

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Adenwalla, Buan, Fech, Hanrahan, Latta Konecky, Minter, Peterson, Purcell, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Franco Cruz, Kolbe, Purcell

Date: Tuesday, October 29, 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 Announcements

2.1 President Priority Candidate

Hanrahan noted that the November 5 Executive Committee will be cancelled due to the 4:00 faculty/staff forum with the President Candidate, Walter Carter. He noted that there will be two faculty/staff forums on Tuesday: at 9:30 on City Campus and at 4:00 on East Campus. He stated that the Faculty Senate meeting on November 5 will adjourn at 3:30 so people can attend the 4:00 forum which will be held at the Quilt Center. He pointed out that seating in the front of the auditorium will be for the Faculty Senators.

Hanrahan noted that he made a request for the Executive Committee to meet privately with the candidate and was initially told that this would happen, but the Board of Regents is not allowing any private meetings with faculty, staff, or students. Hanrahan stated that the President's search committee and the Board of Regents both voted unanimously to approve Carter as the priority candidate. He pointed out that there is a 30-day vetting period and feedback will be needed by November 24th. He stated that he anticipates the Board will make its decision on November 26.

2.2 Policy on Faculty Testimony to the Legislature

Hanrahan stated that there may be a proposed policy coming from Central Administration about faculty testimony to the Legislature. He noted that the policy needs to be reviewed carefully to ensure that there is not a violation of an individual's free speech.

2.3 Report on Board of Regents Meeting

Hanrahan reported that information was provided regarding health insurance. He stated that 280,000 medical claims were filed and 94% of employees were using in network services, although the prediction was for 96%. He stated that there are still challenges with some behavioral health providers, but additional practices in Omaha and Lincoln have recently been added. He noted that faculty/staff should expect to see an \$8-\$10 a month increase in their premium. He stated that it was pointed out that this increase was

50% less than the health insurance increases at our peer institutions. He noted that the conversion to UMR went better than anticipated, and it was pointed out that the work done with the Faculty Senates contributed to the success. He reported that the Extended Tier network is being offered to UNL and UNK employees with some health care providers in their city. He stated that there is contemplation of providing employees with a December premium holiday for health care insurance. He noted that it is felt that there is long term funding in the insurance pool which would allow this without insurance rates increasing in the near future.

Hanrahan reported that he met with Regents Clare and Pillen regarding the search process for a new President. Hanrahan stated that the search consultants did a lot of vetting of the candidates, and the faculty representative on the search committee commented that the search firm was very interested in understanding the concerns of the university. He pointed out that the feedback on the priority candidate needs to be submitted by November 24.

3.0 Approval of October 22, 2019 Minutes

Hanrahan asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none the Executive Committee approved the minutes, with two abstentions.

4.0 Chancellor Green

4.1 Update on Board of Regents Bylaws

Chancellor Green reported that the next meeting of the Chief Academic Officers is on November 21 and the proposed changes to the Regents Bylaws will be discussed at the meeting. Hanrahan stated that he received acclamation of support from UNK, and UNO will soon be sending a letter indicating their acclamation soon. He noted that UNMC has not raised the proposed revisions to its Faculty Senate yet.

Hanrahan asked if the Extension Educator resolution will be included with the other revisions. Chancellor Green stated that he will be speaking with Interim President Fritz about this, and at this time the plan is to move forward with all of the documents.

4.2 Update on Presidential Search

Chancellor Green stated that the schedule for Walter Carter, the priority candidate for the President of NU, has been formed and just released. He noted that Carter will be traveling throughout the State, but each campus will have the opportunity to attend forums to speak with Carter, and there will also be a public forum. He reported that UNL will be meeting with him on November 4 and 5, and there will be a public forum at Innovation Campus on November 6. He stated that there will be a breakfast meeting where Carter will meet with business leaders in Lincoln.

Hanrahan asked if the decision to hire Carter has already been made. Chancellor Green pointed out that the Board of Regents has put forward a good, priority candidate. He noted that three years ago the State passed legislation mandating that only one priority candidate for President or Chancellor will be named. He stated that the process is being followed very carefully and there is a 30-day vetting period.

Adenwalla asked if the Chancellor has met the candidate. Chancellor Green stated that he did meet the candidate, and he pointed out that he believes Carter is serious in wanting the job. He stated that he did not know Carter personally, although he knew a little of his history. He reported that he was very favorably impressed with Carter, and one of the initial things that Carter said to him was that he was not here to do the Chancellors' jobs, and that he considers himself to be a leaderless leader. He stated that he feels very good about Carter, and is looking forward to the campus forums next week.

4.3 Update on EVC Search

Chancellor Green reported that he is in the process of pursuing the lead candidate. He noted that he met with the search committee upon completion of all of the interviews, and they looked at the pros and cons of each of the four public finalists, and reviewed the open feedback from the campus. He pointed out that there was a clearly identified candidate that emerged from the process and this individual would be returning to campus during the first week of November. He stated that if the candidate accepts the position, there will likely be a start date of March 1.

4.4 Update on 2025 Progress Report

Chancellor Green reported that progress on further developing the plan continues, and the co-chairs have kept to an intense schedule visiting the various constituent groups to get feedback on the draft plan. He noted that it is an unfortunate delay that they cannot speak to the full Senate, but they will be meeting with the Executive Committee instead. He stated that the co-chairs' interpretation of the responses to the draft plan is that it is 90% good, but there is about 10% being discussed/added. He reported that targets are being developed for each of the aims identified in the plan, with each aim having three or four primary aspirational targets which will provide better definition to how the strategies of the plan will play out. He stated that the goal is to have a public document available in January, with the full rollout in February on Charter Day.

4.5 Update on Journalism and Mass Communication's Dean Search

Chancellor Green stated that the last report he received is that the search committee is at the semi-finalist stage, and then the final candidates will be brought to campus. He noted that the search is on track to be completed.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Update on Professional Conduct Committee

Hanrahan reported that he is working on contacting members for the Committee that were suggested by Executive Committee members. He noted that Minter will chair the committee, and he hopes to have the Committee fully staffed and provide them with the charge by next week.

5.2 Academic Freedom Training for Faculty

Hanrahan asked the Executive Committee for suggestions on how to provide training for faculty members regarding academic freedom. He proposed having a video created that faculty members could view. Vakilzadian suggested that there be speakers from the

Senate who would go to each college to give a presentation and to answer any questions. Buan pointed out that academic freedom could be challenging for different disciplines, and stated that if a committee is formed to create a presentation, it needs broad representation from faculty members in the different disciplines.

Hanrahan noted that the presentation should provide examples of what academic freedom is, and there should be discussion about the history of academic freedom and UNL's involvement in the formation of some of the ideas on academic freedom that were adopted by the AAUP. He suggested that a contrast between academic freedom and free speech be included, and what rights faculty members have under free speech.

Adenwalla asked who the audience will be. Hanrahan stated that it would be all faculty, and could be provided to the faculty in the beginning of the fall semester. It should also be provided at the new faculty orientation.

Woodman suggested asking Senators to volunteer to serve on the committee.

5.3 Request for a Syllabus Database

Hanrahan noted that the Executive Committee did not vote on the idea to have ASUN develop a syllabus database, and to encourage faculty members to consider lower cost alternatives for textbooks. He suggested that ASUN President Johnson and he write a letter together encouraging faculty members to submit the syllabi for their courses, and to consider lower cost options for textbooks. Peterson moved that Hanrahan's suggestion be enacted. Latta Konecky seconded the motion.

Adenwalla stated that she has looked at many ebooks, but she has heard from students that they can be hard to use, and there is some cost involved. Latta Konecky stated that with open access e-textbooks, a print version of the e-textbooks may be available for low-cost purchase from the OER sites, such as OpenStax. She pointed out that not all instructors using open access/OER materials are using an entire e-textbook, rather they are assembling a collection of appropriate materials for their course. Adenwalla noted that this is harder to do in some disciplines. Woodman reported that one of the etexts that he used was charged directly to students' tuition costs, and the students were unaware that they could opt out from purchasing the etext. He stated that the mechanism to opt out of purchase needs to be more easily available.

Peterson stated that the Executive Committee should encourage instructors to seek alternative options, but not demand that faculty members must do it. Buan noted that the discussion with Interim EVC Moberly was about exploring the option, but not demanding it be done.

Peterson questioned whether there is an intellectual property concern with posting syllabi in a database. Hanrahan pointed out that the content of a course is not covered by copyright, it is the delivery of the course that is protected. Adenwalla stated that while the idea is that students would look at a syllabus to see if it meets their learning style, there needs to be the understanding that courses can evolve over the semester. Buan

pointed out that even when syllabi are posted, there could be changes that need to be made as a class progresses. She noted that having the syllabus ahead of time could set up an expectation, which can lead to more problems and complaints. Minter pointed out that some syllabi are not prepared until shortly before a course begins. Hanrahan stated that students can now take a syllabus from a course they took and submit it to a database. Peterson pointed out that his department has been posting the syllabi for all of its courses on the department website for at least ten years now and they have never encountered the problems being suggested.

Buan asked if the request to the faculty needs to be an endorsed missive from the Executive Committee. Hanrahan pointed out that working with ASUN is providing the faculty with the opportunity to have some control over what would be viewed in the database.

Latta Konecky suggested changing the motion to support communicating with the faculty about the syllabi database and to make clear the intended benefits of the database. Buan seconded the language change. Woodman suggested using the President's newsletter to relay the information. Minter suggested that contact information be added instead of syllabi for courses with large sections. Latta Konecky suggested that ASUN should first speak to the instructors of large courses with numerous sections to investigate those issues.

Peterson suggested tabling the motion to allow Hanrahan to work with Johnson to draft a letter to the faculty, which he will share with the Executive Committee for review before it is sent out. Tabling the motion was approved by the Executive Committee.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Proposed Revisions to the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee (Professor Gorman)

Gorman, chair of the CHCC, reported that the Committee is bringing forth a proposal to change the name of the Committee and to change the membership. She noted that the Honors Convocations was eliminated by the EVC's office about a year ago without consultation of the CHCC, and as a result the Committee is proposing the name change to more accurately reflect the responsibilities of the committee.

Gorman stated that the other recommendation is to make some changes in the membership of the Committee, including the elimination of one non-voting member and the addition of seven other non-voting members. She pointed out that it takes many people to plan and implement the graduation ceremonies and the Committee feels that the people who help to make the events a success should be recognized as members of the Committee.

Gorman reported that moving the commencement ceremony to the Pinnacle Bank Arena provided more space, but also created some problems because part of the event was being handled by PBA staff, not University staff. Woodman asked if the Devaney Center could be used for the ceremonies. Gorman stated that with the larger enrollment of students the

Devaney Center is no longer large enough. She pointed out that there has been improvements with commencement since the undergraduate ceremony has been split into two ceremonies. She noted that the experience is now better for everyone, in part because the ceremony is not as lengthy. She reported that UNL has one of the highest attendance rates in the country for the commencement ceremony because the diplomas are handed to the graduating students at the ceremony. She stated that we have an attendance rate of approximately 83%.

Peterson moved that the proposed changes be presented to the Faculty Senate for approval. Buan seconded the motion. Hanrahan stated that the motion will be presented to the Senate at the November 5 meeting.

Gorman stated that she also wanted to let the Executive Committee know that the CHCC also updated its Regalia Policy. She stated that the commencement regalia this year was changed to coincide with the 150th anniversary of the University. She noted that the Committee was consulted about the changed regalia and some proposed changes were rejected by the Committee. She reported that the CHCC is very much committed to keeping the policy that the regalia represents the academic achievement of the student. She pointed out that the Committee receives numerous requests to allow other recognition of a student, such as an indication that they are an athlete or a member of some student organization, but the Committee has declined these requests.

Woodman stated that he has observed some other forms of recognition on the robes of the regalia. Gorman noted that the recognition must be some kind of academic achievement, such as a student being a member of a national or international academic society. She stated that the Committee has a list of what is considered acceptable academic recognitions. Woodman asked what would happen if Athletics told the student athletes to just wear a sash recognizing that they are a student athlete. Gorman stated that if something like this occurs and becomes a problem, it will be addressed.

Gorman stated that student organizations continue to apply, and members are allowed to put a pin with the organization's logo on the sash, but only a specific size is allowed and it can only identify the organization. She stated that the pin cannot have any political statements on it. She pointed out that anyone who is not wearing the proper regalia, or who have modified the regalia dramatically, can be removed from the graduation ceremony. Hanrahan asked if sororities and fraternities can have a pin. Gorman stated that they can.

Woodman asked what the stole of gratitude is. Gorman stated that the stole is a means of students expressing their thanks to those who have helped them to accomplish their goal of graduating. She stated that the students purchase the stole and then present it to the person as a gift.

Gorman pointed out that the CHCC is a great committee with dedicated members who work hard to ensure the graduation ceremonies are successful. Peterson asked how faculty attendance at the ceremonies is going. Gorman stated that low faculty attendance

is an ongoing problem. She noted that the College of Arts & Sciences will pay for a faculty member's regalia if they attend commencement.

Gorman stated that the Marshal Corps is vital to conducting the ceremonies and hard work has been put into increasing the number of members to help facilitate the ceremonies. She noted that staff members can serve as members of the Marshal Corps as well as faculty. Woodman asked if the members of the Corps are provided refreshments. Gorman stated that a lunch is provided since there are two ceremonies.

6.2 President Priority Candidate Forum

The Executive Committee worked on developing questions to ask the candidate for President of the University of Nebraska at the upcoming forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, November 12, 2019 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.