

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

**Absent:** Krehbiel

**Date:** Tuesday, July 28, 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.

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### **1.0 Call (*Buan*)**

Buan called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

### **2.0 EVC Spiller**

#### **2.1 Status of Search for Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs**

EVC Spiller met with the Executive Committee in a closed session to discuss the status of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs search.

#### **2.2 Graduate Student Questions Regarding the Fall Semester**

EVC Spiller noted that she has shared with the Executive Committee a summary of the communications Graduate Studies has had with graduate students concerning the fall semester. She reported that the summary included information on communications with the graduate community, and graduate student orientation. She pointed out that some colleges have held town hall meetings for their graduate students and they are welcome to attend the Chancellor's Town Hall meetings.

#### **2.3 Plans to Reopen the University Libraries**

EVC Spiller reported that Dean Stewart of the University Libraries is asking for the Executive Committee to review the proposed reopening plans for the University Libraries. Buan stated that the Executive Committee will be reviewing and discussing the proposal later in the meeting.

### **3.0 VC Boehm**

#### **3.1 What might UNL learn about the "next normal" from in-person NCTA and Extension summer activities and programs? What seems to be working well?**

VC Boehm stated that Extension is still dealing and working with the reopening of its offices, but one lesson is that Extension efforts need to look at the local data trends when making decisions because there is such variation with the number of COVID-19 cases across the counties. He noted that NCTA has been holding classes this summer and 48 students have been living in the residence hall. He stated that NCTA learned that it is

critical to involve the faculty in developing the engagement strategy for teaching, and reported that NCTA has had a successful summer.

VC Boehm wanted to give kudos to all of our Extension professionals who have been on the front line with the county state fairs. He noted that most of the citizens have been very supportive of the efforts, but the state fairs are not the same as in previous years. He stated that the focus has been on showcasing the youth, and so far the fairs have been a positive experience.

VC Boehm stated that the faculty have to be involved with the plans to reopen the campus in the fall and the administration needs to be listening to concerns and providing support for the faculty.

Buan asked if counties where there are either no or few reported cases of COVID-19 are nervous about people coming from outside the county to either work or attend the county fairs. VC Boehm stated that the Extension employees are following the CDC guidelines and University requirements, but Extension Educators are encouraged to call ahead before going out to a different county and to use common sense during engagement with people. He noted that there have been some cases in IANR, but nothing that is systemic or related to work. He stated that the greatest concern is with the research labs because people work closely together in these environments. He reported that Interim Dean Varner has provided some additional guidance for Extension Educators meeting with people from communities.

Dawes asked if Extension personnel have requested accommodations for different working arrangements. VC Boehm reported that he has not seen any figures on requests for accommodations and whether flexible work arrangements have been made. Dawes asked what the recourse is for Extension Educators if they test positive. VC Boehm noted that all University employees must wear a face covering or maintain a six foot distance. He pointed out that some of the county-based staff are county employed and they do not have to follow the University's requirements. He stated that litigation pertaining to COVID-19 is unclear at this time, but in his opinion he thinks if an Extension employee feels that they have been exposed to COVID-19 due to their work, the university should be liable to make sure those individuals have the care that they need. He pointed out that there is a clause in the Extension guidelines that states that if a client creates a hostile environment, the Extension personnel is to leave and contact the administration who will step in and become involved with the situation.

Buan reported that she has heard a few complaints from IANR and she has forwarded them to AVC Walker. VC Boehm asked that complaints be forward to either AVC Bischoff, Interim Dean Varner, or himself.

### **3.2 Any planned activities related to diversity, equity, and inclusion on East Campus for students, faculty, and staff?**

VC Boehm reported that IANR has a website devoted to diversity and inclusion (<https://ianr.unl.edu/diversity>) which includes a section on activities and initiatives being

taken in IANR, and the letter from IANR leaders committing to IANR taking additional and intentional steps towards making the Institute and Nebraska agriculture more inclusive for those who feel the impacts of bias, racism, microaggressions, and other forms of oppression. He stated that IANR is making progress on a number of fronts such as including an entire section on inclusive excellence at new faculty orientation. He reported that he has met with Extension professionals across Nebraska who are a diverse group of people and has let them share their stories to him about the biases they have encountered. He stated that the campus anti-racism group will look at all of our buildings to see if there are names that are associated with racism and will consider whether these should be renamed.

Gay asked if VC Boehm views Extension as being a vital component in educating the rest of Nebraska about the history of racism in Nebraska. VC Boehm stated that he thinks it is unfair to expect a faculty member to carry the heft of this effort and noted that the role of the administrators is to consult with local leadership. He noted that framing discussions around this history of racism is difficult to do without polarizing people. He believes it is everyone's job to build a more inclusive state.

### **3.3 Update on Nebraska Ag Economy**

VC Boehm reported that the Nebraska Economic Forecasting Advisory Board just recently met and while the economy is still in a slump, it is not down by as much as was previously anticipated which could be positive for the university.

### **3.4 Dean of Extension Search Plans**

VC Boehm reported that Dave Varner has been appointed Interim Dean of Extension until a permanent person is found, but with the budget cuts and a new biennium request coming up next year, he has no intention of conducting a search in the near future. He stated that when a search is conducted it will be an international search.

### **3.5 Reopening of Campus**

Kolbe stated that people in the county that he has spoken with are nervous about the campus reopening and the influx of students and he asked if the University is ready. VC Boehm noted that we have a well thought-out plan, and some faculty members have several backup plans developed for their courses. He stated that the ultimate decision will be based on the status of COVID-19 in Lancaster County. He believes we will get clear guidance from President Carter and Chancellor Green about reopening.

## **4.0 ARRC Case - Professor Christina Falci**

The Executive Committee went into closed session to discuss the Chancellor's response to recommendations from an Academic Rights & Responsibilities Special Hearing Committee.

## **5.0 Announcements**

### **5.1 University of Nebraska Faculty Senates' Stance against Racism, Privilege and Inequity**

Buan reported that the final copy of the Statement against Racism, Privilege and Inequity from the four campuses, plus NCTA, were sent to President Carter on Friday to ask for his support and to prioritize equity and inclusion across the University system.

### **5.2 Town Hall Meetings**

Buan noted that total attendance for the three town hall meetings this month was just under 1500. She noted that the Chancellor presented the budget overview and the projected shortfalls, provided an update on the Forward to Fall efforts, and discussed the anti-racism journey and the role of the co-leaders on this effort. She stated that questions raised involved whether others will be notified if someone has tested positive for the virus, and consideration of HIPPA regulations; what actions fraternities and sororities are taking to ensure safety. Woodman asked if he is not allowed to let students in his courses know that someone has tested positive. Buan stated that people are being asked to use the COVID app which would help them learn if they were possibly exposed. She suggested that we follow up these questions with AVC Goodburn and VC Wilhelm.

### **5.3 Budget Cutting Procedures**

Buan reported that the Chancellor met with the Academic Planning Committee to begin the process of addressing the budget cuts. She noted that the APC will be working through November to address the proposed cuts.

### **5.4 Upcoming Meeting with AVC Goodburn, Director Monk, and Director Johnson**

Buan reported that the Executive Committee will be meeting with AVC Goodburn, Director Monk, and Director Johnson to discuss access to the digital learning center for final exams and concerns about ProctorU.

### **5.5 Question on Worker's Compensation for University Employees**

Buan stated that AVC Currin responded to her question about whether university employees would be covered by worker's compensation if they contracted COVID-19. She noted that AVC Currin stated that university workers would be under Nebraska Worker's Compensation rules. She stated that she is still waiting to get answers to other questions she raised with AVC Currin and will share those when she receives them.

### **5.6 Faculty Senate Diversity & Inclusion Committee**

Buan reported that she met with the Faculty Senate Diversity and Inclusion Committee to give the Committee its charge and noted that the members are excited to get to work.

### **5.7 Update on Proposed Bylaws Revisions**

Hanrahan and Woodman reported that the ad hoc committee on the proposed changes to the Regents Bylaws is continuing to work with members of the General Counsel's office to find language that is agreeable to both parties.

## **6.0 Approval of July 14, 2020 Minutes**

Buan asked if there were further revisions to the minutes. Gay moved for approval of the minutes seconded by Billesbach. Motion approved.

## **7.0 Unfinished Business**

### **7.1 Grading Deadline Policy**

Buan reported that the revisions to the grading deadline policy were approved with the changes suggested by the Executive Committee.

## **8.0 New Business**

### **8.1 University Libraries Proposed Changes to Policy and Operations**

Dawes stated that the University Libraries is seeking the Senate's endorsement for modifying its operation to limit access to its facilities in order to ensure the safety of its staff and the University community. She noted that there will be limited access to only the UNL community and printed material will not be available until four days after it has been returned. Buan asked if instructors have been notified that students will have more difficulty accessing the libraries. Dawes stated that the library liaison will inform departments, and noted that interlibrary loans will be restricted.

Buan asked if the Executive Committee approves the University Libraries plan of operations. The Executive Committee approved the plan.

### **8.2 Graduate Student Assembly's Concerns for 3-week Session Pay for GTAs**

Buan reported that the Executive Committee was asked by Dean Carr, Graduate Studies, to make recommendations about salaries for GTAs teaching the 3-week session. She noted that she contacted GSA President Eric Rodene to see if GSA has any concerns about the issue and noted that President Rodene sent a letter outlining concerns. Woodman asked if there was any variance between different department expectations for GTA salaries. Buan stated that the proposal is for the salary to be prorated based on the GTA's contracted salary. Hanrahan suggested that the Executive Committee should send a letter of support for the GTAs receiving a minimum salary, but they should not get paid more than a faculty member. Woodman stated that he is fine with the idea of a minimum but departments should make their own decisions. Buan agreed to draft a letter and share it with the Executive Committee for input.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, August 25, 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.