

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Anaya, Bender, Guevara, Joeckel, Nickerson, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Schubert, Sollars, Woodman, Wysocki, Zoubek

Absent:

Date: Wednesday, August 7, 2013

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

Guevara called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Perlman

2.1 Engineering Situation between UNL and UNO

Chancellor Perlman stated that the situation with the engineering program at UNO has not really changed since it was reported in the newspapers. He reported that there is not a lot of momentum for a separate engineering college at UNO, although there are some people still wanting it. He noted that the Board of Regents ordered the Chancellors of UNO and UNL to provide an integrated plan for the Peter Kiewit Institute in Omaha. He noted that this will mean a strategic plan for UNL's Engineering College and UNO's Information Science and Technology College. He stated that it is time to get the administrative structure at PKI set up correctly and there is great potential for growth. He stated that a report will be given to the Academic Affairs Committee of the Board later this month and a presentation to the full Board is scheduled for September providing the Board meets as planned.

Wysocki asked if there is going to be any input from interested faculty members who are teaching at PKI on the strategic plan. Chancellor Perlman stated that unfortunately the political situation revolving around this issue does not allow for much input, but he does not think Dean Wei is hiding his strategic objectives. He stated that the faculty will probably not be able to look at the proposed structure of the PKI before the public sees it at the September Board meeting.

Nickerson asked how many people were on the committee that looked into developing the strategic plans. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the Board did not require the formation of a committee.

2.2 Enrollment Figures for this Summer and Preliminary Figures for Fall

Chancellor Perlman reported that final figures on summer enrollment are not currently available although he understands there has been positive growth in the actual number of

students taking summer courses including some increase in undergraduate credit hours. He noted that final figures will probably be generated at the end of the week.

Guevara asked if online enrollment is separated from actual classroom credit hours when enrollment figures are reviewed. Chancellor Perlman stated that during the semester the combined enrollment figures are reviewed although it can be differentiated if needed.

Woodman noted that a few years ago the summer courses were given to the colleges to manage. He asked how this is functioning. Chancellor Perlman reported that he has not heard of any complaints and if numbers in enrollment continue to increase it will indicate a positive trend. He pointed out that it made sense to have the colleges control the courses they teach through the year. This allows the colleges to plan across the spectrum of the courses they offer and create a better organized system of offering classes.

Bender asked if fall figures are available yet. Chancellor Perlman reported that he has not received official figures yet but enrollment looks good.

2.3 MOOC and Coursera at UNL

Chancellor Perlman reported that the contract with Coursera was signed at the system level and this contract creates an opportunity for faculty members to experiment with these kinds of courses if they want to. He pointed out that we are not required to do anything with this contract, but it allows us to be in a position for faculty members who may decide they want to teach a MOOC course. He stated that any course will still be required to follow the traditional course approval system. He pointed out that the original enthusiasm nationally for MOOC courses has faded and UNL is being cautious in offering these kinds of courses.

Guevara stated that the Coursera contract generated a lot of questions and comments from faculty members and noted that SVCAA Weissinger had formed a committee to look at these kinds of courses. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that prior to the contract SVCAA Weissinger had formed a taskforce to look into MOOC courses and after the contract was signed she felt that more faculty engagement is needed before decisions are made to offer MOOC courses at UNL.

2.4 Update on Student Success Center

Chancellor Perlman reported that the Student Success Center is now located in the southwest corner of Love Libraries South which has been renovated to accommodate the Center. He noted that the Explore Center, Advising, and Education Abroad will all be located there. He stated that it is a very attractive space and invited the Executive Committee to visit the Center. He reported that planning continues for Love Libraries North and conversations continue on what should be on the first floor. He pointed out that it will ultimately be a success center but he is not sure exactly what services will be located there. He stated that Dean Busch and the Libraries staff have been very collaborative in what can be done. He stated that more fund raising is needed in order to complete the project but some ideas with the designs are being explored.

Nickerson stated that he was inquiring about tutoring services because of presentations made to the Executive Committee about boosting enrollment with higher student retention. He reported that he sent some students to tutoring services but no one there could provide tutoring for microbiology. He pointed out that he would like to get the tutors in Biological Sciences to merge with the tutoring center and wondered if there could be connections between department tutors and the tutoring center.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the most successful tutoring efforts he knows of are department based, such as the Chemistry department's resource room and the Mathematics tutoring services. He pointed out that the Life Sciences might want to consider having something similar. He stated that a centralized tutoring service can provide basic tutoring services but more specialized areas of a discipline would best be handled by the department. He pointed out that it would be difficult to have tutors who can cover all the different disciplines.

Woodman reported that Biological Sciences used to have something similar to what the Chancellor described and it was well used, although its success was never measured. He pointed out that the bigger problem is departments having the funding to support tutoring services. Chancellor Perlman responded that he did not know how Chemistry and Mathematics fund their tutoring centers and he is uncertain whether they asked for funds. He stated that the administration might be open to proposals and suggested that departments check with Chemistry and Mathematics to see how they set their services up. He wanted to encourage faculty members to talk about this issue in their departments, but ultimately the department has to make this a priority.

2.5 University Budget in Light of Tuition Freeze – Impacts on the Second Year of the Biennium

Chancellor Perlman stated that he will be talking about this issue in his upcoming State of the University address. He stated that we will have a deficit, although it is not as large as some of the ones we have had in the past, but we will still need to deal with it. He pointed out that we still have a million and a half that was imposed on departments last year and another \$800,000 has been projected as our share of the university budget. He suggested that we could be facing approximately a \$2 ½ million deficit. He noted that the second year of the biennium actually improves somewhat based on projections. He pointed out that we do not have a lot of surplus funds available to help us.

2.6 Fabricated Equipment Policy Issue

Schubert reported that he recently learned that UNL has instituted a policy of charging overhead costs on fabricated equipment. He noted that this summer he nearly lost two NSF grants because the Accounting Office did not want to accept the researcher's and NSF's budget because Accounting wanted to place an overcharge fee on the equipment. He pointed out that the decision on whether an overhead should be charged on this kind of equipment was being made by an unqualified Accounting employee who does not have the scientific background to make such a decision. He noted that this incident relates to a deep rooted problem in the lack of communications between administration and faculty members. Schubert stated that when this incident occurred he sent VC Paul

and VC Jackson an email message suggesting that their offices can work together so the correct decisions can be made. He pointed out that he did not receive a reply from either one and stated that a solution needs to be found because this is having impacts on researchers throughout the campus. Chancellor Perlman asked when this issue arose. Schubert stated that it just happened two weeks ago. Chancellor Perlman stated that he will follow up on this issue.

2.7 Efforts to Update Student Code of Conduct

Guevara stated that there have been some efforts to change the Student Code of Conduct for several years now but with no results. He stated that VC Franco's office does not seem to be actively participating in the effort and that the students have primarily been given the task of writing proposed changes. He stated that the Executive Committee thinks that we should have a Code that is similar to those of the Big Ten schools. He reported that he has contacted VC Franco's office about this effort but has not received any reply.

Nickerson asked if the Chancellor thinks the students should have the primary responsibility of writing the Code or whether this is something that should come from the administration and the faculty with input from the students. He noted that the students have generated some proposed changes with some input from the faculty but further revisions need to be made. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that if this were an absolute policy it would help explain why the effort has been going on for so long. He noted that in a perfect world the effort to revise the document would come from the student body because it would be easier to enforce.

Ruchala stated that part of the difficulty is that the students have shown great interest in revising the Code, but they don't quite have the ability to put together a policy such as the Code of Conduct and they have had little guidance from other people at the university. She stated that the question becomes who should spearhead this effort.

Chancellor Perlman understood the Executive Committee's concerns and stated that he will see what can be done to move this effort along.

2.8 Efforts to Update UNL Bylaws

Chancellor Perlman reported that he has asked a law student to review the UNL bylaws to identify areas that need to be updated. He stated that he will share this information with the Executive Committee when he receives it to see how changes can be made to reflect the administration of the campus.

2.9 What Criteria are Used in Determining Whether a Dean's Search is internal or External?

Chancellor Perlman stated that several things are considered in order for a decision to be made on whether a dean's search is internal or external. The first is the faculty of a college need to have a cohesive direction about the type of person they want as dean.

Secondly, there needs to be consideration on the likelihood of having a successful search, and it needs to be determined whether there are enough resources available to hire someone externally because many sitting deans return back to their unit. He pointed out that another major factor is whether the majority of the faculty members in a college want an internal dean.

Schubert noted that the Executive Committee had several discussions on this subject and looked at the Regents Bylaws regarding administrative searches. He pointed out that the Regents Bylaws states that the search advisory committee shall solicit and receive suggestions and recommendations for filling the position from all sources – Regents, Administrators, Faculty, Students, and the Public. He asked what defines an external search and whether UNL can have an internal search according to the Bylaws.

Chancellor Perlman stated that there is no question that we can perform an internal search. He stated that the Bylaws state that the public can make suggestions and recommendations for filling the position, but it does not imply that the public has the opportunity to apply for the dean's position. Schubert suggested that this clarification should be made in the Bylaws when they are revised. Chancellor Perlman stated that would be fine.

Schubert stated that at this point it is just a technicality, but he believes that administrative positions should always be external. He noted that it could be difficult for an internal person to deal with budget cuts and other administrative decisions because of the personal history the candidate might have with people in a department. Chancellor Perlman stated that he does not agree with this argument. He pointed out that there is a lot of gambling in hiring an external person because you do not know for sure how this person will act as an administrator. He pointed out that there are costs and benefits whether it is an internal or external search.

Joeckel asked if the Chancellor could elaborate on what some of the criteria might be on whether an investment in conducting an external search is warranted. Chancellor Perlman stated that there could be the consideration of whether the person is retiring or going back to a unit. If they are retiring, the investment is not an issue, but if hiring an external person this usually requires paying someone a higher salary than the previous administrator as well as having to provide funds for the administrator returning to his/her unit. He pointed out that this factor does not drive the decision on whether to have an external or internal search but it is a consideration. He stated that the campus has priorities and goals it wishes to attain and he would like to think that we can get someone who can contribute to these priorities although that is not always the case. He stated that sometimes the internal person is really the best person for the position. He said that the decision of whether to do an internal or external search is a balancing act and all factors need to be taken into consideration.

Ruchala asked if the decision to conduct an internal search is made before or after a search committee is convened. Chancellor Perlman stated that it can be a mix. In the abstract if you have to come up with \$250,000 to hire someone who would not contribute

much to our priorities we probably would not conduct an external search. Guevara asked if the faculty of a college said they wanted an external search, would one be conducted. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that this would be a very strong factor in favor of conducting an external search. Guevara noted that the faculty of a college would have quite a lot of say in the decision. Chancellor Perlman stated that of course they would, but we want to make sure that the college is ready to make that kind of decision. He pointed out that if you do not have a cohesive faculty that doesn't know what direction the college should go than we would not be able to hire anyone. He stated that is one of the reasons why an interim dean is put into place while a college decides its direction. He stated that the administration wants to make sure that the college faculty knows what direction they want their college to go in.

Nickerson asked if an external dean search on average is much more expensive than an internal search. Chancellor Perlman stated that it is probably a little more expensive. He pointed out that the internal candidates that he has been aware of have negotiated a strong contract and it is to their advantage to do so.

Reisbig noted that looking from the outside of the search there is a concern that an internal search could do disservice to an internal candidate. She stated that the Executive Committee does not want the Dean of Libraries to be seen as a less qualified position than other deans' positions. Chancellor Perlman stated that he appreciates this concern and it is something that needs to be considered. But in the particular case we thought the candidate was exceptionally well-qualified and fit exactly what we needed in a Dean of Libraries. He stated that there are some downsides to not doing an external search but there are also some downsides to doing one, the most difficult and biggest challenge is that you don't have the stability of leadership and the opportunity to build leadership. He noted that at some point there will be a transition in his office which will probably result in changes in other administrative positions as well. He pointed out that it is very difficult in higher education to groom a person to become an administrator to take your place.

Joeckel stated that he appreciated that Chancellor's candor with respect to this issue. He asked if the Chancellor foresees a trend towards hiring internally. Chancellor Perlman said no and stated that it is a balance. We have to ask where the unit is at the point of time when you have to make a transition. He noted that if things are going well in a unit there would be more willingness to hire an internal candidate. He stated that it really is a judgment call for each administrative position and he hopes that we always respect the faculty's judgment on these decisions.

2.10 Update on Renovations to the Student Union

Chancellor Perlman reported that some renovations on the first floor of the Union will take place this fall. He noted that efforts are being made to schedule the renovations to allow for the least disruption and so that they can be done quickly. He stated that money will need to be raised for the complete renovation of the Student Union.

2.11 Delays Occurring in Transfer of Credits for Students

Woodman stated that some transfer students are having difficulty registering for courses that have prerequisites because they have been unable to receive transfer credits for a course they previously took at another institution because they are told that there is no equivalent course at UNL. As a result they are losing their place to register. He noted that this is a technical detail that can be resolved. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that we have made some great strides with transfer students and recently met with high school students who have had a great experience with transferring courses. He pointed out that this is an issue that the Executive Committee needs to discuss with SVCAA Weissinger.

2.12 Health Center Plans

Chancellor Perlman noted that the Board didn't approve the contract with Bryan Health. He stated that one of the reasons for wanting to privatize the Health Center is to provide a better way of managing the Center. He noted that the Health Center does not have any competition on campus and essentially they tax students to pay for the services they provide. He stated that it is always difficult for him to measure the Health Center's efficiency and whether the quality of the services is good or whether the students are paying too much or too little. He pointed out that by looking at Bryan Health a comparison market has been created. He stated that Bryan said they would keep the prices the same and would build a new facility without increasing student fees. He reported that he has now asked the Health Center staff to come up with a similar plan without raising student fees, unless it can be shown that University requirements would justify an increase. He stated that the Board will require 1.4 debt coverage ratio. He stated that he would like the Health Center to offer some of the same services that Bryan was willing to offer and he wants us to be a preferred provider under more insurance plans. He stated that he wants our electronic records to be able to interface with Lincoln hospital electronic records, to provide expanded hours, and to indicate the expectations of doctors and the pharmacy.

Ruchala reported that when she was visiting the University of Indiana she saw that they merged the university emergency health care services with Bloomington's hospital and wondered if this could be done at UNL. Chancellor Perlman pointed out that our health center does not have emergency care so a similar situation would probably not work as well here.

2.13 Upcoming Issues

Chancellor Perlman reported that he will be giving his State of the University address in mid-September and will discuss his goals for the campus and other issues at that time.

Guevara noted that the Executive Committee has not met with SVCAA Weissinger since April 17 and would like to have the opportunity to meet with her. He noted that the UNL Bylaws state that the SVCAA is to meet with the Executive committee bi-monthly. Chancellor Perlman stated that the Executive Committee should assert their rights under the bylaws but she did meet with you in April. He will mention it to her but if it continues to occur the Executive Committee should let him know.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Executive Committee Retreat

Griffin reminded the Committee that the Executive Committee retreat was going to be held on the afternoon of August 14.

4.0 Approval of July 24, 2013 Minutes

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

5.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Faculty Needed for Special Fees Committee

Anaya, Ruchala, and Woodman volunteered to serve on the special fees committee.

6.2 Faculty Members for Arts & Sciences Dean's Search Committee

The Executive Committee reviewed the suggested names for the Dean of Arts & Sciences search Committee as recommended by SVCAA Weissinger. The Committee identified other possible faculty members and Guevara stated that he will contact SVCAA Weissinger and pass on the Committee's suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:49 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, August 21 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Toni Anaya, Secretary.