

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Adenwalla, Buan, Franco Cruz, Gay, Hanrahan, Latta Konecky, Minter, Peterson, Purcell, Vakilzadian, Woodman

Absent: Fech, Kolbe

Date: Tuesday, February 11, 2020

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 2:30 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green/Interim EVC Moberly

2.1 Compulsory Pledges

Hanrahan reported that there are some faculty members that expressed concerns that the messaging encouraging people to sign the diversity/inclusion pledge was heavy-handed. Gay asked whose idea it was to have the pledge. Interim EVC Moberly stated that approximately 300 universities are members of the national CEO Action organization which allows individuals to digitally sign to indicate they support diversity and inclusion.

Gay stated that he thought that signing the pledge is ineffectual, and amounted to virtue signaling, and that anyone that had been brought up properly would automatically do what the pledge states. He pointed out that if we care about diversity we would offer more compelling start-up packages for under-represented new faculty members, and include diversity of thought. He stated that a staff person may feel pressured by a supervisor to sign the pledge. He stated that the pledge is very reminiscent of the loyalty pledges people had to take during the McCarthy era. Adenwalla stated that the effort seems like window dressing, and someone who holds racist views could sign it to cover their true feelings. She asked if people will be labeled if they do not sign the pledge.

Chancellor Green stated that he believed it was important for the University to offer the pledge. He noted that CEO Action for Diversity is a national organization which advocates for diversity and inclusion. He stated that he takes full accountability for it, and does not understand the angst against it. Adenwalla asked if there is any data that would indicate that organizations signing this pledge have seen improvements in diversity and inclusion.

Interim EVC Moberly pointed out that diversity and inclusion is a value the University supports and is clearly stated in the N2025 Strategic Plan. He noted that it is not mandatory for people to sign the pledge and he does not think there is pressure on any of the staff to do so.

Adenwalla asked if there was a list of those that signed. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny reported that there is no list. Chancellor Green pointed out that he does not want people to feel compelled to sign the pledge, and that was never the intent. Latta Konecky stated that she did not feel it was compulsory, and she knows of no one in her unit that feels that it was, or felt that it was being pushed by the University Libraries administration. Buan pointed out that it is a sensitive issue for many people. She stated that she mostly heard that the pledge was considered an empty signal of valuing diversity and inclusion. Interim EVC Moberly pointed out that the University has been criticized by some faculty members for not speaking loudly enough about diversity and inclusion.

Adenwalla asked how minority faculty and students have viewed the pledge. Chancellor Green reported that he did not have actual figures, but noted that he was encouraged by students and faculty members to have UNL participate with CEO Action for Diversity. Hanrahan suggested that in the future the Faculty Senate could help roll out the announcement of such an event.

Minter noted that this is a hard time to communicate across multiple audiences, and suggested that University Communications might want to consider a message that addresses a more generalized audience.

2.2 Chancellor's Commissions - Reports to the Faculty Senate

Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that the Chancellor and Hanrahan discussed the issue and it was agreed that the Chancellor's Commissions would be encouraged to share an annual report with the Faculty Senate. Griffin asked if she could contact the Commissions to get the reports. Chancellor Green stated that this was fine.

2.3 Online Course Evaluations

Hanrahan reported that one of the Faculty Senators expressed concern at the February 4, Senate meeting about why the Senate did not have the opportunity to vote on the standardized questions for course evaluations, pointing out that it is related to the curriculum and involves all of the colleges. He noted that the Board of Regents Bylaws state that the Faculty Senate is to deal with matters of interest to more than one college. Interim EVC Moberly noted that the course evaluations are not instructing people on how to teach. Furthermore, he pointed out that faculty members have been heavily involved, including Woodman, throughout the process so there has been significant feedback from many faculty members. He stated that he respectfully disagreed that this was a curricular issue.

Hanrahan stated that the current evaluations focus on the instructor, not the course itself. He pointed out that the new online evaluations are more centered on the course and therefore are meaningful to the instructor which could impact how the instructor delivers the course. He noted that some of the Senators seemed to be bothered by the standardized questions, and are uncertain whether they can add their own or department questions. He stated that there was the sentiment at the Senate meeting that there should be involvement from the Senate. Interim EVC Moberly asked whether the Executive

Committee spoke on behalf of the Senate when the online course evaluations were presented to the Executive Committee.

Buan stated that the feedback being received from Senators is that directives are being made by certain unit heads that all faculty must use these online forms. She stated that it is her understanding from the previous discussions the Executive Committee had with Associate VCs Goodburn and Walker that we were still in a pilot phase with the questions and the online evaluations have not been rolled out, and it now appears to be a top-down decision that was made. Hanrahan pointed out that the Executive Committee never voted on the questions.

Woodman asked what the purpose is of having a uniform set of questions on an evaluation form versus one developed by a department. Interim EVC Moberly stated that the taskforce conducted a highly intensive review of evaluation questions and found that there were many problems identified in the literature. He noted that some of the questions used were inherently biased, and some of the questions asked students to give evaluation of things the students did not know or understand. He pointed out that there has been a pilot study and significant feedback received from faculty members, and he has not heard of any complaints on the substance of the questions.

Adenwalla stated that there needs to be an avenue for faculty members to provide feedback about the online course evaluations. Buan stated that she believes the taskforce should get the feedback. Minter pointed out that the online course evaluations were rolled out differently in the colleges, and in some cases without much context. She suggested that the Executive Committee and Academic Affairs work together so people understand the reasons behind the online evaluations.

Hanrahan asked if Associate VC Goodburn could bring the questions to the Executive Committee. Buan stated that if data from the pilot study was available that could be useful. She pointed out that explaining the reason for some of the questions would also be helpful, and faculty need to know that they can add their own questions. Minter stated that there also needs to be a process where people can raise concerns about the online course evaluations.

2.4 Status of Equity Adjustment Raises

Interim EVC Moberly reported that there is a list of faculty members who will be receiving salary increases to address pay equity issues. He stated that he is currently working with Payroll to determine when the people will receive the increases. Purcell asked if the original 33 people identified by Academic Affairs last spring will receive the salary adjustments. Interim EVC Moberly stated that some of them received salary adjustments that occurred through the normal college raises, and no one fell off the original list. Woodman asked if the inequities were gender based. Interim EVC Moberly reported that they were not.

Purcell asked if the .4% salary increase received by the campus last year was used for the adjustments. Chancellor Green pointed out that a lot of hard work went into identifying

the individuals and determining how the increases could be made. He noted that the increases are coming out of the additional .4% salary pool that UNL received this year, and part of the .4% for next year will be used. He noted that President Carter had to sign off on the increases because some of them were retroactive which requires the President's approval.

Purcell stated, that as chair of the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee, she wanted to thank Interim EVC Moberly for all of his work to make the adjustments a reality. Interim EVC Moberly pointed out that the colleges did a lot of work to make this happen as well. He stated that the total amount of the salary adjustments was approximately \$684,000.

Vakilzadian asked if faculty will receive a 2.4% increase this July. Chancellor Green stated that UNL received 2.4% for the current fiscal year and for the next fiscal year. He pointed out that .4% for each of the fiscal years is being used for the salary adjustment which means that there should be a 2% salary increase beginning July 1 for faculty and staff.

2.5 What is the university doing to help faculty members understand the regulations for conducting research with foreign entities?

Hanrahan stated that a professor raised concerns over a message that was sent out by an Associate Dean regarding faculty members knowing the regulations that are in place for conducting research with foreign entities. He asked what the University is doing to inform faculty members, and if there is anything the Senate can do to help disseminate the information. He noted that Professor Dan Hoyt will be coming to speak to the Executive Committee regarding the topic.

Chancellor Green reported that the University has a policy regarding the reporting of foreign interests and there is a mechanism in place to insure compliance with the regulations. He pointed out that the administration is trying to inform faculty of the regulations in order to protect them and the University. Buan noted that ORED has sent out a message that they want to work with the faculty, and in her department she stated that there was a healthy, positive discussion about the issue. She pointed out that when faculty members accept grants and contracts there is language in those documents that need to be adhered to.

Adenwalla reported that there was a presentation from ORED in her department, but there was a lot of uncertainty with the technical pieces of the regulations. She suggested that there needs to be someone who handles the technology aspects to explain the situation to the faculty. Vakilzadian stated that his department received an email about what kinds of things should or should not be on a laptop when faculty travel overseas. He noted that having clarification about these things would be helpful. Adenwalla suggested having ORED supply an updated monthly list of what technologies are considered sensitive.

2.6 Update on AAUP and Extension Bylaws

Chancellor Green reported that he is still waiting for the finalization of the language from Central Administration. He stated that as soon as he receives it he will get it to the Executive Committee. He noted that he hopes that the proposed changes can be on the Board of Regents agenda in April for its first reading, and in June for the second reading. He stated that the proposed changes includes the resolution to change the language pertaining to Extension Educators.

2.7 Update on the Faculty Athletics Representative Search

Chancellor Green reported that the search has concluded successfully and an announcement will be made soon. He stated that the interview process has been thorough and followed our normal procedures. He noted that the final candidate met with all of the head coaches and with Athletics' administration and he feels good about the decision. He stated that the new FAR will overlap with Professor Potuto until July 1. Hanrahan asked how long the new FAR is scheduled to be in that position. Chancellor Green stated that it is for five years, but there could be a renewal of the contract.

2.8 Issues on the Horizon

Chancellor Green noted that the State of Our University address will be this Friday and he will be talking a great deal about the new budget model and the need for it. He stated the he is very pleased that Professor Bloom will be serving as the Faculty Associate in the budget model governance process.

Vakilzadian asked how colleges with deficit budgets will be handled by the new budget model. Chancellor Green pointed out that the subvention pool will subsidize colleges/units. He stated that over the long term, the college will need to address the deficit. Peterson stated that the previous budget model had no real sense of accounting, but with the incentive-based budget model there will be real accounting by the units. Chancellor Green pointed out that our budget model is a hybrid model which is only partially based on a responsibility centered management budget. Peterson noted that there may always be some colleges that will need subvention funds because they are not revenue generating, but they are needed for the University to achieve its mission of teaching. He stated that the budget model will be adjusted when needed to make sure that it is functioning the way we need it to, and there will be some flexibility built into the budget model to allow for adjustments. He noted that the first couple of years of using the new budget model everyone will be held harmless and will receive the same budget as they had in the previous two years.

Hanrahan stated that in regards to space allocation there are certain disciplines where an efficient use of a building is 50% of space used, while for other disciplines it is 100% use. He pointed out that the Space Allocation committee will need to take things like this into consideration and not just have a standard formula.

Vakilzadian asked what the status is of the proposal to establish a School of Computing. Chancellor Green noted that he will be speaking about this at the State of Our University

address. He stated that at this point only the Department of Computer Science and Engineering will be in the School of Computing.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Report on Board of Regents Meeting

Hanrahan reported that the Board of Regents approved changing the admission criteria, but the Regents scholarship issue was removed from the agenda by President Carter due to concerns raised by students. He noted the change to the Regents scholarship requirements would limit honors students from being able to have minors or double majors.

Hanrahan stated that the Student Regents were discussing climate change and the Board's Business and Finance Committee charged the Foundation to examine what the impacts would be if the Foundation stopped investing in fossil fuel companies.

3.2 I Love NU Day

Hanrahan reported that March 10 is I Love NU Day where people can gather at the Capital Building to show their support of the University. He noted that UNL is striving to have more people in attendance than UNK this year.

3.3 Faculty Salaries

Hanrahan reported that President Carter is making faculty salaries a priority and he has placed a moratorium on adding positions at Central Administration. He noted that new positions will not be added, but if a current position becomes open a replacement will be sought.

3.4 Academic Freedom Statements

Hanrahan stated that he will be meeting with Associate VC Walker and Professor Schleck to discuss the Senate not endorsing the statements. He stated that the Chancellor is concerned how FIRE (Foundation for Individual Rights in Education) will react to the statements not being endorsed.

Hanrahan noted that he has told the Chancellor that the faculty do not like it when the administration packages a policy or statements and then just expects the Senate to pass it. He pointed out that there needs to be a flowchart that indicates the process for approving policies that impact the faculty. Buan stated that it is okay for the administration to say that a policy is needed and then go to the faculty asking them to develop the policy, or vice versa.

3.5 Coronavirus

Hanrahan noted that there are faculty members who have family in China and are impacted by the coronavirus, and he asked the Chancellor what the University is doing to assist faculty members who are being impacted by the virus. He stated that the Chancellor is going to look into providing information to faculty on what support services are available to help them during the health crisis.

3.6 Review of Retirement Plans

Hanrahan reported that Central Administration is forming a committee to review the University's supplemental retirement plan to see if our current plan is a good program for employees or whether improvements could be made. He stated that faculty members are needed, preferably with someone with expertise in finance or accounting. He asked the Executive Committee for recommendations.

3.7 Professional Code of Conduct Update

Minter reported that the committee working on the Professional Code of Conduct is making good progress and is currently in the drafting stage after having done extensive research. She stated that the initial draft will be brought to the Executive Committee this semester.

3.8 Report on Meeting of the Executive Committee and Academic Planning Committee Faculty Members

Hanrahan noted that the Executive Committee and faculty members of the APC met this past Friday to discuss the proposed governance committees for the incentive-based budget model. He stated that the Executive Committee provided feedback which he has sent to VC Nunez.

4.0 Approval of February 4, 2020 Minutes

Purcell moved to approve the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Buan. The minutes were approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Update on Executive Committee Goals

Hanrahan noted that the Executive Committee has achieved some of the Committee's goals such as developing a Senate resolution calling for colleges to have an incentive based budget model governance committee, working on developing a Professional Code of Conduct, and reconstituting the Budget Committee. He stated that the Committee needs to continue to work on obtaining funding for faculty to attend leadership conferences, developing a handout on academic freedom, and complete work on the incentive-based budget model governance committees.

5.2 Strategy - Closed Session

The Executive Committee went into closed session to discuss strategy.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, February 18, 2020 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.