

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Buan, Hanrahan, Kolbe, Latta Konecky, Minter, Peterson, Purcell, Woodman

Absent: Adenwalla, Franco Cruz, Fech, Vakilzadian

Date: Tuesday, December 10, 2019

Location: 203 Alexander Building

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 (*Hanrahan*)

Hanrahan called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

2.0 University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (Professor Sollars)

Sollars noted that there have been questions regarding the impact of the incentive-based budget model on the work of the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UUCC). She reported that the UUCC is instituting greater oversight of the duplication of courses and will be enforcing this more rigorously. She stated that in cases of apparent duplication, more data is being requested from units wanting to add the new course, and the Committee is asking for supporting information from the unit offering the existing course as well. She pointed out that so far this procedure has been working well.

Sollars stated that the UUCC is suggesting a two-year moratorium on adding the ACE designation to any existing courses, but new courses requesting ACE certification will be considered.

Sollars stated that the last session of ACE reports showed that there are many courses that have not been taught for some time, and the UUCC ACE subcommittee has been discussing this problem. She pointed out that the feeling of the subcommittee is that ACE courses should be taught regularly because students need to know when they can take a course in a four-year period. She stated that the UUCC is strongly urging units to decertify ACE courses that are not being offered regularly. She asked the Executive Committee what it thought of this idea. Woodman suggested that decertification be on a three-year cycle. Sollars noted that four years would be the range for the students to fit the course in their online planner. She stated that if a course is on an intended two-year cycle that is fine, even if unforeseen circumstances prevent it from being offered once in a while. Buan asked how often recertification for ACE courses occurs. Sollars stated that recertification occurs every five years. Hanrahan noted that this would be a policy change, and he was told today by administration that a Senate policy needs to be run through the administration. Latta Konecky pointed out that it is the faculty that is in charge of the curriculum, and this would apply to the curriculum. Peterson stated that the responsibilities of the UUCC are defined in the committee syllabus, and the Committee is

a Senate committee which would require approval by the Senate. He suggested that the change could be made through the syllabus. Minter pointed out that the change could cause some anxiety for Senators. Buan pointed out that the change is not punitive, and students need to know when they can add a course into their plan.

Minter stated that there are some departments that run a lot of small classes, but they can be so broadly defined that the students do not know what the course is really about. However, these courses are offered every year. Other departments might develop numerous titles for a section of courses, but they are not offered as often. Hanrahan stated that there may be issues with departments that have small size classes that may not be offered as often, and a policy would need to address these concerns. He suggested that an automatic decertification occur if an ACE course is not being taught in three years.

Woodman asked if existing courses will be reviewed for duplication. Sollars stated that there have been suggestions that the entire campus curriculum be examined for duplicate courses. She pointed out that this would be a huge undertaking and asked who would do this, because the UUCC cannot. She noted that there are 800 ACE courses alone, not including all of the other courses in the curriculum. Woodman suggested that advisors might be more knowledgeable about duplicate courses and could be asked. Hanrahan noted that a critical component of the incentive-based budget model is credit hour production and there is a concern that departments/colleges might try to add courses which already exist in order for them to increase their credit hour production. He asked if the UUCC could be expanded to handle additional work. Griffin pointed out that it is getting increasingly difficult to get faculty members to serve on committees due to their strained workloads. Sollars suggested that a policy related to inactive courses be established that would encourage departments to inactivate a course if it is not being offered in the next five years. She noted that this could be easily done in the current curricular management system. Kolbe suggested that department and college curriculum committees could do this. Buan pointed out that the language should clearly state that the course is just being inactivated, not deleted. Sollars stated that the UUCC would still need to review the course if it was to be reactivated. Kolbe noted that his department had removed inactive courses which allowed them to free up course numbers for new courses.

Sollars reported that there has been a request for a subcommittee to review Honors courses. She noted that Professor McMahon, Director of the Honors Program, is doing a good job of strengthening the Program, but there are no criteria for what makes a course an Honors course. She stated that McMahon is discussing the issue with departments and colleges, and suggested that there is an Honors Program committee that would make sure the Honors criteria are met, and then the proposed program would go to the UUCC for approval.

Peterson pointed out that there are not enough Honors courses available so Honors students often contract with a faculty member to essentially turn an existing course into an Honors course so the student can receive Honors credit hours. He stated that it makes sense to have criteria for what is considered an Honors course. Woodman stated that he

is tired of denying students Honors credits for his 5 credit hour Anatomy course. Due to the size of his course and because he feels that an Honors course should be an intellectually stimulating experience with a focus on the development of a student of itself, rather than just an added paper, he does not offer honors credit. In Biological Sciences they sometimes ask a senior faculty member to offer a small Honors section of a larger course which would usually be more rigorous and stimulating than the large enrollment traditional course. Peterson stated that he thinks McMahan would have the same concern and that Honors courses should focus more on the intellectual experience. He suggested that an approval system for contracting an Honors course is needed. Woodman added that Interim Director Bachman had focused on the honors project/paper issue during her tenure and he hoped that the new Director would have continued this. Sollars pointed out that McMahan should speak to the Executive Committee first before moving forward with this idea.

Hanrahan stated that he would prefer the UUCC expand its membership and the chair of the subcommittees of the UUCC would have to be members of the central UUCC. He noted that what is being proposed to the Chancellor is to reconstitute the Senate's budget advisory committee, and to revise it so it becomes the governing committee to oversee the incentive-based budget model. He asked if the UUCC faculty would want to have a designated seat on the overarching governance committee. Sollars asked how the possible expansion of the UUCC would occur. Hanrahan stated that it would have to be approved by the Senate since it is a Senate committee, but the UUCC could recommend the changes.

3.0 Student Code of Conduct (Assistant VC Johnson and Interim VC Bellows)

Johnson provided the Executive Committee with a redlined version of the NU system's proposed changes to the Student Code of Conduct that was previously revised by Professor Lenich of the Law College, and approved by the Faculty Senate. Bellows reported that the newest version was the system-level effort, led by Johnson, to work with the four campuses to develop a Student Code of Conduct that would apply to all of the campuses.

Johnson noted that some of the new changes were just a change in language, such as changing the word "you" to "student" because students are not the only audience for the Code. He reported that "he/she" has been replaced with "they or their." He stated that the affirmative defense language has been removed, and noted that most university Codes don't have it. He pointed out that the intent of the Code is to prohibit behaviors and the prevailing trend in higher education is to not include affirmative defenses.

Johnson reported that some sections of the Code have been moved around. For instance, off-campus behavior has been moved towards the beginning of the Code, and the section on First Amendment rights has been moved. He pointed out that decisions on improper behavior are not allowed if they would violate a student's free-speech rights.

Johnson stated that several violations have been identified, including that students cannot be an irresponsible host. He pointed out that this pertains to students who have been

cited by local law enforcement for having a disorderly house off campus. He stated that any violations of local, state or federal laws have been added back into the Code along with any violation of University policy. He noted that these are broad because the type of activity that would warrant a violation are too numerous. Peterson questioned whether students would be facing double jeopardy, if they are cited first by the law and then by the University. Hanrahan asked if a student could be expelled after being found guilty of violating a law. Johnson stated that the Code builds in additional constraints on what students do off campus. He pointed out that we need to follow our own guidance and constraints when violations occur off campus.

Buan stated that there should be clarification on the definition of a student. She pointed out that there are employees who are enrolled in courses. Johnson stated that the question would be what capacity the person is in when they engage in a misconduct. He noted that later in the Code some of this is clarified.

Hanrahan stated that there is concern with the off campus actions that could be a violation of the code. Johnson noted that the University has discretion on what to do if a student violates the Code off campus. Hanrahan asked if Student Conduct & Community Standards should have discretion on these matters. Johnson stated that the definition of what constitutes a university activity is very broad, even if it takes place outside of the University, but there are specific sexual misconduct rules that need to be followed. Hanrahan wondered what would happen if a student was set up to violate the Code. Bellows pointed out that there is a series of investigations that occur with any violation, and if someone tried to retaliate against a student, this would be discovered. She noted that people in Student Affairs are trained to conduct thorough investigations.

Hanrahan asked about alcohol violations. Johnson reported that if a student is consuming alcohol on our campus and is not of legal age and at an authorized event, they would be in violation of the Code. If a student received an MIP off campus, the University would not take action. He pointed out that any violation requires careful investigation of the circumstances, and there is a clear series of steps that must be taken in the process. He stated that if there is a hearing it will be a fact finding check on the investigation and the student has the option of making an appeal to the Appeals Board if the student does not agree with the Board's decision. He noted that there are three different phases of fact finding involved when a student is accused of a violation.

Hanrahan asked what the next step in revising the Code of Conduct will be. Johnson stated that the proposed revisions will need to be reviewed by the faculty and the students of each of the campuses. He stated that feedback is being sought, and if anyone finds something that is problematic they should contact him. He will reconcile the feedback and a new version with proposed revisions will be produced that will require approval. He reported that the current proposed revisions will be shared with the Executive Leadership Team and the Deans. He stated that ASUN will review the document first, before the Faculty Senate. Hanrahan asked what the deadline is for feedback. Johnson stated that it will be needed by early February. He stated that the plan is to hold some forums on the Code, and he is willing to speak to people if needed.

Buan pointed out that in the redlined version the links to the Nebraska state law on the misuse of alcohol have been removed. She asked what the rationale is for this. Johnson stated that the laws are subject to change, and rather than having to revise the Code whenever a change has been made the links have been removed. He stated that the Code will state “in violation of Nebraska law,” but all of the laws won’t be cited in the document. Latta Konecky suggested that there be an appendix where links to Nebraska laws are provided. Buan noted that the University of Michigan’s Code provides hyperlinks pertaining to violations. Bellows stated that Indiana University’s the Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, & Conduct website provides four tabs, pertaining to student rights, responsibilities, procedures, and appendices and each section refers back to the main document. She noted that the website separates each section out for the students.

Minter noted that the insertion of section 18 regarding violation of law seems broad and gives the University a lot of latitude. Johnson stated that this references a Regents’ policy of some years ago. He stated that the section is meant to apply to disorderly houses off campus, otherwise the University will not look at most off-campus violations because it is not in the University’s best interest to pursue them.

Bellows stated that the timeline is to have feedback gathered by February 7th and in early March it would go to ASUN for approval and then to the Senate, after which it would go to the Chancellor, then to the Council of Academic Officers, the President, and finally the Board of Regents. She stated that the goal is to have it to the Board in June and have it approved and in place in August. She pointed out that UNO provides new students with their Code of Conduct and students are required to read the Code and must click on a link indicating they read it before the student can come to campus.

Hanrahan pointed out that there are certain sections that could be tailored to the individual campuses. He asked if UNL will vote on these sections. Bellows stated that these are procedural changes that will not need to be voted on.

Johnson reported that consideration is being given about staff serving on the Student Conduct and Appeals Board. He noted that currently only faculty and students serve on the Boards, but there are Title IX staff who are trained and advisors who could serve on the Board.

4.0 Committee Preference App (Professor Anaya)

Hanrahan noted that he asked Anaya to come to the meeting because she chairs the Committee on Committees. He reported that a Professor at UNO is developing an app that would allow faculty members to indicate their interest in serving on committees or taskforces. Anaya asked if the app could be modified to list all of the Senate committees that need faculty members. Hanrahan suggested that the app could also provide broad based topics that faculty members could indicate their interest in.

Hanrahan stated that each campus would have access to information on its own faculty members. He noted that the information would go into a SAP database. He stated that the plan is to have the app up and running in January.

Buan questioned whether the information could be connected to faculty activity reporting. Kolbe suggested that it could connect with Faculty Insight or produce a pdf report that could be attached to the faculty reporting. Buan stated that the app could be scripted to automatically generate an automatic thank-you letter to faculty at the end of their service term.

Latta Konecky stated that the idea is great, but asked what incentives faculty members have in using the app. Hanrahan pointed out that the Executive Committee would have to lobby the Senate. He noted that the app is to merely find out who has interest in being a member of a committee or taskforce. He stated that faculty could be encouraged to use the app, but they would need to know that this does not commit them to serving. Latta Konecky stated that encouragement at the administrative level would be helpful. Minter suggested that it be included in new faculty orientation.

Woodman suggested that it might work well to add the link to Firefly. Anaya noted that Griffin could still send a notice out to faculty informing them of the need for faculty on committees and providing a link to the app.

5.0 Announcements

5.1 Executive Committee Member Needed for Search Committee for Faculty Athletics Representative

Hanrahan asked if anyone was interested in serving on the search committee for a new faculty athletics representative. Purcell volunteered. Hanrahan reported that Professor Wilkins, Biological Systems Engineering, will serve as the other faculty representative on the search committee.

5.2 Peer Review of Teaching Committee

Hanrahan stated that three or four faculty members from each college are needed to serve on the peer review of teaching committee. He asked Executive Committee members to forward names to him.

5.3 APLU Aspire iChange Team

Hanrahan stated that STEM faculty members are needed to serve on the APLU Aspire iChange Team. He noted a senior STEM faculty member, a recently promoted STEM faculty member, and an URG STEM faculty member are all needed. He asked Executive Committee members to send him suggestions of possible members.

5.4 Meeting with Chancellor Green

Hanrahan reported that he will be meeting with Chancellor Green to discuss the proposed revisions to the Regents Bylaws. He noted that the administration is largely positive to the changes, but Interim President Fritz is insisting on the use of the term administrative

leave rather than suspension. He noted that Associate VC Walker says that approximately half the Big Ten universities use administrative leave.

6.0 Approval of November 19, 2019 and December 3, 2019 Minutes

Hanrahan asked if there were any further revisions on the November 19, 2019 minutes. Hearing none he asked for approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved.

Hanrahan asked if there were any further revisions on the December 3, 2019 minutes. Hearing none he asked for approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved.

7.0 Unfinished Business

7.1 Academic Freedom in Teaching and Learning and Academic Freedom Statement

Hanrahan reported that Associate VC Walker is asking the Executive Committee to again review the proposed Academic Freedom in Teaching and Learning and Academic Freedom Statement. He noted that the changes suggested by the Executive Committee in the spring semester have been addressed. He suggested that the documents be reviewed at the January 7 Executive Committee meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:51 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, January 7, 2019 at 2:30 pm. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.