

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Billesbach, Buan, Dam, Dawes, Franco Cruz, Gay, Hanrahan, Kolbe, Krehbiel, Minter, Weissling, Woodman

Absent: Eklund

Date: Tuesday, September 22, 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 (*Buan*)

Buan called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2.0 CAS Response on Lecturers – Professor Pascha Stevenson and Professor Catherine Johnson

Buan noted that the Executive Committee wanted to meet with Stevenson and Johnson to discuss the recent letter from Dean Button addressing lecturers' concerns.

Stevenson noted that there is a meeting on Thursday with Dean Button to discuss the recommendations and proposals in the letter. She pointed out that guidelines pertaining to lecturers have been developed by the Ad Hoc Committee formed to investigate and report on the status of lecturers, in consultation with CAS deans, chairs, and directors, but the question is how binding are these guidelines. She noted that Dean Button has been wonderful in trying to address the situation, but she infers indicated that CAS is having to work within constraints coming from upper administration. Johnson pointed out that the lecturers were disappointed that the guidelines were not as powerful as they had hoped for and the salary situation continues to be bleak. She stated that the result is that lecturers feel demoralized. Stevenson stated that she fears the amount of discretion that departments will have, even with these guidelines, indicates that there will not be any significant changes in how lecturers are treated.

Woodman noted that the Ad Hoc Committee went in with great hope and Dean Button was willing to go to the forefront on the issue, but a frequent response has been that things cannot be corrected due to the Bylaws. He pointed out that colleges do have their own bylaws and questioned why CAS can't have a statement in its bylaws that says that after working for two years lecturers will receive a salary increase and in the third year a lecturer could be raised to a senior lecturer. He stated that the Dean could issue the statement which chairs would have to follow and would need to justify it if they did not follow the college bylaws.

Billesbach asked why this should be an issue at the college level rather than a campus-wide issue. He pointed out that having one set of guidelines for each college could create

a caste system on campus. He questioned whether there are similar documents pertaining to lecturers in other colleges, and why this would not be a unifying document for all colleges at UNL.

Hanrahan asked if the Executive Committee could be sent the final report of the Ad Hoc Committee. He reported that former EVC Plowman transferred a large amount of funds to CAS to address their temporary instructional needs, but he questioned what has happened to these funds because it was not used to adjust lecturers' salaries. Minter pointed out that Plowman's promise to transfer funds was not exactly what occurred, and CAS wound up getting less than half of its temporary budget funds. Hanrahan noted that Academic Affairs needs to verify how much funding went to CAS to help address the salary of the lecturers, and then the Dean should be asked what happened with the funding.

Buan reported that she sent a letter to Dean Button and AVC Walker and they both agreed to speak to the Executive Committee about the lecturer situation. She noted that with the proposed budget reductions some colleges are having a higher percentage of budget cuts because they need to make up for deficits they had in previous years. Minter pointed out that \$1 million was put into CAS' permanent budget, but its temporary instruction costs are \$3 million and typically vacant faculty lines were used to supplement the temporary instruction costs. Hanrahan stated that the Chancellor implied that the \$1 million promise was to address the temporary lecturer needs in the college, particularly in English and Modern Languages & Literatures. Stevenson pointed out that English lecturer salaries are 35% below their peers and Modern Languages are 40% below its peers. She stated that the lecturer salaries have the largest gap compared to our peers, but no one ever mentions this. She stated that once again lecturers are being asked to wait another year without a salary increase, even though some of these people have worked here long term and rarely have received a salary increase. She asked why improving lecturer salaries is not considered a part of the N2025 plan, and noted that the University's continual refusal to address the status of the lecturers is disheartening to say the least.

Hanrahan stated that the Executive Committee should ask EVC Spiller, AVC Walker, and Dean Button how the situation is going to be fixed in CAS and what happened to the idea of the changes in CAS being a role model for the rest of the campus. He suggested that there should be a Town Hall meeting for lecturers. He pointed out that at some universities, lecturers are unionized. Woodman noted that tenure-track faculty members are usually not as supportive for increasing non-tenure track faculty salaries if the funds are coming out of the same pool of funds and noted that unionizing might be a better strategy for lecturers. Minter stated that if a Town Hall meeting with the Chancellor should occur, it would be good to collect questions ahead of time because some lecturers may not feel comfortable speaking at the meeting.

Minter pointed out that the Board of Regents Bylaws trump any other bylaws and Dean Button may be hampered by changing the status of lecturers. Stevenson noted that the lecturer and senior lecturer positions are already recognized and questioned why these

cannot be utilized. Woodman reported that the Ad Hoc Committee suggested a pathway from Lecturer II to a Professor of Practice category if the person had a terminal degree, but AVC Walker had stated that a national search needed to be conducted for any Professor of Practice position.

Hanrahan noted that there is a capital campaign fund happening to raise funds for endowed chairs and questioned why funds could not be raised for lecturers. He stated that it could help address some of these issues and could be done at the campus or college level. Woodman stated that there could be a proposal for a distinguished lecturer title since there are many lecturers on campus who have been here for numerous years. He stated that the Ad Hoc Committee was hoping that a Lecturer III category could be created. Minter stated that the review process could be done through the EVC's office.

Buan asked Stevenson and Johnson to let the Executive Committee know how the meeting with Dean Button goes. She stated that the Executive Committee will invite EVC Spiller, AVC Walker, and Dean Button to meet to discuss their perspective and will ask where the roadblocks are for making improvements for lecturers. Stevenson pointed out that there could be some roadblocks with getting promotions, but there is a smaller one for getting salary raises. She stated that even a raise without a promotion would be an improvement because currently many lecturers continue to be used by the University with no improvements at all to their salaries and little acknowledgement of their dedicated work. Buan pointed out that people need to be treated equitably.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Report on Leadership Town Hall Meeting

Buan reported that she attended the Town Hall meeting last Friday and one of the highlights is that while enrollment is down slightly, it is holding surprisingly well and there has been an increase in First Generation and under-represented students. She stated that another highlight is the strong interest in the three-week sessions from both faculty and students.

Buan stated that AVC Goodburn reported about a survey of students conducted in the fourth week of the semester. Students are struggling with some technology issues and anxiety. AVC Goodburn also described the revised description of course delivery and the criteria for online classes or web classes.

Buan stated that VC Wilhelm gave details of how UNL is supporting LLCHD with staff and health workers and introduced changes to the UNL COVID Dashboard. She noted that questions were asked about the rapid saliva test and reported that the campus is looking for an FDA-certified laboratory to process these tests.

Buan reported that CAPS has expanded its capacity to provide increase access for faculty, staff, and students. She noted that other questions raised were how the campus was dealing with students who are intentionally not getting tested. She stated that we are working with the RA's and UComm to encourage students to get tested.

Buan stated that EVC Spiller reinforced that the three-week sessions were supplemental and are similar in how faculty are paid for teaching summer courses.

3.2 Letter to Athletics Director Moos, Chancellor Green, and FAR Fuess

Buan reported that she sent a letter raising concerns that the Big Ten's decision to have fall sports did not provide an equal opportunity for female athletes to compete. She stated that the response was that the Athletics department will ensure that there will not be inequity and student athletes will have a choice on whether they want to play. She noted that the only sport approved to compete this fall is football.

Woodman and Billesbach noted that football players are being protected to ensure their health, but volleyball players do not seem to have the same protection. Woodman asked if football players are attending in-person classes during the time they will be competing, since the administration has made a compelling argument for having in-person classes.

Franco Cruz pointed out that we do not know if any bubble of protection is in place for the student athletes. He questioned whether this bubble is only when the student athletes are competing, and if the same opportunity will be provided for each of the different teams. He pointed out that there should be the same approach for each team, and before the Executive Committee jumps to conclusions it needs more information. Woodman asked if other non-competing teams would then be excluded from the training table and other associated athletic perks like academic help if they were not competing in that season.

3.3 National Council of Faculty Senates

Buan reported that she attended via Zoom the National Council of Faculty Senates conference. She stated that a major topic was about the budget cuts that universities are facing due to COVID. She stated that Hans-Joerg Tiede from the AAUP and Sirry Alang from Lehigh University spoke and there was discussion on the need for a national governance survey.

3.4 Meeting with AVC Walker on Bylaw Revisions

Buan reported that she met with AVC Walker to finalize the proposed revisions to the Regents Bylaws and noted that things are moving forward and the plan is to present the proposed changes to the Faculty Senate at the October 6th meeting.

3.5 Request to Co-Leaders of UNL's Journey to Anti-Racism and Racial Equity

Buan reported that she sent a letter to the Co-Leaders of UNL's Journey to request what actions they would like the Executive Committee to address in regard to the incident of the stealing of the Black Lives Matter signs by members of a fraternity. She stated that the co-leaders have responded, as did VC Bellows who stated that she and AVC McDowell would be willing to meet with the Executive Committee. Buan noted that she has also communicated with ASUN President Miller and VC Barker. She stated that we need to think about a way to think and address public incidents like this in a shorter time frame.

Krehbiel questioned whether there is some gender bias occurring because the sororities that violated the COVID-19 protocols were addressed quickly, but there has been no word of action against the fraternity involved the BLM sign incident.

Buan noted that the Executive Committee does not get specific information about misconduct by students, but often receives email from other faculty members questioning what the Executive Committee is going to do when an incident occurs. She wondered whether the Committee could work together with VC Barker so we can communicate that steps are being taken to address an incident. She suggested having a shared diversity inclusion event with ASUN. Woodman asked if there would be a more wholistic way to address the issue with the demography involved.

Weissling stated that she would like to see the University get out ahead of these things before the press reports it. Dawes pointed out that the press just needs to report a story and they could do this much quicker than the University which must comply with procedures and processes. She suggested that the line of communication between the Senate President and the Chancellor could be a little tighter so the Senate President could respond what actions are being taken.

4.0 Approval of September 8, 2020 and September 15, 2020 Minutes

Buan asked if there were any further revisions for the minutes. Hearing none she asked for approval of the minutes. The Executive Committee approved the minutes for both September 8th and September 15th.

5.0 Unfinished Business

No unfinished business was discussed.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Meeting with Dance Program Faculty Members about budget cutting Process (Professors Susan Ourada and Hye-Won Hwang)

The Executive Committee met with Professor Susan Ourada and Professor Hye-Won Hwang to discuss the proposed elimination of the Dance program. Ourada and Hwang stated that they were not given any programmatic reasons for the cut and they were not provided with information on what criteria was used to justify the proposed elimination even though they specifically asked. They felt that there was no consultation with the faculty members as outlined in the Procedures to be Invoked for Significant Budget Reallocations and Reductions. The Committee had further discussion and provided suggestions about information the program needs to gather for the Academic Planning Committee's public hearing.

Hanrahan moved that an ad hoc committee be created to work on a letter supporting the faculty in the programs being proposed for elimination. Minter seconded the motion. Hanrahan, Kolbe, and Minter agreed to serve on the ad hoc committee.

6.2 Course Delivery, Models and Planning Spring 2021 Document

Buan noted that last Friday the document on course delivery for models and planning for spring 2021 was released. She stated that the administration wants a unified definition so they can code courses but it appears that faculty will have less flexibility to how they deliver their courses which is contrary to what EVC Spiller told the Executive Committee recently.

Kolbe stated that a hybrid model is not mentioned and this needs to be discussed. He stated that faculty members should be allowed to deliver their courses in a manner that would provide the most flexibility for the instructor and the students. Hanrahan noted that EVC Spiller stated that we do not have enough equipment to offer these kinds of hybrid courses. Weissling stated that she believed EVC Spiller said that she would discourage this kind of course delivery because of the lack of equipment.

Minter stated that her department had a meeting about the three scenarios for course delivery and there was clarification that the web conferencing model does not preclude instructors for having meetings in person.

The Executive Committee agreed to discuss the issue with AVC Goodburn when she meets with the Committee on September 29th.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:31 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, September 29, 2020 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Lorna Dawes, Secretary.