EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: **Gorman, Gruverman, Kopocis, Leiter, Pierobon, Reimer, Robison, Shrader, Timmerman, Tschetter, VanderPlas**

Absent: **Baesu, Lewis**

Date: **Tuesday, May 5, 2026**

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.**

1.0 Call *(Leiter)*

Leiter called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0 University Libraries (Dean Liz Lorang, Associate Dean Charlene Maxey-Harris, Associate Dean Thomas Padilla)

2.1 Implications of Joint Accreditation and Access to UNL and UNMC Library Resources

Dean Lorang noted that when UNL and UNMC received joint accreditation from HLC some people assumed that the UNL and UNMC libraries would become accessible to each other. She stated that it is the desire of the libraries to have as much access as possible, however, nothing has changed because it boils down to the agreements each library has with publishers and vendors and who can have access to their publications. She stated that renegotiations would be complex, although the libraries are willing to do that, but more than likely the price point would increase. She suggested that we would need to do some research and investigation to see what resources at the Med Center would warrant our purchasing access for all UNL faculty.

Shrader noted that it was about purchasing legal rights, but he pointed out that technically we could get digital access and asked if there were any kinds of digital access questions that could be raised. Dean Lorang stated that the infrastructure challenges are not anything we haven't faced in other scenarios, but it is the legal agreement and licensing issue which is the real question. VanderPlas asked if the legal agreement pays for students to have access. Associate Dean Maxey-Harris pointed out that when the UNL libraries negotiate a contract, it usually has to do with the number of students and faculty/staff, but each contract can be different. She noted that we are in a consortium and if we find something the University of Nebraska system consortium can buy together for less money, then we will do that as the libraries always try to be good stewards with our resources. There are nine electronic resources we contract for the NU system so all faculty and students have access.

VanderPlas asked if the university is prevented from publishing how much it spends on getting access to journals and publications. Dean Lorang pointed out that we have an open records statute in Nebraska. Associate Dean Maxey-Harris noted that the prices with a vendor can vary even from library to library or from state to state, and there are many different factors which add to the complexity of what the libraries is trying to do.

Shrader asked if the libraries endorse that every student and faculty member in the university system should have access to all the libraries across the university. Dean Lorang pointed out that the needs for each campus can be very different and stated that to have that kind of broad access would cost millions of dollars. She reported that the libraries have looked across the campuses to see if we can do a joint approach to get one cost, but it would take additional funding to be able to do that. VanderPlas asked if the combination of the campuses would provide better bargaining power. Dean Lorang stated that you would think negotiating through the Big Ten consortium would provide better bargaining power, but the vendors are really testing that right now and she stated that some vendors want to go back to the old model of each campus paying separately, so the vendors are increasing the cost the consortium must pay.

Gruverman asked if there were subscriptions at UNL and UNMC that could overlap. He asked if the resources could be combined which would allow us to get rid of the overlap and could possibly save money. Reimer pointed out that the system office is interested in creating efficiencies across the campuses, and allowing access to the libraries would be so beneficial to the faculty and students, but yet it is so problematic. Dean Lorang stated that getting access for everyone would require renegotiation of contracts and the cost to allow everyone to have access would be millions. She noted that the libraries' practice is to look at UNL pricing and University of Nebraska Consortium of Libraries pricing to see if there are saving costs. She stated that one possible solution is to shift towards open access models and changing academic incentives around publishing in expensive journals. Gorman noted that he won't use some journals in his teaching as they are too expensive.

Shrader asked if the libraries' budget has been impacted by the budget reductions. Dean Lorang stated that some budget reductions have been made to the libraries' budget and the budget is less today than it was pre-pandemic. She noted that student credit hour fees provided some room with the budget, but the libraries' is very prudent with its costs.

2.2 Open Publishing Costs

Dean Lorang stated that the 2022 OSTP "Nelson Memo" directed federal agencies to ensure public access to the results of federally funded research, including peer-reviewed publications and underlying research data. She stated that what has changed is that, now in 2026, researchers are encountering new and more immediate access requirements and publishers are seeking to take this opportunity to grow their revenue even further.

Dean Lorang stated that previously there was an embargo period, often up to 12 months, before articles needed to be made publicly available through a repository. The new federal guidance and resulting funder requirements no longer allow for an embargo of any length. She pointed out that as a result some publishers are now requiring authors to publish open access to be able to deposit their article in the required repository. She stated that in the best-case scenario, there is no cost to the author, but authors frequently need to use grant funds or other sources to get their work published open access. She reported that author publishing charges have been around for at least two decades, but there is increasing pressure for these costs to be paid because of the federal regulations. VanderPlas stated that she heard that the copyrighted version of a paper is the one that the journals format and publish, whereas an author can release their preprints freely. Dean Lorang stated that it depends on what agreement you sign with the publisher because some agreements state that the author cannot publish their preprints. Gruverman noted that some publishers don't have any problems with authors depositing their published articles in a public repository. Dean Lorang stated that this once again varies by publishers. She pointed out that Associate Dean Maxey-Harris has developed a list of resources that can help faculty members with open access publishing agreements at UNL Libraries. Gorman suggested that the list be circulated to departments so promotion and tenure committees can see the list of open access publishing agreements that we have.

Reimer asked how much it costs for authors to get their papers published. Dean Lorang stated that it can be anywhere from $500 - $12,000. She pointed out that some granting agencies expect these costs to be budgeted into a grant request. Shrader asked if the federal government is enabling or favoring the publishers. Dean Lorang reported that publishers have multiple revenue streams, including textbooks. However, they are anticipating that enrollments will be going down so fewer textbooks will be purchased and open publishing is seen as currently the most lucrative revenue stream.

Leiter pointed out that in law colleges they do not have any of this nonsense because each law school publishes its own journal and getting published is highly competitive. He noted that the reputation of the journal is with the public. He stated that the Harvard Law Journal only costs $150 a year and UNL's College of Law Journal is only $50 a year.

Pierobon stated that NSF has a repository for public access and when an author is done with their grant and write their report, they have to submit everything to the repository which allows for public access. Dean Lorang stated that some professional organizations, like the Association of Computing Machinery, have shifted their model to everything being open access. Associate Dean Maxey-Harris pointed out that when they did this, they doubled the cost because it was now open access for reading and publishing articles.

Dean Lorang stated that the libraries hope to have more conversations with the Executive Committee and perhaps the full Faculty Senate so that they can engage with the faculty more broadly. Leiter suggested having Dean Lorang speak to the full Senate at a meeting during the fall semester. Shrader suggested the libraries leadership meet with the colleges as well. VanderPlas suggested the libraries host workshops around tools for open publishing.

3.0 Announcements

No announcements were made.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Proposed Revisions to APC Membership

The Executive Committee discussed the proposed idea of having a faculty representative from each of the colleges serve on the Academic Planning Committee. While the Committee agreed that having widespread representation would be good, there was concern with how the person would be elected and what would happen if no faculty member from a college was willing to serve. Griffin noted that she sent an email message to 1,617 faculty members this fall seeking faculty members to run for election to the APC, but only 9 faculty members volunteered. Gorman pointed out that any change to the APC membership would need to be approved by the Faculty Senate since it would also be a change to the UNL Bylaws.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Meeting with Interim Chancellor Ankerson

Leiter noted that he, Shrader, Reimer, Tschetter, and Griffin have met twice with Interim Chancellor Ankerson, Interim Vice Chancellor Blomstedt, and Chief of Staff Gonzales to discuss how we can rebuild trust and increase the morale of faculty and staff. Shrader pointed out that Interim Chancellor Ankerson is definitely trying hard to make improvements in these areas and Leiter pointed out that she recognizes the issues that need to be addressed. Tschetter noted that the group highlighted the need for better communication with the faculty and staff. Shrader stated that he thinks that Interim Chancellor Ankerson genuinely is trying to work with the Executive Committee.

5.2 Summer Executive Committee Schedule

Griffin noted that the Executive Committee will begin meeting every other week during the summer and the next meeting will not be until May 19.

5.3 Compensation for Terminated Faculty Members Who Are Still Serving as Advisors for Graduate Students

VanderPlas reported that she has contacted Interim Dean Burkey about compensation for those faculty members who are being terminated, or have left the university, but are still advising students at UNL. She noted that she has a student that she cannot hand off to another faculty member and the student is panicking that she will not be able to complete her degree. She stated that faculty should not have to work for free, however, she was told that no compensation is available.

Leiter pointed out that when a faculty member goes to another institution, they usually continue serving on the UNL student’s advisory board. He asked if she has raised the issue with the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee. Shrader asked what the Executive Committee could do in this situation. VanderPlas suggested having the Executive Committee intervene with the upper administration to point out that advising work is real work that is required by the HLC. Leiter stated that he would send an email to Interim Chancellor Ankerson, EVC Button, and VC Heng-Moss.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:55 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 2:30 pm. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and Ann Tschetter, Secretary.