

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
East Campus Union, Arbor Suite
February 3, 2015
Presidents Nickerson, Bender, and Guevara Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Nickerson called the meeting to order at 2:36 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Donation from the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association

President Nickerson reported that once again the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association is making a donation to the Senate. Professor Hay, Southeast Research & Extension Center, presented a check for \$1100 to help support the operation of the Faculty Senate Office. He noted that the money goes into the Schwartzkopf Fund at the Foundation. He reported that the NCEA is comprised of approximately 200 extension specialists, extension educators, extension assistants and county employees, predominantly those working in 4-H from around the state. He noted that the donation is not to support lobbying efforts, but to help support the functioning of the Faculty Senate.

3.0 Chancellor Perlman

Chancellor Perlman stated that he hoped some of the faculty were able to interact with President Bounds who will begin working at the university on April 13. He stated that President Bounds has been very well received. He reported that he is very optimistic as all of his interactions with President Bounds have been very good. He stated that as soon as President Bounds' schedule is clear, he hopes to have a reception for him at UNL.

Chancellor Perlman reported that although the task of raising \$84 million for the new College of Business Administration building was daunting, enough money has been raised to issue bids for construction to begin. He noted that \$7 million more is needed, but he is confident that the money can be raised. He pointed out that this is an extremely important project for City Campus.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the commons area of Love Libraries is coming along. He reported that the funding for renovations to Manter Hall is not quite there yet, but he is confident that there will be enough to move forward with renovating the building. He pointed out that the timing of Manter Hall is significant because most freshmen take a life sciences course which means the building is heavily used. He stated that the new teaching labs in Brace Hall are ready so Manter can be taken off line to begin the renovation.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the Union Bank space in the City Campus Union is currently under construction. He pointed out that the Union Bank partnership will be beneficial to us and their bid was very much in excess of bids from other banks. He stated that having Union Bank on campus will generate approximately \$700,000 a year, half of which goes to support UCARE and provides scholarships for education abroad. He noted that all of the money generated from the contract with Union Bank goes back to student programs which is a high priority for the campus.

Chancellor Perlman noted that the next biennial budget for the state will be decided this spring by the Legislature. He stated that there will be a legislative hearing on the proposed university budget on March 3, but we will not know the Legislature's decision until sometime in May. He reported that the Governor has recommended a 3% increase for all agencies in the state and the university and he believes this is an optimistic sign for us and indicates that the university is appreciated. He pointed out that a 3% increase is a good place to begin budget discussions with the Legislature.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the university's budget is being presented differently this year. In the past it was presented as one complete budget, but this year it will be divided into three parts. He noted that he does not know what the consequences will be for presenting the budget this way, but the idea is to distinguish our core operations from the economic development portion of the budget. He stated that the first part of the budget that will be presented is the core university budget which is funded by state dollars and tuition and reflects the inevitable increase in operating costs. He stated that if the core budget increases by 3%, and there are salary increases of 3%, there would be a \$12 million shortfall for the entire university system, and UNL would be hit with half of the deficit. He pointed out that the shortfall would not include any money raised by a tuition increase.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the second part of the budget that will be presented is for strategic initiatives. He noted that this would add 1% increase to the merit based campuses because we are further behind our peers in terms of salaries. He noted that the request asks for \$10 million for the next two years for strategic initiatives, this includes funding for programs of excellence and some financial aid for students.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the economic competitiveness portion of the budget is the third part of the budget and is comprised of initiatives that are explicitly designed to benefit the state of Nebraska which is a key to our economic success in the future. He stated that the proposed funds would contribute to Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC), funding for the two colleges of the Peter Kiewit Institute, help with health care in rural Nebraska, and contribute to the research that is being done with STRATCOM and national defense. He stated that the request for the economic competitiveness budget is \$10 million for the next two years.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he believes we are not badly positioned going into the biennial budget and he believes the Legislature is pretty friendly towards the university. He stated that another bill that is being introduced is the intercampus acceleration fund. This is a one-time fund that would come from the cash reserve. He reported that it is more difficult to negotiate space with private companies on NIC if the space will not be available until a reasonable time. He noted that it is hard to get a developer to put up a large building in the hopes that it will be leased. He stated that the request to the legislature is to create a \$25 million revolving fund. The developer would put in \$25 million, and once the building is half way leased, the developer would put our share back into the revolving fund so construction on another building could begin. He noted that he has seen this work at other research campuses.

Chancellor Perlman reported that with the retirement of Linda Crump the office of Equity, Access, and Diversity was restructured because it was felt that we needed to build up our compliance and investigative aspects of the office and to be more vigilant with respect to sexual misconduct under Title IX. He stated that a search was conducted to find a new director and initially we had three candidates, one of who withdrew. It was believed that the other two were not quite ready in their careers to take on the role of director. He stated that a targeted search was then conducted and a lawyer with the firm of Jackson Lewis PC in Omaha was found and subsequently hired. Susan Foster, the new director of Institutional Equity and Compliance, as the office has been renamed, has been hired. She has worked in areas of compliance and provided guidance to clients in all areas of employment related issues. He noted that Foster was an elementary teacher in the Millard schools. He pointed out that the targeted search had to be kept confidential because we did not want to jeopardize her position with the law firm. He reported that all of those who interacted with her during the interview process were enthusiastic and he believes she will bring some real energy to the office. He noted that she has a real passion for diversity and thinks she will be aggressive in pushing the diversity initiative.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the search for a new SVCAA is progressing. He noted that VC Green is the chair of the search committee and a search firm has been hired. He stated that candidates are now being identified and encouraged faculty members to submit names if they know of someone that would make a good SVCAA. He stated that he hopes the search committee will actively start interviewing in 4 – 6 weeks.

Chancellor Perlman reported that six or seven candidates have qualified for airport interviews for the Director of the UNL Alumni Association position and these interviews should begin shortly. The hope is that the list will be narrowed down to two or three finalists.

Professor Joeckel, School of Natural Resources, noted that the Chancellor said that the presentation of the university's budget was in a new format and asked how the decision was made to present it this way. Chancellor Perlman reported that the decision was made based on conversations with Interim President Linder, the Chancellors, legislators, and with the advice of Senior Associate VP for University Relations Ron Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor on Community Relations Michelle Waite. He stated that he believes the presentation provides a fairer representation of all of the things the university does for the state. Professor Joeckel asked if presenting the budget this way could endanger the core budget. Chancellor Perlman stated that there is always a risk, but he does not think this will happen.

Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical Engineering, pointed out that over the last few years the faculty salary increases have partly been used to cover budget shortfalls and asked if this was going to occur again. Chancellor Perlman noted that he indicated when part of the salary increase was used this year to cover the budget that if enrollment and tuition revenue had increased he would try to return the funds to the salary pool. He reported that he has just recently learned of the spring enrollment figures and he will be able to add funds back into the salary pool in July. Professor Vakilzadian asked if this means that faculty could see a 4%

increase in their salaries. Chancellor Perlman noted that it will depend on what percentage the legislature provides for salary increases. He stated that he hopes to be able to put 1% back into the salary pool.

Past President Guevara, Modern Languages & Literature, asked if the problem with online tuition dollars that helped to create a budget shortfall last year has been resolved. Chancellor Perlman reported that the issue of online courses for our own resident students has been resolved. He stated that the details of how to incent faculty to do courses for non-residential students are not yet clear.

Professor Vakilzadian asked if there will be a tuition increase. Chancellor Perlman stated that he suspects there will be some increase. He reported that 1% in state contribution generates \$5 million system wide. A 1% in tuition generates \$3 million for the campus. He stated that an increase will be proposed to the Board of Regents, but ultimately it will be the Board who makes this decision.

Chancellor Perlman stated that some of the really good things occurring on campus are the result of faculty initiatives and he wanted to share this information. He stated that the faculty of the Life Sciences have been pushing for some time to have an interdisciplinary program that will bring courses in these disciplines from both East and City Campus together. This will enable the Life Sciences to recruit more graduate students and do some interesting work. He reported that we now have an interdisciplinary program in complex biological systems. Collective recruiting by the departments involved have resulted in attracting some extraordinary students. The students will rotate among various laboratories in the departments involved in the program during their first year, but not have a home department. This will allow them the opportunity to determine where they want to focus their program. He stated that this interdisciplinary program gets faculty members to interact with one another and it is an exciting project that has been pulled together by ambitious and creative faculty members.

Chancellor Perlman reported that he hopes there will be a major retreat in the fall on Nebraska Innovation Campus (NIC) that will focus on how the humanities and social sciences can engage with the private sector on NIC. He stated that the administration really wants to engage the humanities and social sciences on NIC and to have them play a role on the campus. He stated that some national experts will speak on the subject and suggest how we can generate more interest. He noted that the Maker Space on NIC is being constructed and there will be 20,000 square feet of space for it. He reported that there will be equipment in the building including things such as 3D printers, wood working equipment, sewing machines, laser cutters, and other equipment. He stated that Professor Farritor is teaching in the Maker's Space and there are approximately 50 students from a wide variety of disciplines enrolled. He noted that the first class had the art students showing the engineers how to make their aprons on the sewing machines (the first equipment to arrive) and then the engineering students showed the art students how the 3D printers could be used.

Chancellor Perlman reported that spring enrollment figures were positive and ahead of last year which will hopefully allow for the additional increase in salaries. He stated that resident students were down by 1%, but international students rose to 8.4%. He noted that this emphasizes the importance of our recruiting efforts. He stated that 23% of our undergraduate students are now non-resident students and overall we have approximately 1500-1700 international undergraduate students, and if we did not have them we would need to have budget cuts. He stated that he wants to emphasize how important it is to globalize our campus. He pointed out that our domestic students need to experience diversity and globalizing our campus is critically important for our success. He stated that we need to continue to work hard for our global engagement.

Professor Rudy, Health and Nutrition, asked if our retention rates have improved. Chancellor Perlman stated that the general impression is that our retention rates have improved, although we do not have the exact figures yet. He pointed out that an important thing the campus needs to consider is that not all students leave over the breaks. We have international students here and we need to think how we can make the campus a more friendly and accommodating place for them during the breaks when they remain but much of the campus is closed.

President Nickerson asked how much money has been put into the complex biological systems program. Chancellor Perlman reported \$200,000 was put in to backstop the program. He noted that there has been some concerns about having graduate students going between the departments. He stated that if a graduate student cycles through the first year and finds there is no grant money to fund the student we will find a way to bridge the gap. He stated that he thinks everyone involved is more confident that units will be more willing to take risks once they see how the program works.

Professor Vakilzadian asked if the Maker's space is available for all faculty to use. Chancellor Perlman

pointed out that the space is open to anyone, even people outside the university, through a membership. He stated that an individual membership entitles a person to use whatever machine you want to use, as long as you can safely operate the machine. He stated that he hopes people will be engaged with the Maker's space. Professor Vakilzadian asked if faculty and students will be assessed a fee for using the space. Chancellor Perlman stated that there will be a fee for faculty, staff, and students, but it will not be much. He pointed out that he would be shocked if anyone could find a better deal because he does not think there are laser cutters that could be rented more cheaply.

Professor Lee, Communication Studies, asked what will happen to the old College of Business Administration building. Chancellor Perlman stated that it will be utilized in some way and there is a group that is trying to develop a plan on how to best utilize it for the campus. Professor Lee asked if it is likely to be used for departments or just classroom space. Chancellor Perlman noted that anything is possible. He stated that we need to maximize the impact of its use for the campus, and he is sure there won't be a shortage of claimants wanting to use the space. He noted that we will have a few years to determine how it will be used.

4.0 Approval of January 13, 2015

Approval of the minutes was postponed until the March 3 meeting due to the lack of a quorum.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Convocations Committee (Professor Lu)

President Nickerson reported that the report has been postponed until next month because Professor Lu was unable to get back from Chicago due to the weather.

5.2 Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (Professor Swenseth)

Professor Swenseth reported that each year the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (IAC) conducts a study on some aspect of student-athletes, the most recent one focusing on our missed class policy. He noted that the IAC's subcommittee reviews the schedule for each team to make sure that the scheduled games will not put the student in violation of the policy. He pointed out that the scheduling has become somewhat more difficult since joining the Big Ten because the other universities do not have a similar policy. He noted that we do not allow competition during finals week which is when the NCAA finals in volleyball occur. He stated that the difficulty with scheduling is causing the IAC to review the policy and there could be some recommended changes, but the Committee wants to conduct a trial of them before bringing them to the Senate as a proposal.

Professor Swenseth stated that the current year study is on the tutoring process. He noted that there have been some violations at some institutions recently and the IAC's subcommittee is reviewing ours to make sure nothing like that happens here. He stated that other activities of the IAC include reviewing transfer and scholarship appeals. He noted that there have been very few problems with these.

Professor Rudy stated that he noticed in the report that there is an item regarding independent courses. He asked if Professor Swenseth could explain why the IAC looked into these courses. Professor Swenseth stated that it occurred because of recent incidents that happened at some other schools. He stated that we wanted to check to make sure that we do not have any courses that are over populated by student-athletes because it could be an indication that these are courses where student-athletes could easily get a good grade.

Professor Adams, Plant Pathology, asked if some student-athletes would not be able to keep up with some courses if they were not available online. Professor Swenseth pointed out that it is the student's responsibility to address any issues with the courses they take and they should be able to keep up with the course without having to get access to it online. If this becomes an issue, the IAC may need to address the situation. Professor Lee stated that it has been his experience that the student-athletes that have the most difficulties are the baseball and softball students because of the travel involved. Professor Swenseth noted that these two sports have the most problems and knows that the competition season has been moved because of the conflicts. He reported that there have been instances when their games had to be rescheduled due to weather problems, but if the rescheduling causes the student-athletes to miss an extra day of class that will cause them to go over the limit of allowable absences, the IAC stands up to say that the game cannot be rescheduled on a particular day. He noted that golf can be a real issue because they can't compete on the weekends because the courses are open to the public.

Professor Rudy noted that over the holiday break a football player was suspended. The player appealed the suspension but was denied. He asked if the player received any assistance with making the appeal. Professor Swenseth stated that he is not aware that the player received any assistance.

5.3 Honorary Degrees Committee (Professor Black)

Professor Black stated that the Honorary Degrees Committee's first responsibility is to make recommendations for honorary degrees to the Faculty Senate. If these nominations are approved by the Faculty Senate, the nominations are then forwarded to the Chancellor for approval, ultimately going to the Board of Regents for final approval. He noted that two nominations were approved this year by the Senate and forwarded to the Chancellor.

Professor Black stated that the other responsibility of the Honorary Degrees Committee is to review nominations for the Pound Howard Award which is the most prestigious award the university offers, although it does not come with a financial benefit, it recognizes extraordinary contributions that an individual has made to the university. He reported that seven nominations of very highly qualified individuals were received this year. He stated that the nomination files include recommendation letters, both internal and external letters of support and a formal presentation is made to the Committee by the nominators. He reported that it was difficult to pare down the nominations this year because of the national and international contributions made by the nominees. As a result, three nominees are being put forward to the Senate for approval. He stated that the nominees' diversity attests to their qualifications and each one is highly qualified. He reported that the Committee was enthusiastic about the nominations and hoped that the Senate approves them.

6.0 Pound Howard Award Ballot

President Nickerson stated that there was a quorum earlier in the meeting but several people left resulting in the lack of a quorum. Coordinator Griffin noted that several years ago the Senate was unable to vote on the Pound Howard ballots at the meeting due to lack of a quorum so the vote was taken electronically. She stated that she would send the ballots out to the Senators by email asking them to cast their vote by Friday.

7.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

8.0 New Business

8.1 Motion to Approve the Ballot for Elections to the Academic Planning Committee, the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee, and the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Panel

President Nickerson reported that the Committee on Committees is making a motion for the Senate to approve the ballot. He pointed out that the motion does not need a second because it is from a Senate Committee. The motion will be voted on at the next meeting.

8.2 The Process for Trying to Make Changes to State Statutes that Would Benefit the University – Travel Reimbursement (Senior Associate Vice President for University Affairs Ron Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor for Community Relations Michelle Waite)

Nickerson reported that he asked Sr. VP Withem and Assistant to the Chancellor Waite to speak to the Senate to educate the faculty on how they can interact with the Legislature. He noted that in some respects this is a follow up on the travel reimbursement issue and what the faculty can possibly do to change the policy so the reimbursement process is not so cumbersome and time consuming.

Sr. VP Withem stated that he works in Varner Hall with the President and is the director of governmental relations for the university system. This requires him monitoring what is going on in the Legislature that would impact the university. He also carries the position of the university forward to the Legislature. He noted that each campus has a legislative liaison and each week he meets with the campus liaisons to help determine what the university's position should be on certain bills coming before the Legislature.

Sr. VP Withem stated that in order to introduce any changes to an existing state statute you need to have a state senator introduce a bill for you. He pointed out that this is not an easy process and requires someone who has a working relationship with a member of the Legislature. He noted that the state legislator will need to formulate the arguments to support the bill.

Sr. VP Withem agreed that it would be easier to get travel reimbursement if we had a system that allowed a per diem rather than the current system which requires receipts for all purchases. He stated that if the Senate could find a Legislator who is willing to present a bill to change the current procedures, the Legislator would draft the bill. He pointed out that bill can only be presented in the first ten days of a legislative session. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite stated that if someone has an idea concerning a proposed bill it would be a good idea to work with a department chair or a dean. She noted that private citizens could approach a Legislator as well. She stated that the state used to have a per diem system, but this changed several years ago based on some of the auditing processes that were taking place. She noted that the university has spoken to legislators about the

problems with the current system but to no avail. She pointed out that there are 18 new senators in the Legislature and they could be made aware of the problems and perhaps side with the university.

Assistant to the Chancellor Waite reported that Nebraska is the only state with a unicameral system which means that there is one house with no political parties. She stated that when a bill is introduced it goes through three stages of debate and there is a public hearing on it. She reported that the Legislature is in a 90-day session and the university's budget will be debated on during this time. She stated that approximately 700 bills are introduced during the session. She pointed out that the Unicameral is very citizen friendly and very receptive to testimony. She suggested that if the Senate still feels strongly about this issue it might want to take it forward to the President's office and eventually be put into the university package.

Professor Farrell, Agricultural Leadership, Education & Communications, asked if there was new legislation that was introduced that changed the process for getting reimbursements because there used to be a per diem. Sr. VP Withem reported that about five or six years ago there was a bill that dealt with how long a state employee had to file a reimbursement. He noted that people were not filing their reimbursements in a timely manner and a bill was introduced to change the period of time when a reimbursement claim needed to be filed. In the back of the bill was a section that said that receipts have to be provided for actual expenses. He stated that he does not think this part of the bill was ever discussed. Professor Farrell asked if all of the campuses are frustrated with the reimbursement process. Sr. VP Withem stated that he has heard complaints and frustration with the process even from the business officials that have to process all of the vouchers. Professor Rudy asked if the Legislators are required to submit receipts or if they are allowed a per diem. Sr. VP Withem reported that they are on a per diem. Professor Joeckel asked if the rule about receipts being required is absolutely uniform across the state. Sr. VP Withem stated that he believes it applies to all state agencies. Professor Farrell noted that the university, being a state agency, must follow the rules of the state.

President Nickerson noted that the Senate had a very well attended and lively discussion in November about the problems with the reimbursement process and the audit requirements that the university is subjected to which is the reason behind wanting to try and get a bill formulated that would remove the cumbersome procedure. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite stated that discussions on introducing a bill should begin sometime this year because it would need to be introduced in January. She suggested that a message could be taken to the President's office about the issue.

Professor Hays asked how credible the university is today in terms of the presentation of our budget. Sr. VP Withem stated that when he was a member of the Legislature and chaired the Education Committee there was a sense that the university didn't get along well with the other state entities, but he thinks today the university is received a lot better. He pointed out that the university's goal is to show that it is making significant contributions to the state and is not just asking for money. He reported that the more the university can interact and provide information to the Legislators, the more we can contribute to the state. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite agreed and said that the university tries to be seen as a resource. She noted that it is helpful when legislators are invited to events or activities occurring on campus because it gives them a hands on perspective. She pointed out that the campuses working together and having a unified approach to the legislation seems to be more effective.

Professor Rudy asked if the university provides any guidelines on how to approach the Legislature as a private citizen. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite stated that when she is contacted she usually advises that any university employee testifying to the Legislature give the disclaimer that they are not representing the university, but they can provide their title for where they work. She noted that the first amendment rights allows anyone to speak as a citizen. She stated that if anyone has any questions, they should feel free to contact her.

President Nickerson asked if there are any particular issues that faculty should speak about. Assistant to the Chancellor Waite stated that 11 bills can be discussed in one day by the Legislature, and the campus liaisons and Sr. VP Withem have to discuss the strategy to see who should be asked to testify about the bills. She noted that a bill is coming up, which she discussed with the Executive Committee, that would have impact on the university. It is LB 54 and it deals with transfer of credit from Nebraska colleges and universities. As currently drafted the bill allows the Coordinating Commission to draft policies, not guidelines, on what courses can be transferred. This would take the voice of the faculty out of the process of deciding what courses would qualify for transfer. She stated that a hearing has already been held about the bill. Sr. VP Withem pointed out that there is nothing more at the heart of faculty governance than who decides what courses are acceptable for an academic program. Past President Guevara stated that we need to make sure that LB 54 does not get passed because other institutions could alter their courses as they see fit which could be detrimental to academic

programs at the university.

8.3 Additional Items of Interest

Professor Adams noted that he did not have a chance to ask the Chancellor about the graduate student housing that will be demolished on East Campus, yet the Chancellor talked about the need for bringing in more international students. He stated that this housing provides a community for international students and their families which gives them a sense of security and he believes the residents will be dramatically affected by the forced move. He pointed out that many of the spouses of international graduate students do not drive and he worries about what kind of housing these families would be able to get in town. President Nickerson stated that the Executive Committee could raise this issue with the Chancellor.

Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, asked what the status is of the draft guidelines on Extension Educators serving on outside boards. President Nickerson stated that it is his understanding that the document, as revised by the Executive Committee, has been accepted by Dean Hibberd and VC Green and is now at the university lawyers. He stated that it still needs to be decided whether the guidelines apply to all faculty members or just Extension Educators. Professor Peterson questioned who will make this decision. He pointed out that there are the Regents bylaws and policies that must be followed and asked if these would merely be guidelines. Professor Steffen, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences, pointed out that the revised guidelines put all of the current Regents bylaws and policies into one easily understood document. He noted that UNL has its own policies and Extension was coming up with its own set. The revised document outlines all of the policies and lists them in one place. He pointed out that the big advantage to having the document is that if you go through the guideline process, and you are given permission to serve on a board and then evaluated each year knowing you are serving on a board, someone cannot try to kick you off the board, particularly for political reasons. It basically provides protection for a faculty member. Professor Peterson noted that if it is just a document that it wouldn't have to be approved. President Nickerson stated that the document extends the existing policies and provides some support. Professor Joeckel noted that most importantly is the dialogue that centered around the document because it made the administrators hear the faculty's viewpoint.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Tad Wysocki, Secretary.