

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
East Campus Union, Arbor Suite
Presidents Woodman, Purcell, and Bender, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Woodman called the meeting to order at 2:35 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

President Woodman welcomed the Senators back and reminded them of the expectations of being a Senator: to attend meetings, listen to guests and participate in the meetings, share the Executive Committee and Senate minutes with colleagues, and bring issues of concern to any member of the Executive Committee. He pointed out that the Executive Committee minutes often provide faculty members with information on current and upcoming issues and initiatives.

3.0 Interim SVCAA Kostelnik

Interim SVCAA Kostelnik welcomed the faculty back and noted that the faculty is the heart of the university and she is delighted to speak to the Senate. She stated that there will be good news tomorrow morning when the announcement is made about the new enrollment figures. She stated that enrollment numbers have increased in almost every category for both in-state and out-of-state students.

Interim SVCAA Kostelnik reported that she met with the Executive Committee recently and had discussions about enrollment. She noted that while enrollment numbers are important, getting students and retaining them are not always the same thing. She pointed out that there are a lot of programs for first-year students: First Huskers, for students who are the first generation of their family to attend college; programs to help military students, which we have been nationally recognized for; and a first-year experience program to name a few. She pointed out that research shows that students who are going to remain at a university have trajectory established by the 8th or 9th week of classes, but the same holds true for students who will not remain. She reported that one strategy that helps students is taking class attendance. While this can be difficult to do, particularly in large classes, it matters to students when they know that the professor is paying attention to whether they are present. She noted that this summer she worked with parents whose child decided not to return to campus. The students were struggling in school, yet very few of them had a note from the instructor identifying the student as not attending class. She pointed out that students who have been flagged by an instructor for poor attendance are contacted by advisors who can assist the student in getting the help they need.

Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that research shows that giving assignments over a period of time, especially to freshmen and sophomores, makes a difference in whether they succeed as a student. She noted that it is hard for students to gauge their progress in a course if they do not get realistic feedback on how they are doing. She pointed out that not getting feedback until midterm can have a negative impact on retaining students. She stated that it does not take much work on the part of the faculty member to help retain students. Just letting the advisor know that they are missing class and giving students early assignments are just a few things that can easily be done.

Interim SVCAA Kostelnik reported that there are some new people in Academic Affairs. She noted that former Associate VC Lance Perez is now Interim Dean of the College of Engineering and has been replaced by Professor Judy Walker who is serving as Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty Affairs. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik reported that Sonia Feigenbaum is now an Associate Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs overseeing International Engagement and originating activities and programs to internationalize the faculty and academic units to build strategic international partnerships. She stated that Associate VC Feigenbaum will consolidate international affairs efforts. She noted that Associate VC Feigenbaum comes from Brown University and she has a great deal of experience in international affairs.

Interim SVCAA Kostelnik reported that the searches for the Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost and Vice Chancellor of IANR are going well and Chancellor Green hopes to have the new people for these positions in place by January 1.

Professor Lee, Communication Studies, noted that Chancellor Green informed the Executive Committee that Professor Berger, Director of the Honors Program, was retiring next year and Chancellor Green wants to

review the Program to see if it needed to be improved. He asked if Interim SVCAA Kostelnik had any insights of what will be done with the Honors Program. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that a transition allows you the opportunity to review what you have been doing and plans are to have an external team come in to conduct an academic program review very soon of the Honors Program. She stated that the thinking right now is to grow the program, but what that growth might be, such as more students, more faculty, and more courses, needs to be determined. She stated that she will have more information the next time she speaks to the Senate.

Professor Soundararajan, Biochemistry, pointed out that we already have an Honors Program that spans many disciplines, but we do not have an Honors College and asked whether there is consideration to creating an Honors College. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that Professor Soundararajan is correct. She noted that what the administration is thinking about the Honors Program is what growth will look like. She stated that no one has suggested that it be moved from a program to a college. She stated that the questions is what is the best way to serve these students, to teach them, support them, and attract honors students. In order to do all of this we will need the best infrastructure.

Professor Rudy, Nutrition and Health Sciences, asked for an update on the biennial program assessments, the learning objective outcome assessments. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that when you look around the country those universities that can best tell their stories can talk about the learning outcomes for their students. There is a lot of pressure for universities to have these outcomes and the reason for having them is that it makes it easier to communicate to the students, the state, and others. She said that even if we didn't have external encouragement to identify outcomes, it behooves us to have them. She stated that she wants to see the assessment program continue, and noted that universities around the world are conducting assessment.

Professor Ladunga, Statistics, pointed out that it can be difficult to keep outstanding students because they can get such good scholarships elsewhere. He noted that funds are distributed to departments for the whole academic year, but nothing is available if funds are needed urgently to help out students and he suggested that there be some flexibility with these funds. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik noted that this is an important idea that she will discuss with the Chancellor. She stated that there are some emergency funds on campus, but not enough. She pointed out that for some students in their final year of school they have difficulties juggling their capstone courses and maintaining a job. She stated that for the next two years the Foundation has a campaign to raise money specifically for supporting students. She stated that she will make sure that the Chancellor and Brian Hastings, President and CEO of the Foundation, hear of the suggestion.

Professor Nickerson, School of Biological Sciences, noted that while there are many programs to help retain students, tutoring services for departments are lacking. He pointed out that this issue has been raised in the past and the Executive Committee was told that tutoring services would be improved once the Love Library renovation projects were completed. He asked if any improvements have been made. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik reported that there are increased efforts to improve tutoring services. She stated that she is not aware of where tutoring services are insufficient and asked that faculty members send her an email message identifying where there are needs.

Professor Schleck, English, pointed out that the Writing Center is dealing with a greater number of students, particularly international students, but the Center really lags behind our peers. She hoped that efforts are being made to make improvements to the Writing Center. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that the new Writing Center is great, but we do need to grow the infrastructure around it and the Chancellor is aware of this. She noted that we need our students to be successful, and although funds are limited, she thinks there will be consideration to funding these kinds of priorities. Professor Weissling, Special Education & Communication Disorders, asked if Interim SVCAA Kostelnik was speaking of the physical buildings or the administrative needs when she spoke of the need for infrastructure growth. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that it includes both the need for people and for buildings. She pointed out that growth isn't just about the need for funding. It also includes how to manage growth. She noted that there are some great processes here at UNL, such as the promotion and tenure process, which is one of the best that she has seen. There are other great things with our infrastructure, but we have some traditions at the university that may need to be considered in order for us to grow.

President Woodman asked for an update on what is going on with the Office of Equity and Compliance. Interim SVCAA Kostelnik stated that she is not privy to what occurred with former Director Susan Foster, and noted that it was a confidential, personnel matter. She reported that the transition to having Tami Strickman become Assistant to the Chancellor has gone smoothly and that Strickman is very competent.

4.0 Approval of April 26, 2016 Minutes

Professor Wysocki, Electrical and Computer Engineering, moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, and approved by the Faculty Senate.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee (Professor McElravy)

Professor McElravy reported that 5,000 graduation degrees were awarded last year, and as a result, the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee is thinking about the length of the graduate ceremonies as the graduating classes get larger. He stated that this year the graduate and undergraduate ceremonies were combined for the August graduation and the ceremony went well. He stated that one of the most relevant needs is having enough Marshals to help with the ceremonies. Currently we are 40% short of what we need. He pointed out that it is a constant recruitment effort to get faculty members to serve as Marshals, and if anyone is interested, they should contact Professor Robert Gorman (rgorman1@unl.edu).

Professor Shea, School of Natural Resources, asked if the low number of faculty members attending graduation is still a concern. If so, what can be done to correct it? Professor McElravy stated that it is a concern. Efforts have been made to provide faculty members with free availability of academic regalia should they be interested in attending the graduation ceremonies. He noted that timing is a problem associated with the ceremonies and the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee continue to discuss this issue.

Professor Lee stated that he does not like when the graduate and undergraduate ceremonies are combined because it does not provide distinction for the graduate students, although he understands the need to make the graduation ceremony more efficient. Professor McElravy stated that Associate Dean Laurie Bellows surveyed some faculty members and most of them liked the idea of combining the ceremonies. Professor Rudy, Nutrition and Health Sciences, pointed out that more Marshals are needed if there are three separate ceremonies for those graduating and logically it is difficult to get the needed faculty members to help out. Professor McElravy reported that paying facilities for three separate ceremonies is also costly. He noted that with the increased size of the graduating classes we have outgrown many of the on-campus facilities and we may have to start using the Pinnacle Bank Arena more often.

5.2 Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (Past President Bender)

Past President Bender reported that the FCAC met last June to review data on faculty salaries. The review showed that information pertaining to the gender equity issue showed the gap between male and female salaries had increased, which may have been due to the VSIP. He noted that the Committee recommended that the administration keep an eye out to see if this problem persists. He reported that the number of female faculty members has relatively stayed the same for the past ten years.

Past President Bender stated that there is continued concern about some college and department salaries being much lower than their peers. He noted that salary compression is another concern with the gap in salaries being narrowed between the different levels of positions. He stated that decompressing these differences would probably make recruitment more attractive. He pointed out that senior faculty members sometimes have lower salaries than junior faculty members.

Past President Bender reported that in terms of benefits a recent AAUP report showed that the value of our benefits package places us in the mid-range with the other Big Ten schools, although this could be deceptive because it is difficult to compare benefits. He noted that the Executive Committee expressed its concerns about the need to improve our benefits in a letter to President Bounds. One of the suggestions for improvements in the benefits was to increase the tuition remission benefit to include graduate courses. He pointed out that this could help in recruiting younger faculty members. Professor Rudy noted that the letter also asked for an explanation regarding the reprieve in paying health care costs this summer only to then have an increase in the cost of health care insurance in January. He stated that the question is why we could not have banked the money to use it to offset the cost of insurance. President Woodman stated that the explanation received from President Bounds was that the state money we get towards health care and what we as insured employees pay are separate funds that cannot be used to cross over to cover the loss from either of the funds.

Professor Stewart, Art & Art History, asked if there is anyone faculty members can talk to about salary inversion. Past President Bender stated that the FCAC would be interested in knowing of these situations because it is a very serious problem. Anyone facing this problem should contact any faculty member of the FCAC.

Professor Weissling asked if any comparison numbers were looked at for Professors of Practice, particularly

comparisons as to the number of female employees in these positions compared to tenure track faculty members. Past President Bender stated that this is information that we should be able to get from the Institutional Research, Analytics, and Decision Support office. He noted that he will let the FCAC know that this data should be reviewed the next time the Committee meets.

5.3 Executive Committee Summer Report (President Woodman)

President Woodman reported that the Executive Committee met eight times over the summer and discussed a significant number of topics. He stated that an ad hoc committee on diversity and inclusiveness was developed and members will be notified soon of a meeting. He stated that the Committee hopes to initiate discussions with the Office of Equity and Compliance regarding the Title IX process, particularly as it relates to faculty members.

6.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished Business was discussed.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Resolution to Honor Vice Chancellor Prem Paul

President Woodman noted that the campus received notice that Vice Chancellor Paul was stepping down from his position and the next day the Executive Committee decided to present a resolution to the Senate honoring his work. Unfortunately, it was just a few days later that he passed away. The Executive Committee presented the following motion:

**Resolution of Appreciation for Professor Prem Paul
from the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
in Appreciation of his Service as
Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development**

Presented to and approved by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Faculty Senate,
September 6th, 2016

Whereas **Professor Prem Paul** ably and admirably served this campus from July 1, 2001 to September, 2016 in the capacity of Vice Chancellor of Research;

Whereas **Professor Paul** also served admirably on this campus from early 2008 to September 2016 as the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development;

Whereas **Professor Paul** also ably and admirably served this campus from early 2001 to early 2008, in the capacity of Dean of Graduate Studies;

Whereas **Vice Chancellor Prem Paul** provided effective leadership in fostering numerous initiatives and programs across campus during his time as Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, including:

strengthening departments and setting priority investments through strategic hiring, changing the culture of the university so that more faculty members would see value in pursuing top-flight research, promoting interdisciplinary collaboration vital in modern scientific research, overseeing the creation of new research centers, deepening the relationships with funding institutions such as the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, the United States Department of Agriculture, and many businesses, increasing the research expenditures to \$146.9 million in 2015; and

Whereas, **Professor Paul** was an eager and frequent contributor to shared governance through his willingness to engage the Faculty Senate and its Executive Committee when appropriate; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln commends **Professor Paul** for his term of outstanding and extraordinary service to the university community as Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development, and be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this Resolution be presented to the family of **Professor Paul**, and preserved in the formal minutes of the Faculty Senate.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

7.2 Executive Committee Goals for 2016-2017

President Woodman reported that the Executive Committee goals emerge from discussions that have occurred

over the last four years. One of the goals that the Executive Committee identified was to develop a best practices set of guidelines for department and colleges on non-tenure track faculty members. The Executive Committee also wants to establish an ad hoc committee to deal with Title IX issues, examine challenges facing faculty members with joint appointments, and to monitor the transition from Blackboard to Canvas. Additional goals are listed on the information that was provided to the Senate. He stated that if anyone has comments or suggestions about the goals they should contact any member of the Executive Committee.

7.3 Open Mic Discussion

- Concerns and/or experiences with Canvas

President Woodman stated that the Senate President and President-Elect get to go to the CIC Faculty Leadership Conference and last year the major issue discussed was on academic freedom. He stated that he believes that the discussion helped to improve the focus of the university. The emergence of Canvas ties into it with Unizenn which allows the Big Ten universities to share activities related to teaching.

Professor Soundararajan noted that he has been able to observe other Big Ten university honors programs and it is heartwarming to note that our program involves undergraduate research. He pointed out that we do not have the multi-million dollar support that some other Big Ten schools have for their Honors program, but our students are able to participate in research.

Professor Nickerson reported that one of the things learned from attending the CIC Faculty Leadership Conference is that faculty members at some of the other Big Ten schools serve on their Board of Regents committees, and he believes that this has helped to open discussions here about getting faculty members to serve on our Board's committees. Past President Bender pointed out that it becomes clear very quickly when attending the conference that the faculty on other campuses are a lot more actively involved in governance than we are. He noted that President Bounds brought the idea up for the Faculty Senate Presidents to serve on the Board committees when he met with the Executive Committee.

Professor Hanrahan, Glenn Korff School of Music, stated that he really liked Canvas. Professor Stewart asked why he liked it. Professor Hanrahan stated that it is simpler to use and that it interfaces well whether you are on a computer, phone, or tablet. President Woodman stated that he uses it and downloading a file to Canvas is simple and more reliable than Blackboard. You can also view your site and update it. He reported that the plan is that Canvas and Blackboard will run parallel for two years. He pointed out that no definite decision has been made as to what will happen after the two year period. Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical and Computer Engineering, asked if it is possible to run different programs on Canvas. Professor Leiter stated that it does allow professors to use and utilize applications within Canvas. He suggested that anyone with questions on how to do this should contact Jeremy Van Hof, Assistant Director of Academic Technologies (jvanhof@unl.edu). Professor Lee stated that his experience is that Canvas does not offer templates like Blackboard, but it uploads files much faster and once you get used to the program, it is much easier. He noted that the students really seem to like it and he really likes the attendance feature. President Woodman stated that an added feature is that grades can be pushed directly to PeopleSoft. Each grade will not have to be manually plugged in which is especially helpful for large classes.

Professor Weissling asked if there will be widespread faculty training on Canvas and how will it be rolled out. Professor Leiter stated that Information Technology Services has a plan in place to offer a lot of training around campus and several sessions have already been scheduled. He noted that communicating to everyone is the biggest challenge right now, and if people are unaware if their department or college is having a training session, they should contact Jeremy Van Hof. Professor Dollars pointed out that faculty members can sign-up on line too. She stated that the online Canvas 101 and 102 tutorial sessions are really good.

Professor Leiter reported that by spring of 2018 all classes will be set up on Canvas. Blackboard will still be running, but you would have to ask to be put onto Blackboard for one more year.

- Name one thing you like about UNL and one thing you don't

Professor Lee stated that Interim SVCAA Kostelnik was right about the promotion and tenure process at UNL. He noted that in the College of Arts & Sciences the promotion and tenure committee members are elected, but this does not occur at many other schools. He pointed out that the process is very transparent here.

President Woodman stated that as a non-tenure track faculty member he felt the transition to the Professor of Practice ranking system has been exceptionally welcoming, although he admitted that this could vary by departments. He stated that he believes the Senate forums for non-tenure track faculty members has helped and the best practices document should be helpful.

Past President Bender stated that he believes that we have a really good student body. There is a lot of variation among the students and, for the most part, they are respectful, civil, and hard working.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2016, at 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Colonial Room A & B. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Allison Reisbig, Secretary.