

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Baesu, Krehbiel

Date: Tuesday, March 22, 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 2:33 p.m.

2.0 EVC Ankerson

2.1 Update on Enrollment

EVC Ankerson reported that we are in the height of the enrollment season for incoming students and while applications have been up significantly this year, the current number of deposits is down from last year at this time. She noted that there is a new student event taking place this weekend and there is the expectation that the deposits will increase following the event. She pointed out that seven or eight years ago you could predict enrollment based on certain activities, but that no longer holds true. She stated that AVC Winter believes that for Fall 2022, we will be .5 or .6% below enrollment from Fall 2021. She stated that lower enrollment may be in part due to the large graduating classes that we had the last couple of years, and we are expecting another large graduating class this year, and while this is good for our 4- and 6-year graduation rates, it does present challenges with our enrollment figures for the upcoming year.

EVC Ankerson noted that tuition is a driver of our budget, and she asked the Executive Committee members to encourage students to attend the university. She pointed out that colleges are effectively using Foundation funds to offer scholarships which definitely influences prospective students. She stated that when prospective students visit campus and meet faculty members the chance that these students will attend the university.

2.2 Proposal for Compensating Faculty Senate Executive Committee Members

EVC Ankerson noted that Kolbe gave her the proposal and they discussed service in general and the different types and levels of service. She stated that serving on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee is very important as is chairing a search committee or participating in other committees because it impacts faculty life in a profound way. She pointed out that in some units, service is covered through apportionments but there are cases where faculty members go above and beyond their required service work.

Gay noted that the discussion and proposal was generated in part because there are faculty members who only have a 2% service apportionment, yet they are doing significantly more service work. EVC Ankerson stated that from this discussion, it sounds like service apportionments and the service work that is done by some faculty members varies considerably, but faculty should be able to negotiate their service apportionment during the annual evaluation process. Kolbe pointed out that some faculty members have indicated to the Senate that they have not been allowed to discuss nor able to adjust their apportionment even when they requested it.

Gay reported that the idea to provide some funding for faculty members serving on the Executive Committee would be a way to incentivize people to serve and could create greater competition to serve on the Committee. EVC Ankerson stated that regardless of whether people get a financial reward for the service, their service should be recognized in the evaluation process by their chairs and deans. She pointed out that if people are being asked to serve on the Committee over the summer than she would be fully supportive of providing some funding during that period of time. She stated that providing course releases for all Executive Committee members would not be feasible financially. Gay pointed out that the proposal initially called for all the Executive Committee members to receive a stipend, but this was changed to just the officers.

Weissling stated that service work is a complex issue that goes beyond apportionment. She noted that there are some departments that don't acknowledge service work for promotion even if a faculty member has a 30% service apportionment. She stated that there can be a disconnect between the expectations and apportionment and amount of work faculty members actually do.

EVC Ankerson pointed out that the university's documentation states that faculty members should be evaluated according to their apportionment of duties, but if this is not occurring in all departments than it is an issue that needs to be examined. She stated that service work should be valued and noted that the university would not operate well without it. Kolbe suggested that a database for Academic Affairs needs to be created delineating the different apportionments of duties. EVC Ankerson stated that faculty members should feel comfortable in requesting a change with their apportionment.

2.3 Plan for the Use of Revenue Generated by Alcohol Sales at University Events

EVC Ankerson reported that the decision on how the revenue would be used would be up to the Chancellor and the Executive Leadership Team, but she would be interested in hearing the Executive Committee's thoughts on this. Woodman suggested that the revenue be used to support scholarships to help attract more students.

2.4 What is your perspective on the budget model and how close is it to being ready? With your experience as a former Dean, do you have reservations about the budget model?

EVC Ankerson stated that the new budget model is a tool that will provide greater insight into the budgets of each college, and it will basically be the same budget as this year's when it starts being used on July 1. She pointed out that 85-90% of the budget is based on salaries and benefits and most of this funding is from state-aided funding. She noted

that units have been defined as primary (the colleges) and support (various university services) and the units have or are in the process of developing their budgets. She noted that the amount the primary units' budget is assessed will be determined once all of the support units have completed their budgets. She stated that three factors increase available resources for the primary units: enrollment, grants and contracts, and philanthropy.

EVC Ankerson stated that she has been in favor of a new budget model because the historical model has been based on incremental increases that have not been based on strategic projections. She pointed out that the Academic Planning Committee will play a role in the process as academic program actions are proposed. She stated that overall, she is optimistic but noted that there are some ongoing refinements that need to be made over time to the model and the Budget Model Advisory Committee (BMAC) is working on developing policies and guidelines. She noted that during this first fiscal year, colleges budgets will remain whole.

EVC Ankerson stated that we will need to think strategically about the future and align budget processes with strategic planning, but she sees this as a very positive process, one that was introduced in October by EVC Spiller – the Integrated Academic Planning and Resource Process. She noted that the policies and guidelines may need to be adjusted as we move forward and gain more experience with the budget model.

Woodman reported that when the budget model was first being considered there was discussion about subvention, but this has not been brought up recently. He pointed out that there are some units whose enrollments would not be in alignment with their budget. EVC Ankerson stated that the term “subvention” is not currently used in the model and noted that not all primary units are not profit centers related to student credit hour generation. She stated that there needs to be a common understanding of the value of areas contributing to our university mission, that some colleges generate more tuition, some more research, some contribute more to the state through engagement, while some generate more awards and accolades. She said there needs to be trust that people are managing their resources well.

2.5 What exactly has been changed with the Regents Scholarships and what criteria are being used for selecting students now that the ACT scores are optional? Has the demography of the Regents Scholars changed?

EVC Ankerson reported that she received information from AVC Winter regarding these questions. She noted that academic scholarships are reviewed holistically rather than based on a formula. She stated that a student's high school GPA, their ranking when they graduate, and an evaluation of how they performed over their four years of high school are all considered. She stated that if an ACT score is available it can weigh into the decision. She reported that for highly competitive scholarships the student generally needs to be above the 90th percentile above all other students being admitted to the University. She pointed out that the Regents Scholarship is highly competitive, and all efforts are made to fairly evaluate students.

EVC Ankerson stated that recent Regents Scholars have been more economically, racially, ethnically, and geographically diverse. She reported that 25% of the scholarships went to students of lower and middle-income families which is up 7.2% from four years ago, and 29.6% of the recipients were students of color this year. Woodman asked if there is a breakdown by ethnicity of the students of color. EVC Ankerson stated that she does not currently have that information.

2.6 Where are we in the process of revising the tenure and promotion guidelines? Has work continued on developing a promotion track for Professors of Practice that was originally set in motion by EVC Spiller?

EVC Ankerson stated that when she receives a report from the group working of revising the tenure and promotion guidelines, the recommendations will be discussed and then revisions will be vetted with different groups on campus including the Faculty Senate. Weissling asked if there is a timeline for the guidelines being revised. Kolbe stated that the hope is to have them approved in the fall.

Woodman stated that he thought there already was a promotion path for Professors of Practice. EVC Ankerson stated that there is and stated there is not a path for promotion of Lecturers. Kolbe noted that last year some long-term Lecturers could possibly be moved to a Professor of Practice position. AVC Walker stated that this was a one-time only process. She pointed out that when the Professor of Practice track was first created most units made changes for their long-time Lecturers, but there were some Lecturers that should have been converted to a Professor of Practice but were not, so they had the opportunity to become a Professor of Practice last year. She stated that there is no expectation that this process will be allowed again.

2.7 Is there training for new department chair/heads on how to evaluate faculty and how to communicate with faculty members about their evaluation? How are administrators/supervisors taught/trained to handle conflicts during a faculty evaluation?

EVC Ankerson stated that typically each college has specific evaluation protocols and there should be a means of onboarding and training chairs and directors on how to evaluate faculty members. She noted that this training has stayed mostly in the colleges, but recently at the DEO sessions there have been conversations about how to have difficult conversations on a number of topics, not just evaluations. Weissling asked if there is now ongoing training. EVC Ankerson noted that training was reduced during the height of the pandemic, but the training is now occurring more frequently. Kolbe pointed out that it would be good to remind chairs/heads/directors about apportionments at these training sessions.

2.8 Anonymous Evaluations of Administrators

Kolbe noted that the colleges dictate the evaluation of administrators and pointed out that many units do not allow faculty members to submit anonymous reviews of administrators. EVC Ankerson stated that evaluations should be confidential, but Woodman pointed out that this is not always the case. He stated that faculty are evaluated anonymously all of the time through student evaluations. He reported that

there are some non-tenure track faculty members who have been penalized because of their evaluation of an administrator. Herstein stated that it is very difficult to give an honest evaluation when they are not anonymous, especially if someone is a non-tenure track faculty member.

EVC Ankerson stated that she understands the concerns but noted that having anonymous evaluations could create a bias both ways. AVC Walker pointed out that the Bylaws mandate that a review process must be conducted for major administrators. She stated that there are no mandates requiring faculty members to evaluate department chairs, although she pointed out it might be part of the structure within a college. EVC Ankerson stated that it is likely that college bylaws outline the specific evaluation process for chairs or department heads.

Eklund asked if the administration feels that anonymous student evaluations are helpful. He stated that having anonymous evaluations, both for faculty and administrators, would create more honest, and therefore, helpful evaluations and it is unfair to expect faculty evaluations to be anonymous but not administrators. AVC Walker reported that the UNL Bylaws does state that there are to be cumulative review of administrative officers, but she does not think that this is something that has been done recently.

EVC Ankerson thanked the group for the perspectives and noted that some things that were discussed today need to be worked on collectively by the EVC's office and the Senate Executive Committee.

EVC Ankerson reported that there are some faculty members teaching category 2 courses that will need reassurance as the County moves to a no mask requirement. She pointed out that the University has been following the data and recommendations from the CDC and the Lincoln/Lancaster County Health department when making its decision. Woodman pointed out that there are students who have asked for accommodations and noted that there are only a few weeks left in the semester and asked why the policy should be changed. Herstein stated that there are students who signed up for an in-person class because they were assured that everyone in the classroom would be required to wear masks. She questioned whether removing the face covering policy is breaking a contract with these students. EVC Ankerson stated that she understands all of the concerns but noted that the Chancellor has made clear what will happen with the Covid protocols. Kolbe reported that he continues to raise the faculty's concerns with the Chancellor and Associate to the Chancellor.

3.0 Graduate Faculty Status (Dean Hope and AVC Walker)

Dean Hope reported that she shared with Provost Gold and Vice Provost Jackson the concerns with giving Professors of Practice Graduate Faculty Status. She noted that it turns out that the other campuses have similar concerns and as a result proposed revisions to the Graduate College Handbook will be considered.

Dean Hope pointed out that there is one Graduate College across the university system and Provost Gold is head of it. She reported that the Executive Graduate Council would have to vote on any changes as well as graduate faculty from all four campuses.

Dean Hope stated that part of the problem is that there is currently a mismatch between faculty being hired to teach in post-baccalaureat programs and the current requirements for Graduate Faculty Status and at UNL this primarily affects Professors of Practice. She reported that there are currently three levels of graduate faculty status: the graduate faculty which has full level of responsibilities; the graduate faculty associate, which can do most things but cannot chair or co-chair doctoral committees; and the graduate lecturer which is appointed to teach a specific graduate class or other activity for a limited time. She stated that tenure-leading faculty automatically meet the criteria for graduate faculty status but for non-tenure leading faculty, they must be nominated and approved for any of the three levels of graduate faculty. She pointed out that the graduate faculty associate is limited to a four-year term, and it is currently not renewable. She stated that an application for graduate faculty associate status must be submitted in the first four years of employment.

Woodman asked what the reasons were for requiring faculty members to apply for graduate faculty associate status in the beginning of their employment rather than later after they had developed their career. Dean Hope stated that the graduate faculty associate status was conceived as a transitional phase that would allow faculty members to teach some graduate courses while building a record for full graduate faculty status.

Dean Hope stated that there are three proposed changes that address most of the concerns. The first change would be that graduate faculty status would not be required for a course that is practice oriented. She stated that if a department needs a course taught and the best person to teach it is someone with experience rather than a traditional scholarly record, they would be able to teach it.

Zuckerman pointed out that there are some Professors of Practice who have the knowledge and experience to teach a course but have been denied full graduate faculty status. Dean Hope stated that she is aware that some Professors of Practice have been denied and noted that this is a real problem for some departments. She noted that some departments have had to resort to graduate faculty lecturer status in order to cover courses.

Dean Hope reported that the second revision is that courses in a designated professional program do not need to be taught by someone with graduate faculty status. She pointed out that this is primarily for practice-oriented programs and the goal is that we want to make sure that we have the right people teaching these kinds of courses. She stated that recognized graduate and professional programs at UNL are Master of Architecture, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, Doctor of Plant Health, and Law.

Weissling asked if there are other things that change if a program is identified as a professional program. Dean Hope pointed out that we do not have an administrative structure which governs professional programs and noted that other Big Ten universities have separate professional programs. Some programs have worried about being designated as a professional program in the new budget model but that professional

programs usually generate funds. Currently, the Graduate Council does not oversee professional programs and they are administered in different ways depending on the program. She pointed out that there would need to be conversations with the EVC's office about what administrative structure is needed if these changes are approved. Also, programs will want to consider the implications carefully about whether they want to switch a program to a professional program.

Dean Hope stated that the third revision is to allow the graduate faculty associates to have an extension of an additional four years, and this would impact a significant number of graduate faculty. She noted that moving more Professors of Practice to graduate faculty status would help meet the needs of our graduate programs. The additional four years would allow more time to build a record for graduate faculty status. Also, she stated that scholarship of teaching will count towards a Professor of Practice obtaining graduate faculty status.

Buan asked how our policies compare with other Big Ten universities. She asked if we are keeping our standards high relative to our peers with respect to the people we are hiring. Dean Hope stated that this conversation has occurred with Vice Provost Jackson, and he felt these changes do maintain our standards. She reported that at a recent conference of Graduate Deans she found that some Big Ten universities have very separate professional programs while others handle decisions on who can contribute to graduate programs within academic departments.

Buan asked if it is still clear what expertise is required for those being hired to teach professional courses, and she questioned whether hiring someone because they have experience rather than hiring a tenure-line faculty members is a mechanism to hire someone at a lower salary. Kolbe noted that there has been a push in the recent past to hire a Professor of Practice when a tenured faculty member retires rather than hire a tenure-line faculty member. Dean Hope stated that the Graduate Council did discuss whether these changes facilitate moving away from having tenured faculty. She pointed out that this is a larger discussion that needs to occur and is beyond this topic.

Weissling asked where the resistance is to giving graduate faculty associates permanent status. Dean Hope stated that she and AVC Walker discussed this, and Vice Provost Jackson stated that the idea is to avoid creating a level of graduate faculty status that some might see as a second-level status. She pointed out that if a department has Professors of Practice that they want moved to graduate faculty status there needs to be some apportionment in scholarly activity. AVC Walker noted that Professors of Practice need at least 80% apportionment in teaching which would then allow 20% apportionment for research or creative activity and pointed out that apportionments can be changed.

Weissling asked how being in a professional program would affect master's thesis and doctoral degrees. Dean Hope stated that in a professional program at the master's level there would be a capstone project. Current professional programs that offer a doctorate degree have a significant scholarly project in lieu of the dissertation and have other milestones appropriate to the degree as well. She noted that we currently do not have a

professional program that offers a doctoral degree, but the idea would be that there would need to be traditional research milestones for the Ph.D. Weissling asked what would happen if a student in a professional program wanted to do research in addition to taking the courses in the program. Dean Hope stated that they could seek a Ph.D. in the department that administers the professional program or in a different department.

Zuckerman asked if, in the foreseeable future, the requirements for a master's degree changes would a faculty member with full graduate faculty status be able to oversee the graduate committee. Dean Hope noted that with a professional program there would be more flexibility than if it was a regular master's program. She stated that she would welcome further conversations with anyone about the professional program issue.

Dean Hope reported that another change to the guidelines is that adjunct faculty members who were previously graduate faculty at UNL could still maintain their graduate faculty status and would be able to finish working with the graduate students they had when they retired, but they would no longer be allowed to admit any new graduate students. There are also modest changes to procedures for emeriti faculty.

Dean Hope stated that the timeline is that each campus Graduate Council will vote on the proposed changes, then all graduate faculty would vote on the changes, probably before the end of the semester. She noted that two areas that may be of concern to some are that Professors of Practice could have full graduate faculty status, and that they could chair a Ph.D. committee. Woodman reported that in his department the student and faculty member work together to decide who will chair the committee. Dean Hope stated that departments approve the chair of a graduate committee, and they could state that only tenured faculty members could chair a graduate committee if they desired. Another concern for some people may be that POP's do not get graduate faculty status automatically as happens for tenure-line faculty.

Billesbach asked for clarification on the graduate faculty applications process. Dean Hope stated that the department graduate committee votes on the application which is then sent to her and if the candidate meets the criteria, she forwards the application to Vice Provost Jackson and Provost Gold would make the final decision. She noted that there is an appeal process if someone is rejected. Billesbach pointed out that there does not seem to be any hard metrics on the criteria needed for graduate faculty status. Dean Hope stated that if a department thinks that someone is doing scholarship work that is worthy of faculty graduate status, they should make the argument in a letter that is attached to the application.

Herstein asked if there is a process for removing someone's graduate faculty status. AVC Walker stated that it could only be revoked due to extreme disciplinary measures or if the position is eliminated.

Dean Hope stated that the members of the Graduate Council would like to get input from the faculty regarding the proposed changes to the Graduate College Handbook. A list of

the members can be found at <https://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/governance/graduate-council>.

3.0 Announcements

3.1 Search for AVC of Institutional Equity and Compliance

Minter reported that the search committee for the AVC of Institutional Equity and Compliance worked over the spring break to review the applications of the candidates. She stated that the search is on time and a new AVC will take office this summer.

4.0 Approval of March 8, 2022 Minutes

Kolbe asked for approval of the minutes. Woodman moved to approve the minutes with one minor change that he had. Gay seconded the motion. The Executive Committee approved the minutes.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Professional Code of Conduct

Item postponed.

6.0 New Business

6.1 Faculty Senate Elections

Griffin asked Executive Committee members to encourage Senators to submit their names for election to the Executive Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, March 29, 2022, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Platte River Room North. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Kelli Herstein, Secretary.