

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Dawes, Fech, Konecky, Lee, Peterson, Purcell, Rudy

Absent: Adenwalla, Belli, Hanrahan, Leiter, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Date: Tuesday, August 8, 2017

Location: 201 Canfield Administration 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 (*Purcell*)

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

2.0 EVC Plowman

2.1 Update on the Finals Week Schedule and Commencement Procedures

EVC Plowman asked what the next step is to get the Faculty Senate to consider the proposed changes to the finals week schedule and commencement procedures. Purcell stated that EVC Plowman needs to send her a proposal and Purcell will then charge the Grading and Examinations Committee to review the proposal and report its findings to the Faculty Senate. Purcell pointed out that ASUN needs to address the issue as well. EVC Plowman stated that she will send a formal proposal to Purcell and hopes that a decision can be made by next spring.

EVC Plowman noted that distributing diplomas at the graduation ceremony directly impacts the final exam schedule because exams cannot be given on Friday afternoon in order to allow time for exams to be graded and diplomas processed for the Saturday graduation. She reported that she has had discussions with the Chancellor about whether to discontinue handing out the diplomas, but the Chancellor has decided at this time to continue distributing the diplomas. She pointed out that the issue will be reconsidered once we have to move out of the Pinnacle Bank Arena because of lack of space. She stated that decisions will then need to be made on where to house the graduation ceremony and whether it should be divided into two ceremonies.

Rudy noted that University Registrar Morrell stated in a paper that the conflict of exams might be due to classes that do not meet during the regular class schedule and suggested that the classroom management scheduling people might be able to provide information on whether this is the cause of the problem. If so, consideration should be given to not allowing off-scheduled classes. EVC Plowman reported that Athletics has pointed out that there are professors who are giving finals during the 15th week which is not allowed and causes hardships for some students, particularly for some of the student-athletes. She noted that she is trying to work with the deans on this issue.

EVC Plowman stated that she will send a formal proposal about changing the exam schedule to Purcell.

2.2 Update on Budget Reduction

2.2.1 Faculty Concerns about the Possible Elimination of Faculty and Graduate TA Positions, Despite Vertical Cuts

EVC Plowman noted that President Bounds sent a message out last week with the latest update on the budget cuts. She noted that one example of a budget cut is the reimbursement rate for mileage and there has been some suggestions about printer costs. She stated that while most of the cuts are related to administrative/business costs, the academic units will be affected. She pointed out there are no definitive plans yet on how we will deal with the budget reduction.

Lee asked when Human Resources will be centralized. EVC Plowman stated that she thinks more information regarding the centralization of Human Resources, Procurement, and Information Technologies will be made in early September. Lee asked if some people will need to relocate if the services are moved to another campus. EVC Plowman stated that some savings might be found through the attrition of people leaving the university. She noted that there was a hiring freeze, particularly for staff positions last year which was intended to help with last year's cut.

Purcell pointed out that some of the President Bounds' task forces may not have realized the full impacts of their recommended changes for savings. Plowman noted that 60% of UNL's reimbursement for mileage is for IANR and most of that is for Extension. Purcell noted that for Extension personnel jobs require that they travel in order to serve the people of Nebraska. Rudy stated that Extension receives external funding and the federal reimbursement rate is 53.5 cents. He stated that the Extension faculty should be able to use the external funding money and get paid the federal reimbursement rate because the funds are not state dollars. Purcell pointed out that the Extension personnel will not be allowed to do this.

EVC Plowman stated that it is unlikely that all of the cuts will be covered through administrative savings and UNL will still need to deal with budget reductions. When asked, she said she has not heard anything, at this point, about eliminating faculty or graduate TA positions. She noted that we do need to ask some hard questions about how we use our graduate remission because it is a large part of our budget. She reported that she has asked each dean to look hard at possible places where budget cuts can be made.

2.3 Campus Safety Issues: 16th and 17th Street Changes - What are the Plans for Street Lights, Signage and other Efforts for Move-in and Start of the School Year?

Rudy pointed out that with the removal of the stop lights on 16th and 17th streets there is no longer any control of pedestrian traffic which is already causing traffic backups and problems and it is only going to get worse once the semester begins. He stated that there is real concern for the safety of pedestrians. EVC Plowman stated the project is actually a city project and she is not sure what can be done about the situation. She stated that she

will notify VC Jackson and ask her to contact the UNL Police to see if they can provide any assistance.

2.4 Vision for Student Affairs

EVC Plowman reported that Laurie Bellows has assumed the role of Interim Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs for two years, but a national search will begin at the end of Bellows' first year. She stated that Bellows has been working with the staff of Students Affairs to see what updates need to be made in order to make Student Affairs a dynamic student affairs office. She noted that the office has been underfunded and received a large budget cut some years ago, but efforts are underway to try and address the underfunding. She stated that Bellows is looking at best practices at other schools.

EVC Plowman reported that the Greek Vitality summit that was recently held has been beneficial with 91 people, including house leaders and house advisors, participating. She pointed out that there was discussion regarding student misconduct and that the administration wants the Greek system to take greater responsibility for policing its members.

Lee stated that it seems like the relationship between Student Affairs and the faculty needs to be strengthened and asked if the faculty can provide any input. EVC Plowman noted that this is something she wants her office to work on and there are many things that the faculty can get involved with. She pointed out that mental health is a major issue for many students with a growing number of students arriving to campus on medications for anxiety and with experience in high-risk drinking. She thinks the faculty could be helpful in spotting signs of trouble in students, but faculty would need training to identify these signs. Purcell noted ASUN is looking into mental health issues as well. EVC Plowman reported that she attended a meeting with Nebraska Medicine which operates the Health Center and she was impressed with the psychological services that they offer.

EVC Plowman stated that another area that needs attention is diversity. She noted that she had a brief opportunity to quickly look at the report from the diversity services that was recently conducted. She stated that while we have a lot of activity on campus relating to diversity, we do not have a clear focus so we need to have conversations about this issue. Lee asked if the diversity report can be sent to the Ad Hoc Committee on Diversity and Inclusiveness. EVC Plowman stated that she will ensure that the Committee receives a copy of the report.

EVC Plowman reported that she recently met with the LGBTQA+ committee and found out that the LGBTQA+ Resource Center is used not only by students, but faculty and staff as well, yet the Center is housed under Student Affairs. She stated that funding for this center doesn't seem to match the need for services. She pointed out that a survey of new students asked if they would appreciate the services of the LGBTQA office and over 400 responded yes showing the need for the Center.

2.5 Administration's Response to What Appears to be the Changing Focus of Civil Rights Regarding Transgender People, Immigrants, and Affirmative Action and the Resulting Effects on Campus Climate

EVC Plowman stated that at a recent meeting of Big Ten academic officers one of the main topics of conversation was regarding the changing focus of civil rights since the November elections. She noted that the University is very committed to academic freedom and free speech, but these can be difficult conversations to have given the current climate of the country. She said that the administration is open to any suggestions or feedback on how we can deal with these issues. She pointed out that every campus in the country is struggling with these same issues. Lee noted that there is a lot of litigation occurring around the nation regarding universities having safe places for free speech.

Lee stated that it would be helpful if either the Chancellor of EVC Green could speak publicly to international students and transgender students to assure them of the university's commitment to them. He noted that these groups in particular are feeling vulnerable since post-election.

2.6 Honors Program Status

EVC Plowman stated that Associate VC Goodburn is drafting a very rough proposal with the idea of having an honors college which would consist of discipline-based academics. She reported that an idea is to build an honors dorm where the program could be housed, but we would need to find a donor to fund the building of the dorm. She stated that we want to start the discussion about an honors college very soon and suggested having Associate VC Goodburn meet with the Executive Committee to begin those discussions. She pointed out that having an honors college would help us attract more high achieving students, particularly in the Big Ten because of our lower tuition rates.

Lee asked if the vision of the honors college goes beyond just having the professional schools involved. EVC Plowman stated that she would like to see every college have involvement in the honors college. Peterson noted that he teaches honors courses and it is very nice to have students from multiple colleges take the courses and he would like to see this aspect of the program retained. EVC Plowman stated that there would still be some required honors courses for students out of their discipline.

2.7 Re-creation of Teaching and Learning Center

Lee asked if any thought has been given to recreating a teaching and learning center. He noted that we used to have one but it was eliminated with earlier budget cuts and we are probably one of the only universities that does not have one. He stated that it probably does not need to provide all of the services that it used to. EVC Plowman agreed and stated that there are some people in her office who are considering a proposal to create one. She pointed out that many of the colleges have their own teaching and learning unit and the services they provide such as training international TA students and having instructional designers is needed across the campus.

2.8 Response to the Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Best Practices for Non-Tenure Track Faculty Members and Response to the Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Integrity

EVC Plowman stated that she has not had the opportunity to review the reports carefully, but asked what some of the highlights and suggestions of the report are that the administration might be able to address. Rudy stated that with the Professors of Practice, (PoP) the campus seems to be moving in the right direction, but there are some policies that need to be consistent across the campus. He stated that policies for Lecturers are lagging and there have been justifiable complaints from Lecturers, some who have taught at the university for many years. He noted that the Senate conducted a survey about three years ago on the non-tenure track faculty members and would like to conduct one again this fall to see if the campus is moving in the right direction. EVC Plowman encouraged conducting another survey. She reported that her own experience in the College of Business has shown what a positive influence Professors of Practice have. However, she recommended a review of the promotion procedures for PoPs to make sure they make sense. Lee noted that Interim VC Goddard is trying to develop more support for the research faculty similar to that for PoPs.

Rudy stated that there is a belief by some faculty members that Lecturers do not have terminal degrees and therefore cannot be moved into a Professor of Practice position. EVC Plowman stated that this belief is not accurate and that many Lecturers hold terminal degrees. Rudy asked if long-term Lecturers could have their positions converted to a Professor of Practice position and whether the search for this PoP position could be exempted. EVC Plowman stated that the Office of Institutional Equity and Compliance discourages this practice. She stated that one of the difficulties with Lecturers is that they are often paid out of temporary funds and we cannot use these funds for extended employment. She noted that the source of funds can be a deciding factor in why we use Lecturers and more permanent funding would be needed to fund Professor of Practice positions.

3.0 Gayle Schanou, Director, Benefits & Risk Management

3.1 Health Savings Accounts

Schanou reported that she was asked by Purcell to meet with the Executive Committee to provide an overview of what the Health Savings Account (HSA) is and why the university does not offer HSA at this time. She stated that currently the university offers a Medical Flexible Spending Account (FSA) which allows an employee to contribute up to \$2600 a year, but the money in this account expires at the end of the year.

Schanou stated that the advantage to an HSA is that the account belongs entirely to the individual. There is no infiltration from other vendors, no expiration day on the savings, employees can contribute as much as they want up to the maximum limit set by the IRS, the funds can be used to pay for health care expenses after retirement, and the FSA always belongs to the individual even if a person has a job change or becomes unemployed. She noted that unlike the FSA, which requires an employee to enroll each year, the HSA always belongs to the individual. She stated that another benefit to an

HSA is that the employee can have investment options and can choose which options to allow the funds to grow.

Lee asked what expenses are considered medical expenses because many insurance plans will not cover things like hearing aids. Schanou stated that most medical expenses are covered under an HSA. However, the HSA funds cannot be used for health care premiums, but if someone was on Medicare the HSA could be used to cover any additional premiums that someone would have.

Schanou pointed out that HSAs offer triple tax benefits if the funds are used for medical costs. She noted that a person would get the pre-tax deduction, the investment earnings are not taxed, and when the funds are used they are not taxed. She stated that the HSAs are very popular and more universities and employers are offering them.

Lee asked if heirs can inherit the funds. Schanou stated that descendants can inherit the funds but they will need to pay taxes on it.

Fech asked if a person has to have a high deductible plan. Schanou stated that this is correct and it is the biggest hurdle for the university offering an HSA. She stated that Benefits is working on trying to see if we can have a fourth health option. She noted that the problem is with the embedded deductible. She stated that HSAs require that the deductibles have to come from one plan and our pharmacy plan is separate from our Blue Cross/Blue Shield health coverage plan. She reported that it will take a lot of administrative work before the university could offer the HSA and there is limited time to get this done this year because open enrollment is in the fall.

Fech asked if Schanou envisions a scenario where the university would offer both an FSA and a HSA. Schanou pointed out that offering both could add more confusion about the funds. Fech asked if the university would eliminate the low option of the health care plan. Schanou stated that she does not envision that happening here. She reported that she has been in constant conversations with Varner Hall about our health care plan. She pointed out that we are grandfathered on our plan and changes would remove this which has some additional costs that need to be considered.

Fech asked if the university is still self-insured. Schanou stated that we are and being self-insured has helped us to keep our health care costs down. Purcell pointed out that we are getting hit with a 10% increase this year and next year in health care costs. Schanou stated that this is because we have had some really high claims recently. She pointed out that some years there is a high number of claims while other years are lower. Fech asked if Nebraska Medicine and UNMC are included in our self-insured plan. Schanou stated the UNMC, UNK, UNL, UNO, and Curtis are in our plan. She noted that retirees are actuarially separated out and Medicare is economically the best option for them, but the university does have a plan for retirees should they want it.

Purcell thanked Schanou for meeting with the Executive Committee.

Purcell asked if the Executive Committee should pass a resolution saying it supports the university having HSAs. Rudy suggested that Purcell send an email thanking Schanou for meeting with the Committee and stating that the Executive Committee supports the idea of offering HSAs.

4.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

5.0 Approval of July 25, 2017 Minutes

Peterson moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Fech and approved by the Executive Committee.

6.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Mileage Concerns Expressed by Extension Educators and Extension Specialists

Purcell presented a draft document that was generated because of numerous comments/concerns that she has received from Extension Educators, Extension Specialists and staff concerning President Bounds' announcement that the reimbursement for mileage will drop from 53.5 cents per mile to .25 cents. She asked the Executive Committee members to review the document and provide feedback. Purcell stated that if approved she would give the document to President Bounds, Senior Vice President Lechner, Regent Whitehouse, Chancellor Green, EVC Plowman, and VC Boehm. Lee moved that the document be approved on behalf of the Executive Committee. Konecky seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the Executive Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:33 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Konecky, Secretary.