

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Buan, Fech, Franco Cruz, Hanrahan, Kolbe, Latta Konecky, Minter, Purcell, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Adenwalla, Gay, Peterson

Date: Tuesday, April 7, 2020

Location: Zoom Meeting

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 4:37 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

3.0 Approval of March 31, 2020 Minutes

The Executive Committee agreed to postpone approval of the minutes until Chancellor Green had the chance to review his comments.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Update on Proposals from AVC Walker

Hanrahan stated that he notified AVC Walker of the Executive Committee's concern on how students could register provide feedback/concerns on a course for this semester. He reported that there will be a statement in the course syllabus providing information to students on how they could provide feedback or concerns.

4.2 Bylaws

Hanrahan reported that he received Central Administration's revisions to the proposed changes to the Regents bylaws. He noted that some of the changes being proposed by General Counsel are not acceptable, but AVC Walker thinks we can suggest some changes that would create a compromise that both sides could accept.

Woodman noted that we have been trying to get the AAUP censure issue resolved for two years. He suggested that we should let Central Administration's revisions go forward, pointing out that the AAUP will more than likely reject them. Franco Cruz suggested that the Executive Committee could write a statement saying that it is against the proposed changes made by Central Administration.

Buan pointed out that the four campuses have slightly different policies, but the suggested revisions to the Regents bylaws would be University-wide. Hanrahan stated that the bylaws are for the entire University, and the campus bylaws are structural. He

pointed out that when UNK and UNO became part of the University system they had to conform their bylaws to the University so they are much more detailed than UNL's.

Hanrahan suggested that we could propose to add the contested language to the UNL bylaws. It was pointed out that the Regents would need to approve any changes to the UNL bylaws and they might reject the revisions.

Purcell asked if there were any changes to the proposed revisions on Extension Educators. Hanrahan noted that he did not receive any changes about the revisions.

Hanrahan pointed out that Central Administration's revisions to the bylaws, and now proposed changes to the Student Code of Conduct, would need to be declared emergency motions at the April 28th Faculty Senate meeting.

4.3 Update on Executive Committee Elections

Griffin reported that there is now at least one candidate running for election for the President-Elect, Secretary, Extension Educator position, and four members for the Executive Committee.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Proposed Pass/No Pass Temporary Policy Change (AVC Walker)

Kolbe asked if the proposed changes to the Pass/No Pass policy would super cede a department's requirement of a grade only option. Walker stated that if the Faculty Senate approves the proposed policy, which would only apply for this semester, it would super cede existing course requirements.

Woodman noted that his class is a grade only option course, and he heard a suggestion that faculty members with this kind of grading option should sign an individual contract with each student who wanted to retain the grade option. He stated that if that is the case, the contract should be handled at the administrative level, rather than at the faculty level.

Walker pointed out that the current process is that students have to consult with an advisor about changing a course to a Pass/No Pass grade, and the advisor would inform the student whether the change could have negative impacts for the student's further academic career. She stated that the faculty member is not involved in the process. She reported that Associate Dean Watts, Undergraduate Education & Student Success, and University Registrar Booton have both been consulted as the proposed temporary policy was developed. She noted that not every student will opt to take a course Pass/No Pass, and the course would still count towards a student's graduation requirements. Woodman noted that there are courses listed for grade only and asked if the temporary policy would change this. Walker stated that it would for this semester. Woodman stated that, given the extenuating circumstance we are all in, he supports having this option for the students.

Vakilzadian asked if the deadline date of May 29th for allowing the Pass/No Pass option is correct, even though courses are completed and grades assigned in early May. Walker

stated that the May 29th deadline is by design. She stated that students would be able to see their grade and then could decide whether to keep it or change to a Pass/No Pass. She stated that the idea is to help guarantee that students stay engaged, and gives them some level of control. She pointed out that the stress level for the students right now is very high and appears to be getting worse than expected because many of them are really struggling with the whole COVID-19 situation and its financial implications.

Vakilzadian asked if students could change their grade to a Pass/No Pass if they receive a grade lower than C because a passing grade can be a D- in some courses in some departments. Minter stated that if a student fails a course they receive a No Pass. Walker pointed out that students need a C or better to receive a Pass. She noted that the students would not get credit if they take a course Pass/No Pass and receive a grade of “No Pass”, and it would not impact their GPA. She pointed out that the students still have the option of retaining their grade if they so choose.

Hanrahan asked if the policy would also apply to graduate students. Walker stated that it would not. She noted that a decision regarding graduate students would have to be made by the Graduate College which is system-wide.

Hanrahan asked how soon a decision would need to be made. Walker stated that the sooner the better because so many students are having high anxiety over their courses, and the longer we wait the more likely some students might want to withdraw from their courses. Woodman stated that he would encourage his colleagues to address this as soon as possible so we can keep the students on track for their courses. Hanrahan asked if there is a motion to approve the policy. Fech asked if there were any dissenting comments. Buan stated that there may need to be some clarification in the language such as including that the policy would only apply for this semester. Walker stated that this could be done and there would be clarification that the policy applies to grade only courses as well. Buan moved to accept the proposal with the suggested revisions. Kolbe seconded the motion. The Executive Committee approved the proposed Pass/No Pass policy on behalf of the Faculty Senate.

Walker thanked the Executive Committee and stated that she would communicate the Committee’s decision to the administration, but asked that Hanrahan inform the Senate prior to the announcement that would come from the EVC.

5.2 Recruitment of Students for Next Academic Year

Kolbe asked if there were conversations occurring about recruiting students next year given that LPS made the decision to give all students either a Pass/No Pass. Walker stated that she does not think it will be an issue for new recruits. She pointed out that every university in the country is worried about fall enrollment, and we will do whatever we can to encourage enrollment.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:13 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, April 14, 2020 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.