

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Billesbach

Date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021

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 2:32.

2.0 Chancellor Green/EVC Spiller

2.1 Update on Spring Calendar

Chancellor Green stated that the proposal to modify the 2021-22 academic calendar was reported to the Board last week and the calendar has now been finalized. He noted that the contract dates when academic year faculty are to return to work would be a week later (January 10) and end a week later in May. He stated that this would allow for a two-week interim session.

EVC Spiller pointed out that the two-week session in January is technically a pre-session to the spring semester. She stated that if a faculty member wanted to offer a three-hour course in the winter pre-session, the course could then be extended into the spring semester. She noted that the winter pre-session is parallel to the summer pre-session.

2.2 Update on the University Budget Governance Committee. How and to what degree will faculty be engaged in the model and budget prioritization?

Chancellor Green stated that the structure of the Budget Model Advisory Committee is being finalized and EVC Spiller, VC Nunez, and Professor Bloom have worked on developing it. He pointed out that there will also be a Budget Model Data Quality Committee as well. He stated that he will come to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee to request nominations for faculty members to serve on the Budget Model Advisory Committee. He stated that he plans to have the initial appointments put into place before the end of the semester to enable the committees to begin work by the start of the 2021-22 academic year. Buan asked if the Chancellor has any idea how many faculty members will serve on the Committee. Chancellor Green stated that he does not know the exact amount, but there will be a number of faculty on the Committees.

2.3 Will all COVID stimulus funds be used for academics or will some be directed towards Athletics?

Buan explained that the question came about due to Athletics being included in the Chancellor's statements to the Senate regarding the losses UNL has occurred due to the pandemic. Chancellor Green noted that there were three stimulus funding packages that UNL received. The CARES Act was the first funding which provided just under \$16 million to UNL and this required that 50% of the funds would be provided as grant-in-aid to students, so roughly \$7.5 million went to general funds to offset the costs accumulated due to the COVID pandemic. The second package came in December and part of the package was for higher education. He reported that UNL was designated to receive \$23 million and another \$7.5 million of these funds was to be used for grant-in-aid to students with the remaining \$16-\$17 million going to UNL's general funds to offset the COVID costs. He stated that the third funding package was more recent after President Biden became President. In this package UNL received just over \$42 million but it came with the same requirements as the CARES Act in that 50% of the funding would go to grant-in-aid for students and 50% would go to the general fund to address losses due to COVID.

Chancellor Green stated that UNL has a total of approximately \$120 million in COVID related losses – both direct losses and additional costs incurred due to the pandemic. He reported that of the \$120 million, roughly \$70 million is in the academic enterprise, and roughly \$50 million is what is expected in losses for Husker Athletics. He pointed out that if you total up the three packages of funding, the non-student aid funding for UNL totals approximately \$45 million, and if you apply this to the roughly \$70 million in losses to the academic enterprise it leaves us with a \$25 million deficit which we will cover with cash reserves. He pointed out that none of the stimulus funds will go to Husker Athletics. He stated that Husker Athletics will shoulder the entire \$50 million in losses from their cash reserves. He noted that the University of Nebraska is fortunately one of the few universities in the NCAA that has accumulated cash reserves in Athletics.

Chancellor Green pointed out that we are one of the few universities where their athletics department transfers funds to the academic enterprise. He noted that Husker Athletics does not receive funding from student fees or state appropriated funds. He stated that beginning in 2018-19 the academic enterprise received \$10 million per year from Husker Athletics. He reported that \$5 million goes to support scholarships for non-athletes, but these funds were lost this year because Husker Athletics suffered such large financial losses from the loss of competitive seasons, fan attendance at games and meets, and cost of COVID-19 testing and risk mitigation. EVC Spiller pointed out that we have really benefitted from the level of support that Husker Athletics has provided. She reported that UNL had to backfill the loss of the scholarship funds that were not covered this year by Husker Athletics. Chancellor Green pointed out that Husker Athletics intends to continue providing the previous levels of funds in the future. He noted that in addition to the \$10 million provided to the academic enterprise, Husker Athletics pays for contracted services that the University provides, which in the last year combining student athlete scholarships costs and contracted services was \$19 million which is paid directly to the University.

Weissling asked if the \$10 million from Husker Athletics is part of the tax on auxiliary revenue. Chancellor Green reported that \$5 million of the \$10 million from Husker Athletics is from the auxiliary tax that was instituted by former Chancellor Perlman a number of years ago.

Woodman asked if stimulus funds can be used for summer tuition. EVC Spiller stated that no new information has been provided yet about whether stimulus funds can be used to cover summer tuition.

2.4 With recent successes in Women's Bowling, NCAA Woman of the Year, and numerous others, what can UNL do to strengthen its brand as a leader in women's athletics?

Chancellor Green stated that he was very happy that the UNL Bowling Team won its 8th national title, and he noted that he was elated that Angela Mercurio, a three-time Nebraska track and field All-American, was named the 2019 NCAA Woman of the Year. He stated that our Women's Volleyball team has been perennially very successful, and he believes the University of Nebraska is known as a place of prominence and success across the breadth of women's sports. He asked if the Executive Committee feels that women's sports do not receive the same attention as men's sports.

Buan stated that the reality is that women's sports are not promoted as much as men's sports and are not put in larger venues. She pointed out that women's sports schedules are not publicized as much, and she asked if we could amplify women's sports more which would provide them with the ability to grow their base. Chancellor Green stated that he thinks we have amplified women's sports and he believed Husker Athletics has a strong history of supporting and recognizing women's sports. He stated that he finds it frustrating when women's sports, no matter how great the accomplishment, most often are placed in the deeper pages of the news and would certainly like to see such accomplishments equally celebrated and reported.

EVC Spiller reported that she had a conversation with Dean Farrell of the College of Business about curriculum plans relating to empowering student athletes to think about their future and taking ownership over their athletic identity. She stated that the curriculum would help prepare these students for their future.

Woodman asked if there has been any consideration to having a female mascot at UNL. Chancellor Green noted that ASUN recently raised this topic. He stated that at earlier times in Nebraska's history we have had a genderless mascot.

Franco Cruz asked if teams that are successful get more funding. Chancellor Green stated that it is a free-market system that the dollars flow where they are generated. He noted that UNL has an unusual circumstance in that we have more than two sports where revenues have exceeded expenses, including football, basketball, and women's volleyball, and in some years, baseball, make money. He stated that all other sports are subsidized, and we have made investments across the sports in both people and facilities

beyond those we have led in for many years in football, basketball, baseball and women's softball. He noted the bowling facility has just been renovated, the Francis Allen Gymnastics Training Center is unparalleled, we are building a new track and field facility, and the Hibner soccer and tennis center is a newer world class facility which opened a few years ago. He pointed out that every sport at UNL has generally high levels of attendance which is unique, and this contributes to the also unique long-standing financial health of Husker Athletics.

2.5 Update on UNL vaccinations. How many faculty and staff? Estimates of student sign-ups on the registry.

Chancellor Green reported that we are largely through the faculty/staff and student employee vaccinations, although the Lincoln/Lancaster Health Department has not verified or released data as to the numbers, but we project over 10,000 UNL employees have been vaccinated. He anticipates that the percentage of employees who have been vaccinated will be high.

Chancellor Green stated that vaccinations are now open to the general student population at the University and several thousand of our students have already signed up for it. He stated that the first round of vaccinations should start next week, and he hopes to have many of our students go through the vaccination process. He pointed out that we have certainly been heavily encouraging students get vaccinated before they leave campus, and he has been very pleased with our partnership with the county health department.

Buan asked why UNL wouldn't require vaccinations given that a 70% vaccination rate is needed for herd immunity. Chancellor Green stated that we are not planning on requiring vaccination, but the University is expecting our take rate on the vaccine to be above 80%. He stated that he feels very good and confident about our risk mitigation and protection policies.

Franco Cruz asked if people who choose not to get vaccinated will be required to get tested. Chancellor Green stated that this has not been delineated yet, but the health department will consult with us and make recommendations where appropriate.

Woodman asked if the six-foot social distancing rule will apply in summer session classes. Chancellor Green stated that it is more than likely, and he does not anticipate that there will be a change in the mask requirement policy. He noted that things could possibly change in August, but that depends on the rate of COVID infections. He pointed out that even when the mask requirement is no longer in place people may still choose to use them, which of course is their individual choice.

Kolbe asked if there has been any discussion regarding is the University and potentially needing booster vaccinations in the fall. Chancellor Green stated that this is unknown, and we are all still learning a lot about the virus and vaccine coverages. He stated that we will continue to provide best practices.

2.6 Update on Student Health Insurance

Chancellor Green reported that there is no update at this time. He stated that the President's Council will be meeting April 21st and it will be an agenda item.

Chancellor Green stated that the fact that the Regents Bylaws revisions went through seamlessly and how they were approved unanimously, affirms the importance and timeliness of these revisions, and he really appreciates all of the people involved in the long process and major effort to make these revisions. Buan wanted to thank the Chancellor, EVC Spiller, AVC Walker, and Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny for being staunch supporters for the revisions. She stated that it is wonderful to feel that our colleagues will have the due process protection and that the Extension Educators' resolution acknowledging them as faculty members is great.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 NU Bylaws Revisions

Buan reported that the Board of Regents have approved the revisions to the Regents Bylaws as proposed by the Faculty Senate.

3.2 Update from the Faculty Senate Engagement Council

Buan reported that on the day of the Board of Regents meeting there has been a Faculty Senate Engagement meeting. She stated that Provost Fritz, VP for External Relations Mello, and Executive Director Hammond meet with the Presidents of the Faculty Senate from each campus, and at the recent meeting there was discussion about the stimulus bills, President Biden's Executive Orders, and Title IX. She noted that all of the stimulus funds are fully tracked and auditable and Provost Fritz confirmed that there are strict guidelines on how the money can be spent. She reported that VP Mello believes that there will be significant increases in federal funding for research. She noted that last Thursday the state budget was passed including the Capital Renewal Plan. She stated that Provost Fritz hopes that the Engagement Council will continue when Chancellor Gold becomes Provost and she said that VP Mello and Executive Director Hammond were very appreciative of being able to interact with the Senate Engagement Council because it is a very valuable conduit for them to explain what is going on and for them to get a sense of what the different campuses are thinking. She noted that there was discussion about the new travel policy where we are going to a per diem.

Woodman asked if the Capital Renewal Plan is only for deferred maintenance on old buildings. Buan stated that it is but there is a part of the bill that has a mechanism which allows for depreciation and for service plans into the future which was accounted for in the costs. She pointed out that philanthropic funds could then be directed to new construction rather than being used to cover maintenance costs.

3.3 Box Migration

Buan reported that she sent CIO Tuttle an email about the concerns raised regarding the lack of communications when departments would be migrated from Box to SharePoint, but she noted that he is currently out of town. Buan stated that May 17 has been considered the deadline when ITS will forcibly move files and it is expected that it will

take six months to get everyone migrated. She noted that people are only receiving a three-day notice and she asked ITS if this time could be extended to a couple of weeks to allow people to prepare for the migration. However, she was informed that this could not be done due to the volume of files that need to be transferred. She pointed out that there is an option for units to request that the move occur earlier, such as IANR has done.

Hanrahan stated that CIO Tuttle needs to be aware that there are communication problems within ITS that needs to be resolved because even the IT staff in his college only became aware of the deadline shortly before it was to occur.

Woodman reported that individuals can request to manually move their files. He stated that once the files have been moved to OneDrive they would be deleted from Box after four weeks. Kolbe pointed out that during the pandemic, many faculty members are using Box to run their classes and that a change of this magnitude during an active semester is absurd – especially if they expect mass compliance and no issues. Woodman stated that the ITSC has consistently said that the migration should not occur during the middle of the semester for academic departments. Krehbiel stated that the messages about the migration have been inconsistent and she was expecting to do the migration this summer, not in March.

Minter suggested that there needs to be a regular communication that is University-wide that is reported on a more regular basis. Buan noted that Nebraska Today is being used for communication but the stories are not necessarily focused on ITS messages. Weissling pointed out that she does not always have time to read Nebraska Today and stated that there needs to be something like a newsletter or communication from the administration about important information regarding upcoming events or things that employees need to do that impact their work at the University. She stated that providing email addresses of people who can be contacted about the upcoming events to answer questions would be helpful. Kolbe suggested that Nebraska Today could have an “Action Item” column or section.

3.4 Vaccination for Students

Buan reported that the pause with the J&J vaccinations is affecting the timeline for when students can be vaccinated, but the administration is hoping they will be able to provide students vaccination soon since they will now have to get the two-shot dosage.

4.0 Approval of April 6, 2021 Minutes

Buan asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she declared the minutes approved by acclamation.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Faculty Senate Handbook

Buan reported that she reached out to AVC Walker about creating a Faculty Handbook and AVC Walker thought it was a great idea. She stated that joint taskforce of the EVC’s office and the Senate will be created and asked for two volunteers to serve. She pointed

out that the Faculty Senate Handbook would be included. Franco Cruz volunteered to serve.

Franco Cruz reported that he has incorporated the changes suggested for the Faculty Senate Handbook and will send the document to Griffin who will upload it to the Executive Committee Box folder.

5.2 Modified 2021-22 Academic Calendar Update

Kolbe reported that he has been working with AVC Walker to ensure that department executive officers explicitly understand that no department or college meetings can be called before January 10 when faculty are scheduled to return to work. He stated that he promised that the Faculty Senate will help disseminate the information via the President's newsletter and asking Senators to share the information with their colleagues.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Nominees for Extension Dean Search Committee

Buan stated that the Executive Committee has been asked to provide 3-5 names of people to serve on the search committee for an Extension Dean. Weissling volunteered. Krehbiel suggested that there be both an Extension Specialist and an Extension Educator on the search committee. Other faculty members were suggested.

6.2 Agenda Items for VC Wilhelm

Buan and Woodman stated that faculty need to know how classes for fall are going to occur and when the last date for making these decisions will be. Buan suggested we need to know what metrics would be needed to decide which courses would be most impacted if they had to revise their plans for their fall courses. Woodman stated that if any social distancing at all was required it would impact large enrollment classes and would probably require web conferencing again given the ineffectiveness of the hybrid model used last fall.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:41p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be conducted via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Lorna Dawes, Secretary.