

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bender, Dawes, Fech, Lee, Purcell, Rudy, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Hanrahan, Konecky, Leiter, Purdum, Steffen

Date: Tuesday, March 14, 2017

Location: 201 Canfield Administration

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 (*Woodman*)

Woodman called the meeting to order at 2:38 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green/EVC Plowman/VC Boehm

2.1 Guidance for Degree and Curricular Changes beyond the College Level

EVC Plowman reported that previously no guidelines were available on what steps need to be taken in order to create a new major or minor. She noted that Associate VC Goodburn and the Associate Deans of the colleges have worked together to develop guidelines that are now available in a very clean, neat table which shows the steps involved in revising the curriculums starting from the department level up to the EVC office. She noted that this information is available on the web at: <http://academicaffairs.unl.edu/academic-program-management/program-processes/undergraduate>. Woodman asked where the Academic Planning Committee fits in the processes. EVC Plowman stated that the APC is listed in the table and approval for new programs, majors, or minors still need to go to the APC before they are sent to the Chancellor and to Central Administration.

2.2 Projections for Health Care Costs

Chancellor Green reported that our health care plan has an anticipated increase of 10% for each of the next two years. Rudy asked if these increases were in addition to the increase that employees have already received this year. Chancellor Green stated that it includes this year. He noted that up until this fiscal year which began July 1, our health care plan was in a good state and was able to absorb any costs which resulted in no increases being passed on to the employees. However, two main factors have impacted our health care. The first is the increase in insurance costs, and there have been claims this year which have been decidedly higher than in previous years. He noted that the increased health care costs have been factored into the budget deficit that we will be facing.

Chancellor Green pointed out that there is a President's task force on Human Resources that is looking at University's human resources to see if there are other approaches that can be taken within the University system that could help reduce costs.

2.3 Definition of Vertical Cuts

Chancellor Green stated that the administrators have now started working on the framework for budget reductions. He noted that the University had its hearing with the Appropriations Committee on February 27, but we will not know the Legislature's decision until late April or early May. He stated that he, EVC Plowman, and VC Boehm have started looking at the budget at the macro level to get some idea of what the situation could look like for the campus. He pointed out that we do not know what will happen with the President's task forces and whether savings can be found that will help with the University's deficit.

Chancellor Green stated that he has started looking at the various possible numbers for the budget cuts and has asked the Vice Chancellors some questions about programmatic things that could be explored. He pointed out that he plans on looking at the recommendations that will be vetted by the departments and colleges. Purcell asked if the budget cutting procedures will be invoked in the fall. Chancellor Green stated that the actual budget cutting procedures will not begin until the start of the new academic year in August because faculty will need to be engaged in the process. He noted that during the summer the budget situation will need to be reviewed and information gathered that will allow the administrative team to look at everything diligently.

Chancellor Green stated that other factors that need to be considered with the budget is whether there will be tuition increases. The Board will set the tuition increases in June. He noted that President Bounds has said that the campuses will have discretion to recommend differential tuition options across the campuses.

Woodman pointed out that the budget cutting process in 2011 basically had no involvement of the faculty other than the President of the Faculty Senate due to confidentiality. He spoke with current Academic Planning Committee Chair Professor Wagner to see if the Senate Executive Committee could be more involved in the process and Professor Wagner stated that he was fine with this. Chancellor Green stated that he plans on having a transparent process. He plans on keeping the faculty informed and he will layout the process for the faculty, explain how it will be done, and believes that the framework will then guide the rest of the process.

EVC Plowman reported that she will be going to the Deans and the department chairs to tell them that they need to consider if there could be some pockets that could be cut if needed. She stated that her commitment is not to say to each Dean that they have to consider cutting their budgets by a certain percentage.

Chancellor Green pointed out that there are two levels to the budget cuts to the University. President Bounds' task forces will be considering changes that could result in horizontal cuts for the University. The task forces will look to see if there are different models that can be used that would deliver services more efficiently. He stated that the other level is for more programmatic cuts at the campus level. During this time the Vice Chancellors will talk to their leadership team before vetting possible ideas for cuts with the campus. He stated that the process will be more pragmatic and open than it has been

in the past. Lee noted that during previous budget cuts the Academic Planning Committee would be provided with a list of possible cuts, but making this information available could be devastating to the campus, particularly for those units on the list. He stated that confidentiality has to be vetted to prevent fear on campus. Chancellor Green agreed, but stated that there has to be a process to gather information in order to make decisions. He noted that protecting the academic enterprise is paramount because that is our responsibility to the students and the state. He reported that the Vice Chancellors will be working with the Deans to see what possible options could be cut, if needed.

Lee pointed out that programs cannot be handpicked for budget cuts according to the AAUP, and he doubts that there will be enough retirements to deal with the budget cuts. VC Boehm stated that reductions could possibly be made by giving up lines of unfilled positions in a unit. Chancellor Green stated that very careful consideration and pragmatic decisions will need to be made.

2.4 Update on Hiring Freeze

Chancellor Green reported that the hiring freeze will still be in place until the end of this fiscal year. He stated that approximately 140 positions at UNL have been exempted from the freeze, most of which are faculty, but some critical staff positions have been exempted. He stated that another list of possible exemptions is coming from the Vice Chancellors and most of these are staff positions. These positions will be sent to President Bounds for consideration before the end of March. This will leave about 250 open positions on campus. He noted that not filling the positions is helping us to deal with the cash flow shortfall for this current fiscal year.

2.5 Plans to Eliminate Frozen Positions That Were Not Approved with the Budget Cuts?

Chancellor Green reported that there are no plans to eliminate those lines that are part of the hiring freeze. He noted that the administration has worked hard to protect the faculty positions and fill as many as possible so they are in place for the fall semester. He stated that the one area that where there has been some difference is with Nebraska Extension because a number of these positions have been held. VC Boehm stated that there are 31 open positions in Nebraska Extension. Purcell asked if these positions are Extension Educators. VC Boehm stated that they are a mix of Extension Educators and staff.

2.6 How Many Lecturers Have Terminal Degrees?

Rudy stated that a topic of discussion with the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Honesty is the possibility of advancing Lecturer positions to Professors of Practice. He noted that there is the belief that Professors of Practice have terminal degrees, but Lecturers do not. EVC Plowman reported that not all Professors of Practice have terminal degrees. She stated that we do not have the data yet to know the exact figures, but this will hopefully be rectified by the end of the summer.

EVC Plowman pointed out that there needs to be clarity around the issue of promoting Professors of Practice. She stated that some colleges have the requirements and procedures neatly outlined while other colleges do not. She stated that this is something

she wants her office to work on next year. Rudy noted that some Professors of Practice may not have terminal degrees, but they have many years of experience. EVC Plowman stated that this is important to consider, particularly since Professors of Practice will be important to us meeting our instructional needs as the student enrollment grows.

Woodman pointed out that there are no instructions about promoting Lecturers to Professors of Practice. He stated that there are cases where a Lecturer position is to be changed to a Professor of Practice and the Lecturer who has held that position for many years wind up having to compete with other candidates because the position has been made a national search. EVC Plowman stated that this does not seem fair and said that some colleges are tackling this by requesting a targeted search. She noted that we have to figure out creative, yet inexpensive ways to increase our teaching element.

2.7 Legislative Update and Appropriations Committee Update

Chancellor Green reported that the budget will go to the floor of the State Legislature by the end of the month. He noted that we should have an answer on the budget by early to mid-May. He stated that under the Governor's proposed budget the University would have a \$56 million deficit, that is if there is a 2% salary increase, a 10% increase in health care for two years, and no change in enrollment. He noted that this is prior to any tuition increase. He pointed out that President Bounds has not indicated how he is going to allocate the budget deficit to the campuses.

Purcell noted that President Bounds has stated that there could be differential tuition increases for the campuses and asked if our tuition increase could be less than the other campuses. Chancellor Green stated that this is a complex issue and consideration needs to be given to enrollment data, price points, and what our peers are doing. He pointed out that in one of our peer groups our tuition rates are in the middle of the group, but in the Big Ten we have the lowest tuition. He noted that Iowa is having the same economic difficulties that Nebraska is facing and the University of Iowa is removing a lot of their scholarships to cope with budget deficits. Purcell asked if scholarships were considered here. Chancellor Green stated that we will not use scholarships to offset the budget.

Chancellor Green reported that the advocacy for the University has been very high and efforts are still being made to inform senators what the implications of the cuts will be to the University.

2.8 Procedures for Internal Searches for Administrative Positions

EVC Plowman noted that this appears to be in reference to the search for the Dean of the Law College. She pointed out that there was overwhelming support for the faculty of the College to conduct an internal search. She stated that the position was posted and announced and one applicant has applied. Woodman noted that this was not about the Dean of Law position specifically, but about internal searches where there seems to be minimal publicity in the search stage, but then a well-publicized invitation is issued at a later stage to interview the single candidate for the position. EVC Plowman stated that she would need to see if the position announcement was more broadly distributed. Woodman agreed and asked that there be an established procedure, such as what is done

in the College of Arts & Sciences when they are looking for Associate Deans, to ensure that all internal searches are well publicized to attract the greatest number of qualified candidates.

EVC Plowman noted that there are some administrative positions in her office that will need to be filled, one of which is the Associate VC of Academic Affairs and Dean of Graduate Studies. This will be handled by an internal search, but this does not mean that there can't be numerous applications and a national search can be conducted if it is felt that this is needed.

Chancellor Green reported that there will be some other administrative positions that will need to be filled in the future.

2.9 Issues on the Horizon

Chancellor Green reported that the strategic planning process is moving forward and he is beginning to receive reports from the task forces, with all of the reports due in early April. He stated that he will work with the task forces through the rest of the semester and summer to help frame the discussions for the work this fall. He noted that developing the strategic plan will probably take a year.

Chancellor Green reported that the History department has won the University-wide Departmental Teaching Award. He noted that other University-wide awards will be announced in April.

Chancellor Green stated that a decision has been made to have a separate Honors Convocations award ceremony for the students in order to put the focus of the ceremony back on the students. He noted that there will be a special faculty award program for the faculty in April.

Chancellor Green reported that he has spoken to the leaders of UNOPA and UAAD who stated that the staff continually feel that they don't have a voice at all on campus. He asked them what they feel would be the best way to deal with this issue. A suggestion was made to possibly form a staff Senate, or some other mechanism, that will allow the staff to bring issues forward.

Chancellor Green stated that he is encouraging everyone to participate in the investiture ceremony scheduled for April 6 because it is an important event in the life of the University. He hopes that the event will be a great thing for the campus and he plans on focusing how we are already distinctive in the Big Ten, and how we will become ever more so in the era ahead.

EVC Plowman stated that she has been spending a lot of time meeting with people to learn what they do and what issues they are facing. She stated that she is beginning to get a feeling for how to move the academic leadership forward.

VC Boehm reported that he has now been on campus for 73 days and has now visited 41 counties. He stated that he is excited about the promotion and tenure process here, which is a much more transparent process than at other universities. He noted that there are opportunities for faculty members to understand where they are in the process and there is an appeals process.

VC Boehm reported that IANR will be hosting an IANR Science Summit on April 13 which will showcase the progress that is being made on the Institute's strategic plan and will allow the administration to listen to the integrated teams.

Lee asked what the status is of the Big Ten money for Athletics. Chancellor Green noted that beginning this coming year we will be fully integrated into the Big Ten which means we will receive our full revenue allocation from the conference. There is also a new TV contract which will increase the revenue for Athletics. He reported that he will be speaking with Athletic Director Eichorst about the increase in revenue and future plans. He noted that 5% of Athletics' revenue comes back to the university and they are a totally self-supporting unit. He reported that when Athletic Director Eichorst first came here he reached out to the academic deans to meet with each of them to learn about the colleges and what the student athletes are doing. He pointed out that Athletics wants to help the University and he wants to forge that new relationship at an even higher level than previously.

3.0 Academic Honesty Committee Report (Rudy)

Rudy noted that Professor Wes Peterson, Professor Scott Fuess, and Dean Matt Hecker, members of the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Honesty, were in attendance to help discuss the report from the Ad Hoc Committee. He noted that the Committee reviewed existing policies across the campus and also reviewed policies at other universities. He stated that a video call was conducted with Kansas State University's Academic Integrity Office. He noted that the report focuses mainly on undergraduates, but the Committee recognizes that academic integrity is not just an undergraduate issue.

Rudy stated that the Ad Hoc Committee will be making recommendations to the Senate, one of which is to make it a standing Committee. One of the things the Committee would like to do is to complete an assessment of the campus climate, including both students and faculty at all levels. The Committee will eventually advocate policies and recommend changes for the campus. He stated that faculty need to be updated on technology and how it is impacting academic integrity.

Rudy stated that the Committee is looking at an instrument from Rutgers University to survey the faculty and the staff. Fuess noted that other universities have used it and when Texas Tech surveyed their faculty they found their views were extremely different from the students. Woodman asked if the survey would indicate opinions about academic honesty. Rudy stated that the survey asks about attitudes and if a faculty member has taken action on cases of academic dishonesty.

Rudy pointed out that faculty members need help sometimes to identify academic honesty. He noted that students today are much more electronically savvy than the faculty. Woodman pointed out that there are tools available now that are more generic that faculty members can use.

Rudy stated that one thing the Ad Hoc Committee discovered is that faculty members are reticent to report cases of academic dishonesty and we need to create a system so the faculty know they will be supported if they report incidences. He noted that students do not seem to take the issue seriously because we don't portray it very well. He noted that there is very little information in the Student Code of Conduct on the issue. He stated that the Committee would like some kind of public statement or an honor code published. Peterson stated that the Committee's recommendation is for the campus to consider an honor code which will help make the issue part of the culture of the campus. Hecker pointed out that an honor code would make a public and explicit statement of institutional commitment to academic integrity.

Woodman asked if the Committee has discussed using the XF type of grade indicating that a student has failed due to cheating. Rudy stated that there should be some kind of clear adjudication because there are different punishments across the campus. Lee stated that the penalties should be consistent. Fuess stated that having an XF grade would allow recordkeeping of a student's academic behavior. Rudy pointed out that students should have the ability to appeal and explain their case if they are given an XF grade. He noted that best practices at other universities show that faculty members did not have to prove beyond the shadow of doubt that a student cheated, just that there was preponderance of evidence. He stated that best practices also showed that having an academic integrity officer and staff was important and there needs to be appropriate staffing through the Office of Student Life to address cases of academic dishonesty.

Fech noted that teaching students about academic honesty might need to be done at the elementary school level because when they get to college it is too late. Hecker noted that our admissions standards are changing and we could filter out our standards to the high schools and include academic honesty. He noted that faculty have a tendency to assume that students understand the definition of cheating and plagiarism, but this is not a good assumption. He stated that high schools vary greatly about teaching academic honesty and we have not done much to address cultural expectations.

Rudy reported that EVC Plowman has stated that she is willing to support a survey being conducted.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Honesty will be presenting a report at the April meeting of the Faculty Senate.

4.0 Announcements

4.1 President's Task Forces

Woodman reported that the President's task forces are go give their reports to the steering committee by the end of March. The steering committee will then present its recommendations to President Bounds in early April.

5.0 Approval of March 7, 2017 Minutes

Rudy moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Dawes and approved by the Executive Committee.

6.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

7.0 New Business

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:44 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, March 28, 2017 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Sheila Purdum, Secretary.