

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Baesu, Bearnese, Boudreau, Eklund, Kopocis, Lott, Minter, Shrader, Tschetter, Zuckerman

Absent: Dawes, Paul, Vakilzadian

Date: Tuesday, May 16, 2023

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.

1.0 Call (*Kopocis*)

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

2.0 Chancellor Green

2.1 You recently announced the formation of a budget advisory committee. How do you see this committee working, what is its main focus, and will this just be an ad hoc committee?

Chancellor Green noted that in anticipation of additional budget reductions in the fall, he created a temporary budget advisory taskforce composed of all the deans and vice chancellors with VC Zeleny serving as chair. He stated that the responsibility of the taskforce is to consider and create proposals for budget reductions in the next biennium. He pointed out that the taskforce began working in late March and he has asked for a report to be submitted by June 1. He stated that he will consider what the taskforce is proposing but pointed out that the new Chancellor will need to consider how to move forward after he/she arrives in July.

Minter asked if the additional budget reductions would have to go through the Academic Planning Committee again. Chancellor Green stated that any major budget reductions must go to the APC for consideration.

Kopocis pointed out that some of the faculty and staff lines are being moved to alternative funds and questioned whether these employees are being notified of this change. Chancellor Green stated that he does not know how the colleges are handling this and noted that not all the colleges are moving employees to alternative sources of funding. Minter stated that she is particularly concerned for the Professors of Practice being moved to alternative sources of funding because if that money should no longer be available, it would be an easier way to eliminate the PoP position. Chancellor Green pointed out that Professors of Practice do have a term length to their contract. He noted that alternative funds do not necessarily mean grant funds and stated that there are other funds that are non-appropriated funds such as auxiliary funds and Foundation funds.

2.2 At times there seems to be more of a divide between East and City campus. How can we remove some of the obstacles that exist between the two campuses?

Zuckerman reported that she has been doing a considerable amount of work with Extension and stated that there are differences between City and East campus in how some things are handled, such as financial processes. She noted that there seems to be a lack of transparency in IANR and there is a cultural difference between the two campuses.

Chancellor Green stated that there are some perceptions that things aren't quite the same, such as that IANR has a lot more funding than the rest of UNL, but he pointed out that this is not true and there are no differences in how it operates. He did note that there is some federal funding that is specifically earmarked for IANR such as the Hatch Act and Smith-Lever funding. He stated that he did not believe there was any major obstacle between the two campuses.

Zuckerman pointed out that the Executive Committee is also concerned over the recent IANR draft statement regarding service and the removal of the service apportionment from IANR faculty. Chancellor Green stated that he is aware that getting people to serve on the Faculty Senate and the various campus committees is difficult, but he does not believe that it only pertains to IANR.

Minter stated that there are structures in place in IANR that are different that makes collaborating with City campus more challenging. She noted that there are so many different processes in place, such as the IANR faculty having to complete the Activity Insight each year, yet NU system Central Administration wants to make things more efficient? Chancellor Green reported that there is some cultural practice difference between IANR and the rest of UNL because of the nature of the federal dollars that IANR receives. He pointed out that with the federal funds there are considerable federal reporting requirements that must be dealt with to receive those funds. He noted that the Activity Insight was created by IANR 20 years ago to in many ways mirror this reporting.

2.3 Are there things on the horizon that the University is doing that can influence the community more?

Zuckerman asked how the university intends to support community engaged research in order to be in alignment with the Carnegie community engaged university designation. Chancellor Green stated that the question with the application for the Carnegie designation is whether it captures what we are already doing in terms of community engagement or whether it is requiring new and expanded engagement. Zuckerman stated that it does not feel like there is a university-wide directive to support community engaged research. Chancellor Green noted that one thing that makes sense for the future would be to create a leader for community engagement across the university.

2.4 Do we have any hard evidence on why students are not coming to UNL or are we making an assumption that the political climate is the reason students are

not coming to the University? Is there anyway the University can get this kind of concrete evidence?

Chancellor Green reported that we do have some hard evidence on why we have lost enrollment since our peak enrollment in 2018. He noted that over the last four years there has been a significant decline in the number of international students due to a combination of the pandemic or the escalating geopolitical situation with China. He stated that another factor is that a greater number of high school graduates are choosing not to go to a four-year university, but he pointed out that it is too early in the data collection to know whether the lower enrollment is pandemic driven or whether it is due to the assertions around the value of higher education in the current labor market or some other factor. He stated that it is difficult to know whether the decrease in enrollment has been impacted by national and local politics and noted that it would be several years before this could be assessed.

Shrader asked if the decrease in enrollment is occurring locally, regionally, or nationally. Chancellor Green stated that it is occurring nationally. He noted that over the past six months he has had conversations with many of our undergraduate students about political issues asking them if they have spoken to their peers about the political situation and the economy and noted that they do not seem to be worried about the long-term economic picture and seem to accept that this is something that we will work through.

2.5 Is there any reason that the Faculty Senate, as a body of faculty governance, cannot address the Board of Regents to encourage that each of the campuses have the same access to the same students by having similar tuition rates?

Chancellor Green stated that there is no reason that the Faculty Senate Executive Committee couldn't have this conversation with the NU system leadership/Board of Regents, but at the end of the discussion it would more than likely result in pressure for UNL's tuition rate to be decreased. He stated that from a business perspective, it is legitimate for UNL to have a higher tuition rate because our cost of doing business is higher due to the level of our faculty and comprehensive research, R-1, Big 10 stature.

2.6 Is there a way to incentivize faculty members to recruit more students? Is there some incentive that can be provided to faculty members who are actively involved in recruiting students?

Chancellor Green reported that getting faculty members more involved in recruiting efforts comes back to valuing the service during their annual evaluation.

2.7 The loss of staff is a real concern. What are your thoughts on improving the staff salary?

Chancellor Green stated that UNL might need to rethink what some of our staff do and changes might need to be made, including infusing the staff salary pool with some additional resources.

2.8 What are your thoughts on how to address faculty/staff burnout and what are the things we could tackle that would address the burnout issue.

Chancellor Green stated that the question is what is causing the burnout feeling. Is it the cumulative effect of the pandemic, the increased bureaucratic overload on faculty, are apportionments not accurate for the work that is being done? He noted that before the burnout issue can be addressed, the cause(s) need to be determined. Given the disruptions of the immediate past three years caused by the global pandemic, and now ongoing recovery to normal, such assessment is particularly difficult. Hopefully we are now in a new normal for the foreseeable future ahead and this will abate.

2.9 What are your thoughts on the January precession?

Chancellor Green stated that information is still being gathered to determine whether the January precession is beneficial. He pointed out that it was definitely good to have the precession during Covid and it really enhanced students ability to graduate faster, but stated that it is unclear whether the January precession is sustainable and noted that it does have some negative impacts including faculty/staff/student burnout because of the change in the semester schedule.

Zuckerman pointed out that other universities with a precession typically have a shorter semester than we do. Chancellor Green reported that there has been some discussion about a 14-week semester rather than a 15-week semester, but no action has been taken on it.

3.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

4.0 Approval of May 2, 2023 Minutes

Kopocis asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Minter moved and Lott seconded approval of the minutes. The Executive Committee approved the minutes.

5.0 Unfinished Business

5.1 Update on Chancellor's Search

Minter reported that the charge to the Chancellor's Search Advisory Committee was to get a list of finalists to President Carter and this was done last week. She noted that there was consensus among the search committee members as to who should be put forward to the President.

Minter pointed out that there is a state statute that says that the President will select the priority candidate. Kopocis noted that there will then be 30 days for public comment and the candidate will not only meet with groups on campus, but the individual will also be traveling across the state to meet people. She stated that one of the stipulations was that the person had to have all of the requirements for a full professor.

5.2 Update on EM 16 Ad Hoc Committee

Minter reported that the co-chairs of the EM 16 committee, Professors Vuran and Shrader, are working on setting up the committee's first meeting.

5.3 Decision to Change Herbie Husker Mascot

Kopocis reported that when she met with Chancellor Green, she asked whose decision it was to change the Herbie Husker Mascot back to its earlier look. She noted that the Chancellor stated that Vice Chancellor Alberts asked people across the state what their preference would be, and the change was made based on the feedback.

5.0 New Business

No new business was discussed.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, May 30, 2023, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in 203 Alexander Building. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.