

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
January 9, 2018
City Campus Union, Regency Suite
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 Academic Planning Committee Report (Professor Bloom)

Professor Bloom reported that one of the main responsibilities of the Academic Planning Committee (APC) is to make recommendation on proposals for new academic programs and programs proposed for elimination. He stated that the APC also supervises the APR processes for departments that do not have an external accreditation process. He noted that an APR for a department typically occurs every seven years.

Professor Bloom stated that another important responsibility of the APC is to review and consider the Chancellor's general budget framework when significant budget reduction or reallocations are being proposed. The APC will also advise the Chancellor on the timeline of the proposed changes, and if the APC disagrees with the general budget reduction framework it may present an alternative framework.

Professor Bloom pointed out that while the Chancellor drives much of the planning process for the campus, the APC wants to keep actively involved in the process.

Professor Bloom stated that the APC is an interesting committee composed of faculty members elected by the UNL faculty, administrators as listed in the UNL Bylaws, a faculty representative from the Graduate Council, an undergraduate student from ASUN, a graduate student from GSA, and recently a non-tenured faculty member has been added to the membership. He noted that Professor Ann Tschetter, History, is serving as the non-tenure track faculty member.

Professor Bloom stated that for the past year the biggest preoccupation for the APC has been the budget cuts. He pointed out that the timing of the cuts was changed over the last 6-8 months with the process being invoked much sooner than anticipated. He stated that the APC's goal was to adhere to the Procedures to be invoked for Significant Budget Reductions and Reallocations and to move through them in a timely fashion. He wanted to thank Chancellor Green and the other administrators for quickly providing requested information regarding the budget cuts to the APC. He pointed out that the APC is not done with the current budget process, and although there will be no academic program cuts at this time, the Committee still needs to address the first group of budget cuts that were proposed. As a result, there will be a public meeting on January 17th for people to address the APC about the cuts. He reported that the Committee should be able to quickly make a decision regarding these cuts.

Professor Bloom noted that the APC may have to deal with further budget cuts, depending on what happens in the State Legislature, although he believes the Committee will be able to act quickly should the Chancellor have to invoke further cuts. He stated that the budget cutting process is cumbersome and the Procedures include a number of ambiguities and outdated language that needs to be corrected. He suggested that consideration be given to revising the Procedures when the budget situation stabilizes. He stated that one of the challenges he has encountered as Chair of the APC is to understand how the university budget works because there are so many components to it. He stated that he hopes the Interim Vice Chancellor for Budget and Finance will be able to work with him to make the budget less opaque.

Professor Bloom stated that while the APC is part of the process when budget cuts are made at the campus level, it is not involved in budget cutting decisions at the college or department level and this might need to be reviewed. He pointed out that currently these kinds of cuts are not part of the APC's jurisdiction, yet these kinds of cuts could affect programs.

Professor Bloom noted that the Chancellor's intention is to develop a strategic plan and the APC wants to make sure that it is front and center in this process. He pointed out that the strategic plan could influence the organization of UNL and the APC would definitely need to be involved.

Professor Bloom stated that the APC also wants to be involved in any proposed changes to the campus budget model. He noted that a change in the budget model could change incentives for units and impact the faculty.

Professor Vakilzadian, Computer and Electrical Engineering, asked if the APC meetings are open to the public. Professor Bloom stated that normally they are open to the public, but recently the Committee has gone into Executive Session to work on the budget situation. He stated that the APC meeting schedule and agendas are posted on line on the APC website <https://www.unl.edu/apc/>.

3.0 Regent Vice Chairman Schafer

President Purcell reported that Regent Schafer was unable to attend the meeting due to a business conflict and he sent his apologies to the Senate. She noted that Regent Schafer did try to find another Regent who could speak to the Senate, but was not able to find anyone whose schedule would allow them to attend the meeting.

4.0 Senior Associate to the President Marjorie Kostelnik

4.1 Update on Budget Reduction Efficiencies

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik reported that her job is to lead the implementation of university-wide efforts to realize efficiencies and cost reductions across service areas. She noted that the goal is to save \$30 million through efficiencies so that the academic side of the university is buffered from taking this initial round of budget reductions. She stated that she is happy to report that we are on target for achieving the \$30 million. She pointed out that the BRT update was reported in October (<https://nebraska.edu/news-and-events/news/2017/budget-response-team-update>). She stated that 61 positions have been closed at the university and the funds from those positions are financing the first stage of the BRT reductions. She noted that the teams anticipate that more positions will be closed through retirements, but likely there will not be enough retirements to cover all of the reductions needed to make the \$30 million target.

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik reported that she has been impressed with how the BRT groups have been addressing the reductions. People on every team are striving to find ways to work more efficiently with fewer resources. She noted that four key operational areas have totally reimagined how they can be reorganized to do their work: human resources and payroll, information technology, facilities and energy, and procurement. She stated that through this reimagining significant savings will come about. She noted that the reorganized services areas will still provide services where they are needed, but will eliminate some duplications and will work more systematically across the university. She stated that her experience as the Dean of two colleges that came together to form one during a previous budget reduction tells her that it takes about two - three years for the reorganization to evolve and hit its stride. She predicts that in time the BRTs will achieve smoother, more efficient operations due to the diligence and hard work of the teams that are identifying the most economic best practices for their areas. She pointed out that every million dollars saved through operational efficiencies means there will be a million dollar less that academic programs in the University have to identify for the budget reduction.

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik reported that she has received over 800 emails about the BRT efficiencies and she has answered them personally when the email was not anonymous. She pointed out that the BRT groups appreciate the very useful feedback that has been provided in the emails. She stated that more feedback is welcome because it helps to hone the efficiencies so they are more appropriate and successful. However, she noted that the changes will not be without some pain for everyone, even when the efficiencies are identified as operational in nature. For instance, changes to the mileage rate, cell phone coverage, and printing all have impacts on a variety of university personnel as well as students.

President Purcell asked for an update regarding changes to the vacation policy. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik noted that there were two proposals pertaining to benefits that were most concerning to employees who provided feedback: a proposal to lower the maximum vacation cap, and the proposed policy to discontinue the one-fourth sick leave payout for office/service staff when they retire. She reported that changes to these policies would result in significant savings, but these proposed changes were controversial because they had some unintended consequences that were highlighted by the feedback. She stated that when employees leave the university they get a payout for unused vacation. This amounts to millions of dollars over time. The goal of the proposed policy was to capture some of these dollars to reduce the deficit in the University budget. However, there were two unintended consequences which concerned the campuses greatly. One was the vacation change would affect maternity leave because many employees use their vacation time to extend maternity/paternity leave. Another unintended consequence is that two weeks of vacation time is not enough time, particularly for international employees who want to go home for a visit. Feedback related to sick time leave indicated that some employees were counting on the money to pay off their mortgage or for use in retirement. As a result of these and other concerns raised, these two proposed changes have been tabled for now. She reported that the university is working with a benefits consultant to review the situation, but these benefits will be considered again. She noted that the other 70 proposals approved by the Chancellors and the President are still being put into effect. Tony Lazarowicz, UAAD Representative, asked if substantial notice will be given to employees if there are any changes to the vacation and

sick leave policies. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that ample notice will be given. She stated that in the original vacation and sick-leave proposals, changes would not have gone into effect until 2019.

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that there will be a travel policy BRT tour next week to the campuses. People from the BRT who worked on the travel policy will be going to each campus to hold a forum about the changes and to hear from the people who travel or handle travel arrangements and receipts. She stated that the feedback obtained from these forums will help shape the final travel policies and she urged faculty members to attend the forums.

President Purcell asked if the mileage rate of 25 cents will remain forever or will it eventually be raised. She noted that the federal rate for mileage reimbursement has increased and so has the cost of gas. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik reported that the university went to the State to change the mileage rate and the State said that the rate could be reduced as long as it was across the board at the university. She noted that the change could result in over \$1 million in savings in its first two to three years. She stated that the administration did talk with former Associate Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development Mike Zeleny (now Associate to the Chancellor) about how travel on grant funds would be impacted and she suggested that the Senate might want to talk further with him about this issue. She stated that she was aware of the hardships Extension experienced. Others find the mileage rate challenging to work with as well such as field supervisors in many disciplines and programs. She stated that there would not have been a change in the mileage rate if the budget situation wasn't so severe. She noted that she would not say that the rate would never change in the future. However, she does not think it will happen any time soon.

Professor Lee, Communication Studies, stated that the campus has been hearing about the UNL budget model being changed to a responsibility centered budget model. He asked if there will be a new budget model in association with the BRT changes. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik noted that the BRT is not requiring a new budget model, but individual campuses can always choose new models that make sense to them. In a responsibility based budget model, operational services are often purchased. In some versions of such models, costs for operational services are spread out across the campus and this may result in cheaper services overall.

Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical and Computer Engineering, asked if consideration has been given to having a per diem for travel. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that this issue has been raised by other faculty members, and was favored by the BRT group on Travel. However, the State has to approve this change and at this time the State has not expressed an interest in changing the policy. She said that background analyses conducted by the Travel BRT have shown that having a per diem could help save the University money. She pointed out that as individual citizens, employees could contact their Senators to support such a change in state policy as a means to save state dollars.

Professor Billesbach, Biological Systems Engineering, stated that some of the budget reduction recommendations proposed on the website seem to be etched in stone and that no refinements to the recommendations will be considered. He pointed out that people traveling do not always have access to a computer and cannot easily contact Travel & Transport. He asked if there will be exceptions to the travel policies in these kinds of cases. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that this question should be raised at the travel policy forum. Professor Billesbach pointed out that there might be instances of travelers in other countries who need help, but are unable to get it through the university. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik pointed out that there will be a real effort to take into account some of the circumstances that weren't addressed in the early stages of the travel policy development. She stated that she believes for now the rule to use Travel & Transport exclusively does not apply to all foreign travel, but she will check to see if this is correct. She pointed out that the lowest price criteria was not the only factor that was taken into consideration when the draft travel policies were developed. Traveler safety, convenience, and leveraging the power of large numbers of travelers were also considered.

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that we are currently in Stage Two of the Budget Reduction process – the Installation Phase. This is the phase during which feedback is being solicited from faculty and staff to shape proposed policies and practices. That feedback can be provided through listening sessions and through the BRT website <https://nebraska.edu/brt/contact-and-feedback/budget-suggestions>. She noted that all emails are forwarded to the appropriate BRT for their reference. She reported that in the summer the third stage of the budget reduction process will occur; this is the Interim Product Phase. During this phase, campuses will pilot strategies and see how well they work over multiple semesters. Feedback will continue to be solicited and changes will continue to be made in line with needs and goals.

Professor Adenwalla, Physics & Astronomy, asked if academic program cuts are on the horizon. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik pointed out that if the university gets further reduction from the State there will need to be

academic program cuts because there is nothing left to get out of the operational side of the university.

Professor Vuran, Computer Science & Engineering, noted that faculty members can often get cheaper rates for travel than going through Travel & Transport and suggested that the restriction for using one source for making travel arrangements be removed. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik pointed out that there are real aggregate savings when we have a single contract with a single agency. She stated that where the savings comes from is when a large number of people are using the same travel agency. Professor Adenwalla noted that many faculty members travel on their research grant funding and they are very careful with their money so they want to be able to get the best rate. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik noted that this is a legitimate concern, but over time the university will benefit in savings. Professor Vuran asked if there will be representatives from Travel & Transport at the travel policy forum. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that she did not know, but suggested that Professor Vuran pose his question to the Travel BRT representatives.

Professor Banerjee, Agricultural Economics, stated that it appears that the budget situation is cyclical and she noted that she will probably experience more budget cuts in her career at the university. She asked how the faculty can best prepare for these cuts. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that the university is having these kinds of conversations on how we can deal with future cuts. She noted that the budget efficiencies are meant to be long-term efficiencies.

Professor Weissling, Special Education & Communication Disorders, pointed out that the faculty are being asked to trust the administration that there will be savings if we are contracted with one travel agency, but no numbers are being provided to help support the claim. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that she will ask the travel BRT to provide some examples. Professor Weissling stated that the same thing is occurring with Purchasing. She noted that in the past she has taken advantage of sales on needed equipment, but does not think that she will be able to do this with the new policies. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik pointed out that in meeting with the procurement BRT and considering bulk purchases for the university system versus individual purchasing, you begin to see where real savings can be attained. Professor Buan, Biochemistry, asked where the delineation is between using state funds versus research grants for making purchases. She stated that it should be clear when purchases are not coming from research funding.

Professor Adams, Plant Pathology, stated that in his background he learned long ago that governments cannot contract with a company that gives them a good deal, that they are required to go with the contract that comes in with the lowest bid. He stated that the only means of making agreements with companies is if there is an open bidding process. He asked if there is a legal way that the university can contract with one company for its travel needs. Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik stated that there is an open bidding process in place now - an RFP is put out by the university, a committee reviews the bids, and procurement experts make the decision. We are in year three of a five year contract with Travel and Transport. She pointed out that the university is trying to give faculty and departments access to procurement experts in all areas of purchasing.

Senior Associate to the President Kostelnik thanked the Senate for the opportunity to speak and said she would be happy to speak to them again as the BRT efficiencies progress.

5.0 Announcements

5.1 Response from the Faculty of Purdue University

President Purcell reported that she received a letter from the Faculty Senate of Purdue University thanking the UNL Faculty Senate for its support regarding the lack of faculty input on Purdue's proposal to purchase Kaplan University.

5.2 Interview and Public Presentations of Candidates for the Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development

President Purcell noted that the public presentation by Dr. Marty Scholtz, candidate for Vice Chancellor for Research and Economic Development was being held today at 3:30 and that a reception would be held following the presentation. She encouraged the Senators to attend the public presentation of the remaining candidates:

Dr. Richard Hichwa, on January 11 at 3:30

Dr. Bob Wilhelm on January 18 at 3:30

Dr. Mo Dehghani on January 23 at 3:30

6.0 Approval of December 5, 2017 Minutes

President Purcell asked if there was any corrections to the minutes. One correction was identified. Professor Joeckel moved for approval of the minutes. Motion seconded by Professor Billesbach and approved by the Senate.

7.0 Committee Reports

7.1 Intercollegiate Athletics Committee (Professor Kettler)

Professor Kettler noted that the IAC has 13 members, three who are students and one of these is a student-athlete. He reported that the Committee has met four times this year. He pointed out that during his time on the IAC there have been three Athletic Directors who serve as non-voting members.

Professor Kettler stated that the IAC has a Subcommittee to Assess Academic Support Services and annually conducts a review of an academic program supported by the Athletics Department. After the review a report is submitted to the Athletics Director, the Chancellor, the Executive Vice Chancellor, and the Faculty Senate. He stated that there is also a Scheduling Oversight Subcommittee, which provides oversight on all athletic competition schedules to make sure that the Missed Class Policy of the IAC is followed. He stated that the Transfer Appeals Committee has not met yet. He noted that this Committee convenes at the request of a student-athlete.

Professor Kettler stated that another task of the IAC is to review applications and select the Male and Female Student-Athletes of the year. The winners for the 2016-17 academic year were Drew Wiseman, Electrical and Computer Engineering student who competed in track and field, and Tierra Williams, a Child, Youth and Family Studies student, who also competed in track and field.

Professor Kettler reported that last year the Subcommittee to Assess Academic Support looked at practices and class times because student-athletes and coaches were finding it more difficult to schedule practice times when everyone could participate. He stated that a review of the course schedule showed that lab offerings are being shifted to the afternoons and the overall number of lab offerings have dropped. Most of the dropped lab offerings were held in the morning. He pointed out that this is an issue, not only for student-athletes, but for other students as well. He noted that if the campus wants to grow to 35,000 students, this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Professor Kettler reported that the IAC continued its review of the academic progress of student-athletes. He noted that the federal/IPEDS graduation rates for student-athletes continues to exceed the rate for the overall student body. For a single year the rate is 74% for student athletes, and 67% for the overall student body. The four-year average basis is 73% for student-athletes and 67% for the overall student body. He stated that the overall graduation success rate (GSR) for our student-athletes increased again and is above the Division I average. He pointed out that Nebraska's all sport GSR is 89%, which places us in a tie for sixth in the Big Ten. He noted that for male student-athletes the GSR is at 85%, for female student-athletes it is 94%. He stated that the academic progress rate for all of Nebraska's teams, except two, are above 975. He noted that when we were in the Big 12 we were at the top with these numbers, but we were at the bottom when we entered the Big Ten. However, we have been moving up since then. He noted that one thing that does impact our success rate is when student-athletes transfer or if they leave the university before completing their degree.

Professor Kettler stated that the time demand on student-athletes is a concern that the IAC is watching carefully. He noted that the Big Ten network wants to get as much air time for sports so various programs wind up competing at inconvenient times and places. He stated that the IAC has been pushing back on this to ensure that competition schedules are appropriate for the student-athletes. He pointed out that the travel demands on our student-athletes changed considerably when we moved into the Big Ten and this is becoming an issue. President-Elect Rudy noted that the information presented does not include all of the time that student-athletes have to put in for training and preparing for competitions.

Professor Adams stated that he is concerned that we don't hear from the IAC about concerns of study time for students when they have to travel to compete. He stated that courses should be structured to provide online information for them which will allow them to succeed in a course. Professor Kettler stated that all student-athletes are instructed to find out from their professors what assignments are available and what work needs to be done when they are traveling. Professor Adams asked how the student-athlete can know what is going on if they are not attending class. Professor Kettler reported that student-athletes should not be missing more than nine Monday, Wednesday, Friday classes and six Tuesday, Thursday classes, or 20% of the classes. He pointed out that none of the student-athletes come close to missing this much time. He stated that it is the student-athletes responsibility to get the notes from another student in the class if they miss classes.

Professor Brown Kramer, Psychology, asked if there are particular days of the week when student-athletes are more likely to be in class, and which semester are they most likely to attend classes. Professor Kettler stated that he does not think data is available to accurately answer this question. He noted that earlier in the week should be a good time because teams typically travel more at the end of the week.

8.0 Unfinished Business

8.1 Motion to Install Alertus Warning System on General Purpose Classrooms

President Purcell noted that the motion was presented at the December meeting and there was considerable discussion with Emergency Management Coordinator Mark Robertson and Assistant Vice Chancellor Heath Tuttle. She stated that the motion calls for installing the Alertus notification system on computers in general purpose classrooms. She asked for a vote of the motion. The motion was approved with 39 in favor, 2 against, and 2 abstentions.

9.0 New Business

No new business was discussed.

10.0 Open Mic

No comments were made at the open mic.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:14 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, February 6, 2018, at 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union, Great Plains Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.