

## UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

May 2, 2023

Presidents Deb Minter, Kelli Kopocis, and Steve Kolbe, Presiding

### 1.0 Call to Order

President Minter called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

### 2.0 Announcements

#### 2.1 Introduction of New Senators

President Minter noted that this was her last meeting serving as President and she wanted to say what it a delight it has been to work with all of the Senators from across the campus and conveyed how grateful she was for everyone's service.

#### 2.2 Recognition of New Senators

President Minter wanted to recognize the new Senators: Bill Belcher, School of Integrative Global Studies; Colin Meiklejohn, School of Biological Sciences; Rigoberto Guevara, Modern Languages & Literatures; Adam Thompson, Philosophy; Chelsea Witt, Psychology; Scott Barrett, Psychology; Esma Gel, Supply Chain Management & Analytics; Tomasz Bednarski, Nutrition & Health Sciences; Mackenzie Savaiano, Special Education & Communication Disorders; Michael Burton, Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design; Hashan Otu, Electrical & Computer Engineering; L. J. McElravy, Agricultural Leadership, Education, and Communication; Tom Weissling, Entomology; Sarah Paisley, Extension Engagement Zone 1; Tasha Wulf, Extension Engagement Zone 4; Elizabeth Exstrom, Extension Engagement Zone 6; Jordan Luka, Extension Engagement Zone 8; Linda Reddish, Extension Engagement Zone 9; Lorna Dawes, University Libraries. She noted that Dane Kiambi from the College of Journalism & Mass Communications has been re-elected to the Senate. She stated that she really appreciates everyone's service, for communicating with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and for their participation in shared governance.

### 3.0 Election of Executive Committee Members

#### 3.1 Election of President-Elect

President Minter noted that Professor Eklund, Glenn Korff School of Music, was running for election to become President-Elect. She asked if there were any other nominations from the floor. Hearing none, she asked for a motion to approve by acclamation. Professor Peterson moved to approve by acclamation. Motion seconded by Professor Shrader and then approved by the Faculty Senate.

#### 3.2 Election of Secretary

President Minter stated that Professor Boudreau, University Libraries, was willing to serve again as Secretary of the Faculty Senate. President Minter asked if there were any nominations from the floor for the position. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve by acclamation. Professor Peterson moved to approve by acclamation. Motion seconded by Professor Tschetter, History and then approved by the Faculty Senate.

#### 3.3 Election of Extension Educator to the Executive Committee

President Minter noted that Professor Kim Bearnese, Extension Zone 5, was running for election to a full term on the Executive Committee (she served only a partial term replacing an Executive Committee member that had left the university). President Minter asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve by acclamation. Professor Boudreau moved to approve by acclamation. Motion seconded by Professor Eklund and then approved by the Faculty Senate.

#### 3.4 Election of Executive Committee Members

President Minter reported that the following Senators were running for election to the Executive

Committee: Professor Dawes, University Libraries; Professor Tschetter, History; Professor Shrader, College of Journalism and Mass Communications; and Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical and Computer Engineering. President Minter asked if there were any nominations from the floor. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve by acclamation. Professor Eklund moved to approve by acclamation. Motion seconded by Professor Bednarski, Nutrition and Health Sciences, and then approved by the Faculty Senate.

President Minter then thanked the members of the Faculty Senate Executive Committee for their service and input on numerous issues that were brought to the attention of her and the Executive Committee. She pointed out that serving on the Executive Committee is a terrific way to get a sense of what the dynamics are of the university, and she encouraged Senators to consider serving on this important committee.

President Minter then distributed plaques of appreciation to the Executive Committee members whose terms were ending Professor Kolbe, Past President; Professor Boudreau, Secretary; Kim Bearnes, Extension Educator; Professor Krehbiel, Executive Committee Member, Professor Weissling, Executive Committee Member; Professor Eklund, Executive Committee Member, Professor Latta Konecky, Executive Committee Member.

President-Elect Kopocis then presented President Minter with a plaque and gifts thanking her for her service as Faculty Senate President. President-Elect Kopocis noted that President Minter started her presidency as we were just emerging from the pandemic and stated that she appreciates the sense of calm, the sense of inclusiveness, and President Minter's ability to articulate everyone's comments on the Executive Committee into cohesive statements. Past President Kolbe pointed out that the changes to EM 16 were dropped on the very first day of President Minter's presidency.

#### **4.0 Approval of April 4, 2023 Minutes**

President Kopocis asked if there were any revisions to the minutes. Hearing none she asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, moved for approval. The motion was seconded by Professor Shrader, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, and approved by the Faculty Senate.

#### **5.0 Committee Reports**

##### **5.1 Convocations Committee (Professor Koch)**

Professor Koch stated that he has appreciated the opportunity to serve on the Convocations Committee for the past three years and that it has been wonderful being involved in bringing in such a wide diversity of guest speakers to the campus. He reported that \$11,545 (plus an additional \$2,000 pending for further information about the visit) was distributed for the 2022-2023 academic year.

Professor Vakilzadian asked where the funds come from to support these visits. Professor Koch stated that there are a variety of funds that are used to support the visits, some are from within a college or the Research Council. He noted that the applications list the other funding sources. Coordinator Griffin pointed out that there are two funds, the Special Events Convocations Committee Fund and the Palladian-Avery Lectureship Fund that are used to support the awards from the Convocations Committee.

Vakilzadian asked who submits the applications. Professor Koch stated that most of the applications are generated by a faculty member in a department although the Center for Great Plains Studies also applies for funding.

##### **5.2 Committee on Committees (Professor Mering)**

Professor Mering wanted to thank the members of the Committee on Committees for their work. She noted that this year 73 faculty members volunteered to serve on the various committees which is an increase from 2021-2022 when only 49 people volunteered. President Minter asked if the

challenges for getting volunteers in 2021-2022 was due to the challenges to Covid. Professor Mering stated that it is possible that the pandemic was part of the problem in getting faculty to volunteer to participate in shared governance.

### **5.3 Executive Committee (President Minter)**

President Minter noted that the Executive Committee report for the 2022-2023 academic year was included in the Senate packet. She reported that some of the highlights were the Executive Committee meeting with AVP Schlichting, Professor Baugh from Finance, VC Beck from Human Resources, and UNL Emeriti Association President Crews to discuss the changes in the University's retirement plans. She stated that members of the Executive Committee have been involved with AVC Walker and others in updating the Guidelines for Evaluating Faculty which hopefully will be coming next year to the Senate for review and approval. She noted that revisions to the Guidelines will represent a more consistent set of practices across the campus.

President Minter stated that the Executive Committee continued to push hard to have the administration value the service work of the faculty, especially as the university moves towards more defined roles for the faculty. She noted that some faculty members will have less service work associated with their position which puts pressure on the remaining faculty members to maintain shared governance.

### **6.0 Unfinished Business**

No unfinished business was discussed.

### **7.0 New Business**

#### **7.1 Nomination for Louise Pound-George Howard Distinguished Career Award**

President Kopocis noted that the nomination for the award was being forwarded by the Honorary Degrees Committee for the Faculty Senate to vote. She stated that the ballot would be sent electronically to the Senators tomorrow morning.

#### **7.2 Proposed Revisions to Academic Rights and Responsibilities Procedures**

President Kopocis stated that the Faculty Senate will be considering proposed revisions to the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee procedures this fall and a draft of the proposed revisions were included in the Senate packet for Senators to review over the summer.

Professor Peterson pointed out that some of the proposed revisions are housecleaning changes and others are due to events that have arisen with special hearing committees. He noted that one proposed change is regarding the university providing free legal counsel to administrators but not to faculty members. He stated that this revision may be difficult to get approved. He noted that the proposed changes are being reviewed by some administrators and General Counsel will need to review them, but he is hoping that a formal motion for approval will be presented to the Senate in the fall and then it will need to be approved by the Board of Regents.

#### **7.3 Open Mic**

President Kopocis noted that she and Past President Minter have served on the Chancellor's search committee noting that President Carter has asked for a short list of five people.

Professor Stevenson, English, suggested that having more committee meetings over Zoom might help increase the number of faculty members willing to serve on committees.

Professor Gay, Physics and Astronomy, asked if any progress has been made on Executive Committee members receiving compensation for serving on the Committee, especially compensation for the President or President-Elect. Past President Minter noted that some funds are provided to the President's home department for course buyout to allow the President to focus on the work of the Faculty Senate, but not much progress has been made in being able to get the Executive Committee members compensated for their service, although the Committee continues to

push for this. Professor Gay pointed out that the administration appreciates the service of the faculty members but doesn't want to reward the service work. Past President Minter stated that advice was given by the administrators to work with VC Zeleny when he was Chief of Staff, but since then he became VC of Business and Finance. She pointed out that current Chief of Staff Davis just assumed the position in the beginning of the semester and soon we will have a new Chancellor, so the proposal is on hold for now. She stated that she believes there is some interest in rewarding the Executive Committee members and she hopes that we can take the idea forward in the fall as the campus leadership gets more settled.

## **8.0 EVC Ankerson**

EVC Ankerson thanked the Faculty Senate for the opportunity to provide some updates.

### Enrollment

EVC Ankerson stated that several measures have been implemented this year aimed at Fall 2023 and beyond for enrollment. She noted that the colleges and ASEM have integrated efforts and hosted successful recruitment events such as the Admitted Student Day. She reported that she will be referring to "point in time" comparisons with last year's enrollment figures. For graduate enrollment, we are up around 17% in acceptances right now which equates to 120 students (including 95 international and 25 domestic students) and noted that three countries continue to be encouraging for acceptance offers: China, Ghana, and Korea.

EVC Ankerson stated that this past week there has been an increase in momentum of first-time freshmen, especially in-state students and we are seeing an increase in enrollment deposits from international students from Brazil, Nigeria, and Vietnam and strong numbers from China and India. For in-state students we are up a bit in Omaha, the Tri-cities, and Northeast Nebraska but relatively flat with last year's number in Lincoln students. She reported that transfer numbers are higher than 2021 and 2020, but still trailing last year at this time.

EVC Ankerson stated that we are looking at another record undergraduate commencement in a few weeks and pointed out that these multiple record graduation numbers the last few years is fantastic for our students, and our economy as these students enter the workforce. She noted that we focus not only on recruiting new students, but also focus on the retention and success of our current students.

EVC Ankerson stated that we are working with Ruffalo Noel Levitz consultants on enrollment practices for Fall 2024 and beyond. She noted that their work with us focuses on areas such as undergraduate communications and marketing, scholarships and financial aid, and undergraduate recruitment and stated that the consultants will make their third visit to the campus. She stated that this summer and fall, we will be implementing impact initiatives affecting Fall 2024 enrollment and work will begin next fall/spring on longer-range initiatives.

### Budget Reduction Recommendations

EVC Ankerson reported that the Academic Planning Committee is in the midst of working on the proposed \$10.8 million budget reduction recommendations. She noted that the members of the APC are thoughtful and thorough in their work, asking important questions and practicing due diligence. She stated that the APC is due to provide its recommendations on the proposed cuts to the Chancellor later this month.

### LB77 Implications

EVC Ankerson stated that the Executive Committee had questions about the recently passed LB77 which allows people to carry a concealed weapon without a permit and the impacts this could have for the campus. She noted that Nebraska Statute 28-1204.04 makes it unlawful to possess a firearm on school grounds or at school-sponsored activities in Nebraska. She reported that the campus is developing plans to educate our broader community, including signage – especially in public areas such as the Unions, athletic facilities, and libraries.

### Update on Leadership Searches

EVC Ankerson reported that the search for the next Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs is underway and proceeding well. She stated that an announcement of the candidates will be forthcoming later this week and the candidates will be on campus during the next two weeks. She stated that she is thankful for the integral work of the search committee in bringing in a strong pool of candidates.

EVC Ankerson noted that efforts to identify a search firm for the next Dean of University Libraries is currently underway.

### Recap of Several Areas:

#### Graduate Student Stipends

EVC Ankerson pointed out that the minimum stipend for Graduate Students was increased from \$10,930 to \$14,000 for the 2023-24 and 2024-25 academic year. She noted that units are not required to pay the minimum stipend but doing so provides a number of benefits for the students including a tuition waiver of up to 12 hours for the fall and spring semesters and 79% of health insurance.

#### University Libraries

EVC Ankerson reported that our former Dean of Libraries, Claire Stewart, was instrumental in multiple significant initiatives for our faculty and students. The first was a deal between the Big Ten Academic Alliance (BTAA) and AM (formerly Adam Matthews) which gave us access to millions of pages of essential primary source content including 69 new databases. The second was a negotiation between the BTAA and Wiley which included 100% open access with no fees to BTAA faculty (lead authors) for publishing in all journals under the Wiley umbrella – “in Wiley publications, no fees, no caps, no limits, no hassle; authors keep rights in their own work under a Creative Commons license; immediately open and available to anyone”. The third initiative was negotiating a new contract with Elsevier. EVC Ankerson noted that each of these initiatives alone is significant, but together they make a significant positive impact for our faculty, students, and our university.

#### Promotion and Tenure

EVC Ankerson stated that 93 faculty members, including tenure-track, faculty of practice, research, and extension educators, are receiving promotion and/or tenure this year with an event celebrating them on May 9. She reported that 41 have been promoted to the rank of associate professor, 44 have been promoted to the rank of full professor, and 28 faculty have received tenure.

#### Professorships and Awards

EVC Ankerson noted that 9 UNL professors have been awarded prestigious professorships from the Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor and two of these faculty members received University Professorships which recognizes those who have shown an extraordinary level of scholarly or creative achievement and clear potential for continuing accomplishments. She reported that Professor Eileen Hebets will be the George Holmes Professor in Biological Sciences and Professor Kimberly Tyler will be the George Holmes Professor in Sociology.

#### Student Success

EVC Ankerson stated that because of the investment of time, expertise, and mentoring by the faculty and staff, our students are succeeding. Some examples of students' success is the UNL debate team winning its second national championship in a row with senior Nick Wallenburg winning the individual championship. She reported that 5 UNL graduating seniors and 2 graduate students have been offered Graduate Research Fellowships from the National Science Foundation. She stated that this impressive result reflects the positive impact of collaboration between Undergraduate Research and Fellowships, the McNair Scholars Program, ORED, and the colleges of Engineering, and Arts and Sciences. She stated that 10 of 19 students applying for the UNL

Fulbright US Student Program were named as semi-finalists and 6 were awarded Fulbright Scholars. She reported that UNL has been recognized as a First Scholar Institution by the Center for First-Generation Student Success and noted that UNL earned the award because of its demonstrated commitment to advancing the outcomes of first-generation students through improving both first-generation student success initiatives and institution-wide approaches.

EVC Ankerson pointed out that other achievements that occurred at UNL this year include the \$1 million, 4-year grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. She noted that this is the largest Arts and Humanities research grant in the university's history. She reported that the Reller Prairie Field Station, which supports a range of experiential learning opportunities, had its grand opening; investments in student start-ups through the Husker Venture Fund occurred; the Carolyn Pope Edwards Hall was opened and fully functional in the spring semester; we achieved rankings of online programs in the Master of Engineering Management and in the MBA program; we hosted 80 fellows from across the Big Ten for the BTAA Academic Leadership Program; we celebrated the new Don and Lorena Meier Studio of the College of Journalism and Mass Communications and the Marvin and Virginia Schmid Law Library renovation. She pointed out that these were just some of the accomplishments that occurred this year.

EVC Ankerson wanted to express her appreciation to each of the senators for serving on the Faculty Senate this year and to wish them the very best for the summer months.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:39 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, September 5, 2023, at 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union, Great Plains Room B. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.