

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Bearnes, Billesbach, Eklund, Gay, Herstein, Kolbe, Krehbiel, Minter, Weissling, Woodman, Zuckerman

Absent: Baesu, Buan

Date: Tuesday, April 19, 2022

Location: Nebraska Union, Platte River Room North

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*)

Kolbe called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2.0 EVC Ankerson

2.1 Do we have enrollment figures of students from California, Colorado, New Jersey, and Texas that are being in-state tuition and is there consideration to expanding this offer to other neighboring states and population centers.

EVC Ankerson explained that the overall enrollment picture takes into account the number of incoming freshmen, graduate, professional, transfer students, and returning students and the number that will graduate. She stated that these numbers impact our net tuition revenue and before we consider offering the in-state tuition rate to neighboring states we need to more thoroughly review the impacts this would have for the campus. She noted that a Beadle scholarship was offered to the admitted students from the four identified states. She stated that there has been some improvement in enrollment numbers for students from some of these states for the 2022-23 academic year and that we have exceeded our overall initial goal with the pilot program, but she will have better information on the enrollment numbers in a few weeks.

Kolbe asked if spring is a better indicator of our enrollment. EVC Ankerson stated that spring is when we know what our retention rates are and noted that once students arrive at UNL, they usually stay here.

Billesbach asked why we didn't target Iowa or Kansas instead of New Jersey. Kolbe reported that ASEM wanted to target states from the east coast with a large population. EVC Ankerson pointed out that the high school student rate probably played a factor in this as well. Woodman asked why in-state tuition rate is not open to all states. EVC Ankerson stated that we wanted to conduct a pilot test with the four states to try to get an overall perspective and whether it is to our advantage to offer out-of-state students in-state tuition rates.

Kolbe pointed out that another reason for not opening the pilot study to more states is to see the impacts that a larger group of students would have on teaching capacity and

housing. EVC Ankerson noted that enrollment is a huge driver for the campus and while it has a lot of potential it is a complex issue with many factors involved that we need to consider before opening the in-state tuition rate to students in our neighboring states. Minter reported that when the University of Michigan offered in-state tuition rates to out-of-state students it became a point of contention with the state legislature which felt that the state's appropriations to the university were not being used for Michigan students. Zuckerman noted that the legislators probably felt like they were educating other state's students.

Eklund stated that he used to believe that the Beadle scholarships were a full waiver for students, but he now understands that they are a fixed amount. He asked who pays for the Beadle scholarships. EVC Ankerson stated that it is a \$15,000 scholarship that is funded in part through Foundation accounts. Kolbe noted that the individual colleges were not notified of the pilot study and if they had, they could have helped recruit more heavily in the four states.

Zuckerman asked if there are discussions about lowering our out-of-state tuition rates across the board, including online rates. EVC Ankerson stated that she is not aware of this discussion occurring. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that there have been some conversations around the N150 and N2025 plans and how bringing more students from out of state could help the Nebraska workforce which could be pointed out to the state legislature. Eklund pointed out that it should not be difficult to have UNL provide the same access to higher education to students in Iowa as UNO currently can do. EVC Ankerson noted that UNK also has the capability.

2.2 Alignment of apportionment with faculty's service and other responsibilities.

EVC Ankerson noted that this has been discussed at previous Executive Committee meetings and stated that she does not yet know how much variance there is with apportionments across the university. Kolbe stated that it would be helpful if there was a database showing apportionments to see how it differs in the departments and colleges. Zuckerman suggested that making this information public would go a long way to making workloads more equitable and having a policy that clearly delineates what service, teaching, and research apportionments are, would help eliminate inequities amongst the faculty. Minter stated that a policy could also indicate what the minimum apportionments would be by rank.

EVC Ankerson noted that if you look at particular position definitions, such as Professors of Practice, they have minimum 80% teaching with the other 20% that can be split between service and research, while the standard for Lecturers is 100% teaching although a 5% service for university campus-level service is being considered for them. She stated that since we are a land-grant university that values teaching, research, and service tenure-line faculty members can have varying apportionments in these areas. She noted it would be helpful to determine what the standards are across the colleges and noted that some of this information was brought forward by Associate Deans in the past. She additionally noted that faculty can work with their chair to negotiate their apportionment

during the following year. She reiterated that evaluations should recognize the apportionments.

Billesbach stated that doing service work maintains shared governance but if faculty members do not get recognized for their service work during their annual evaluation than they often do not want to do service work. He pointed out that there needs to be equity among the units of how service work is evaluated. EVC Ankerson stated that being evaluated for service work appears to be a major part of the issue raised by the Executive Committee. Woodman stated that in the School of Biological Sciences they use a rubric to help determine evaluations and service is included in the rubric. Gay pointed out that an obvious problem with getting people to serve on the Senate Executive Committee is that people either feel it is not going to be an experience they will be rewarded for, or that administration does not take shared governance seriously and this is why he developed the proposal to allow some kind of compensation for service as an Executive Committee member.

2.3 Is the University doing anything to address salary compression exacerbated by inflation for all faculty members?

EVC Ankerson reported that we are in the second year of the national competitiveness salary adjustments for tenure line faculty members, and in the midst of working with the deans on an accelerated salary increase process for other regular faculty members such as Professors of Practice and Research Professors. She noted that an accelerated process was done earlier this year for Lecturers. There will be a 2.7% merit salary pool for faculty members come July 1, but there is no way we can currently keep up with the 8.5% inflation rate that the country is experiencing. Minter asked if colleges will still be able to hold back some funds from the 2.7% salary increase pool to acknowledge other faculty types. EVC Ankerson stated that this would remain.

2.4 What do you see as the benefits and limitations of the J term?

EVC Ankerson reported that some of the advantages of the J term is that it could be focused on unique courses that departments could not normally offer during a regular semester, they could be used for domestic or international short trips for experiential learning, bottleneck courses could be offered that would let students take a course that is difficult to get into, intensive preparatory courses could be offered for students who want to polish their skills, and it could allow some students to graduate on time. She noted that the additional time between the fall and spring semester allows graduate students to work on research or prepare for comps, provides time for enrichment activities, allows students time to work more, allows international students to travel home before the start of the next semester, and allows students to retake courses they may have failed or dropped.

EVC Ankerson stated that possible negatives to the J term is that the winter break might be a little longer which could affect retention rates, it will shorten the summer period by a week or two which could impact faculty members who do research in the field, impacts the availability of summer camps, and impacts maintenance time for Housing. However, she said that the positives outweigh the negatives.

EVC Ankerson reported that if faculty teach during the J session it would be considered an overload. Woodman pointed out that faculty are limited to 20% overload. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that faculty members can get permission to go over the 20% overload.

Zuckerman asked if departments would have a set number of courses that they could offer during the J session. EVC Ankerson stated that the J session would be like the summer pre-session in that colleges and departments have a process for submitting courses to be taught. She pointed out that with the new budget model, the minimum enrollment numbers would need to be carefully monitored. She stated that there will probably be good discussions at the unit and college level about what courses should be put forward.

Minter stated that she is concerned that there may not be much conversation or review about whether a course will work in a three-week session. EVC Ankerson stated that she believes conversations need to occur at the unit level on whether a course can be taught in three weeks. She noted that not all courses can be taught in that short period of time.

EVC Ankerson stated that the previous three-week sessions had good enrollment and did not distract from the courses in the spring or fall semester.

2.5 How do we recruit talented people of color given the political climate and discourse that is being used in election ads that weaponize higher education, particularly when the university has not gone on record publicly to uphold teachers' expertise and knowledge in these matters?

EVC Ankerson stated that the University keeps trying to do the best it can to increase our diversity and the climate is improving. However, she noted that we do not have much control over what happens at the state level. Zuckerman stated that providing funds to support candidates, such as for spousal hires, is very important. EVC Ankerson reported that a number of retention offers have recently been made and there is a dual career policy in place now. She stated that her office is working very collaboratively with colleges to try to make spousal hires work.

Minter reported that she recently attended a Big Ten Academic Alliance Faculty Senate Leadership Conference and one thing all of the universities were experiencing was the pressure from outside groups to restrict teaching critical race theory or outside entities wanting to control the curriculum. She stated that universities seem reluctant to generate stories on political climate issues and this has a serious impact not only for higher education but also for K-12 teachers who are not as protected as university professors.

3.0 Peer Assessment Update (Director Monk, CTT, and Professor Balschweid)

Kolbe noted that Monk and Balschweid had met with the Executive Committee last year to discuss new ideas for conducting peer assessment. Minter pointed out that the move towards a new assessment process is a result of moving away from quantitative student evaluations.

Monk reported that revisions that were suggested by the Executive Committee were incorporated in the form and report. He noted that it was clear that faculty members want to see more piloting of the forms and more information about the evaluation process.

Zuckerman reported that she recently participated with a colleague in mutual peer observation for online courses and pointed out that the PDF version was difficult to use most of the time. She stated that it would be helpful for the observer to record questions for follow up and noted that it was nice to be able to exchange observations with a colleague. However, she stated that there needs to be clarification ahead of the process because there are so many different components that could be used and having more information could help shape how the participating faculty members conduct the observations. She reported that allowing faculty members to focus on areas in their teaching that they are struggling with would really be helpful. Monk pointed out that the process is designed to be adaptive, and he is open to hearing suggestions.

Balschweid stated that one of the challenges is how to provide more guidance without being prescriptive. He noted that what is trying to be done with the peer observation and evaluations is to identify what makes a reflective instructor. Zuckerman noted that she did not want a faculty member from outside of her discipline observing and assessing her teaching because pedagogy can be discipline dependent. Monk suggested that it could be optional to have someone outside the discipline participating in the peer observation, although he argued that the teaching aspects are not that different in disciplines. Kolbe stated that it should be clear that the faculty decide how the peer assessment gets done. He noted that some departments might want the process to be more flexible while others may want it more prescriptive. He stated that he does have concerns about other faculty members choosing who gets to evaluate you.

Woodman pointed out that the single observation is just really capturing someone in a specific point in time. He questioned what the personal bias might be of the observer and stated that there needs to be strict protections for the faculty member being evaluated that the peer evaluation cannot be used as a means to rank a faculty member within a department. Monk reported that this is now covered in the guidelines. Zuckerman pointed out that the peer evaluation would be a lot fairer if there were multiple observers.

Zuckerman stated that it would be good if the faculty member being observed could pick one thing to be assessed on rather than all six. Monk pointed out that this can already be done, and faculty members can have a conversation about what they want to specifically address in the assessment process. Kolbe stated that it is important that the faculty will accept this process and noted that it needs to be less time consuming and adaptable.

Krehbiel asked if there is a best practice guide that could be available. Monk stated that there is, and it contains expanded definitions and more could be done, but he is concerned with providing so much information that people are hesitant to read through it all. He noted that there needs to be a balance between providing extra instructions and making things simplified. Balschweid pointed out that the taskforce thought about providing a

three-minute video that could provide a level of depth to those who want it and noted that it would probably be used widely once people started using it.

Krehbiel asked if there was any thought to expanding this to faculty members, like Extension Educators, involved in non-formal education. She pointed out that it could be a very helpful tool, especially for new or younger faculty members involved in engagement. Balschweid stated that it would be helpful to see a subset of non-formal educators to see how they could utilize the peer observation and evaluation for their purposes as well as the audience they would observe. He noted that there are some things in place already for Extension Educators, such as the adult learners' workshop currently taking place, but this could be one more useful tool.

Minter said she really appreciated the work Monk and Balschweid did to incorporate the Executive Committee's suggestions from the previous meeting, although she suggested that some things may need to be fixed in the five areas of focus. Balschweid asked if there is value in the feedback loop and whether it would be helpful. Kolbe stated that he would like to see the peer evaluation being developed for online courses because the university will be hiring people who will be teaching remotely, some of whom could be teaching remotely from other countries. He believes that the peer evaluation process would be incredibly helpful as the university moves forward.

Monk stated that he would like the Faculty Senate to approve the peer observation and evaluation process. Minter moved that the Executive Committee approve the peer observation and evaluation process pending the additional changes that were suggested today. Herstein questioned whether the process is ready to use right now by all faculty members and asked what the consequences are of approving rather than endorsing the process. Minter stated that the Committee would approve it as a possible tool for faculty members to use, but it would not be mandatory. Woodman stated that he does not believe the Executive Committee has to approve everything that the CTT does and asked if there would be a website dedicated to the peer evaluation process. He cautioned the Committee to look at it carefully before making any decision. Kolbe noted that the peer evaluation and observation is not a policy and departments may or may not choose to use it in their peer review.

Minter withdrew her motion and stated that the Executive Committee would have further discussion on the process. She suggested asking AVC Walker whether these tools could become mandatory for the promotion and tenure process.

4.0 Report on Consultant Fees (Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny)

AC Zeleny apologized for the time it took to gather the information on contractual services noting that there were two factors in the delay. The first is that there is not a specific code in SAP identifying consulting fees so each transaction had to be opened to see if it was an actual payment for consulting, and the other reason for the delay was the demands of having to deal with the pandemic which essentially put the efforts on hold.

AC Zeleny reported that 75% of contractual services at UNL were under \$50,000. He noted that the total was between \$20 million to \$28 million, and these were all payments made to external vendors. He stated that the three largest payments went to Nebraska Medicine to operate the Health Center, StarTran for campus bus service, and the Professional Program in Veterinary Medicine that is in association with the Iowa State Veterinary Program.

AC Zeleny stated that the typical cost for a search firm for a Vice Chancellor position is about 30% of the first-year salary and it might include \$10,000 for travel noting that the total could be up to \$65,000. He reported that there are some consultants who are on retainer, but most are a one-off payment. He pointed out that UNL's contractual services are lower than our sister campuses with UNO having the highest costs, yet UNL is the larger campus.

Billesbach asked if there is a cost level to determine whether we should use internal people as consultants or outside consultants and services. AC Zeleny noted that Facilities Management often do basic renovation, but actual building projects would be contracted out.

Woodman asked if there is any data on whether executive consultants are worth the cost. AC Zeleny stated that it depends on their expertise. Herstein asked why the costs were down in 2021. AC Zeleny stated that it was probably down due to the pandemic, and he anticipates that the figures will also be down for 2022 because campus operations really slowed down during the pandemic and there was not much high-level turnover. He stated that he did not think that the colleges made any direct payments to consultants, so he did not think these costs were directly involved in the budget cuts.

4.0 Announcements

4.1 Information Technology Increased Security Coming

Woodman reported that Information Technology Services will be revising Executive Memorandum 16 to allow greater security for computing at the University. Kolbe stated that he is trying to schedule CIO Tuttle to speak to the Faculty Senate on Tuesday.

4.2 Acknowledgement of Kolbe, Buan, Gay and Woodman Service

Griffin noted that this was Kolbe's last Executive Committee as President (he hollered in joy) and noted that it was the last Executive Committee meeting for Buan, Gay, and Woodman. The Executive Committee applauded and thanked the committee members for their service.

5.0 Approval of April 12, 2022 Minutes

Kolbe asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Woodman moved and Gay seconded approval of the minutes. The minutes were then approved by the Executive Committee.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Professional Code of Conduct

Agenda item postponed.

4.2 ITSC Survey

Agenda item postponed.

5.0 New Business

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, immediately following the Faculty Senate meeting. The meeting will be held in. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Kelli Herstein, Secretary.