

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

Present: Anaya, Bender, Guevara, LaCost, Nickerson, Purdum, Reisbig, Rinkevich, Ruchala, Schubert, Woodman

Absent: Wysocki, Zoubek

Date: Wednesday, December 5, 2012

Location: Faculty Senate Office

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 to Order

Schubert called the meeting to order at 3:06 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Chancellor Perlman Unable to Attend January Senate Meeting

Griffin reported that the Chancellor will be unable to speak to the Senate at the January Senate meeting because he will be in India conducting university business.

2.2 ASUN Student Bereavement Policy

Schubert reported that ASUN approved a motion to recommend that a student bereavement policy be included in the Class Attendance policy. He noted that ASUN did make some minor changes to the policy that the Executive Committee had previously reviewed. He reported that he has not received a formal request yet from ASUN to include the policy in the Class Attendance policy. He suggested that the Executive Committee review the policy next week to see if it needs further revisions before it is presented to the Senate.

2.3 Associate VC Goodburn

Griffin announced that Associate VC Goodburn will be meeting with the Executive Committee on December 12 to continue the discussion on retention efforts. Ruchala stated that Associate VC Goodburn might discuss the idea that is being considered to change Love Library. She noted that this is probably a discussion that the Senate needs to be involved in. Anaya pointed out that there is an idea to make Love Library a location where students would gather for numerous resources.

3.0 Approval of 11/14/12 and 11/28/12 Minutes

Ruchala moved for approval of the 11/14/12 minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Reisbig. The motion was approved.

Nickerson moved for approval of the 11/28/12 minutes as revised. The motion was seconded by Rinkevich. The motion was approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 Survey on Visiting Professor Housing Needs

Schubert reported that he and Reisbig are working on the survey but some revisions still need to be made before it can be presented to the Executive Committee. He and Reisbig will meet on December 19 to continue working on the survey.

Nickerson noted that VC Green has mentioned the construction of a small hotel near east campus to accommodate visitors and asked if the survey is flexible enough to identify whether faculty would prefer to have visitors housed on east or city campus. Schubert stated that the survey is to determine what the need is for housing and what accommodations would be suitable. He pointed out that how the administration addresses these needs is up to them. He suggested that a comment could be added to the survey that a facility could possibly be available on both campuses. Reisbig noted that she received a suggestion to have a conference room in the hotel as an amenity.

4.2 Recommended Changes on ACE Assessment and Recertification Process

Guevara reported that he and Reisbig met and decided rather than actually writing proposed language changes to ACE Governing document four that they would request some recommendations be considered. He stated that one of the recommendations is to emphasize that the curriculum belongs to the department and that courses with multiple sections that use an ACE approved syllabus will be evaluated by each department's assigned person(s) as one course and the supporting documentation should reflect a sample of some courses to be determined by the person(s) charged by the corresponding department or section. He reported that a statement by the person(s) who teach or supervise the ACE courses must describe how and to what level the outcome(s) of the course were met.

Reisbig stated that her recommendations deal with optional provisions for Ace courses with multiple sections. These recommendations include: the section coordinator, or departmental designee, shall select each semester a reasonable ratio of the sections to collect and assess samples as indicated (e.g., 1:4 in a course with 40 sections); the section coordinator will be responsible for notifying the section instructors who will participate each semester in the process; the section coordinator will develop a system to rotate the sections from which samples are taken and reviewed each semester to ensure that every section is scheduled to meet the provisions; and the section coordinator will report to the hosting department/unit the processes through which the ratio was determined and the assigned sections were rotated across semesters.

Nickerson noted that instructors were concerned that they had to submit evidence each semester. He stated that it was his impression when talking with Director Mitchell that she was cordial to the idea of receiving the evidence every other year. Guevara pointed out that the current governing document states that each semester the evidence must be provided which is difficult to implement for multiple section courses. He stated that people will stop being upset if the problem with multiple sections is dealt with and a statement is included saying that the department controls the curriculum. Reisbig pointed out that the governing document needs to have some flexibility to it.

Schubert asked who will get these recommendations. Reisbig stated that the request should go to the University Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the recommendations should be included into the governance document. Guevara pointed out that the burden placed on multiple section courses needs to be removed. Ruchala noted that there is a faculty committee which is responsible for overseeing ACE and suggested that the Executive Committee notify them that are two problems that have been identified with ACE that really need to be dealt with. She suggested charging the UCC to review the requests made by Guevara and Reisbig to see if they can be included in the ACE governing document.

Guevara agreed to write an email to Professor DeFusco, chair of the UCC, charging the Committee to review the ACE policy and consider changing it to address the concerns that are being raised.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Report on CIC Faculty Leadership Conference

Guevara reported that the conference was very informative. He noted that MOOC courses were discussed and this proved to be a very controversial issue. He stated that some people vehemently opposed the courses while others received funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to create and deliver these courses. He reported that the Provost and President of Northwestern University both addressed MOOC courses from different perspectives. He noted that most of the other Big Ten schools are being more proactive than we are with these courses and many of them have received funding for the MOOC courses.

Guevara reported that online teaching was also discussed. He stated that four of the Big Ten universities have strict guidelines for online courses and these courses must be pre-approved. Nickerson asked who approved these courses. Guevara stated that the curriculum committee must approve the courses and the online courses must meet the strict standards of the departments. He reported that concern was raised about online courses being watered down versions of a course.

Guevara stated that the ongoing discussion about increases in administrators continued. He noted that there is real concern that universities are increasing the number of administrators more than they are increasing the number of tenure track faculty members. He stated that Professor J. Paul Robinson, Faculty Senate President from Purdue University, is looking into the increase in administrators and their salaries at Purdue. Woodman asked if the administrators' total salaries, including foundation awards, are being reviewed or just the portion that is paid through state sources. Guevara stated that he did not have this information. He noted that Professor Robinson will invoke the freedom of information act if he is not given access to the information needed for him to conduct his research. He pointed out that the other Big Ten schools were much more proactive than us in looking into this issue.

Guevara stated that many of the Faculty Senates at the other Big Ten schools are more actively engaged with their administrators. He noted that the Executive Committee requested that Chancellor Perlman share a copy of his draft on institutional control, but the Chancellor was not willing. Guevara reported that he received a copy of the draft from the other Big Ten universities at the conference and was told by other Senate Presidents that their President shared the draft with them. He stated that at some of the schools it is a regular policy to check with the Faculty Senate to get feedback on pertinent issues or policies before any final decisions are made. He reported that some of the other Big Ten universities have concerns with the removal of some clauses that dealt with abuse of faculty members by the Athletics department in the institutional control document revised by Chancellor Perlman. He noted that some other faculty concerns were also removed and some Big Ten Presidents had an issue with this.

Woodman asked if the Presidents of the Faculty Senates at the other Big Ten universities serve a longer term than UNL. Guevara stated that it varies. Some are the same as us and others might serve for two years. He pointed out that the lack of institutional memory can weaken Senates. He stated that administrators can remain the same for long periods of time but Senate Presidents do not.

Guevara reported that concern was raised about the lack of faculty input in the expansion of the Big Ten. He noted that it was bothersome to the faculty because the expansion affects the faculty, not just athletics. He pointed out that one of the criteria of being in the Big Ten is that the university is a member of the AAU, but UNL's membership in the AAU was recently revoked, although the Senate Presidents in attendance understand that UNL was unfairly judged with respect to research funding.

Guevara stated that it was interesting to learn that faculty members at the other Big Ten schools fight to get on the Faculty Senate while here it is difficult to get people to serve. Griffin wondered whether faculty service is more highly regarded at the other Big Ten schools. Guevara stated that there was discussion about who could be a member of the Faculty Senate. He noted that some of the schools presently allow only tenure track faculty members to belong to the Faculty Senate, but they are considering being more inclusive like we are.

Guevara stated that he asked if the other Big Ten schools have an ACE requirement for students similar to ours. He stated that while some of the schools have to meet some specific outcomes, no one outside of the department oversees these courses and no recertification process is required.

Guevara reported that concerns were raised regarding the TOEFL scores not being as good as they used to be. The question was raised as to who is upholding the criteria to make sure that the university is getting good students, particularly since there is a push by many universities to enroll more international students.

Guevara stated that those in attendance at the conference were in favor of saving money by purchasing supplies in bulk, but there was concern for expanding these practices to

items, such as the use of computer software programs like KACE, which directly affect faculty members. He noted that some people were in favor of the use of a program like KACE while others were mortified by it.

Guevara stated that it was a nicely prepared conference and the President and Provost of Northwestern University where the conference was held were very nice. He stated that attending the conference was a very good experience.

Nickerson stated that he has read articles in the New York Times and in other publications regarding bloated administrations of universities and the excessive salaries of administrators. Guevara stated that Professor Robinson is basically trying to address the growth in administrative positions in the past 15 years. He noted that most of a university's budget goes towards faculty salaries and benefits, but this is because the number of faculty members is larger than the number of administrators. Nickerson reported that when he first became a member of the Senate Chancellor Perlman showed how we are comparatively slim in the number of administrators compared to other universities. Ruchala noted that compared to other Big Ten business schools, our business school has comparatively few administrators. Woodman asked if the other Big Ten business schools have more students. Ruchala stated that they are much larger schools.

Guevara reported that there was discussion about starting a campaign to take away the perception that a liberal arts education is wasteful. He noted that some members of the public feel that it is too costly and takes too long for students to get through a liberal arts education program.

Guevara stated that most of the other Big Ten schools had two or three representatives at the conference. Woodman suggested that next year a larger group from UNL should attend the conference. He stated that we should try to get three faculty members to go. Schubert pointed out that the Senate budget is small but it might be a good time to ask for an increase in the budget so we can send two or three people to the conference. He stated that it might also be a good idea to specifically target some people from the other Big Ten schools to engage them in more detail on particular issues.

Guevara reported that a committee from the conference was elected to look into academics and athletics. He noted that this committee of the Big Ten schools will meet once a year in Florida and there was some indication that the Faculty Senates from each of the campuses might want to send someone to the meeting. He stated that a draft document will be created and shared. Woodman noted that Rutgers and Maryland, who have just very recently been added to the Big Ten are deeply in debt with their athletic programs.

Ruchala asked if Guevara got any sense as to why the Faculty Senates at the other universities are so much more engaged with their faculty. Guevara stated that it seems that they feel very strongly about shared governance. Griffin wondered if service work by faculty members is acknowledged more in faculty evaluations at the other institutions.

Guevara reported that nine of the schools have announced strong engagement with tackling athletics and how the university budget is distributed. He stated that a lot of faculty members are concerned when all of the focus is on athletics. He noted that he asked Chancellor Perlman how the increased revenue in athletics from joining the Big Ten was distributed, but the Chancellor did not know the specifics. He stated that the campus gets 5% of the revenue to assist with academics. Nickerson pointed out that our athletics program is very unusual in that it is totally self-supporting. He stated that we might be the only university in the Big Ten where this happens. Bender stated that Michigan and Ohio State probably have self-supporting athletic programs. Woodman pointed out that we have different issues from many other schools in regards to the athletic budget and we need to be concentrating more on faculty driven issues unless there are specific faculty-athletic issues that need to be dealt with.

Guevara reported that graduation was also discussed and he heard that someone is trying to get a three-year degree. He noted that we offer more summer courses than most of the other Big Ten schools. He stated that some of the universities have very limited summer offerings. Nickerson pointed out that this may be due to the fact that the other universities are heavily research oriented and those faculty members would not want to teach during the summer.

Guevara stated that parking was also discussed. He noted that it is a complicated issue. Some of the universities are located in much larger cities than Lincoln and at some schools, the parking is privatized. At those schools where parking is privatized the parking permit rates are increasing by 5% every year. He stated that faculty did not approve the housing/garage combination at the other schools because of concern of the lack of control over what can happen with the housing units. He stated that Ohio State was able to purchase 100 year bonds by borrowing half a billion dollars to construct buildings. This money has been invested and the intention is to pay the bonds back with the interest earned on the money. Nickerson pointed out that this makes sense because they are able to take advantage of the current low interest rates.

Schubert stated that the Executive Committee should point out to the Chancellor that Guevara had to get a copy of the draft policy on institutional control from the other Big Ten schools even though the Chancellor drafted the most recent version. He stated that the Executive Committee should have access to this document particularly since it has been discussed with members of the Faculty Senate at the other Big Ten schools. Guevara noted that the Presidents of the Big Ten schools were going to be discussing the document on Sunday, but he does not know if everyone is going to endorse the changes that Chancellor Perlman made. Ruchala pointed out that a Chancellor thinks highly of a Faculty Senate when he/she is willing to provide the Faculty Senate with draft documents to obtain feedback. Guevara noted that there was some mention that some Senate Executive Committees can take too long to provide input on documents and some Chancellors do not want to appear as if they are seeking approval from the Senate. Schubert pointed out that the Senate can act quickly if needed and noted that the Senate acted quickly on approving changes to the Research Misconduct Policy this past spring.

Woodman stated that there is an obligation to share and seek input with the faculty. Schubert stated that he will write an email to the Chancellor asking for a copy of the draft institutional control policy and to encourage sharing.

5.2 Upcoming Senate Meeting

Due to the early start of classes shortly after the holiday break, Nickerson moved that the Faculty Senate meeting for January be moved to January 15 rather than January 8. The motion was seconded by Bender. The motion was approved. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 15 in the East Campus Union, Arbor Suite.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:04 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, December 12 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in the Faculty Senate Office. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Woodman, Secretary.