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## UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

April 2, 2024

Presidents Kelli Kopocis, Pete Eklund, and Deb Minter, Presiding  
Zoom Meeting

### 1.0 Call to Order

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

### 2.0 Announcements

**2.1 Donation from the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association – Professor Hay**  
Professor John Hay, Biological Systems Engineering, presented a check for \$2,200 to help support the work of the Faculty Senate office. He noted that the Nebraska Cooperative Extension Association (NCEA) is a professional organization whose members are Extension Educators from the University of Nebraska and who come from across the state. He reported that some of the goals of the Association are to provide opportunities for professional development; establish and maintain high standards for extension work; encourage mutual helpfulness, cooperation, and fellowship among extension workers; promote the welfare of all its members; and foster extension work as a professional career.

President Kopocis accepted the check and thanked Professor Hay and the NCEA for their continued support of the Faculty Senate. She noted that the donation helps to support the Faculty Senate President and President-Elect to attend the annual Big Ten Academic Alliance Faculty Senate Leadership conference.

### 2.2 Nominations for Faculty Senate Executive Committee

President Kopocis stated that nominations for Senators to serve on the Executive Committee are still needed. She pointed out that while the Committee meets frequently, it is very interesting and if anyone wants to make a difference at UNL they should contact Karen Griffin, Coordinator of Faculty Governance to let her know of their interest in running for election.

### 2.3 Senators Whose Terms are Ending and those Re-elected

President Kopocis wanted to thank the following Senators whose terms are ending at the end of the month: Eric Malina, Chemistry; Angela Palmer-Wackerly, Communication Studies; Amanda Gailey, English; Liying Wang, Finance; Natalie Koziol, Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth and Families; Elizabeth Lewis, Teaching, Learning and Teacher Education; Susan Ourada, Glenn Korff School of Music; Andrea Cupp, Animal Science; Renee McFee, School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences; Jenny Kreikemeier, Extension Engagement Zone 7, Ron Seymour, Extension Engagement Zone 10.

President Kopocis report that the following Senators have been re-elected: George Avalos, Mathematics; Erica Schauer, Modern Languages & Literature; Tim Gay, Physics & Astronomy; Ralph DeAyala, Educational Psychology; Kevin Pitt, Special Education & Communications Disorders; Eveline Baesu, Mechanical & Materials Engineering; Terri James, Agronomy & Horticulture; Susan VanderPlas, Statistics; Seth Harris, School of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences.

## **2.4 Vice Chancellor Zeleny to Speak on May 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting**

President Kopocis reported that VC Zeleny will be giving a presentation to explain the budget at the May 7<sup>th</sup> Senate meeting.

## **3.0 Chancellor Bennett**

Chancellor Bennett noted that there is a little over a month left of the spring semester and that we will hopefully be in a good spot to start the summer with an eye towards the fall semester.

Chancellor Bennett announced that Provost Gold has been named as the priority candidate for the President of the University of Nebraska but noted that UNL has not been informed yet of when the forums with Dr. Gold will occur on campus, but he understands that there will be a forum for both east and city campus. He hoped everyone would participate fully in the open forums and submit their feedback to the Board of Regents.

Chancellor Bennett noted that the University system announced the hiring of a new Athletics Director Troy Dannen. He stated that he will be meeting with AD Dannen later this week and noted that he has a strong desire to establish a strong relationship between Athletics and the academic venue of the campus.

Chancellor Bennett reported that he is in the process of meeting with the individual colleges. He stated that he met with two of the colleges and they have been productive and enlightening and there is no shortage of people who are willing to share their input and to point out opportunities for ways we can make improvements.

Chancellor Bennett stated that Dr. Berdahl from Academic Analytics apologized for not being able to attend the March 5<sup>th</sup> Faculty Senate meeting, but he has rescheduled a meeting with the Senate Executive Committee for May 14 to discuss reentry into the AAU.

Professor Pierobon, School of Computing, asked if there is any news about the planned renovation of the stadium pointing out that the renovation will require the relocation of the June and Paul Schorr III Center for Computer Science. Chancellor Bennett reported that he hopes to get an update on the stadium renovation when he meets with AD Dannen. He noted that with the transitions occurring in Central Administration it is possible that the effort may stall for the time being. He pointed out that he has been very vocal about the impacts the renovation will have on the campus and that moving the Schorr Center will take extensive time.

Professor Kolbe, Johnny Carson School of Theatre and Film, asked if AD Dannen will be made an Assistant Vice Chancellor like former AD Trev Alberts was or whether this is up in the air. Chancellor Bennett stated that he believes no decision has been made about this. He noted that he spoke with Provost Gold to tell him that UNL, as the flagship campus, needs support and he also talked about the need for a conversation about athletics including discussion of the reporting of the AD and the plans to renovate the stadium. He stated that he would keep the Senate Executive Committee informed whenever he receives updates.

Chancellor Bennett stated that he is very excited to have the opportunity to work with Provost Gold. He noted that UNMC is a premier campus and Dr. Gold's work at UNO gives us opportunities to work together.

Chancellor Bennett stated that he knows that this has been a tough year for the campus and he appreciates everyone for all of the work that they have done. He thanked everyone

for their engagement, their willingness to serve, and for their support of the students.

#### **4.0 Approval of March 5, 2024 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. Motion was then seconded by Professor Tschetter, History and approved by the Faculty Senate.

#### **5.0 Committee Reports**

##### **5.1 Graduate Council (Dean Hope)**

Dean Hope stated that she wanted to share a couple of announcements with the Faculty Seante. She noted that elections to the Graduate Council are currently occurring and while there have been a number of people nominated from CASNR, nominations are still needed from the social sciences: Child, Youth & Family Studies, Anthropology, Community and Regional Planning, Geography, History, Law, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, and Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design. She encouraged the Senators to consider serving and letting their colleagues know of this opportunity.

Dean Hope stated that the Graduate Student Appreciation Week is coming up and the first event will be held on April 5<sup>th</sup> and is an event that is organized by the Graduate Student Assembly. She reported that GSA is bringing together graduate students from across the university system to participate in the event.

Dean Hope pointed out that the Graduate Council serves as an advisory group to the Dean of Graduate Studies. She stated that the Graduate Council is the administrative body for Graduate Studies and approves graduate courses and programs and sometimes deals with academic dismissals. She reported that there are eight elected members from the Graduate Faculty, two graduate students, and she serves as an Ex-officio member of the Council.

Dean Hope stated that during the 2022-23 year the Graduate Council approved, or is in the process of approving, three new graduate certificates, and a graduate certificate that was previously at UNMC has moved to UNL and is being made into a degree program. She noted that the Council approved deletion of the Veterinary Science MS degree, approved a dual MA degree in History and Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education, approved a Ph.D. Computer Engineering degree, and a MA/Ph.D. degree in Communication Studies. In addition, the Council approved accelerated Masters' programs in Computer Engineering, Computer Science, Software Engineering, Child, Youth and Family, Environmental Engineering, and Secondary Education.

Dean Hope stated that other major actions have included some policy changes for the accelerated Masters' programs to make them a little more flexible. She stated that other changes included the removal of the requirement that students with certain scores on the English language proficiency must take the English Language test. She pointed out that the test was not providing much information, was challenging for students, and was not very useful. She noted that there are ongoing discussions about what English language proficiency should look like and stated that anyone with suggestions should contact her.

Dean Hope reported that 95 new graduate courses were approved during the year and some sort of action was taken on 405 more graduate courses. She pointed out that these were mostly modifications of the course which could include things like deletion of a prerequisite.

## **5.2 University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (Professor Jones)**

Professor Jones noted that the report was included in the Senators' packet. She reported that the moratorium on ACE courses ended in August and five existing courses have been approved as ACE courses. She noted that ACE 1, 2, and 3 courses are scheduled for recertification in academic year 2024-25 and the Office of Undergraduate Programs has sent a list of courses that are due for recertification in Fall 2024 to each of the colleges. She encouraged faculty members to de-certify courses that have not been taught in a long time.

## **5.3 Information Technologies and Services Committee (Professor Weitzel)**

Professor Weitzel reported that the Information Technologies and Services Committee's (ITSC) primary responsibility is to review and recommend policies to the Chief Information Officer and the Chancellor. He stated that the Committee meets monthly and in summary, this year there were no major technological changes like in recent years. He noted that Executive Memorandum 16 continues to change the computing landscape on campus and there are several new tools for users, such as the data classification forms for research and non-research data. He pointed out that some research data is legally protected, such as PII, HIPAA, and CUI data, but that still leaves many types of research data legally unclassified which means professors are going to need to classify their own data.

Professor Weitzel reported that it is expected that there will be a re-evaluation of services and software as ITS continues to see budget reductions. He noted that the Adobe site license is one program that may be re-evaluated.

Professor VanderPlas, Statistics, noted that she has been a member of the Faculty Senate's ad hoc committee to look at the impacts of EM 16 on the faculty. She reported that many people try to comply with EM 16 when sharing data, but some granting agencies require that the data be more open, and EM 16 makes this difficult to do. She stated that the current version of EM 16 does not consider this scenario and she believes this is not a rare occurrence. She pointed out that there doesn't seem to be a clear definition of data or definition of data risk classification noting that not all data is a risk. She stated that there needs to be more shared governance of these policies that come from ITS. Professor Weitzel pointed out that there is a research data taskforce that is comprised of faculty members, and he believes they are the right people to ask the kinds of questions that Professor VanderPlas has raised. He stated that he believes it was the taskforce that created the research data classification tool, and the ITSC is monitoring the taskforce's progress and providing input. Professor VanderPlas pointed out that these kinds of impacts on faculty research should have been addressed before EM 16 was put into place. She noted that the data classification forms take a long time to do and to get processed.

Professor Burton, Textiles, Merchandising and Fashion Design, noted that it was mentioned that Adobe Creative Cloud Suite could be a program that would be reconsidered due to its cost. He pointed out that it is a major program that, while it may not be used as widely as the Microsoft suite, is still frequently used and is very important to faculty within the university. He asked if Adobe Creative Cloud were replaced, would there be a grace period that would allow departments to reconfigure their course work. He stated that long term planning is essential if there are going to be changes to major software programs.

Professor Weitzel reported that paying for Adobe Creative Cloud comes from two sources;

students pay a fee, and then the university pays a fee for faculty and staff use. He stated that he believes we are coming up on the negotiations for the Adobe contract but there should be some time to gather input from the faculty, staff, and students. Professor Turkman, College of Architecture, pointed out that Adobe Creative Cloud Suite is used consistently for Architecture courses, but none of the members of the ITS are from the arts and design fields and she thinks there needs to be representatives from these areas on the committee that is looking into changing our contract with Adobe.

#### **5.4 Parking Advisory Committee**

Professor Leiter, College of Law, reported that the Parking Advisory Committee meets each month throughout the academic year with Director Dan Carpenter, Parking & Transit Services. He stated that while the Committee discussed various issues, there were no big surprises, but he did want to point out two items. The first is that the committee calls for two faculty members to serve on it, but it has been difficult at times to recruit the needed number of faculty, so the Committee is in the process of re-evaluating the structure that is needed. He noted that if the Committee decides to change its membership, the proposed revisions will be presented to the Senate, probably during the fall semester.

Professor Leiter stated that the other item concerns city bus passes and whether they need to be given to those people who have purchased a parking pass. He noted that it is ironic that people would automatically get a bus pass when they get a parking permit and the Committee felt that there may be others on campus that are more in need of a bus pass, so the committee approved providing a bus pass to all faculty and staff. He pointed out that the Parking & Transit budget can accommodate this change.

Professor VanderPlas asked if there is a chance that faculty and staff will be able to get the app that the students already have. She noted that having the app would alleviate the need to carry a paper bus pass. Professor Leiter stated that he would need to check with Director Carpenter, and he will take this back to the Parking Advisory Committee for consideration.

### **6.0 Unfinished Business**

#### **6.1 Motion to Create a Faculty Budget Committee**

President Kopocis noted that the motion was presented at the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and it received a second. She asked if there was any discussion on the motion.

Professor McElvray, Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications, stated that he wanted to reiterate support for the motion because he believes that the current system is very reactive and does not allow faculty input into the budget process. He pointed out that the Faculty Budget Committee (FBC) would be a good way to provide communication, so the faculty have a voice at all levels of the university.

President-Elect Eklund asked if the FBC would remove the budget reduction task of the Academic Planning Committee. Professor Zuckerman, Educational Administration, noted that this question was raised in the last Senate Executive Committee meeting. She stated that the APC's task is to focus on cuts to academic programs, but she noted that not all budget reductions pertain to academic programs.

President Kopocis asked if the members of the FBC would be from the Faculty Senate. Professor Zuckerman stated that she thought that having Senators involved would be good because it would provide some overlap. Coordinator Griffin pointed out that having restrictions on who can serve on the committee can cause difficulty in getting it staffed and

she recommended opening the membership to UNL faculty. She asked how many Senators would be willing to serve on the FBC and only two Senators raised their hand stating they would serve on it.

President Kopocis asked what the responsibilities of the FBC would be pointing out that it is important to know this information before it is voted on. Professor Zuckerman stated that an ad hoc committee would need to be created to determine the responsibilities of the FBC. President Kopocis reported that she recently met with Associate to the Chancellor Davis and Professor Vuran, Chair of the APC, to discuss possible revisions to the budget reduction procedures and she asked whether the creation of the FBC would be moving in the same direction as the revisions. Professor Zuckerman stated that the FBC would be complimentary to the procedures and would focus on educating faculty about the budget as well as providing input into all levels of the budget. She suggested members of the FBC could talk to their colleges about their college's budget.

Professor Cressler, School of Biological Sciences, noted that he is a member of the APC, and he does not understand how the FBC would be distinct and how it would be proactive. He pointed out that the amount of effort that would have to go into making the FBC highly functional would be extensive. President Kopocis stated that the Executive Committee also discussed whether the FBC would have any power to be able to get the needed information to accomplish the responsibilities of the Committee. Professor Zuckerman stated that the Committee would be active all the time rather than be activated by budget reductions. She noted that whether it has any power would depend on what the charge is for the committee. Professor Barrett, Psychology, (chat message) asked what systems or programs are currently in place that are already devoted to educating the general body of faculty regarding the ins and outs of the university budget. Professor Gel, Supply Chain Management & Analytics, pointed out that there are people who already do some of the work that is being described with this committee and she is concerned that the FBC would be interfering with the work and processes that are already in place.

Professor McElvray stated that he was trying to think of something that was more important than the university budget in terms of what the Faculty Senate can do. He pointed out that the charge of the APC does not reflect proactive engagement through all levels of the budgeting process. He noted that we do have experts on our campus that engage in budgeting, and he hopes the magnitude of the FBC might yield higher levels of engagement by these people. He stated that he is hearing the arguments that faculty want to be more proactive the budget modeling.

Professor Gay, Physics & Astronomy, stated that he likes the proposal because it is proactive and because it enhances shared governance, but he is not sure how much traction this committee would have. He pointed out that the campus was engaged in a long budgeting process to create the incentive-based budget model, which would have provided more transparency, but the effort has apparently failed. Professor Cupp, Animal Science, (chat message) stated that she agrees with Dr. Gay that she likes the idea but wants more information on what the committee would do and how it would interface with the APC. She asked if we need support from administration for this committee to work.

Professor VanderPlas stated that leadership and common communications across the university could go a long way to making the budget data accessible and would provide transparency and there could be discussions about the budget other than when budget reductions need to be made. She believes that it is important that the Senate be engaged to

increase the overall transparency of the budgeting process and a result could be that the Senate could push the university to be more streamlined and efficient.

Professor Katz, Art, Art History, & Design, stated that she values our colleagues on the APC and the work they do but noted that the APC does not answer to the Faculty Senate. She pointed out that the distinction for this committee would be that it reports to the Senate and the aims of the Senate. Professor Zuckerman stated that the charge would need to include that the FBC would have to interface with the APC.

Professor Shen, Durham School of Architectural Engineering and Construction, suggested that instead of forming a new committee that would overlap with the APC, we should request the Vice Chancellors and Deans that they share the rationale with their proposed budget reductions before they make any decisions. He stated that he is not sure how a small committee can do the work being proposed because of the number of colleges, numerous departments, and even more programs. He stated that having administrators report their data might be a better way to provide transparency and information.

Professor Lewis, Teaching, Learning, and Teacher Education (chat message) regarding the challenge of recruiting committee members, perhaps the committee could be set up whereas half the members are from the Faculty Senate and half are invited to volunteer from the faculty at large.

Professor Gorman, Classics and Religious Studies, stated that he would feel more comfortable voting on the motion if there was more specific information about the committee and its responsibilities.

Professor Gay noted that he served on the APC for three years and the budget reduction meetings were confidential. He stated that the general sense was that the administrators wanted these meetings to be confidential until they could present a finished budget. He stated that the FBC would call for the administration to be more participatory in shared governance.

Professor Peterson stated that he opposes the motion.

Professor Tschetter called the question.

The Faculty Senate voted on the motion. The motion was approved 28 in favor, 26 against, and 3 abstentions.

## **7.0 New Business**

### **7.1 Open Mic**

Director Sollars, Undergraduate Education, asked if the Faculty Senate would like to get an update on the number of undergraduate courses that the University Undergraduate Curriculum Committee considers during the academic year. She pointed out that this information could be provided in the UUC's annual report to the Faculty Senate.

Professor VanderPlas stated that she knows the Executive Committee has had discussions about having service apportionment allocations but IANR by design does not allow service apportionments. She suggested that the Senate needs to revisit the issue. President Kopocis asked if Professor VanderPlas is unable to negotiate any service apportionment. Professor VanderPlas stated that she asked but was told that she couldn't because there was

no way the budget could accommodate the change. President Kopocis pointed out that the Senate Executive Committee discussed this issue numerous times with VC Boehm and Chancellor Green. Professor Cupp reported that IANR is looking at service apportionments and some examples of how to do this have been provided. She stated that efforts are being made to get this worked on.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, May 7, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Regency Suite and via Zoom. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.