

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

**Present:** Baesu, Bearnese, Bouma, Boudreau, Dawes, Eklund, Kopocis, Shrader, Tschetter, Vakilzadian, VanderPlas

**Absent:** Leiter, Lott

**Date:** Tuesday, September 10, 2024

**Location:** Nebraska Union, Big Ten Conference Room

**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 (*Eklund*)

Due to technology problems, Eklund called the meeting to order at 2:41 p.m.

### 2.0 EVC Ankerson

#### 2.1 Update on Fall Enrollment

EVC Ankerson reported that the census freeze was Tuesday night at midnight, and she was very happy to report that the total enrollment growth increased for the first time in 6 years. She noted that while the first-time freshman class did decline slightly from last year, UNL still realized the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest first-time freshman class ever. She stated that it is unknown at this time as to why there was a slight decline in the first-time non-resident freshman class but there are theories that it may be a combination of the problems with FASFA and recruiting efforts by other universities to keep their students in their state.

EVC Ankerson stated that we had good in-state growth, and the student body continues to increase in ethnic diversity with more than 22% of first-time freshman, 21% of all undergraduates, 14% of graduates and 17% of professional students being of ethnic minorities. She pointed out that for the first time in six years, international student enrollment increased and was up 1% for a total of 1,654 international students.

EVC Ankerson reported that this fall the College of Engineering had its largest undergraduate enrollment ever (3,722) and the same was true for the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts (838), both colleges have had significant investments in facilities in recent years. She noted that there were also the largest first-time freshmen enrollments for the College of Business (909), Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts (180), and the College of Journalism and Mass Communications (215). She stated that the enrollment declined in the College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Architecture and stated that for the university, average credit hours enrolled per student increased 1.6%. She noted that we are currently slightly ahead of our enrollment plan projections for both enrollment and retention.

Eklund pointed out that whoever is recruiting in the Omaha area is doing a good job. EVC Ankerson reported that many of our colleges are developing great relationships with

high schools in the state. She noted that when a first-generation student goes to college it not only makes profound changes in the student's life but also for the family as well.

Bouma asked what was being done for international student enrollment pointing out that the Programs in English as a Second Language department went from 36 faculty members down to four. EVC Ankerson reported that prior to the pandemic Chancellor Green approved working with a company which recruited a lot of international students, but these numbers tapered off during the pandemic. She stated that we currently have a contract with a company called Acumen for recruiting international students and we are focusing strongly on students from India, Vietnam, and Malaysia as well as recruiting from other countries to create a diversified approach. She reported that representatives from the company have visited our campus, and they have met with the colleges to learn about the campus, so they have a very authentic way of representing UNL to the families of students. She stated that members of different colleges have also traveled to these countries and will meet prospective students and their families, often at alumni receptions where they can interact with people who attended UNL. She pointed out that we have a Northwest Ag and Forestry 3+1 program with China and next year some of these students will be coming to UNL. She reported that there is also another similar program being created which will eventually bring in more international students and she hopes that, with all of our combined efforts, we will start to see more of an increase in international students next academic year.

Shrader asked what other disciplines international students are taking classes besides agriculture. EVC Ankerson stated that international students are taking business, engineering, global media arts, and a variety of other programs. She stated that one of the attractions of UNL is that we have a safe environment which parents like and if we can keep our costs down, that would be of great help.

Vakilzadian noted that colleagues of his in Engineering at the Omaha campus complain that there does not appear to be any recruiting efforts for their program. EVC Ankerson stated that there is a real partnership between ASEM and the colleges which often involves the associate deans and sometimes department heads, along with the college recruiting staff, and they work together to develop a recruitment plan. She stated that the conversations between the colleges and ASEM are critical for understanding responsibilities.

Vakilzadian stated that he has heard that UNL does not recruit actively in western parts of the state. EVC Ankerson pointed out that we have recruiting efforts in all of the high schools across the state except for approximately five of the schools. She noted that there was communication that resident students were not getting much information from us, while being heavily recruited by out-of-state institutions. The plan this year is for us to send out even more communication to our instate students. She stated that we are always making improvements to recruit more students to UNL.

## **2.2 With more Professors of Practice being hired, are there any efforts to make**

### **improvements for all levels of Professors of Practice?**

EVC Ankerson noted that she has asked for data to understand if more professors of practice are being hired than tenure-line faculty. She asked what kind of improvements the Executive Committee were thinking of and asked what unique needs the professors of practice would have that wouldn't apply to tenure-line faculty members. Tschetter noted that the guidelines for promotion of professors of practice are still a little shaky. She pointed out that there still seems to be the idea that professors of practice are mini faculty members, and some get judged on research which they are not required to do. Kopocis noted that it is difficult to get promoted to the full professor of practice position when they don't have a research portfolio.

Tschetter stated that it is not always clear that professors of practice have academic freedom protection. Another concern is that many professors of practice are participating in service work, yet they have no service apportionment. EVC Ankerson stated that academic freedom applies to all faculty members. Tschetter pointed out that while verbally this has been claimed, the reality can be different. EVC Ankerson stated that she is working with AVC Marks to make continuous improvements for faculty. She stated that if there are additional concerns about the professors of practice, to please contact her.

### **2.3 Update on the status of programs like the google/coursea certificate program and other credentials. Are there any plans to put in place shared governance procedures for approval of these new kinds of programs in order to ensure that future offerings don't conflict with existing academic programs.**

EVC Ankerson noted that our academic courses and programs are required to go through the university process for approval. Courses and programs are credit bearing courses that lead to degrees and programs must be approved by the Board of Regents and the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. She pointed out that approval for minors or zero-credit courses is just needed at the campus level.

EVC Ankerson reported that the Google course decision was made by Interim President Kabourek. She noted that these courses are for industry certification and are generally for people looking for industry certification (proficiency in Tableau, resulting in a certification, for instance) and they are typically different than those seeking a degree. She stated that we hope to get all audiences comfortable with looking to UNL for education, and we will capture information and have a further database to draw from for marketing degree programs.

EVC Ankerson stated that NU Advance is UNL's course delivery platform for online non-credit and professional development, and that faculty can propose these courses. People can also earn industry certifications over a 10-week span through UNL's partnership with Ziplines Education. She reported that faculty can propose these courses. She pointed out that these courses offer a way to broaden our audience, and gain awareness of UNL in the online market, that these are a different audience than our degree-seeking students.

Vakilzadian asked what the campus role is with these courses. EVC Ankerson stated that her office made an arrangement with Ziplines Education to offer a few industry certifications. She noted that we can market our degree programs to those who have inquired about these certifications.

Vakilzadian asked why it can take so long for departments to get approval for a certificate proposal. EVC Ankerson stated that it depends on how well the proposal has been put together and whether there is competition at other universities for the certificate.

VanderPlas asked if departments can get access to the participants in the Google courses so the department could recruit them. EVC Ankerson stated that she is awaiting information about the courses offered through the President's office, and will enquire about it. VanderPlas pointed out that it would be a missed opportunity if we can't integrate with the people taking these courses.

**2.4 At the Faculty Senate meeting President Gold stated that we have seven classifications of faculty members, yet the AAU only considers five classifications. Are there, or will there be, any efforts to decrease our classification of faculty positions?**

EVC Ankerson stated that she is not aware of any plans to change classifications of faculty. She noted that the AAU has particular classifications used to determine the normalized data, but we have faculty types included in the Board of Regents bylaws that we need to adhere to. She stated that we value and need the variety of faculty designations for UNL to accomplish our comprehensive mission.

**2.5 Problems with SAP dropping students in good standing from network access and the problems it is causing for research. Students encounter access interruption when they are not in session.**

EVC Ankerson stated that she is unsure of what the question is referring to and asked Vakilzadian to provide her with more information about the problem.

**3.0 Announcements**

**3.1 Meeting with Faculty Member**

Eklund reported that he and Griffin met with a faculty member this morning that was very concerned with the closure of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. He stated that the Executive Committee needs to learn what the administration's plans are for reimagining diversity and inclusion plans on campus. He noted that he has told VC Davis and Chancellor Bennett that the message that was sent to the students should also be sent to the faculty because it provides slightly more detail about the resources that the Office of Student Life will provide to students.

**4.0 Approval of August 27, 2024 Minutes**

Eklund asked if there were any further revisions to the minutes. Hearing none he asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Tschetter moved and Dawes seconded, approving the minutes. Motion approved by the Executive Committee.

## **5.0 Unfinished Business**

### **5.1 Executive Committee Statement in Response to Chancellor's Message**

The Executive Committee worked on finalizing its statement responding to the Chancellor's recent message about restructuring and the elimination of the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. Boudreau made a motion to accept the revisions to the statement. Motion seconded by Baesu and approved by the Executive Committee. The Committee was in agreement to release the statement on the following day.

### **5.2 Executive Committee Goals for 2024-2025**

The Executive Committee worked on refining its goals for the 2024-2025 academic year. Due to lack of time, work will continue the goals at the next meeting.

## **6.0 New Business**

### **6.1 Faculty Needed for Course and Lab Fees Committee**

Griffin reported that three faculty members were needed to review proposals for course and lab fees. The Committee agreed to contact the Senators to see if anyone was interested in serving.

### **6.2 Well Being Survey**

The agenda item postponed due to lack of time.

### **6.3 Meeting with VC Anderson to Discuss Reimagining Diversity and Inclusion Efforts**

The Executive Committee agreed that it would like to meet with VC Anderson, Office of Student Life, to hear how her office will work to reimagine diversity and inclusion efforts on campus.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:57 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, September 17, 2024, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Platte River Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.