

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Dawes, Fech, Konecky, Lee, Leiter, Purcell, Reisbig, Rudy, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Bender, Hanrahan, Steffen

Date: Tuesday, June 7, 2016

Location: 203 Alexander Building

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

Woodman called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Perlman appointed to American Law Institute Project

Leiter reported that former Chancellor Perlman has been appointed to be a member of the American Law Institute's (ALI) Project on Sexual and Gender-Based Misconduct on Campus: Procedural Framework and Analysis which will look at creating standard procedures for handling Title IX cases. He noted that ALI has a long history of providing expertise on laws, although they work very slowly but thoroughly on issues. He suggested that Perlman could be a resource to get clarification on Title IX.

Lee asked if other faculty members receive "Dear Colleague" letters and wondered who these letters are sent to. Woodman pointed out that the letters are sent to every university and they come from different offices of the U.S. Department of Education.

3.0 Approval of May 24, 2016 Minutes

Vakilzadian moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Leiter and approved by the Executive Committee.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Letter to President Bounds Regarding Improvements in Benefits

The Executive Committee reviewed and revised a letter to President Bounds conveying recommendations made by the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee to improve benefits for faculty and staff. The suggested benefits include improvement in the tuition remission benefit, increasing the amount of the NuFlex credit, reducing the cost of university child care, and/or providing a wellness subsidy to offset the cost of gym membership.

4.2 Proposed Changes to the UNL Bylaws

Woodman stated that he would like to see language included in the Bylaws requiring the VC of IANR and the Executive VC and Provost to address the Faculty Senate at least

once during the academic year. He suggested that the language could be included in the section of the Bylaws that states the responsibilities of the Vice Chancellors. He noted that there is an idea to eventually move the reporting of the VC of Student Affairs and the VC of Research and Economic Development to the Executive VC and Provost, but this would not occur until the current VCs retire.

The Executive Committee reviewed proposed changes to the section on the Academic Planning Committee. Reisbig voiced concern with section 1.1.3 where it states that the APC is empowered to approve or disapprove proposed new academic programs and changes in existing programs. She pointed out that this seems to undermine the Chancellor's responsibilities and suggested that there should be clarification that once approved by the APC, the proposal would need approval of the Chancellor.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Report on Board of Regents Meeting

Woodman reported that there was considerable discussion at the Board of Regents meeting about the University of Nebraska campaign "Commit to Complete" where students complete their education in four years and take 15 credit hours each semester to attain this goal. He noted that there was concern that students transferring frequently to a different major helped to create the delay for graduating in four years. He reported that the Board wants faculty members to encourage students to try to complete their degrees in four years. Konecky pointed out that the Board is attempting to change the culture of the campus because currently many students take less than 15 credit hours a semester and this is considered the norm here.

Woodman stated that having freshmen students entering the university with college credits will help with the graduation rate. Lee stated that he thought the APC did not approve the dual credit because many of the high school courses for college credit were not of the same quality as a university course. He asked if they are now accepted. Members of the Executive Committee said the credits are now accepted. Woodman pointed out that for some majors it is strongly recommended that they do not take the courses in high school for college credit because the high school classes are not as rigorous and more than likely they will have difficulty with the upper level classes in that major at the university.

Woodman stated that graduating in four years has significant financial implications. For each year beyond four years in college an additional 20% is added to a person's college costs. There is also evidence showing that students who go beyond six years in college usually do not finish their degree. Vakilzadian pointed out that many students need to work while attending college which makes it difficult for them to graduate in four years.

Dawes pointed out that it is alright for faculty members to encourage students to try and graduate in four years, but she wondered what changes in the infrastructure the university has made to help the students attain this goal. She noted that students are more likely to succeed when they are engaged and wondered if students are not getting the support they need to succeed. Konecky stated that the Explore Center is for undeclared majors and

provides advising and encouragement, but if students have declared a major it puts them outside the Explore Center and she questioned what kinds of advising and support is available to these students. Reisbig suggested that program evaluations may need to be added to make sure programs are working successfully.

Woodman reported that another discussion at the Board meeting was on open access textbooks which provides online resources instead of a textbook. He stated that UNK has begun using it.

Woodman stated that the most significant discussions at the meeting were regarding a new style of budgeting which is liberal about the expenses but conservative with the revenue. It was decided that predictions for the budgets will now be made once the actual tuition dollars are known. He stated that salary increases in the Big Ten are averaging 2% while we are getting 2.5%, but we are still 4% behind our peers in salaries. However, beginning January 1 there will be significant increases in health insurance for the next three years. Lee asked if the new budgeting model is going to push back the date when departments will know how much money they have available for funding graduate students or hiring instructors. He pointed out that a delay could make it more difficult and costly to get good graduate students and instructors. Woodman stated that he did not know the answer to this question. He noted that the Board feels it needs more realistic understanding of the actual money that will be available. He pointed out that the university is expecting an increase in student enrollment.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:37 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, June 21, 2016 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Allison Reisbig, Secretary.