

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Adenwalla, Buan, Fech, Gay, Hanrahan, Kolbe, Latta Konecky, Minter, Peterson, Purcell, Vakilzadian

Absent: Franco Cruz, Woodman

Date: Tuesday, March 31, 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 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Chancellor Green/EVC Spiller/VC Boehm

2.1 Update on University's Response to COVID-19 and Projected End to Extraordinary Measures

Chancellor Green noted that the real question is whether we expect the COVID-19 situation to change in the near term, or whether it will require us to go beyond where we currently are which is at a Level 3. He stated that at this level courses are being taught by remote access and employees are encouraged to work from home. He reported that some research, facilities, and service employees are still working on campus. He stated that in conversations with local health officials and authorities, at this time, it is not anticipated that the University will need to go beyond Level 3 which would include shutting down research programs. He stated that Lincoln's response to the virus has remained fairly stable, but how long we will have to deal with the virus is of course unknown.

Chancellor Green noted that planning at the University for dealing with the pandemic began in late February and work on it has not stopped. He pointed out that while initially there were some concerns with our spring break being so late compared to other universities, it has actually benefited us because it gave us a longer opportunity to depopulate the campus and to prepare to have our courses taught by remote access. He noted that many of our peers were caught having to switch to remote access in the middle of their classes, and it has been much more disruptive for them.

Chancellor Green stated that it is possible that we may be at Level 3 for another 60 days as the peak day for the virus is not anticipated until early May. Buan pointed out that we have professors at the University who have expertise in modeling these kinds of events and who could help provide information to have more accurate information. She stated that there are also professors who can assist with testing. Chancellor Green stated that the health officials are saying that there is now more adequate testing in the State, and the University did contribute some reagents to aid in testing.

2.2 Updates on VSIP - will it be delayed or the buyout increase to 100% pay? Is there any consideration being given to those who are going into retirement who have seen a significant portion of their retirement wiped away?

Hanrahan reported that he has been asked whether there will be any adjustments for those who signed up for the VSIP given what has happened with the retirement plans.

Chancellor Green noted that the VSIP process has already progressed, and there is no intention to make any changes to it. He pointed out that none of the faculty who signed up for the VSIP have asked for any changes with it directly to the administration.

Buan asked whether there would be any changes with the flexible health savings account. Chancellor Green noted that Hanrahan mentioned this previously. He stated that the issue is whether the savings put into the account this year can be carried over to next year given that elective procedures are not being done because of COVID-19. He reported that he does not know the answer to this question yet because the flexible savings account is tied to the tax law. He stated that given the changes that are currently happening with the tax code and the stimulus package, there might be the opportunity for some leniency with the flexible health savings account.

2.3 Status of Summer Sessions

Chancellor Green noted that that when the task force began working on the University's response to the COVID-19 crisis, it was using the data that was available in February. However, things have since changed dramatically and the academic planning sub-task force has been thinking pragmatically and clearly each day about what we need to do with the curriculum, the impacts on the faculty, and other related issues. He noted that Interim EVC Moberly was serving on the sub-task force, but now that EVC Spiller is on campus, she is now on the sub-task force. He reported that summer sessions is an issue that is now being discussed more seriously, and he believes an announcement about it will be made soon.

EVC Spiller stated that she was pleased to be in Nebraska at the University, and is looking forward to working with the Executive Committee. She noted that the academic planning sub-task force made recommendations about summer sessions, and she has forwarded the recommendations to the Chancellor. There remains a great deal of uncertainty about the COVID-19 situation, and she anticipates that an announcement will be made soon about summer sessions.

EVC Spiller pointed out that the main thing is that it is important that students do not get off-track with their education and noted that many students had internships, experiential learning, and study abroad programs planned for the summer, but these would no longer be viable. She reported that she is seeing whether seed money can be used to develop and expand summer offerings. She stated that her office will work with faculty and departments if the decision is made to offer summer session courses by remote access.

Purcell noted that New Student Enrollment has orientation meetings planned during the summer for new incoming students. She asked what will happen with these plans. EVC Spiller reported that there are several issues about the fall semester that are being

carefully considered. She pointed out that there may be many students who want to continue at UNL, but who may not physically be able to get to campus. She noted that a week and a half ago we were on track with incoming freshmen, but it is a fluid environment right now that needs to be watched carefully. She stated that thought is also being given to what could happen with our out-of-state enrollment.

Purcell asked how the COVID-19 is affecting the University's cash flow. Chancellor Green reported that the crisis is having significant effects on every university in the country. He noted that the University has been impacted financially, but we have not experienced loss in revenues for this semester because our budget was previously locked in when the State Legislature approved the University's current biennium budget in 2019. He reported that there were over 5,600 students living on campus, but it is now down to approximately 750 students, many of whom are international students, and we are taking good care of them. He noted that students who left campus were offered a refund on their housing contract. He reported that the housing contract states that if a contract is canceled they would get 60% of their housing cost back, but this still amounts to an \$11 million hit to the University Housing budget. He reported that we are managing the loss, and we are working to make sure our employees are not impacted by these budget cuts.

Chancellor Green pointed out that during the summer there are macro events, such as Boys and Girls camps, and various sport camps, taking place on campus. He noted that if these events are cancelled it will impact Housing by approximately \$3 ½ million, and in addition the Nebraska Unions will be financially impacted. He reported that Athletics is probably looking at a multi-million dollar loss through July, and contracted services supported by Athletics will also be impacted. He pointed out that our students are first and foremost, and we want to provide them with the opportunity to continue their education. He noted that students may want to take summer sessions courses, given they may be restricted from participating in internships or study abroad programs, and an increase in summer session enrollment could help offset some of our losses.

Chancellor Green reported that enrollment nationally is very fluid, but he thinks we are very well positioned, compared to other universities because he believes students will decide to stay in Nebraska, rather than traveling out of state. He stated that our major concern is the potential further loss of international students. He noted that the number of international students in the U.S. has declined in the last few years with many of these students going to Canada or Australia. However, both of these countries are already reporting that they are now down significantly in international student enrollments.

Adenwalla asked what would happen with lab classes and research programs this summer, pointing out that some of these are sequence courses. EVC Spiller stated that her office will be working with the departments and faculty to see if there are opportunities to switch some sequencing courses. She pointed out that some sequence courses can be taught more easily by remote access, but this would be difficult to do for other sequence courses, and it would be too difficult to change these sequence courses for the summer session. She noted that lab courses in particular are tightly sequenced, but there may need to be some flexibility with these courses. She pointed out that each

department would need to make determinations about whether accommodations could or should be made to the sequence courses. She suggested that additional courses might need to be added in the spring semester to make up for the loss of some courses not being available by remote access. Chancellor Green stated that he is still hoping that in the last half of summer we might have the opportunity to offer some small courses.

Hanrahan noted that summer sessions has a rule regarding minimum enrollment requirements for courses. He asked if these rules will be changed for online courses, and if there will be assistance for faculty to get their courses ready for remote access. Chancellor Green stated that EVC Spiller is having discussions about these issues. He noted there are two issues in regards to summer sessions, one is that priority registration is April 6, and we need to decide whether courses will be offered by remote access. The other issue is whether to make a call to faculty to add additional summer courses. He noted that the academic planning sub-task force is discussing whether to ease enrollment requirements.

Purcell asked if the same rules will apply to the 4-H summer programs. VC Boehm stated that there will need to be a serious conversation with Dean Hibberd and the Extension Educators about remote teaching and learning, which will be dictated by the virus. He noted that County Extension Boards and County Fair Boards already have been discussing and creating plans on what to do. He stated that the whole idea is to flatten the curve of the spread of the virus, and we all have to look at plans for 60-day, 90-day, and 120-day windows. He stated that we will have to figure out how much we can do while following the CDC's guidelines.

Buan stated that it is unknown what the vector is for this virus and asked if there are researchers looking into the susceptibility of our livestock becoming infected. VC Boehm pointed out that we aren't dealing with a zoonotic pathogen that is affecting livestock. He stated that if there were asymptomatic carriers in the animal kingdom, we would have seen them by now because there would be high morbidity in our livestock.

Buan pointed out that if PPEs was abundant, research labs could reopen. Chancellor Green noted that it has been amazing to watch how people have stepped up and embraced what needs to get done to help the State battle COVID-19. He reported that the Nebraska Innovation Studio on Innovation Campus has developed a prototype face shield made with a 3-D printer after a request was made by Bryan Health for more supplies. He noted that the plan is to produce the shields for the private and health care sector and the University's use. He pointed out that not only our lab workers need these shields, but our Housing employees who are working with quarantined students. He reported there has also been a request for us to produce gowns for health care workers and we are in the process of developing them, along with respirators. He stated that the University is currently in discussion with the City and State to provide dorm rooms for first responders and health care workers who may need to be quarantined from their families and need a place to stay. He noted that the Food Processing Center at NIC is developing a production line for hand sanitizer production in volume from alcohol partnered with the Nebraska Ethanol Board.

2.4 Update on Searches

Chancellor Green reported that the search firm hired for the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs search recommended that the search be postponed because potential candidates are not seeking employment elsewhere because they are heavily involved in the front lines of their current university in dealing with the COVID-19. As a result the search is currently suspended.

Chancellor Green stated that the search for Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Services & Enrollment Management is at the candidates pool evaluation stated. He noted that the search for the Director for Institutional Equity and Compliance is forming the pool of candidates. He stated that both searches are moving to the next stage of the search process.

Chancellor Green reported that there are various open positions across campus that need to be filled, and those searches will continue as much as they can.

2.5 Next Step on Lecturer Salaries

Hanrahan noted that the report to address inequities in salaries for lecturers is now complete and has been given to the administrators. He asked what will happen next.

Chancellor Green stated that the report has been received and read, but given the uncertainty with the COVID-19 crisis it is doubtful that the situation can be addressed before the next academic year. Hanrahan asked that the issue please not get dropped.

Minter pointed out that many lecturers have a contract for a year, and not being able to redress the salaries has serious implications for these employees. She wondered if the College of Arts & Sciences, where most of the salary inequities exist, could have some latitude to address the issue for its lecturers. Chancellor Green noted that last year there was some funding given to the College to address the inequities, but he does not think the funds have been implemented. He pointed out that it is better for us to be cautious at this time, given the uncertainty of the impacts from this crisis. He noted that the big issue is what will happen with State revenues, and in the meantime, we will need to be careful what commitments we make.

2.6 Confidentiality Statements - are there alternative forms?

Hanrahan reported that he has heard complaints from some faculty members about having to sign a confidentiality statement, while other faculty members are not being required to sign the form.

Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that anyone who uses SAP has to adhere to the university security system by signing the form. He pointed out that it is required by Executive Memorandum #26, which addresses protection of our data systems. He noted that as more faculty members become involved in using SAP due to their grants they are required to sign the form.

Adenwalla stated that she is concerned with the form stating that a person could be terminated if, for instance, they wrote their password down and walked away and the password was visible. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that he would need to ask for clarification from General Counsel about whether this would occur. Buan pointed out that another issue is that while the faculty are responsible for their grant, many of the business functions for that grant are actually handled by people in the business service group. Adenwalla pointed out that faculty members use their own laptop at times that do not belong to the University. She questioned whether someone would be held liable if their internet service was not as secure as the University's.

Chancellor Green stated that the confidentiality statement and Executive Memorandum #26 are designed to protect the confidential data of the University, and the confidentiality statement applies to the enterprise business people as well as the faculty. He stated that faculty members would not typically use their laptops to access the university systems that are being referred to with the statement.

Adenwalla asked why the confidentiality statement went to the faculty. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that the form went to administrators and the personnel reporting system technically now uses SAP which is what this form is being used for. Chancellor Green stated that the need for this is due to breaches in cybersecurity. He noted that an incident occurred at UNO where an entire building went completely dark due to a breach, and the University has to deal with these kinds of attempts on a routine basis. He reported that Associate Vice President Tuttle informed him recently that the University is hit with over 20,000 attempts of cybersecurity breaches a day. He stated that signing the form is not onerous, but there will be follow up to ensure that there is not an overreach by the Administration.

Latta Konecky pointed out that one of the key problems with the confidentiality statement is not the purpose behind it, but the lack of explanation of why it is needed. She noted that faculty are only being given the form and told to sign it. Chancellor Green agreed that this could be the root of the misunderstanding. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that he will suggest to ITS that they provide an explanation for the form.

Vakilzadian asked if all faculty members have to sign the form. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that the form was distributed only to those faculty members who are using the University data base systems.

2.7 Dean of Extension Comments in Recent News Article

Purcell pointed out that a recent article in the Lincoln Journal Star indicated that half of the Nebraska Extension Educators have been on the job for less than five years. She wondered if the theme of the article should have been why has there been such a large turnover. Vice Chancellor Boehm reported that there has been a transition with some of our Extension professional staff, some who have been here for over thirty years, resulting in a natural attrition of our senior Extension personnel. Consequently, there has been an infusion of younger Extension Educators to fill these open positions, however there was an indication that there was a turnover with some of the new hires, indicating

that something needed to be adjusted. He stated that related to the issue was that there were only five Extension districts for the entire state which meant that all of the Extension Educators had to report to one of the five district directors. These directors were having to supervise anywhere from 40-60 people. He stated that there was a real need to recalibrate how we were deploying our Extension professionals, and the recalibration gets us to a more reasonable number of supervisors per supervisees. He noted that he believes this has been accomplished with the creation of the new Extension Engagement Zones. Purcell stated that she also believes some of the younger Extension Educators realized they could earn a better salary by teaching in a local system.

2.8 Other Issues

Kolbe asked if there were any conversations about expanding the policy to allow students to switch to a pass/no pass this semester. Chancellor Green stated that this was discussed heavily by the academic planning sub-task force, and there was a strong feeling not to go to across the board with the pass/no pass grade because this could cause problems for some students such as pre-med students. As a result the deadline for changing the grade to a pass/no pass was expanded until April 24. He stated that students would need to apply for the change and would need to explain the reason why they are requesting it.

Chancellor Green asked the Executive Committee members if they have received feedback on how people are adapting to our current reality. Kolbe stated that his students feel extremely overwhelmed, but he thinks a lot of this may be due to anxiety over COVID-19. Gay stated that he is impressed with how the faculty are stepping up and taking on the daunting task of teaching remotely. He noted that some faculty members have dropped their research and other activity to focus on their teaching.

Minter stated that her department was able to provide laptops for contingent faculty and GTAs teaching online, but many of these people do not live in places with much bandwidth. She stated that she is very proud of graduate TA's for whom these kinds of changes were intense, and noted they have done an impressive job and the University should be proud of them.

Hanrahan stated that he thinks faculty members in his discipline are doing better now, but there were constant changing directives that were being made which added extra stress, particularly when plans had to constantly be redone.

Buan stated that she is very impressed with how her students are responding. She noted that there is a lot of anxiety for everyone, particularly international students who are far away from their families and feel very isolated. She stated that she believes the students are adapting well due to the fact that they are a very digital generation. She noted that pre-tenured faculty may feel especially stressed. She stated that messages from Dean Heng-Moss and Associate Dean Awada have been encouraging.

Minter stated that she wanted to make a pitch for the temporary faculty members who are paid per course. She noted they do not have the security the rest of the faculty have, and

suggested they should be compensated for all of the additional work they have had to do to put their courses online.

Buan stated that some faculty members are having concerns that after this is over there will be pressure to move some courses to online only. She suggested that the administration be careful of how this is messaged because we do not want to degrade the educational experience.

Vakilzadian reported that he taught his first class online and received positive comments from the students. He noted that the lecture was recorded and is available to the students in case they did not have a good connection.

Fech noted that Extension Educators often work directly with people, and there is some fear that there will be a loss with some of the older students, but people in Extension feel that we need to keep moving forward.

Chancellor Green stated that each day he is very proud of the institution and how people at all levels of the University have stepped up to deal with the challenge. He stated that he is conscious of the comments made by Minter about the temporary faculty.

Chancellor Green wanted to thank everyone for the work they are continuing to do during these difficult times.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Changes to Regents Bylaws

Hanrahan reported that in his meeting with the Chancellor this morning, the Chancellor stated that the plan is to still get the proposed changes to the Regents Bylaws on the Board of Regents' June agenda. He pointed out that this would mean that the additional revisions being proposed by General Counsel will not come before the Senate until the April 28th meeting.

4.0 Approval of March 17, 2020 Minutes

Hanrahan asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none, he asked for approval of the revised minutes. The minutes were approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Draft Diversity and Inclusion Committee Syllabus

Hanrahan noted that he consulted with VC Barker about the previous draft version of the syllabus and pointed out that the Executive Committee accepted VC Barker's suggested revisions. The Committee then worked on revising the syllabus. Hanrahan asked if there was a motion to bring the syllabus to the Senate for approval. Peterson moved to present the motion to the Senate at the April 7th meeting. Motion seconded by Latta Konecky. The motion was approved by the Executive Committee.

5.2 Executive Committee Elections

Griffin pointed out that candidates for the President-Elect and Executive Committee members were still needed. The Committee worked on identifying possible candidates for the election. Members of the Committee stated they would contact Senators to see if they would be willing to run for election.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Proposals from Academic Affairs

The Executive Committee discussed proposals brought forward by AVC Walker from the COVID-19 Task Force Academic Planning Subgroup concerning grade appeals, course evaluations, tenure progress, and student feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, April 7, 2020, immediately following the Faculty Senate meeting. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Joan Latta Konecky, Secretary.