by the Activity Insight program. He stated that this program allows faculty to easily enter data on their activities and also provides administrators with the ability to gather data that is needed for evaluation. He stated that the change to Activity Insight is being coordinated by the Office of Academic Affairs but it is not campus-wide at this time. He noted that there are efforts underway to change the way we do merit and tenure and promotion reviews and he thinks it is a good time for us to look at the rules as a whole.

Harbison stated that this project is one of the things APC is working on this year. He pointed out that APC will only be able to recommend changes to the process to the Faculty Senate and the Chancellor to streamline the process. He noted that the APC would like to be more involved in the administrative role and he believes the reason why faculty members are disengaged is because they don't feel like they are part of the process.

Purdum reported that Animal Science is one of the units that it being the guinea pig for using Activity Insight. She stated that the program does streamline the data entry process somewhat such as automatic downloads on research grants. She thinks the APC's efforts are a worthy cause and it is ridiculous that we are spending so much time and paper to create promotion and tenure files.

Schubert stated that the APC needs to be specific about what it is aiming to streamline the process. He stated that he thinks everyone would support going electronic with the files, but what does the APC mean by streamlining the process. He pointed out that there are extremely divergent sets of rules on campus in regards to the reappointment and promotion and tenure process. He asked if the APC is suggesting that every college and department should have the same rules.

Harbison stated that the length of the process is part of the problem. He asked if we need to have a series of subcommittees that review, vote, generate a report which then goes back to the candidate and then on to another committee that has to go through the process again. He noted that there is limited flexibility to change the rules of the process. Guevara pointed out that departments have the right to make some changes to the procedures. He noted that Arts & Sciences starts with the faculty and if the faculty agrees, it goes to the chair, and if the chair agrees it goes to the college promotion and tenure committee, and then on to the dean. He stated that all of the materials in the promotion and tenure files are reviewed by all of these committees, even though some of them do not know how to evaluate the files. He stated that the process could be streamlined by having someone from your department on the college promotion and tenure committee.

Harbison stated that the APC wants to find out what the problem is with the promotion and tenure process and when the issue was raised in the past with administration departments were told that the rules are those of the Faculty Senate.

Ruchala asked Harbison to provide examples of some of the things that some faculty members wanted to change that you couldn't because the department and the dean said no. Harbison stated that providing data on peer review is an example. He stated that this was not adequate and his department was told that more information would be needed.

Guevara pointed out that the requirements for the promotion and tenure files depend on the deans too. He noted that the previous dean required the evaluation file be ready by October, but that is shortly after the start of the academic year. He reported that the dean would state how many external letters are required for the evaluation process.

Schubert stated that the guidelines are in place to make sure that we have positive hires and deans are looking at what can be done to make a candidate successful. As a result, the requirements for promotion and tenure can vary with whoever is dean. He stated that the process will not work for each unit if there is a unified process.

Harbison pointed out that a large part of the guidelines are uniform and it is this part that should be up for inspection. He stated that the APC wants to look at everybody and to query stakeholders to figure out what they think needs to be fixed with the process. He noted that the guidelines were written about twenty years ago when there were some substantial abuses to the reappointment and promotion and tenure process.

Schubert asked what Harbison wanted the Executive Committee to do with the process. Harbison stated that the Executive Committee does not need to do anything now, that he is just informing the Committee of what the APC plans to work on this year. He noted that several years ago a Wasting Time Committee was formed to see if there were processes and policies in place that were unnecessarily wasting faculty time. He stated that the leading recommendation of that report was to clean up the reappointment and promotion and tenure process.

The Executive Committee thanked Harbison for coming and keeping the Committee up to date on the work of the APC.

Guevara stated that the one of the problems with the promotion and tenure process could be that faculty members are not clear of what the expectations are to receive tenure and promotion. He stated that one thing that can be done to streamline things is to recommend that all files be electronic.

Schubert stated that he does not understand the motivation to streamline the process because no one should tell departments what their requirements are for promotion and tenure files. Anaya stated that it could be that the APC wants to make some parts of the process consistent across the colleges. She stated that mentoring of junior faculty members could really help in the process because a senior level faculty member can tell a junior faculty member what the significant things are that are needed to achieve promotion and tenure. She pointed out that some people going up for promotion and tenure do not know how much information is required. She stated that there needs to be more guidance. Griffin asked if department and college bylaws could provide some of

the guidance. Anaya stated that they could provide some documentation. LaCost pointed out that the problem of what is required seems to be more at the college level. Ruchala stated that colleagues in the departments should know this information. Anaya pointed out that guidelines are needed not only at the department level, but at the college level as well.

Wysocki stated that when he received tenure in Australia there was typically one page listing the activities of a faculty member needed to be included as support for each category (teaching, research, and outreach) required for promotion and tenure.

Purdum suggested that the department and college bylaws being collected by the Senate Office be shared with APC to provide them with information on the reappointment, promotion and tenure process.

#### **4.0 Approval of 9/5/12 Minutes**

Ruchala moved for approval of the minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Wysocki. The motion was approved.

#### **5.0 Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business was discussed.

#### **6.0 New Business**

##### **6.1 Agenda Items for Chancellor Perlman**

The Executive Committee identified agenda items for the meeting with Chancellor Perlman next week:

- Privatization Plans for University Health Center
- 18<sup>th</sup> & R Street Parking Garage and Possible Revenue from Housing Units
- Innovation Campus Update
- Appropriate Ways Faculty Can Help in Recruiting Students
- Assurance of Quality Students As We Strive to Increase Enrollment
- Current Status of NU Online Worldwide
- Is Funding Still Being Offered for Developing New Classes for Online Worldwide
- Impacts of MOOC courses
- Status of the Plus One Benefit with Open Enrollment this Fall

##### **6.2 Review of Senate Meeting**

Item postponed until the next meeting due to lack of time.

##### **6.3 Faculty Members Needed for Special Fees Committee**

Anaya, Woodman, and Ruchala volunteered to serve on the Special Fees Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:02 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, September 19 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in 201 Administration Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Woodman, Secretary.

