

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Baesu, Bearnese, Boudreau, Eklund, Kopocis, Leiter, Lott, Reimer, Shrader, Tschetter, Vakilzadian, VanderPlas

Absent: Bouma

Date: Tuesday, April 15, 2025

Location: 203 Alexander 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 (*Eklund*)

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

2.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

3.0 Approval of April 8, 2025 Minutes

Approval of the April 8th minutes was delayed for a week to allow the Chancellor to review the minutes.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Faculty Senate Executive Committee Elections

Griffin reported that there were now four Senators interested in running for election to the Executive Committee, however, the Secretary seat still had no nominee. Tschetter stated that she would be willing to serve as Secretary. Griffin noted that this would then open up Tschetter's seat, which would bring the total number of open Executive Committee member seats to four.

4.2 Draft Statements to Legislators

The Executive Committee agreed to delay sending the statement to the Legislators thanking them for not advancing LB551 or LB552 until the legislative session is concluded.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Agenda Items for Interim Vice Chancellor Button

The Executive Committee identified the following agenda items for Interim EVC Button:

- Update on Enrollment Numbers. Has the political chaos and the revocation of student visas impacted the number of international student applications? How are Summer Session enrollment numbers looking?
- How many student visas have been revoked, and do we know why they were revoked?

- Faculty see redundancy across the university system. In an evolving new scenario, perhaps there is one dean that oversees the college of arts and sciences for all three campuses, would there be elimination of some of this redundancy?
- Is funding for graduate students being removed if they do not complete their degree within a set time frame (two years for Masters, 3 years for Ph.D. students). How will this impact those who are graduate teaching assistants?
- What has been decided about the eight-week sessions during the regular semesters?
- Can you provide an update on our federal grants that have been suspended?
- What data is being collected that can help us preserve academic programs?
- What is happening with the push to digitize course syllabus for accessibility?

5.2 Report on Board of Regents Meeting

Eklund reported that there was a lot on the Regents' agenda, but they moved quickly. He noted that there was a fair amount of pushback on the Family Parental Leave Policy but in the end the Board approved it. He pointed out that all six categories of the policy were approved, however, the policy is to provide 8 weeks of leave although the original authors of the policy were seeking 12 weeks.

Eklund pointed out that UNO and UNK have some serious concerns with the revisions, particularly with the President being able to eliminate or merge programs. He stated that revisions include the removal of DEI language and gives too much power to the President. He noted that the uncertainty of the political climate is causing Board members to be more cautious. Leiter stated that he wants to hear what President Gold means by the phrase "in consultation with" which is listed in the proposed revisions.

Eklund reported that after the meeting the Presidents of the Faculty Senates met with President Gold and Interim VP Kratochvil for two hours. President Gold discussed what is happening both nationally and within the state with higher education. There was discussion about the Board meeting and President Gold reported to the group that with inflation rates the system has a budget shortfall of \$155 million. He reported that UNO and UNK faculty are scheduled to receive a 3.9% salary increase, but in order to provide the increase these campuses will need to lay off people. Shrader pointed out that UNL faculty might get only a 2% increase but could still have budget reductions.

5.3 Report on Zoom Meeting of the BTAA Faculty Leadership Joint Statement

Eklund and Shrader attended the Zoom meeting and reported that there was concern among the members of identifying the Big Ten Academic Alliance in the statement because it would seem that the BTAA was endorsing the statement rather than the Faculty Senates of the individual universities. It was pointed out during the meeting that the statement is about the shared values of higher education and five of the universities have approved the statement and 11 will

have their Senates vote on it later this month. One of the universities plans on writing their own value statement and one university's action was unknown.

In regard to endorsing the Rutgers University Mutual Defense Compact statement, 3 universities have approved it. Several would be voting on it later this month, but one university did not endorse the statement.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:54 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 2:30 pm. The meeting will be held in the Nebraska Union, Big Ten Conference Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Signe Boudreau, Secretary.