

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent:

Date: Tuesday, July 14, 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 2:31 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green

2.1 ICE's Decision Regarding International Students

Chancellor Green noted that in the spring we were concerned with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and Immigration and Customs Enforcements' (ICE) requirement that international students must be enrolled in on-campus courses, although the ICE adjusted this requirement at that time to allow international students to take at least one or more courses online in the spring. He pointed out that the temporary ruling had been suspended for the fall courses which caused major concerns across higher education resulting in Harvard and MIT filing a suit against the ruling. He reported that we oppose the decision and the University system has signed the amicus brief and issued a statement against the decision and in support of our international students. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny reported that just within the last few minutes the White House administration rescinded the requirement.

2.2 Anti-Racism Journey Leaders - How will they integrate with other Diversity and Inclusion efforts on campus?

Chancellor Green noted that he recently communicated that five co-leaders from the faculty (Kwame Dawes, Lory Dance, Anna Shavers, Kara Mitchell Viesca, and Sergio C. Wals) would help lead the campus effort on anti-racism, and he recently appointed another faculty member (Collette Yellow Robe) to the group. He pointed out that the group will not be a task force or committee, but they will consult with the campus and advise us on how to move forward with our efforts, specifically regarding anti-racism and racial equity. He stated that he is planning a meeting with the group soon to develop an agenda and wants to get the effort rolling before the fall semester begins.

2.3 Athletics plans for fall?

Chancellor Green reported that the Big Ten conference recently made the announcement that the intent is to have fall sports: football, volleyball, cross country, soccer, and field and track, but for conference play only. He stated that

the conference is prepared to make the decision to not have fall sports if it is deemed necessary. He pointed out that the conference is still in the intense planning phase, but there are still a lot questions about when the football season would start and the number of games that would be held. He reported that the conference agreed that students must be on campus in order to play, and there are already two Big Ten universities who might not meet that requirement. He noted that the planning is very fluid at this point and the Athletic Directors are continually communicating with each other. He pointed out that no final decisions have been made yet.

2.4 Will Extension Educators have to go into isolation for 14 days after working the county fair where they will be exposed to hundreds of people each day?

Chancellor Green noted that he visited with Extension Leadership about this question. County Fair Boards make the decision about whether they will have a county fair and how they would be administered. He reported that many of the fairs are allowing youth exhibitions, but there would be no carnivals and the number of people allowed would be reduced. Others have gone to a virtual format, and typically only immediate family members would be allowed to the exhibitions. He stated that the plans are being done in concert with their local health departments. He reported that Extension is not requiring that Extension Educators quarantine themselves for 14 days after the fair unless it is a requirement by the local health department.

2.5 Are static exhibits, which will not even be judged for the State Fair, really necessary this year given the additional exposure that Extension Educators will face to set the exhibits up and then to take them down?

Chancellor Green noted that the State Fair is over a month away and planning for it is still very fluid, although he does know that the number of people admitted to the Fair will be reduced. He stated that an important part of 4-H is youth development and showcasing the efforts of the participants, and judging is only one component of the 4-H activities. He reported that UNMC has provided guidance to the state and county fair boards on how to take proper measures such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and other safety measures.

2.6 Faculty who are also livestock show superintendents will be exposed to people from across the State, is it really safe for them to be at the Fair for several days?

Chancellor Green noted that 4-H and FFA youth exhibits and competitions are at the core of the Nebraska State Fair and their events have been separated to eliminate the number of people who would be in attendance. He stated that safety measures are being taken for the livestock shows and the number of days for these have been reduced to two with social distancing required in the show arenas and livestock barns. He pointed out that our Extension personnel are not required to do this work if they are not comfortable with it.

2.7 Virtual Graduation Ceremony

Weissling noted that the upcoming commencement graduations will be held virtually again. She encouraged the Chancellor to consider having teachers, doctors, ranchers, or some other professionals as guest speakers rather than focusing on sports figures. Chancellor Green stated that he appreciates the suggestion and will take this into serious consideration as plans proceed with the upcoming graduations.

2.8 COVID-19 Related Issues

Buan stated that she has received questions from faculty members asking if there is a point where the university would decide we won't have in person instruction. Chancellor Green reported that if our health care sector cannot maintain adequate capacity in the handling of COVID cases that could restrict on-campus courses. He noted that currently the curve has remained flat in Lincoln.

Woodman asked who would be responsible for reporting if a department has information about someone testing positive in the classroom or in the lab. Chancellor Green stated that the Lancaster County Health Department would report to the University that there is a case and the Health Department would then begin contact tracing. He noted that there needs to be a balance to not disclose the data on the person who is infected. Woodman also mentioned that the information about the expenditures for consultants or whether the UNL police are receiving any training to ensure they have the tools to deal with the public in the least punitive manner had not been provided yet.

Kolbe asked if there are any steps that returning students from hot spot areas are required to take to show up on campus safely. Chancellor Green stated that we are not requiring test data yet. He noted that the point of time of testing creates challenges because one day a person could be negative and the next day they could be positive. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that there will be a quarantine requirement in place for international students coming to campus and the university is keeping a close eye on the states that are considered hot spots.

Gay asked what facilities is doing to make sure that we have the best filtration system in buildings to help eliminate the spread of the virus. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that Facilities is working with departments and building maintenance people on the air flow changes in buildings. Buan asked if there has been any discussion of installing UV killing equipment for air filtration systems. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that he would make this inquiry to Jimmy Jackson, Associate VC of University Operations. Billesbach asked if there will be any changes in the air filtration systems to allow for exchange of airflow before the next class begins. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that based on ratings, 69 minutes are needed to clear the air space, and Facilities is working quickly to make this adjustment in the buildings. Chancellor Green noted that we are limiting the density of people in the classroom, and making other adjustments, for example he pointed out that the Chemistry department is putting their large

lecture section classes in the Lied Center where students can be spread out. He pointed out that these are just some of the efforts being taken to make the campus as safe as possible.

3.0 Professor Blankley - Preparation for Executive Committee/Administrator Retreat

The Executive Committee discussed with Professor Blankley, who will be the facilitator for the retreat, the protocols for the meeting and topics that the Committee felt should be discussed.

4.0 Announcements

4.1 Council on Inclusive Excellence and Diversity

Buan thanked Minter and Gay for their willingness to serve on the Council on Inclusive Excellence and Diversity.

4.2 NU Statement on Equity and Diversity

Buan noted that all five campuses approved a statement supporting equity and diversity and work will begin to form a joint resolution with more specific requested actions and calling for Central Administration to implement these actions.

4.3 Ad Hoc Committee on Proposed Revisions to Regents Bylaws

Hanrahan reported that the ad hoc committee met today with Provost Fritz and Senior Associate General Counsel Hoefer and compared General Counsel's most recent suggested revisions with the revisions approved by the Faculty Senate in April. He stated that there was agreement about classifying post docs as faculty members, and there was discussion about administrative leave. He reported that Hoefer agreed to work on the language pertaining to threat assessment, and voluntary versus involuntary administrative leave. Hanrahan stated that he is optimistic that an agreement on all of the proposed changes can be reached within a few meetings.

4.4 Forward to Fall Update

Buan reported that she sent an email message to AVC Goodburn and VC Wilhelm asking what a faculty member needs to do if they become positive for COVID-19. She stated that the F2F Committee dealt with the issue and will be updating the COVID website to provide this information.

5.0 Approval of June 30, 2020 Minutes

Woodman moved for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Eklund and approved by the Executive Committee.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Face Coverings Statement

Buan noted that the Executive Committee has worked with AVC Walker and the Academic Planning Task Force to develop a face coverings syllabus statement, and when it is approved there will be a link to the statement on the Senate website. She noted that including the entire statement in a course syllabus would not be required, but the instructor would have to provide a link to the policy website

<https://www.unl.edu/facultysenate/Face%20Coverings%20Syllabus%20Statement%20July%202020.pdf>. She stated that accommodations for a class not requiring a face covering will be provided, but otherwise everyone must abide to the policy.

Billesbach asked if signage will be provided for classrooms indicating that face masks must be worn. Buan stated that there will be signage throughout the campus, and if there is an exemption, students need to be made aware that a safety plan is in place. She encouraged faculty members to put the link on their syllabus, and if an instructor has an exemption they should indicate this on the syllabus. Hanrahan suggested that it should be communicated to departments that they should specify if any of their courses have exemptions to the policy.

Buan called the question to ask for approval of the face coverings syllabus statement. The Executive Committee approved the statement.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Grades Due Date Policy

Buan asked the Executive Committee to review proposed changes to the grades due date policy. She noted that the changes are being suggested due to the modification of the fall semester calendar. Woodman pointed out that the mini session deadline for grades is set for December 26 which is odd since it is in the middle of the holiday break and suggested that it be moved to January 1. Kolbe suggested that the deadline date for the mini session should be January 4th when the offices reopen. The Executive Committee approved the policy with the change of the due to January 4th instead of December 26.

7.2 Attendance and Engagement Policy

Buan reported that the Academic Planning Task Force is requesting a modification of the class attendance policy to accommodate students who may have the virus or are in quarantine. She stated that the suggestion is that faculty should not penalize students for absences and faculty members should be prepared to develop assignments for remote student engagement. The Executive Committee discussed concerns about modifying the policy including that the proposed changes could allow students to take advantage of it. Hanrahan suggested that faculty members should be sent a letter from the Executive Vice Chancellor's Office encouraging faculty members to be flexible about different ways to consider attendance.

Buan called the question. Three were in favor of the policy, two abstained, and five were against it. Motion failed.

7.3 Faculty Training Video

Buan stated that a faculty training video is being created and asked for volunteers to speak. Hanrahan, Kolbe, and Woodman volunteered and it was suggested that Gay be asked to also speak.

7.4 ARRC Case - Final Recommendations

Item postponed to allow ARRC Chair Professor Falci to join the meeting to provide information.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, July 28, 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.