EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Belli, Dawes, Fech, Hanrahan, Latta Konecky, Lee, Leiter, Peterson, Purcell, Rudy, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Adenwalla

Date: Tuesday, November 28, 2017

Location: City Campus Union, Regency A

Guests: VC Boehm, IANR; Dean Hibberd, Nebraska Extension; Director Muller, IANR Analytics; Professor Brassil, Member Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee; Assistant Director Joy, Institutional Research; Senior Analyst Mohlman, Institutional Effectiveness & Analytics

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 2:31 p.m.

2.0 Investigation into Extension Educator Gender Pay Inequity
   Woodman, who serves as the chair of the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (FCAC), reported that the Committee met last May and for the first time data was requested on Extension Educators’ salaries. A letter was then sent to Chancellor Green reporting that the data received from Institutional Effectiveness & Analytics showed that, as a whole, male Extension Educators received an 18% boost in their salaries in comparison to females. Broken down the data showed that male Assistant Extension Educators received 10.79% more than females of the same rank, male Associate Extension Educators received 9% more than their female peers, and full Extension Educators received 12.6% more than their female peers. He reported that Chancellor Green asked the FCAC to reconvene in the fall to look into the issue further.

   Boehm reported that the first time he saw the data was in May shortly before the issue was discussed at a Faculty Senate Executive Committee meeting. He noted that he has great respect for his colleagues in Institutional Effectiveness, but more time and quality data and outcomes were needed to carefully review the information. He pointed out that Jennifer Muller was hired for a two-year period to help understand the data. He stated that annual salary increases are assigned with a focus on merit. He pointed out that timely promotion increases are expected to help
Extension Educators to progress on a reasonable salary trajectory and starting salaries are constantly evaluated to help us attract the top talent to Nebraska. He stated that one of the more challenging pieces of the data to work on was how to assess prior creditable service. He pointed out that there is now a system in place so assessment can be done more routinely and predictably and this new system was used when reviewing the data on all Extension Educators.

Hibberd reported that about two-thirds of Extension Educators are women which is a shift as more women are getting hired into these positions. He pointed out that the effort is to always get the best person for any position within Nebraska Extension. He noted that areas that were traditionally populated by male are now seeing an increase in female Extension Educators.

Hibberd presented data for Extension Educators who primarily work in 4-H. He noted that data for the first ten years was considered and it indicated that salaries are fairly tight between females and males when they first were hired, but a graph showed that there were some Educators whose salary did not rise in comparison to others over the ten year period. He stated that performance has been taken into consideration and a proposal has been made to give equity adjustments for Educators whose salaries were below the average.

Lee pointed out that most of the 4-H Extension Educators are women so the comparisons between females and males were limited. Hibberd stated that data was analyzed that showed that some 4-H Educators were willing to start at lower salaries. He noted that the other six program areas in Extension show different results with more Educators falling below the mid-line salary range. He stated that the total investment for the proposed equity adjustments for Extension Educators is $180,000. He pointed out that the data shows that Extension has done a good job of keeping salaries equal in the first ten years of employment, but the analysis shows that there are some equity adjustments that need to be made. He stated that he hoped once the adjustments are made that the salary gap will close considerably. He stated that for new hires IANR is looking at prior credible service and putting this into a formula to provide equitable salaries. Rudy asked if service, other than Extension, would be considered credible. Hibberd replied yes and noted that service involving some kind of teaching role would count.

Rudy asked how the amount of $4200 for promotion was determined. Hibberd stated that this has been standard operating practice for at least the last five years. Boehm noted that he appreciated that the salary discrepancy issue was identified and that the focus is on the early career professionals because rectifying any salary equity issues will play out later in their career.

Lee pointed out that some of the Extension Educators are not publishing research and he asked how some Extension Educators have such larger salaries. Hibberd pointed out that some Extension Educators are very active in obtaining grants and revenue fees and are very creative in the kinds of Extension work they do. He stated that when determining salary increase based on performance there is a strong focus on the impacts of the Educator’s work and whether it makes a difference.

Purcell pointed out that prior to 1998 ¼ of Extension salaries came from the counties and the counties could help provide larger salary increases to Extension Educators. Boehm noted that salary compression is a real issue and a great deal of work has gone into gathering and reviewing
the data to make sure it is accurate. He stated that Executive Vice President and Provost Susan Fritz is forming a group to discuss the data. He noted that the $180,000 has been put into the salary portfolio with the focus on making Extension Educator salaries equitable and fair. Purcell asked if the adjustments will be indicated as a gender equity increase. Boehm stated that it will be an equity adjustment. He stated that he will initiate the pay process and assumes that the increase for the identified Extension Educators will begin on January 1.

Peterson noted that the FCAC in the past has discussed changing the promotion amounts to percentages rather than having flat amounts of increase. He pointed out that this would be a better method, but would be more costly. Boehm stated that if our goal is to retain the very best faculty members, he thinks it would be better if the promotion was based on percentages.

Boehm noted that, in his position, he was able to see the name of the Extension Educators who fell below the line of the average salary and he made inquiries into each one to try and understand why their salaries were lower than their peers. Lee asked if Boehm is convinced that the judgements on the service of these Extension Educators was not gender based. Boehm reported that he was totally convinced. He noted that consideration was given to whether there were biases as to the areas that women took in Extension Educators such as 4-H versus animal science. However, he reported that changes are occurring in the field and more women are working in areas that had previously before been dominated by men. He noted that this change in the gender shifts is occurring in the Masters and PhD level too. He pointed out that salaries for Extension Educators could make a difference for students when deciding which career path they want to take.

Purcell stated that the 4-H Extension Educators are paid less than other Extension Educators, but they are the first ones to be asked, due to their close relations with the communities, to get the citizens of the State to rally support for the University. Boehm stated he did not disagree with Purcell’s statement, but 4-H Extension Educators are paid lower in other states too. He noted that he has felt good about being able to find $180,000 for the pay equity, but it will take time to keep Extension moving forward and to make changes. He suggested that Extension might someday want to review whether it should continue the three-class system of Extension Educators.

Rudy asked if there was any consistency in why an Extension Educator was an outlier on the chart. Hibberd reported that extremely high performance by other Extension Educators and low performance could be a factor. Woodman asked if the adjustments will be individualized or made across the board. Hibberd stated that they will be individualized and those people who are further below the average salary line will receive more of an adjustment.

Brassil asked if there were gender differences in credible service. Hibberd stated that this was looked at, but it did not have any real bearing on the statistical difference. Muller pointed out that the chart displayed was for Extension Educators with Masters’ degree, not PhDs.

Rudy stated that there could be interpretation by looking at the graph that there is a failure to promote women. Brassil noted that the 2017 data shows that there are improvements. Boehm reported that there are a number of Extension Educators who are promotable, but they are
choosing not to go up for promotion and he is looking to see if there is a disproportionate number of women in this group. He pointed out that these individuals are leaving $4200 off of their base salary which impacts their earning capacity in future years. Purcell stated that she would be willing to talk with these people to encourage them to go for promotion. Brassil noted that there could be an internal mentoring program. Hibberd pointed out that an internal mentoring program already exists, but it would be helpful if all Educators participated in it. Fech reported that he serves on the Extension promotion committee and the leader is very strong in mentoring people. He noted that humility is a strong characteristic of the Extension culture and this could be a factor in why people do not go up for promotion.

Boehm stated that he thinks the review of the Extension Educators’ salaries will be an annual event now. He pointed out that employees who have been here a long time have experienced bias in the system from years ago. He noted that there used to be four Extension districts which was collapsed down to three. He asked during the spring promotion and tenure process whether district bias could also occur. He stated that there are Extension Educators being promoted and groomed with regional groups, but he prefers a more unified group of Extension Educators with consolidated shared governance. He noted that if we are really trying to be fair and equitable we may want to explore different ways of assessing and evaluating the merits of promotion.

Brassil pointed out that there could be some biases with the starting salaries and asked if this consideration was factored into the data. Muller stated that this data has not been run yet.

Lee asked if the Extension Educators have to go up for promotion the same as tenure-track faculty members have to. Boehm stated that Extension is not so tight with promotion policies and individuals can remain in the system.

Belli asked if there has been consideration of changing the terms of the contracts for Extension Educators. Rather than having a 90-day notice they would be given a year’s notice of termination. Woodman stated that this has been proposed and Purcell stated that the proposal has stalled at the Central level with President Bounds. Boehm stated that he believes some consistency and protection for Extension Educators would be good.

Purcell thanked Brassil, Mohlman, Joy, Muller, Hibberd and Boehm for attending the meeting and working on this important issue.

3.0 New Business
3.1 Meeting with VC Jackson
Purcell reported that she and other Executive Committee members will be meeting with VC Jackson on Friday to discuss the new funding model announced by President Bounds.

4.0 Approval of November 14, 2017 Minutes
Peterson moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Latta Konecky and approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0 Unfinished Business
5.1 Review Purdue-Kaplan Purchase Letter of Support from the Faculty
The Executive Committee reviewed the proposed letter supporting the faculty of Purdue University in the decision not to purchase Kaplan University. Belli moved to approve the letter and to present it to the Faculty Senate at the December 5 meeting for the Senate to vote on. Motion seconded by Hanarahan and approved by the Committee.

5.2 Motion to add Alertus System to Classroom Computers
Purcell noted that Mark Robertson, Emergency Management Coordinator, will be speaking at the December 5 Senate meeting and members of the Executive Committee feel that a motion should be made to have the Alertus emergency alert system installed on classroom computers. Woodman questioned what the add-ons to the Alertus system would be. Leiter noted that most people have cell phones and receive alert messages so having the Alertus system could be overkill, but the students are concerned with getting notice of emergencies and what actions they should take in an emergency situation so a motion should be considered. Woodman suggested that it could be installed, but then revisited to see how it is working on the classroom computers. Hanrahan noted that he turns his cell phone while teaching and hopes his students do as well so he believes it is a good thing.

Latta Konecky moved that the Senate consider adding the Alertus system to the campus alert system for a pilot of two years. Belli seconded the motion. Motion approved with one abstention.

Woodman suggested that Robertson brief the Senate on whether there has been any feedback on the removal of the blue emergency phones on campus.

5.3 Review Statements Received Concerning Central Administration’s Freedom of Expression Statement
The Executive Committee reviewed the numerous comments received regarding the draft statement on Freedom of Expression from Central Administration. She asked that anyone with additional comments to send them to her by 5:00 p.m. on December 1. Purcell will share the comments collected with President Bounds on December 5 at the breakfast meeting before the Board of Regents meeting.

5.4 University of Nebraska New Funding Formula
Purcell reported that information pertaining to the change in the new funding formula was obtained from Omaha World-Herald reporter Rick Ruggles. Belli asked why the Faculty Senate did not receive this information from the administration. Purcell noted that the Executive Committee is scheduled to meet with President Bounds and Chancellor Green on Monday to discuss the issue. Vakilzadian voiced concern that the budget model was based on quantity, not quality and noted that there is no comparison between credit hour production and scholarly work.

5.5 Review Freedom of Speech/Academic Freedom at UNL
Purcell noted that she sent out a statement to Senators on Monday expressing the Executive Committee’s concern regarding academic freedom and freedom of speech on campus. She also informed the Senators that the Executive Committee will be meeting with President Bounds and Chancellor Green to discuss the issue further on Monday, December 4. She stated that she asked the Senators to share her email with their colleagues.
Peterson asked what the Senate plans on doing with the statement. Purcell noted that the open letter generated by faculty members of the AAUP has been sent to some faculty members, but she feels it should be sent to all faculty members. Lee made a motion for the Executive Committee to agree to provide the open letter to faculty members suggesting that they review the letter and decide whether they want to add their name to the list. Motion seconded by Belli and approved by the Executive Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:27 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 immediately following the Faculty Senate Meeting. The meeting will be held in the City Campus Union, Regency Suite. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.