

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Baesu, Boudreau, Eklund, Kolbe, Kopocis, Krehbiel, Latta Konecky, Lott, Minter, Weissling

**Absent:** Bearnes, Paul, Zuckerman

**Date:** Tuesday, October 11, 2022

**Location:** 201 Canfield Administration Building

**Note:** These are not verbatim minutes. They are a summary of the discussions at the Executive Committee meeting as corrected by those participating.

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### 1.0 Call (*Minter*)

Minter called the meeting to order at 2:31 p.m.

### 2.0 Chancellor Green/Vice Chancellor Boehm

#### 2.1 How can the faculty get better connections with recruiting students? Has there been an announcement about the updated list of states in our national scholarship program? Update on the search for a new Associate Vice Chancellor for ASEM.

Chancellor Green reported that Associate Vice Chancellor Volkmer is serving as the interim Director of ASEM and EVC Ankerson's goal is to have him be in this interim position for a year which would enable him to continue the good work that he is doing and provides him time to complete some of the changes he is making with ASEM.

Chancellor Green noted that last year we started a pilot program mid-year to offer national scholarships to students in Colorado, California, Texas, and New Jersey and there was some success in recruiting students, particularly from Colorado. He stated that the scholarships are now being offered to students in Colorado, California, Texas, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Kansas, and Missouri. Kolbe asked if students in these states would have to qualify to get a Ruth Leverton scholarship. Chancellor Green pointed out that they would, but the scholarships are not a remittance to provide all of these students with in-state tuition rates but for students who qualify for the Leverton and the George Beadle scholarships it does reduce their tuition to the resident rate. Kolbe asked what faculty members can do if they hear of a student from these states that qualify for these scholarships. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny reported that information will be shared soon.

Chancellor Green noted that recruiting students is part of everyone's job at the university and he is hopeful that the deans will be discussing with the faculty about how we can implement our recruiting efforts. He pointed out that he will be visiting communities across the state this winter to tell the University's story and to recruit future students.

**2.2 What kind of impact would a continued decrease in tuition revenue have on UNL's budget?**

Chancellor Green noted that a continued decrease in tuition revenue would definitely impact our budget. He pointed out that we are in year three of the 2020 budget reductions and in the last two years our enrollment numbers have been lower than we had projected. He stated that last year our costs were lower, partly due to the pandemic, but we are at the point that we need to begin recovering from our lower than projected enrollment numbers.

Chancellor Green stated that we also need to be aware that this is a budget setting year for the Nebraska Legislature, and we will have new members in the Legislature and a new Appropriations Committee chair. He noted that we need to turn our enrollment numbers around and begin increasing our enrollment again.

**2.3 Our hiring pattern in recent administrative positions does not articulate our commitment to diversity. Are we not positioning ourselves well to hire diverse candidates?**

Chancellor Green pointed out that we have been working hard to get diverse pools of candidates for our positions and we have had diverse pools of candidates for current Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance and the Dean of the College of Architecture searches. In the end, he said the goal is to hire the most qualified candidate. VC Boehm noted that if you compared the pool of candidates from the pools a few years ago you would see a radical difference in diversity. He stated that when a search is conducted you shoot for a diverse pool in hopes of being able to hire excellence that enhances the team's diversity. Chancellor Green stated that the commitment is there, and we will continue working to try to increase diversity of our hires.

**2.4 Can you expand on your rethinking of the Grand Challenges? Will timelines be adjusted, or will expectations be adjusted?**

Chancellor Green stated that a correction is needed in the question because the Grand Challenges within the N2025 plan are definitely on track and schedule. He stated that what he referenced in the recent State of Our University address was that we are thinking of a recalibration of the time period that was stated in the N2025 Plan, as well as some of the specific targets in its aims. He stated that the impacts and disruptions of the past 2.5 years of the global pandemic (the N2025 was instituted in February 2020) requires us to look at our targets and their timeline noting that 2025 may no longer be the right date. He stated that our enrollment goals and some other targets need to be reviewed and looked at pragmatically.

**2.5 Chancellors' Retreat – was the travel policy discussed?**

Chancellor Green reported that the Chancellors met with President Carter in a President's Council retreat yesterday and the problems with the travel policy and vendor was brought up as a concern about the unintended impacts that centralization of functions across the system-level, and that perhaps a post-assessment of the changes implemented since 2017 in response to the system Budget Response Teams is in order.

**2.6 With the devastation of the 4-H Camp site in Halsey, are there plans to replace the site? What impacts will this loss have on the 4-H program?**

VC Boehm stated that the wildfire in Halsey not only destroyed 19,000 acres of the national forest and grasslands, but tragically a firefighter lost his life fighting the fire – Michael Moody of Purdum. He noted that the Nebraska National Forest at Halsey was developed around the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it was one of the largest human-planted forests in the U.S. He stated that there were approximately 6,000 acres of trees which were all unfortunately lost due to the recent wildfire. He stated that the original intent was to have a nursery in the Great Plains that could provide trees for Yosemite and Yellowstone should there be wildfires.

VC Boehm reported that the U.S. National Forest Service manages the land, and the Nebraska 4-H Foundation owned the 4-H camp buildings that were lost, and that Nebraska 4-H then leased these facilities to run 4-H camp. Both the U.S. Forest Service and the Nebraska 4-H Foundation are trying to figure out next steps. He stated that Extension Dean Stoltenow and Nebraska 4-H director Lodl are in contact with the leadership of both the U.S. Forest Service and the Nebraska 4-H Foundation, and he has been receiving many emails about the loss of the 4-H camp site. He reported that the Nebraska 4-H Foundation did have insurance on the buildings.

VC Boehm stated that the University's 4-H Program will be impacted, and that director Lodl and Dean Stoltenow are working on developing messaging about next year's camp offerings and our commitment to residential camps and the 4-H platform. He stated that there are a number of platforms other than Halsey that could possibly be used, and we are thinking of how we can bring the camping experiences to those interested across the state.

Krehbiel asked if he could explain the relationship between UNL's programming and the 4-H Foundation. VC Boehm noted that it is very complicated because there is a national 4-H Foundation and a Nebraska 4-H Foundation. He stated that Nebraska 4-H is run through Nebraska Extension and funding for the program is received from both the national 4-H and the state foundations. He reported that most of the funding is used for programming and to support some staff and various initiatives. He noted that director Lodl sits on the Nebraska 4-H Foundation Council, but a separate Executive Director runs the Council. He stated that the Nebraska Foundation has put funds into buildings in the past. Krehbiel pointed out that the other residential camps were closed, and Halsey was the last camp which means that the state is now down to zero residential camp sites.

**2.7 After visiting with Dr. Matthew Shenoda, what should our next steps be to further diversity, inclusion, and equity at UNL?**

Chancellor Green noted that Dr. Shenoda (from Brown University) was here specifically to consult with us about a potential campus-wide research and scholarship consortium on anti-racism and racial equality proposed by the Journey co-leaders. He noted that creating such a consortium would contribute to Grand Challenges and he is looking to receiving feedback and report from Dr. Shenoda. Minter asked if there is any idea when

the report would be available. Associate to the Chancellor Zeleny stated that the expectation is that it may be in the next couple of weeks.

## **2.8 News from IANR**

VC Boehm reported that there is a large influx of Covid relief federal dollars from government agencies, and these agencies are now seeking grant proposals. He noted that the grants can be up to \$1 billion each but the drawback is that the proposals have to be submitted in 3-6 months and the faculty and administration are working to understand what the federal agencies are interested in funding. He noted that the review panels for the federal agencies are not the typical review panel, they will have staff from different agencies which includes under-represented groups like tribal councils and coalitions. He reported that a positive outcome is that faculty are talking with each other to generate ideas and to come to a shared vision of where we can have impact. He stated that one example of a grant is for a meat and poultry expansion program and the university has put in a \$25 million proposal to redo the Loeffel meat lab. He stated that this would support the eighty small meat processors that are in the state, and we have a commitment to develop the Small Meat Processing Plant of the Future which will be a multi-disciplinary center to strengthen the meat industry in the region and would address workforce shortages and other challenges faced by small meat processors. The Loeffel harvest and processing facility on East Campus will get equipment upgrades and will hire and train staff to maintain hours of operations and a suite of resources will also be available for those looking to set up or expand small processing operations.

VC Boehm stated that he and Chancellor Green and Dean Heng-Moss were in Washington D.C. and met with Senator Flood's and Senator Fischer's teams and had very good discussions. He pointed out that the USDA National Center for Resilient and Regenerative Precision Agriculture located at Nebraska Innovation Campus has 17 scientists and 40 support staff, but this could be increasing by up to 42 scientists with a 150-support staff. He noted that they were scheduled to meet with Deputy Secretary Bronaugh, but due to illness they met with Secretary of Agriculture Vilsack instead.

VC Boehm reported that IANR had its all-hands-on meeting recently and about 165 people attended and the event was live streamed. He noted that the event focused on celebration of people, and he pointed out that approximately 60% of IANR are new employees. He stated that this year there will be an open and very transparent dialogue about where IANR is heading. He noted that the Faculty Liaison Committee has been activated and Associate Vice Chancellor Bischoff lead a good conversation with the Committee which has drafted a position statement on faculty service, commitment, and workload. He stated that he is looking forward to bringing the statement forward.

## **3.0 Graduate Student Assembly President Andrew Donesky**

Donesky stated that as President of the GSA he asked the GSA what they wanted the officers to focus on this year. He noted that the assembly decided to focus on graduate student stipends and health insurance, pointing out that there are subcommittees that are looking at other issues like family graduate student housing. He noted that the officers asked a lot of questions regarding health insurance for graduate students last year, and he,

Graduate Studies Dean Hope, and other GSA leaders met with University of Nebraska Director of Risk Management Harford to discuss graduate health insurance. During the discussion Dean Hope asked if anyone has asked the graduate students what their needs are for insurance. Donesky reported that as a result, Varner Hall is conducting a survey of all graduate and undergraduate students in the system that are required to have health insurance through the university.

Eklund asked where the graduate students are at now and what they hope to accomplish. Donesky stated that for a lot of graduate students the cost of health insurance is a large amount of money that comes out of their pockets and the cost is substantial for those that have small stipends. Eklund asked if graduate students are required to get health insurance from the University. Donesky stated that they can have health insurance through other sources, such as their parents, but it needs to meet the University's standard requirements. He pointed out that there are some students that sometimes have to pay for two different health insurance plans because the one they have outside of the university does not meet the standards. Kopocis pointed out that some students do not realize that they can opt out of the university's insurance if they are on their parents' health insurance, but they must opt out every semester. Latta Konecky noted that there may be some students who will age out of being able to be on their parents' insurance.

Donesky stated that the university is trying to determine whether the current health insurance is meeting the needs and is a good value for the students. He stated that GSA would like to see if better health insurance policies for graduate students are available which would meet their needs.

Minter asked if GSA has collected data on graduate stipends. Donesky stated that some data has been collected but pointed out that it is quite difficult to get that information, not only here at the university, but from other Big Ten schools as well. He noted that stipend amounts can vary, not only college by college, but also by departments. Baesu pointed out that stipend amounts can also vary within a department. Donesky reported that the GSA was able to find information on minimum stipends from the Big Ten. He stated that the information that was gathered can be found on the GSA website at <https://www.unl.edu/gsa/news-and-reports> and stated that when the total compensation was normalized (looking at total compensation including tuition remission) UNL was at the bottom of graduate student compensation. He pointed out that UNL has the lowest tuition rate which some might wonder if that is an indication that our education is not of a high quality, but he stated that he doesn't believe this and stated that UNL is actually a great value because of the lower tuition rate and the good education that is provided. He stated that graduate students here would have to get paid at least \$19,000 to get to the middle of the Big Ten graduate stipends from 2021-2022.

Donesky reported that the Graduate Council passed a resolution years ago that graduate students should be paid a fair living amount (<https://graduate.unl.edu/academics/rights>), and this still has not happened, although he noted that some colleges have raised their graduate stipends. He stated that graduate students would like to see more equity across the board in terms of graduate stipends, but he doesn't know how that could happen and

is seeking advice on how to accomplish this goal. He noted that he is scheduled to meet with Chancellor Green on November 4. Minter stated that logistically to make a big difference in graduate stipends GSA would need to work at the dean level, college by colleges, or work with the Executive Vice Chancellor's office to get the office to infuse more funds to the colleges for graduate stipends.

Weissling asked what the Deans said when Donesky met with them. Donesky stated that the College of Engineering took on the task several years ago to improve graduate student stipends. He has heard that CASNR might be doing some checking and the College of Arts & Sciences is looking at grad stipends but there are a few colleges who said they are working to try to make improvements, however, they said they are doing the best that they can at the present time. Minter asked what the role of the Dean of Graduate Studies is in regard to graduate student stipends. Donesky stated that he believes the Dean of Graduate Studies is more academically focused and he does not think Graduate Studies has control of the graduate student stipend budget at the dean or college level.

Minter stated that from an advocacy perspective it will probably need to be a team effort to improve graduate student stipends. She questioned whether scholarships or Foundation funds can be used to support graduate students. Kopocis pointed out that we need to align our priorities because if we want top graduate students, we need to provide them with a good stipend. Eklund noted that graduate programs assist the university in a huge way with national ranking and that needs to be taken into consideration. Minter wondered if the case might be that we are too broad in the range of our graduate programs and that we might need to be committed to a subset of graduate programs that would pay better stipends.

Donesky pointed out that student fees are another concern which ties into stipends. He noted that family housing is an issue, as is health care but if stipends were higher, it would help address all of these other concerns. He noted that 50% of the users of the Husker Pantry are graduate students.

Donesky reported that another issue that has been raised is abuse of the advisor and mentor relationship with graduate students. Minter asked if Donesky thought the Professional Code of Conduct would help curb the abusive behavior. Donesky stated that it could help but many of these problems are situations that often don't get reported for fear that the advisor or mentor would retaliate in some way. Lott noted that there are retaliation laws, but Kopocis pointed out that filing a lawsuit would be a lengthy process. Minter stated that the Executive Committee should address the problem with Chancellor Green.

#### **4.0 Approval of October 4, 2022 Minutes**

Minter asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she asked for approval of the minutes. Latta Konecky moved for approval, motion seconded by Weissling, and approved by the Executive Committee.

## **5.0 Unfinished Business**

### **5.1 Professional Code of Conduct (Minter)**

Agenda item postponed due to lack of time.

### **5.2 Refine Questions for President Carter**

The Executive Committee worked on refining its questions for President Carter when he meets with the Committee on October 18.

### **5.3 Faculty Senate Policy on Acceptable Use of Software Systems Management and Deployment Tools**

Minter asked the Executive Committee to review the Senate's policy and noted that she highlighted areas that were in violation to the newly revised EM 16. She stated that the Committee would discuss this at an upcoming meeting because the Faculty Senate would need to act on it.

## **6.0 New Business**

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:11 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, October 18, 2022, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Big Ten Conference Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.