

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
December 5, 2017
City Campus Union, Auditorium
Presidents Purcell, Rudy, and Woodman, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Purcell called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Meeting with Academic Planning Committee on Budget Cuts

President Purcell reported that the Senate Executive Committee will be meeting with the Academic Planning Committee to hear the Chancellor speak on the second round of proposed budget cuts. She noted that the Chancellor will address this later in today's meeting.

2.2 Equity Pay Increases for Extension Educators

President Purcell noted that the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee and the Senate Executive Committee worked with Extension and IANR administrators to determine that there were 45 Extension Educators who have been underpaid and these Educators will be receiving a combined total of \$180,000 in equity pay increases. She stated that the salary increases are scheduled to begin January 1.

3.0 Chancellor Green

Chancellor Green stated that the first issue he wanted to address was regarding academic freedom/free speech and the need for civil discourse. The second issue is in regards to a positive update on the budget.

Chancellor Green reported that at the Board of Regents meeting this morning the Board discussed the academic freedom/free speech issue after Professor Schleck presented the Open Letter from University of Nebraska Faculty on Recent Attacks on Our Institution that had been circulated to faculty members of the University. He noted that 315 current and former faculty members across the University system signed the letter. He pointed out that the University of Nebraska is dedicated to its tri-part mission, and for nearly 149 years the University has provided dedicated service to over 280,000 graduates. He noted that UNL alone provides programs of study and research across nine academic colleges and to over 26,000 students. Chancellor Green stated that both he and President Bounds made comments to the Board of Regents at the Board's meeting today in reference to the greater issue and its context.

Chancellor Green pointed out that we are living in a time when questions are being raised in regards to whether the greater academy is reflective of the greater public that it serves and the questions being raised about academic freedom/free speech are being raised on a national, and possibly, international level. Universities across the country are grappling with the same issue. He noted that the University does not discriminate based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, marital status, and/or political affiliation in its programs, activities, or employment. He stated that there is a belief among some people that the issue has been enveloped in a political perspective and that we have been unable to contain the fallout from the August 25th incident. He firmly stated that he believes academic freedom and freedom of expression is alive and well at UNL. He pointed out that this does not mean that the campus is perfect. He noted that this not the first time in the history of the campus that the question of academic freedom/free speech has been raised. He reported that in the late 1960's and early 1970's the same question was raised with more liberally-minded people feeling that their voice was not allowed on campus.

Chancellor Green pointed out that the campus has not been idle on addressing the issue of academic freedom/free speech. He reported that in 2016 Our Core Value and Beliefs statement was shared with the students, faculty, and staff of the campus (<https://diversity.unl.edu/our-core-values-beliefs>). He noted that the statement values inclusion and equity for all and that we all share in the responsibility of creating a positive culture. He stated that each member of the University community should be a role model for others. He reported that in 2016 the Husker Dialogues program was initiated and over 3,000 freshmen students gathered to discuss diversity and inclusion issues. He noted that the event was led by over 200 volunteers from the campus. He pointed out that this year over 3,200 students and 300 volunteers participated and Kansas State University employees came here to observe the program to learn about it so they could adapt a similar program to their campus.

Chancellor Green stated that the campus has the TIPS Incident Reporting System which allows any member of the university community to share matters they feel need to be addressed. He pointed out that, to date, no complaints have been made about people feeling that their political views have been suppressed on campus. He stated that a campus taskforce has worked on drafting a Freedom of Speech document which was adapted from the University of Chicago's statement and adopted by FIRE. He pointed out that this statement has been incorporated into a statement being drafted by NU Central Administration. He noted that the Senate has received a copy of the draft statement and is evaluating the document. He stated that the statement will eventually be given to the Board of Regents for approval in early 2018.

Chancellor Green reported that our policies for those wishing to come to campus to speak are being carefully evaluated. He noted that a diversity analysis was conducted by Halualani & Associates recently and an Atlas Diversity Benchmarking and Diversity Mapping for the campus has been developed and will be implemented. He reported that in mid-September the Colleges of Law and Journalism and Mass Communications hosted a debate on the importance of freedom of speech. He noted that the event was very well attended and well received by ASUN and other student organizations and in October there was a workshop on implicit bias where the campus hosted the Kierwan Institute from Ohio State University.

Chancellor Green announced that in the spring of 2018 Executive Vice Chancellor Plowman will initiate workshops on civil discourse. The workshops will look at the first amendment and discuss what it means for faculty, how to manage difficult conversations in the classroom, and free speech outside of the classroom. He reported that ASUN and the Graduate Student Assembly have been working with Interim Dean Tim Carr on developing a Bill of Rights for graduate students.

Chancellor Green stated that in January he will be inviting administrators, the Senate, UNOPA, UAAD, and ASUN to have a conversation about the academic freedom/free speech issue. He noted that the University is partnering with the Gallup organization to gain feedback on this and other issues with the university community. He stated that thought is also being given to having a national symposium on the issue. He wanted to thank people for the questions that have been raised and he pledges to continue to seek improvement in the building of Nebraska and its people. He believes that Nebraska can and will be a national force in dealing with the issue. He stated that the above information has been shared with the Board of Regents to make them aware of what has been occurring on campus, and noted that the administration has done the best it could to provide information, but there are some personnel issues that cannot be made public.

Chancellor Green reported that there was a major development since last month with the budget. As a result, he is suspending the additional proposed budget cuts that were to be presented to the Academic Planning Committee (APC) on December 6. He noted that when he first reported the budget cuts to the APC, the campus would be facing a \$6 million shortfall for the biennium and he wanted the APC to consider an additional \$2.5 million to address possible additional cuts to the state budget. He reported that the APC voted to move forward with the general budget framework and timeline in October and the first round of proposed budget cuts, \$3.7 million, was presented to the APC on November 15. He pointed out that these were all non-programmatic cuts. He stated that over the last couple of weeks he received good news from the NU System. One was that our health care costs were projected to be 10% per year based on what the actuarial advisors said, but the actual number has come in at 5.7%. He noted that this effectively wipes out our structural deficit for our health care costs. In addition, the budget efficiencies identified by the Budget Reduction Taskforces have exceeded our expectations already for this year. As a result, the structural deficit for any of the campuses is now gone under the current situation. He reported that UNL has also exceeded our tuition expectations because our enrollment is slightly higher than what was predicted.

Chancellor Green stated that a silver lining through the budget process is that we have gone through the planning and if we need to bring forward some budget cuts, we will be ready for them. He noted that while we are in a better place now, we need to remember that we are still having an \$11.3 million cut from our budget through the budget efficiency process.

Chancellor Green stated that he wanted to address the NU system budget reallocation that was recently reported in the newspapers. He pointed out that the proposal calls for reallocating resources among the four campuses. He noted that the current state appropriated budget model has been in place since the early 1990's and there is some inequity with this model. He stated that President Bounds wants to address the inequity and reported that we, and UNMC, are on the over-resourced side of the model and both of our budgets will be reduced to address the inequity. He pointed out that he agrees with the decision, although he is not happy about having less in our budget.

Professor Joeckel, School of Natural Resources, asked if the University will be a financial hostage of the State Government because of the academic freedom/free speech issue. Chancellor Green responded that this will not occur. Professor Joeckel asked if the English department will be singled out because of the August 25th incident. Chancellor Green stated that he does not perceive the department to be singled out by the University. Professor Joeckel asked if there will be any changes in the intellectual offerings of the University. Chancellor Green stated that he cannot say that there won't be some programmatic cuts because of the budget situation, but cuts would be made in a way that would do the least damage to the academic core. Professor Joeckel asked if there are any efforts to end tenure. Chancellor Green stated that to his knowledge, there are no efforts to remove or end tenure. Professor Joeckel asked about concerns from outside entities. Chancellor Green pointed out that the departments, colleges, and the administrators hear constructive comments and negative comments throughout the year. He noted that in relation to the ideology of the University, there does not appear to be any change from outside constituents. Professor Joeckel asked if the intellectual freedom of the faculty will be interfered with or will it be in the future. Chancellor Green responded no.

Professor Adenwalla, Physics and Astronomy, stated that she does not understand the reallocation of the NU budget model. She pointed out that one of the criteria used to justify the change was based on credit hour production, yet UNL produces 51% of the credit hours. Chancellor Green pointed out that the budget model that is being vetted does consider credit hour production, but other criteria factor in as well: courses may be weighted differently depending on the fields of studies and the costs involved in delivering specific courses are a few of the criteria that are being used. He stated that what makes this model difficult is that you have an academic health center at UNMC and then there is also IANR which is very different from the rest of the University system and all of these factors are pulled apart from the data. He stated that more information will be provided about the new budget model in the near future. Professor Adenwalla stated that you would assume that UNL would benefit with more money because it has more STEM fields, does more research, and because we are the flagship campus. Chancellor Green stated that he believes the President will speak in greater detail about the budget in the future if and when this unfolds further.

Professor Lee, Communication Studies, noted that the Chancellor had informed the Senate Executive Committee that departments having programmatic cuts would be notified several days before the announcement of the second round of budget cuts, but now that these cuts are not being put forward, he asked if any departments have been notified of the proposed cuts. Chancellor Green reported that no departments have been informed of any program cuts and pointed out that announcing that there is a proposal to cut a program at this time would be demoralizing.

Professor Brantner, Modern Languages & Literature, stated that she thought the Chancellor's deliberations as reported in the Op Ed piece were interesting and provided people, both inside and outside the University, with a broader understanding of the academic freedom/free speech issue. She asked what other reassurances can be given to faculty, instructors, and graduate students. Chancellor Green noted that there has been many discussions about the issue and about what has and hasn't happened. He noted that many of the rumors and reports have been inaccurate. He pointed out that in circumstances such as this, the decision process is not always the way you would like it to happen. He reported that he had numerous discussions with the Senate Executive Committee and that although these are difficult conversations, a university needs to have these kinds of discussions. He stated that after all of the publicity this fall that has occurred around this incident, one might wonder if you were a prospective student, regardless of your political view, whether you would feel comfortable to be here as a student. He stated that he has spoken with many parents about this issue and pointed out that we need to carefully listen to the parents and the prospective students.

Chancellor Green reported that the Graduate Student Assembly have been fully engaged around the issues that have arisen out of the process and they have asked valid questions regarding their responsibilities, the definition of academic freedom and freedom of speech. He stated that he believes that academic freedom and freedom of speech are alive and well on this campus, but we do need to have discussion about what is going on around the university as well as nationally across higher education.

Professor Billesbach, Biological Systems Engineering, noted that he has spent six years serving on the Student Judicial Board where he saw all kinds of cases involving student misconduct. He pointed out that for each case the focus was on providing remedial action as opposed to punitive action. He reported that he has spoken to alumni, graduate students, and faculty and there is the perception of whether their rights are being protected at the university. He asked what the Chancellor can do to prevent a cloud of fear from permeating the campus over this issue. He pointed out that no one really knows what happened with the incident and the

subsequent actions, and the perception is that a young woman exercised her right of free speech and was fired for it. Chancellor Green stated that he is trying to evaluate a way to try and provide people with a more accurate picture of what the unprofessional behavior was that was exhibited without violating personnel issues. Professor Billesbach suggested that the incident could be used as an educational moment.

4.0 Approval of November 7, 2017 Minutes

Professor Joeckel moved for approval of the minutes. Motioned seconded by Professor Adams, Plant Pathology, and approved by the Senate with several abstentions.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Emergency Motion - Purdue-Kaplan Letter of Support

President Purcell reported that the Executive Committee developed and approved a letter to support the faculty of Purdue University in opposing the purchase of Kaplan University. She stated that the letter is being presented to the Senate for approval, but the letter needs to be submitted by December 8. Therefore, she is asking that the motion be considered an emergency motion. Professor Hanrahan, Glenn Korff School of Music, moved that the motion be considered as an emergency. Motion seconded by Professor Brantner. The emergency motion was approved.

President Purcell noted that a copy of the letter was in the Senate packet and the motion to approve it came from the Executive Committee and does not require a second. The motion to approve the letter supporting the faculty of Purdue University was approved with five abstentions.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Mark Robertson, Emergency Management Coordinator

Mr. Robertson reported that his mission as Emergency Management Coordinator was to ensure a safe and peaceful quality of life for the University community. He appreciated being able to speak to the Senate and noted that he has previously spoken to the Executive Committee as well as the Information Technologies and Services Committee. He stated that as the Emergency Management Coordinator it is his responsibility to look at prevention, preparedness, response recovery and mitigation. He noted that there is an emergency management team and staff on campus to help if there was ever a large disaster, but the most important thing he does is to prepare our students, faculty, staff, and visitors should there be a disaster, and recent national events have led him to be busier than ever before. He pointed out that he frequently gets asked questions regarding an active shooter event.

Mr. Robertson stated that work is being done to have the tornado warnings report when the alarm is just a test of the system. To do this, he stated that a computer chip is required for each system that is in place. Professor Weissling, Special Education and Communication Disorders, asked if there is a reason that the fire alarms do not indicate that there is a fire. Mr. Robertson reported that in some buildings the alarms state that it is a fire alarm. Professor Weissling stated that this does not happen in her building. Mr. Robertson asked what the building was and said he would look into it.

Past President Woodman noted that recently there was a gas leak in Manter Hall and the fire alarms did not go off. He pointed out that only a text notice of the leak came through on the UNL Alert system and people did not realize that they needed to vacate the building until the fire trucks appeared. Mr. Robertson stated that there was follow up action on this incident and the UNL Police have worked with the Lincoln Fire Department to correct the situation. He noted that the LFD thought everyone on campus has the UNL Alert and that the fire alarms were not needed. He pointed out that this issue has since been corrected and fire alarms will be triggered if there is an incident in a building.

Mr. Robertson stated that the campus applied for a cost-free grant called Alertus which would be installed on a computer to alert people if there is a safety issue such as a tornado warning. He pointed out that the program does not require memory and is very low tech and would provide information of the alert and what action should be taken. He noted that a single key can be depressed to make the alert disappear. He stated that the alert is already on the Business & Finance computers and can easily be installed on computers in general purpose classrooms. Professor Lee asked if the alert notification is different than the text received on people's phones. Mr. Robertson stated that it is the same alert received on the phones. He pointed out that the alert can also be sent to other devices. He noted that the intent is to provide good information to people so they can make good, safe decisions and he hopes that everyone will get the message because it is important for people to know what they should do to protect themselves in cases of emergencies. He reported that he was informed that faculty consent would be needed to install the alert program on the general purpose classrooms.

President-Elect Rudy asked how many alerts typically occur during the day. Mr. Robertson stated that the number of alerts during classroom times may be about four times a year and the cancel notification of the emergency would not be transmitted to the general purpose classrooms computers because a button is hit in the system that turns the alert notification off.

Professor Kolbe, Johnny Carson School of Theatre & Film, reported that he uses computer software in all of his classes and asked if the alerts could be suppressed. Mr. Robertson stated that Information Technologies Services should be able to designate which computers should not have the Alertus System installed. Professor Kolbe asked if departments would still have control over which computers have the system installed. Mr. Robertson stated that departments could decide whether or not they want to have the system installed on the computers in the classrooms the department controls. He stated that he wants to make it available for those faculty members who feel they need to receive the alerts and the idea is to train everyone so they know what action they should take in case of an emergency. He pointed out that it is important that the leaders of the classes are getting the necessary information.

Brandy Judkins, ASUN/GSA representative, stated that many graduate students teach where there is a projection system but not necessarily a computer. She asked if the alerts only work in classrooms that have a computer. Mr. Robertson stated that there has been some interest in installing a beacon that can become active on a projection system which will provide the emergency information. He noted that the cost to install the beacon would be about \$600 or \$700 a unit.

Mr. Robertson pointed out that students today have been dealing with active shooter preparedness since middle school and up and many students do not feel that the University is doing enough about preparedness. He noted that ASUN has pressed for the campus to take more action so we can all be prepared should an emergency happen.

President-Elect Rudy asked if there has been any feedback regarding the removal of the blue emergency phones on campus. Mr. Robertson reported that there has been no feedback at all and in visiting with departments and colleges weekly, students have stated that they didn't know what the blue lights were for. He pointed out that nearly every student has a cell phone and apps have been looked into that students could install on their phone, but the students felt the apps were not necessary because they can dial 911 so quickly.

6.2 Motion to Have Alertus Emergency Notification System on Classroom Computers

President Purcell reported that the Executive Committee approved a motion to have the Alertus Emergency Notification System installed on campus computers for a two-year pilot program and it was being presented to the Senate this month, with voting on it next month.

Professor Hoyt, Sociology, stated that it is important to establish whether there is an option to not have the system installed on a classroom computer. Assistant Vice Chancellor Heath Tuttle explained that the idea is to only install the system on the 150 general purpose classroom computers. He stated that it would be difficult for these computers to be opted out individually. He noted that the system could also be installed on classroom computers that are controlled by a department or college, if it is requested. Past President Woodman asked if office computers would be affected. Assistant Vice Chancellor Tuttle stated that it would only be put on the general purpose classroom computers. Professor Kolbe asked whether the system would be placed on computers in open labs. Assistant Vice Chancellor Tuttle reported that these kinds of labs are dwindling in number. He noted that there has been some discussion about putting the Alertus system on lab and laptop check out computers so students using these computers would be notified of an emergency. Professor Billesbach asked if the faculty or a department would make the decision to have the program installed on computers controlled by the unit. Assistant Vice Chancellor Tuttle stated that it is his understanding that with the motion before the Senate, if approved, the alert system would be installed only on the general purpose classroom computers.

Professor Shea, School of Natural Resources, said that from his perspective the idea behind the motion is to make sure that we do everything possible to let people know that there is an emergency. He asked if there is an option to not install the system, how can the university community be uniformly informed of an emergency. Assistant Vice Chancellor Tuttle stated that if the Senate approves the motion, all general purpose classroom computers will have the alert system installed and individual faculty members teaching in these classrooms would not be able to opt out of using it for their course.

Mr. Robertson stated that one of the biggest complaints he receives about the UNL alert is why people are

being informed about something that is happening on East Campus or City Campus. He pointed out that a bus leaves either campus every ten minutes to transfer people to either campus and some people are off campus when they receive an alert. He stated that we want as many people to know about the emergency as possible so they can take appropriate action.

Professor Brown Kramer, Psychology, reported that what she finds disrupting is the monthly testing of the fire alarm systems. Mr. Robertson stated that the testing of the alarms on the first Wednesday of the month is in conjunction with tornado season. He pointed out that Facilities needs to test the alarms to ensure that they work properly, although they could possibly be tested at night with the custodial staff to see if the alarms are working. Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical and Computing Engineering, asked if the Wednesday time for testing the alarms can be changed to occur after a class ends. Mr. Robertson stated that 10:15 is when the county sets the tornado alarms and we are in compliance with the county which helps to eliminate confusion about the alarms.

Professor Fech, Metro District, wanted to thank Mr. Robertson and Assistant Vice Chancellor Tuttle for speaking at the meeting and pointed out that today is the 10th anniversary of the Van Maur shooting in Omaha and while he knows thinking about these kinds of emergencies can be difficult and inconvenient, he appreciates the work that the UNL Police are doing to keep all of us protected.

7.0 Open Mic Session

Professor Schleck stated that she was an Associate Professor in English and AAUP Nebraska State Conference President and is here today with other AAUP members Professor Stephen Ramsay and Professor Ken Bloom. She stated that she wanted to give a report of the reading of the open letter to the Board of Regents. She noted that 315 faculty members, representing 88 departments and programs across the university system signed the letter. She stated that the website posting the letter received over 62,000 hits over the past week. She stated that she agrees with the Chancellor that the issues happening across our campus are occurring at universities across the nation and we could be a leader in addressing the academic freedom/free speech issue.

Professor Schleck stated that she was inspired to write the open letter because of the significant knowledge she has about the incident that occurred on August 25th and the University's handling of the situation. She reported that the National AAUP is considering investigating the case and with budget cuts still looming over the University and the three State Senators seeking legislation that could threaten academic freedom, she does not think the issue is over. She recommends that faculty members stay apprised of the issue through the Faculty Senate, the Senate Executive Committee, and she encouraged people to join the AAUP. She stated that she will leave information on how to become a member of the AAUP.

Professor Shea noted that at the November Senate meeting he made some remarks regarding governance relating to the Bylaws. He reported that he sent an email message to all Senators inviting those interested in discussing governance at UNL and possible changes to the Bylaws contact him. He said that as of today he has heard from nine Senators which is about 10% of the Senate membership and unless he hears from significantly more Senators he will assume there is no particular sense of urgency and will not be inclined to initiate any action concerning the Bylaws at this time. He said that if anyone else is interested in discussing this now, please contact him (psheal@unl.edu). President Purcell pointed out that further revisions to the UNL Bylaws have been postponed due to the potential budget cuts as well as the Life Sciences taskforce. Professor Shea stated that he can appreciate the delays, but his interest is in proposing changes to the Bylaws that would increase the role of the faculty in governance.

President Purcell reported that she spoke to the Board of Regents at the Board meeting earlier today about the need for shared governance between the faculty and the administration. Her comments to the Board of Regents were:

“As I stand here, I face the top administrator, President Bounds, the Board of Regents elected by Nebraska citizens, and the Student Regents, elected by their respective student bodies. Missing of course, are any faculty on the Board.

The time is now to either change the State of Nebraska Constitution to allow faculty representatives to serve on the Board of Regents, or at a minimum and perhaps what is most practical is to authorize Faculty Representatives to serve on the committees of the Board of Regents.

The perspective and expertise of the faculty can be very helpful to you. You can use the diversity that faculty can bring. We both need the exchange of ideas.
We urge the Board of Regents to recommit to working with the faculty in the governance of the University of Nebraska system.

With shared governance comes shared ownership, shared responsibility and greater understanding of the work of the University from all perspectives. Thank you.”

Brandy Judkins wanted to invite everyone to join the Graduate Student Assembly Executive Board tomorrow between 11:00 and 1:00 for the Husker Out 2.0. She noted that 250 people attended the first event to discuss how sections of the proposed GOP tax plan would directly impact students. Because of the interest the GSA decided to hold a second event and she said that the GSA welcome faculty members.

Professor Brantner wanted to thank President Purcell for the Senate President’s Newsletter, especially the positive comments she wrote about the English department, and to thank her for her comments to the Board of Regents. She stated that she is puzzled that the faculty were not engaged more strongly in shared governance with the academic freedom/freedom of speech issue and stated that faculty members need to get more active. She pointed out that faculty members need to get more engaged.

Professor Hoyt noted that the least few weeks have been interesting times and he appreciates what the Chancellor has said at one level, yet is bothered by what he said at another level. He pointed out that the faculty are being asked to trust why an instructor was terminated and he would like to ask the Senate Executive Committee to share some insight on the issue. Professor Lee stated that the Executive Committee was told repeatedly that the actions taken against the instructor are not a result of what she said, but with her actions. He noted that she has not been dismissed. President Purcell reported that the lecturer has had a reassignment of her duties and is not teaching. Professor Hanrahan stated that President Bounds’ explanation for the actions taken was that the instructor was blocking the student’s ability to allow people to sign up for Turning Point USA. Professor Schleck pointed out that the blocking of the table is being interpreted by the administration as blocking someone’s right to speak to other students. However, the student involved leapt around the table to video the instructor. Professor Billesbach stated that the actions taken by the instructor do not seem to elevate to the punitive actions that were taken by the administration. He stated that when he served on the Student Judicial Board remedial solutions were always found when students have taken violent action, and he is concerned that there has been an overreaction to the situation which has resulted in punitive action against the instructor.

Professor Joeckel stated that a question he has is whether the student is being compensated by Turning Point USA. Professor Schleck reported that the student is still enrolled at the university and was enrolled the prior year. She stated that she has no idea whether the student is being compensated, but these kinds of positions do exist with Turning Point USA.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:16 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, January 9, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Regency Suite. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.