

## UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

April 6, 2021

Presidents Nicole Buan, Steve Kolbe and Kevin Hanrahan, Presiding  
Zoom Meeting

### 1.0 Call to Order

President Buan called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

### 2.0 Announcements

#### 2.1 Recognition of Outgoing Senators

President Buan wanted to thank and express her appreciation to the service and work of the following Senators whose terms are ending. Mehmet Vuran, Computer Science & Engineering; Mikil Foss, Mathematics; Rigoberto Guevara, Modern Languages & Literature; Ann Bouma, English as a Second Language; Trish Wonch Hill, At-Large Center District; John Raible, Teaching, Learning, Teacher Education; Kevin Hanrahan, Glenn Korff School of Music; John Lindquist, Agronomy & Horticulture; Kim Todd, Agronomy & Horticulture; Sheila Purdum, Animal Science; Steve Hu, School of Natural Resources; Ann Fenton, Extension Engagement Zone 5; Nicole Stoner, Extension Engagement Zone 11; Dane Kiambi, College of Journalism & Mass Communications. President Buan reported that the following Senators have been re-elected, Angela Palmer-Wackerly, Communication Studies; Amanda Gailey, English; Megan Paul, Center for Children, Families and the Law; Natalie Koziol, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & School; Kelli Herstein, Durham School of Architectural Engineering & Construction.

### 3.0 Chancellor Green

Chancellor Green stated that the spring semester has been very successful despite the fact that there were no breaks or downtime, possibly due to the calendar changes put in place to mitigate risk from COVID-19, and he appreciated the grit and determination of our faculty, students and staff to get successfully through the semester.

Chancellor Green reported that we just passed 126,000 COVID tests on campus since the beginning of the fall semester, and our positivity rates continues to be low even though nationally there is an uptick in the number of COVID cases. He stated that over 5,400 tests were conducted over the last week on campus with a total positivity rate of just over 1.5%. He stated that over 1,800 tests were voluntary due to people being concerned about symptoms and the positivity rate was higher for this group compared to the random mitigation testing.

Chancellor Green stated that at the recent Ivy Day ceremony of the Innocents Society, not only were students recognized for their outstanding contributions, but Pat Lopez, Director of the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department, Associate to the Chancellor Mike Zeleny, and Chief Information Officer Heath Tuttle were recognized for all of their heroic efforts to protect the community during the pandemic.

Chancellor Green noted that commencement will occur the first weekend in May and this will be the first in-person commencement ceremony in over a year. He reported that we are expecting a larger than anticipated graduating class because many students have sped up the number of credit hours they have taken making them eligible for graduation. He stated that on Friday, May 7 the graduate commencement ceremony will occur at the Pinnacle Bank Arena. He reported that the Nebraska Law graduation ceremony will take place later that day, also at the Pinnacle Bank Arena. He stated that the undergraduate ceremony will be split into two separate ceremonies and will be held for the first time in our history at Memorial Stadium.

Chancellor Green reported that enrollment for the fall semester is looking solid. He stated that thus far there are some demographic shifts occurring with more Nebraska students enrolling with

slightly less out-of-state and international students.

Chancellor Green stated that the University's budget request is continuing to make good progress through the State Legislature and there is strong support for the Capital Renewal Plan (LB588) which was proposed by the Legislature's Appropriations Committee. He noted that the Legislature should complete its work in May. He reported that President Carter is setting aside strategic funds to address the lagging faculty salaries at UNL and UNMC in the next two years and if the State approves the University's budget the first phase of these increases will occur later in the summer. This is in addition to the planned 1.5% general salary pool for all faculty and staff.

Chancellor Green noted that the campus will be moving forward with the incentive-based budget model implementation beginning on July 1. He reported that he is finalizing the structure for a new budget model advisory committee and a complementary data quality committee and he plans to make initial appointments before the end of the semester. He stated that he will work with the Faculty Senate to identify faculty members to serve on these committees. He announced that he is planning a Townhall meeting in May to discuss the budget model implementation with all deans and unit heads and leaders.

Chancellor Green noted that the projected net financial impact from the pandemic through the end of this fiscal year is approximately \$120 million -- \$70 million from academic losses and \$50 million within Huskers Athletics. He reported that the stimulus funding from the three federal bills has provided UNL with approximately \$45 million of non-student grant aid funding, leaving a significant academic deficit of \$25 million which will need to come out of the University's cash reserves. He pointed out that UNL's cash operating cost per day is approximately \$3.6 million. However, Chancellor Green noted that we have actually weathered the pandemic well in comparison to other universities who have seen much steeper losses and who had to take considerable measures which will take a long time from which to recover.

Chancellor Green stated that some major things the campus will work on in the coming year are 1) an instructional continuity plan on how to handle snow days in the future without losing academic program progress; 2) the new Campus-wide Chancellor's Collaborative on Sexual Misconduct which is charged with the role of expanding efforts to improve education, training and policy development to address sexual misconduct; 3) initiatives in our Journey on Anti-Racism and Racial Equity; 4) new plans and policies for Lecturer appointments; and 5) the launching in 2022 of the next comprehensive fundraising campaign of the University of Nebraska Foundation. He noted that with the last campaign \$1.9 billion was raised and the hope is that significantly more funds will be raised in this campaign that will be conducted from 2022-2027.

Chancellor Green stated that the campus will be addressing one of the key visions from the N150 for the University to become the first to embrace a one-tuition model. He pointed out that this would be unique for a university in the country because there would be one-tuition rate for not only Nebraska students, but for out-of-state students and international students, enhancing access and increasing enrollment.

Chancellor Green reported that our faculty continue to be recognized nationally and internationally. He stated that three faculty members have received 2021 NU system awards. Professor Margaret Jacobs, History received the ORCA; Professor Ken Kiewra, Educational Psychology, received the OTICA; and Professor Larry Rilett, Civil Engineering, received the IDEA. He stated that UNL has also seen an increase in the level of submissions for external funding for research proposals, and he stated that there will be some large research awards granted, announced and celebrated in the next couple of months, including the largest award in our history.

Chancellor Green reported that two major scholarship funding awards will be announced in the months ahead, one in the College of Engineering and one in the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts. He stated that he is pleased to see this major enhanced level of support and

pointed out that this signals a growing momentum for philanthropic gifts in the immediate future.

Chancellor Green wanted to thank President Buan for all of her continuing efforts this past year and acknowledged how difficult a year it has been.

Chancellor Green stated that he is very pleased that we are ahead of our vaccination progress and pointed out that the vast majority of our faculty and staff have participated and received the vaccination. He noted that we are further ahead than we thought we would be, and the Lincoln/Lancaster Health Department has worked exceptionally well with the University. He stated that in all likelihood our students will have the same opportunity to get vaccinated before the end of the semester.

Professor Woodman, School of Biological Sciences, noted that Rutgers University and Cornell University are requiring students to be vaccinated and asked what circumstances would cause UNL to require vaccination. Chancellor Green stated that, based on the number of vaccinations already given, he does not think we would need to require vaccination. However, he stated that we will continue to heavily promote that everyone be vaccinated. He stated that Maryland is considering vaccination but none of the other Big Ten universities are planning on requiring vaccination.

Chancellor Green noted that Professor Billesbach, Biological Systems Engineering, asked a question in chat about concerns of the recent surge in COVID cases and how this might affect our plans for the summer and fall semesters. Chancellor Green stated that we are watching the increases very carefully and will continue testing to see if there are any increases in positive cases. He noted that we will also look at the demographics to see if certain groups are showing higher rates of positivity and we may increase testing for these demographic groups. He stated that we do have contingency plans in place for the semesters should the numbers increase to a level that we need to have tighter restrictions.

Professor Theiss-Morse, Political Science, asked if there will be an incentive structure to encourage students to get vaccinated and will international students coming to campus in the fall be able to get vaccinated here. Chancellor Green reported that we will be working with the LLCHD to get international students vaccinated. He stated that HIPPA does not allow us to delve into whether someone has been vaccinated, but we are already strongly encouraging students to get vaccinated, especially before they head home for the summer.

Professor Samal, Computer Science & Engineering, asked if there will be a change in the differential tuition rate this year. Chancellor Green stated that there is no change, and the distribution is based on the same model that has been previously used. He pointed out that, at this time, he does not know of any future plans for the differential model to be changed.

#### **4.0 Executive Vice Chancellor Spiller**

EVC Spiller stated that she appreciates the opportunity to reflect on the academic mission which is the core of the University. She noted that in the fall when she meets with the Faculty Senate, she hopes to be able to provide a more fully comprehensive state of the academic university, identifying our core commitments to strengthen the academic mission and the N2025 goals. She stated that she also wants to speak about the incentive-based budget and the ways in which it is going to be important to the academic mission.

EVC Spiller stated that the Lecturer issues has had a long history on this campus, at a number of levels, particularly within departments and colleges. She reported that as part of several larger initiatives, she has directed each of the Deans to review compensation levels for all existing Lecturer positions, for current appointments as of March 1, 2021, in all EVC units; each Dean is to look at each Lecturer's salary to develop recommendations for proposed salary adjustments. She reported that she has made a \$550,000 commitment in multi-year funding to support approved compensation adjustments. She noted recommendations for salary actions must be initiated by

Deans and will be reviewed by her office. She noted that criteria for consideration will include expertise, credentials, and achieved performance. She stated that requests will be due by April 26 for salary implementation to occur in the July 31 paycheck for 12-month appointments, and in the September 30th paycheck for 9-month appointments. She noted that the funding from her office is intended to allow colleges to accelerate these pay increases. She stated going forward, as has been the case historically and as will be the case under the IBB, each college will be responsible for funding both initial salary determinations and reappointment levels. She noted that her office will be expecting that all new appointments will be reviewed with respect to ensuring that compensation levels are appropriate. She stated that, additionally, there will be a one-time window of opportunity for deans to make recommendations to shift an existing Lecturer appointment to a position in the Professors of Practice series for faculty who are currently doing work that reflects the requirements, standards, and progression of responsibility for that series.

EVC Spiller stated that the success of the academic mission depends on the ability of the faculty to be successful, and COVID has brought stressors individually and collectively to the faculty. However, she believes that we have triumphed during this difficult year. She stated that an opportunity has been provided for all pre-tenure track faculty members to request an expedited process to extend their tenure-clock for a one-year extension, and pre-tenure faculty members who were on faculty last spring, they may request a two-year tenure extension. She pointed out that no pre-tenure faculty member needs to make this decision now but could do so later to make this request. She stated that departments are required to allow faculty members to develop an operational COVID impact statement as part of their annual evaluation if the faculty member wishes to do so.

EVC Spiller reported that her office and ORED have provided emergency gap research funding to support research impacts for early career faculty. This program is designed for assistant and associate professors whose research may have been impacted by COVID. To date, 50 awards have been granted to Assistant and Associate level faculty members and some funding is still available. She noted that AVC Walker and her working group have been looking at the larger question of the professional development impact of the COVID pandemic on faculty members.

EVC Spiller wanted to acknowledge the hard work done by Director Nick Monk and his team in the Center for Transformative Teaching to provide resources to assist faculty members. She reported that since last March 1,184 courses have been supported by the CTT; 1,433 instructors have participated in 62 workshops about online teaching; 721 faculty have attended 4 institutes on teaching; and 285 faculty, staff, and students have attended two CTT symposiums.

EVC Spiller stated that several years ago an initiative was started to improve the teaching evaluation forms and provide better guidance about annual evaluations. She noted that a Student Evaluation Taskforce was created which made recommendations to change the teaching evaluation form to make it more robust and to capture the richness of what happens in the classroom. She reported that some colleges started using the new form last spring, some used it this past fall, and some are using it for the first time this spring. She pointed out that there seems to be some confusion and that some units believe that the teaching evaluations should no longer be used in annual evaluations, but this is not correct. She noted that we want to have more multi-dimensional sources for evaluations. She stated that the DFW grade distribution, which is a separate report, was developed and is primarily intended to help faculty members to see if there are any equity gaps occurring in their classrooms. She stated that the Peer Evaluation Teaching Committee, which is the next step in the 2019 Student Evaluation Taskforce, has been expected to complete their work this December, but, because the pandemic made it impossible for them to complete their work last fall, that report will not be available until June.

EVC Spiller noted that we had a modified academic calendar this year due to the pandemic. She reported that we had a significant increase in summer enrollment last year, which is one of the reasons why we have a higher number of graduates this May. We also had 400 incoming students

taking classes this summer. She noted that we are tracking the progress of these new students and it looks very promising. She pointed out that the 9-week interval between the fall and spring semesters, which was prompted by health and safety considerations, allowed us the opportunity to be academically innovative with creating two three-week interim sessions. She reported that the students liked the career readiness and experiential learning courses that they could take during these interim sessions.

EVC Spiller stated that President Carter wants to explore the opportunity for winter sessions, and as a result, the Board of Regents will be receiving a proposal from the University-wide Calendar Committee for a change in the academic year. She reported that the fall semester would remain the same, but the spring semester would start a week later (on January 18, 2022) in order to accommodate a two-week interim session. She pointed out that the reason for only having a two-week session is due to regulations regarding student-athlete eligibility requirements. She noted that, which a full 3-hour course cannot be accommodated in a two-week session, 0, 1, and 2-hour courses are good options. In addition, a full 3-hour course can be scheduled by extending into the regular spring semester. The session could be used for internships or experiential learning courses. She stated that the change in the calendar would allow UNL to align its spring break with the Lincoln Public Schools.

EVC Spiller stated that her office has been discussing the idea of instructional continuity which would allow us to plan for how we respond to the circumstances that we have experienced with snow days, pandemic, and natural disasters. She pointed out that 15 weeks is already a tight schedule for instructors to deliver their courses and having several days off due to unforeseen circumstances makes it difficult for instructors to deliver the entire content of their course. She stated that it would be up to the individual faculty members to decide how they would keep the delivery of their course moving forward and students would be provided information about how the course would be delivered during snow days or other events.

EVC Spiller stated that she wanted to recognize the leadership of the Faculty Senate for bringing the proposed revisions to the Bylaws forward. She stated that she is grateful for all of the work that has been done and she is looking forward to good news at the end of the week when the Regents approve the revisions.

EVC Spiller reported that Dean Tim Carr of Graduate Studies has announced his retirement as reported in the Nebraska Today. She stated that an internal search will be started, and the position description will be coming out soon. She noted that the importance of graduate education has probably never been greater, and she plans on considering outstanding candidates for the position.

Professor Stevenson, English, asked how the benchmarking process for determining appropriate Lecturer salaries would be determined. EVC Spiller noted that there will be a little variability by college but the criteria of expertise in credentials, terminal degree, level of experience and achieved performance will be considered. She stated that each recommendation from the Deans will be reviewed by her office. She noted that some disciplines are more competitive in the marketplace and this will be considered. She pointed out that this is not a one-time activity and whenever a request is made review will take place. She reported that reappointment letters are also being reviewed.

Professor Weissling, Special Education & Communication Disorders, was wondering what kind of data will be collected on the interim session and how it will be collected. EVC Spiller noted that changes to the calendar must be made nine months in advance. She stated that the four- and six-year graduation rates are outcomes that are collected, and it is evident with the number of students who are graduating this year that the interim sessions impacted these graduation rates. She stated that graduation rates are by definition lagging indicators, but that we also have access to some leading indicators. She stated that one leading indicator of a student's likely success is how many credit hours the students has completed by the end of their freshmen year. She stated that we will

be looking at this year's data to help us make recommendations for next year and she is optimistic that we will have some additional data points by the end of the semester.

Professor Samal noted that the 4+1 program approved by Computer Science & Engineering has strong interest and asked when students will be able to enroll in the program. EVC Spiller stated that she does not have the information on the timeline, but she will get back to Professor Samal about it.

## **5.0 Approval of March 2, 2021 Minutes**

President Buan asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she stated that the minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

## **6.0 Committees**

### **6.1 Convocations Committee (Professor Cohen)**

Professor Cohen wanted to thank the members of the Convocations Committee and noted that the purpose of the Committee is to administer financial support for visiting guest speakers which help to enrich our academic community. He noted that this year has been an odd year due to the pandemic and the Committee had to initiate ad hoc policies to deal with the interruptions in the visits. He reported that for those departments who received funding but had to postpone the visits of the guest speaker because of the pandemic would need to resubmit an application to obtain funding for the 2021-2022 academic year. He noted that there were three virtual visits this year that were well conducted. He stated that six applications have been received for funding during the fall semester and the Committee will meet to review these applications in mid-April.

### **6.2 Information Technologies and Services Committee (Professor Woodman)**

Professor Woodman reported that the ITSC meets monthly to review, discuss, and recommend policies on IT issues. He noted that in addition to the faculty that serve on the Committee, CIO Tuttle, AVC Batman, and Dean Heng-Moss are also members.

Professor Woodman reported that the ITSC consulted with Information Technologies Services (ITS) about updating general purpose classrooms to accommodate hybrid teaching. He stated that classrooms needed to have Zoom capabilities which included cameras and microphones, and this was a costly upgrade, but Zoom worked well for most instructors. He stated that the CYT digital learning center was opened to accommodate increased testing capabilities.

Professor Woodman stated that the cost for Box is being increased from \$300,000 to \$2 million for the same storage capacity. As a result, the University is transitioning to Microsoft's OneDrive and SharePoint. He stated that a tool will be created to help employees transition their files from Box to OneDrive this year. He pointed out that once migrated to OneDrive, people will only have a 30-day window to access files that were in Box.

Professor Woodman stated that the University continues to explore the Eproctoring services. He noted that UNL opted to use Respondus Lockdown and Respondus monitor testing and assessment purposes. He stated that Respondus Lockdown is used in the digital learning centers and performs as needed, but the Respondus monitor has had issues so a search to this issue is ongoing.

Professor Woodman stated that ITSC received an update from Dave Johnson, Director of Academic Technologies about LMS integration of new and separate technologies used by individual courses, departments, and Colleges and the concerns associated with these new tools in terms of accessibility, pedagogy, and student data. Faculty expressed some concern about the costs/time associated with the adoption of new technology and the effect of faculty productivity.

Professor Woodman reported that ITSC expressed concern about the potential of embedding spyware on publisher websites and the possibility of capturing student behavior data. ITSC was assured that no tracking software by vendors was allowed and only three individuals on campus

could view live terminal information. All other access was subject to approval from HR and the EVC office. Additionally, ITS sought guidance on administrative requests to examine instructor Canvas pages.

Professor Woodman reported that Duo two-factor authentication for email has now been fully implemented. He noted that two-factor authentication is now required for all web-based services. He stated that ITS has now enabled the use of Bridge and Canvas Catalog, pointing out that Bridge is the equivalent of a corporate LMS to enable tracking and support both professional development opportunities, as well as tracking skill building and training across platforms for faculty, staff, and students. He noted that Canvas Catalog allows UNL to centralize their continuing education and professional development programs.

Professor Woodman stated that ITS responded to ITSC and Faculty Senate requests by making available the Qualtrics secure survey tool as an Enterprise license for use by UNL units. This was in place of the individual licenses employed by departments and colleges at UNL.

Professor Woodman stated that ITSC was consulted about updating and replacing the routers in all campus buildings this year. He noted that some people may have communication issues because of the new security demands with the new routers, but anyone having difficulty should contact their IT people who should be able to fix it.

Professor Woodman reported that a biannual survey will be deployed in April and he encouraged everyone to participate.

Professor Woodman stated that a policy governing Endpoint device management is in the process of being developed and may involve a shift from the current opt-in policy to a more secure and efficient opt-out policy. This would involve automatic software maintenance with a self-service capability and the use of Microsoft Endpoint and JAMF Pro for the Windows and Apple platforms.

Professor Woodman reported that the ITSC met with Vice Provost Jackson who spoke of upcoming changes on data use, storage, and transmission policies to incorporate best practices for these issues in Higher Education Research. This is an evolving process which calls for significant regulation including the use of UNL addresses only and limitations on method of transmission and storage based upon the data being classified as low, medium, and high-risk data. There will be training requirements and security standards set for each level of data. A committee made up of faculty, Associate Deans, and ITS, will develop the policies and the roll out will be staggered, phased in, and manageable. Responsibility for meeting these standards will lie at all levels - Co-PI, PI, and the institution will be required to meet these federal standards. ITSC felt there will be a need for new resources and funding needed to acquire the infrastructure and person power to enable these mandated changes.

Professor Woodman pointed out that ITS has limited funding in comparison to other Universities and noted that there needs to be consideration for increasing funding to support ITS.

Professor Billesbach asked when the new Endpoint policy will take place. Professor Woodman stated that the policy is still being developed and there is no date set in place. Professor Billesbach asked if there is a timeline for the policies on data use, storage, and transmission. Professor Woodman reported that the ITSC just met with Vice Provost Jackson last week and learned that the policies are still in the developmental stage. CIO Tuttle noted that the policies Vice Provost Jackson are working on pertain to research data and the goal is to have a better policy for protecting this data. He stated that the timeline is unknown, and input is being sought from faculty members. Professor Billesbach asked if the impetus for the policy changes is from the federal funding agencies or the federal government. CIO Tuttle stated that it is mostly from federal funding agencies and the Department of Defense. He noted the rules regarding research data are more restrictive and the University is focusing on how we can build environments to protect this

data.

Professor Eklund, Glenn Korff School of Music, noted that there are some University owned apps that he needs but they are required to be installed on a University computer and he does not think it is necessary to have a new laptop purchased by the University just to get access to these apps. Professor Woodman noted that accessibility to some apps depends on the agreement between the University and the vendor. He pointed out that Microsoft Office can be installed on an individual's computer. CIO Tuttle agreed that access is very specific with the individual vendors, but he could bring the issue up as the procurement process is being revised. Professor Stevenson noted that not all UNL faculty members have University issued computers and if the licensing contractors preclude people from downloading an app to their computers it would create an issue.

## **7.0 Unfinished Business**

### **7.1 Motion to Revise the Intercollegiate Athletics Committee Syllabus**

President Buan stated that the motion to revise the IAC syllabus was presented to the Senate last month. She stated that the revision is to include the President of the Student Athletic Advisory Board as one of the student members on the Committee. She asked for acceptance of the motion. The motion was approved.

## **7.0 New Business**

### **7.1 Open Mic**

Professor Woodman pointed out that all of the University mascots are males, yet UNL is getting better known as a University with strong female athletic teams such as women's volleyball and the women's bowling team. He suggested that a great symbol of inclusion would be to have a female mascot and suggested that the Faculty Senate advocate for this. Professor Weissling suggested that we have a gender-neutral mascot.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:04 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, April 27, 2021, at 2:30 p.m. via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Lorna Dawes, Secretary.