<div align="center">

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

</div>

Present: **Billesbach, Buan, Dam, Eklund, Gay, Herstein, Kolbe, Krehbiel, Minter, Nicholas, Weissling, Woodman, Zuckerman**

Absent:

Date: **Tuesday, July 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 *(Kolbe/Minter)*
Minter called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0   AVC Walker
2.1   Instructional Continuity Policy
AVC Walker explained that the instructional continuity (IC) policy was an operational decision made by upper administration. With this policy on-campus classes would not be held but progress in classes would be maintained, in a manner to be determined by the instructor. For example, the instructor could decide to hold the class remotely via Zoom, or the instructor could decide to direct students to continue working on their own, reading course materials or working on an assigned project. She pointed out that the idea was to give the instructor as much control as possible with their course. She stated that she is merely seeking the Executive Committee's guidance on whether to have a statement on the Senate's syllabus policy which says that instructors should include on their course syllabus a sentence in how they will notify students if an instructional continuity day is called. She pointed out that instructors could communicate through Canvas, by email, or some other means, and noted that it would be the instructor's choice.

Woodman stated that lab classes must be conducted in the lab and asked if more clarity can be provided for the students when an instructional continuity day is called because not all classes can be taught remotely. AVC Walker stated that how a class would be handled on an IC-day is up to the instructor, and the instructor just needs to tell the students how they will communicate with the students on an IC-day. Minter pointed out that instructors could not ask students to come to class on campus. AVC Walker stated that this is correct because on an IC-day it would not be safe to come to campus. She noted there is a distinction between an IC-day and when the campus is completely closed due to operational status. She stated that if completely closed all classes, no matter what format they are in, are cancelled.

Buan pointed out that in the document previously provided to the Executive Committee about the policy gave the impression that instructors would have to determine at the beginning of the semester how they would deliver their course if an IC-day is called.

AVC Walker stated that the document was just a copy of the memo from the IC working group to EVC Spiller and is not meant for release. She noted that the first bullet in the memo called for allowing the instructor to decide how they would communicate to the students about what they should do on an IC-day. Buan asked what would determine whether a day is called a snow day or an IC-day. AVC Walker stated that there could be a time when all campus operations and classes are cancelled, particularly if there were power outages. She stated that she anticipates that most of the closed campus days will be considered IC-days. She pointed out that Central Administration has put into place a new inclement weather closure pay policy which has a provision that if employees have alternative work capability, they may be expected to work on days when campus is closed, and that the IC operational status is the instructional part of that policy.

Weissling stated that the Executive Committee has been working to try to limit the amount of required statements on course syllabi. She noted that she looked at other universities' IC policy and they were different from our policy and had clearer communication policies in place for both faculty and students. AVC Walker stated that what is being asked is to have instructors communicate on their syllabus what their preferred means of communicating would be, and this could be through Canvas, email or whatever. She noted that if the Executive Committee prefers a blanket policy that all instructors must communicate through Canvas, that could be considered, but it was felt that it would be better to leave it up to the individual instructors. Nicholas stated that having a blanket policy could simplify things for students. Kolbe pointed out that he knows a number of faculty members who don't communicate through Canvas, and he thinks it would be better to let individual instructors decide what works best for them and their class. Herstein agreed.

Billesbach asked if there are consequences if someone does not or cannot follow a policy. He pointed out that there may be some instructors who do not have internet service at their house, and it would be difficult for instructors to have to pivot overnight how they will teach a course. AVC Walker suggested that there be a backup plan if an instructor is unable to communicate with the class on an IC-day. She stated that it is in an instructor's domain to determine how they want to teach their course but noted that departments could determine what the expectations would be for classes on an IC-day. Zuckerman pointed out that her department teaches most of their classes online and if someone's internet service is down, the instructor can call the chair of the department and ask them to communicate with the students to explain the situation.

Minter suggested a statement should come from Academic Affairs advising instructors to have a plan for how they will communicate with their students in the event of an IC-day. She noted that it does not need to rise to the level of being a statement on the syllabus. AVC Walker stated that she wants to work in partnership with the Faculty Senate on the issue.

The Executive Committee deliberated whether to endorse the requirement of having a statement on course syllabi telling students how the faculty will communicate with them in the event of an IC-day. Buan suggested the Executive Committee state that instructors

are recommended to communicate with their students about how they will communicate with them in the event of an instructional continuity day. She suggested that the Executive Committee should also express its thanks to the working group for its work on this issue. Kolbe moved to accept this language. Herstein seconded the motion. Motion approved by the Executive Committee.

3.0   Announcements
3.1   Faculty Handbook
Herstein reported that a committee of faculty members, administrators, and staff worked on putting together the faculty handbook which provides a compilation of website links on various university policies, procedures, and processes pertaining to faculty members.

Buan wanted to thank everyone who worked on putting the handbook together and for AVC Walker's support of it. She asked if a brief preamble and descriptors could be provided for each of the sections as these would be helpful for new faculty members seeking information. Herstein stated that this could be worked on. AVC Walker suggested breaking down the personnel policy section into subcategories or to alphabetize the list.

AVC Walker noted that the original goal was to have the handbook ready by August 1st, and definitely have it ready for new faculty orientation. She reported that new faculty orientation has been revamped and Canvas is being used to provide a course for new faculty members. She stated that the course will be available throughout the year and there will be monthly new faculty development workshops. Minter asked if it would be helpful for new faculty to have an organizational chart showing the chain of command for the campus. AVC Walker stated that IANR has an organizational chart, but she is not sure if one is available for the entire campus and pointed out that it would be complex.

Woodman asked who would be responsible for maintaining the online handbook. AVC Walker stated that ultimately it will be the EVC office, but anyone should let the EVC office know if a listed link has been updated.

Buan moved to approve the faculty handbook with the suggested edits. Kolbe seconded the motion which the Executive Committee approved.

3.3   Executive Committee/Administrators Retreat
Griffin reported that Professor Rodrigo Franco Cruz will serve as moderator at the upcoming Executive Committee/Administrators Retreat.

3.2   Update on IChange
AVC Walker reported that IChange is a project of the Association of Public Land-Grant Universities (APLU) to diversify STEM faculty. She noted that it is a three-year program which initiated with a self-study, followed by development of an action plan, and implementation of the plan in the third year. She stated that there is an IChange leadership group on campus which has identified four topics to focus on and subcommittees have been formed with additional people from across the campus. She

noted that recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty and reviewing faculty evaluation processes are some of the topics being worked on and she reported that there will be information sessions to acquaint the campus with the efforts and the action plan. She noted that the goal is to have the action plan to apply more broadly across the campus to non-STEM disciplines.

Gay asked how the IChange efforts would differ from those of the ADVANCE grant that the University received several years ago. AVC Walker stated that the ADVANCE grant's goal had been to help attain more women in the STEM fields, in part, by offering dual career funding. She pointed out that IChange is a more structured program which reviews what the university is doing that might prohibit diversification. Gay asked if ADVANCE was effective. AVC Walker stated that there are certainly more female faculty members on campus than before the ADVANCE grant and policies have changed for the better. She noted that prior to ADVANCE there were no STEM department chairs that were women. Buan stated that many of the women working on IChange subcommittees came to campus because of ADVANCE. AVC Walker reported that more information on ADVANCE and the summary report can be found at https://advance.unl.edu/advance-nebraska.

Buan stated that IChange will be working over the next few months with faculty to get broader feedback. She noted that we now have institutional metrics which were not available before, and which will be helpful in our efforts to recruit a more diverse faculty.

4.0   Approval of June 29, 2021 Minutes
Gay moves for approval of the revised minutes. Motion seconded by Billesbach and approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0   New Business
5.1   Agenda Items for EVC Spiller
Minter asked Executive Committee members to forward their agenda items to Griffin for the July 27th meeting.

5.2   Faculty Senate Executive Committee Response to Regent Pillen's Resolution
Minter reported that she spoke with Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny. The Executive Committee then crafted and deliberated on the statement affirming that the Faculty Senate supports academic freedom.

Buan moved that the statement crafted be sent to the faculty on the Senate's list serve and to the local press. Zuckerman seconded the motion. Motion approved. The Committee then considered the drafted statement. Gay offered a friendly amendment to eliminate the second paragraph. Eklund seconded the motion. Motion failed. Woodman then offered a friendly amendment to switch the order of sentences. Minter accepted the friendly amendment. Motion seconded by Billesbach. Motion passed. The Committee worked further on the statement. Woodman then moved to accept the language as it stands. Buan seconded the motion. Motion passed.

The Executive Committee agreed that a letter from President Kolbe should communication with the Board of Regents conveying the Executive Committee's concern with Regent Pillen's proposed resolution and the impacts it would have on academic freedom.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:45 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, July 27, 2021 at 2:30 pm. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Kelli Herstein, Secretary.