

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Wysocki

Date: Wednesday, October 10, 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 3:03 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 University-Affiliated Research Center (UARC)

Schubert reported that the University has entered into a long-term partnership with the United States Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) to create a University-Affiliated Research Center. He noted that this will be the largest grant in the history of UNL. He stated that research associated with UARC is usually done in a secure environment which might have implications for some faculty research. He stated that some laboratories that have been available to all faculty members within a college or department may now be closed or limited to authorized faculty members only. He reported that faculty members can ask to be involved in the research but not all faculty members will receive approval. Woodman pointed out that some of this is already occurring with Behlen laboratories. Nickerson noted that the Chancellor indicated in an earlier conversation that Behlen, will be used for some of the research. Guevara stated that the research might have relevance in regards to recruiting and admitting some international students. He pointed out that the federal government has strict guidelines on who can be involved with this kind of research.

Schubert stated that ideally the UARC facility should be on Innovation Campus but it will not be ready in time. He noted that currently the equipment that could be used for the research is scattered in different buildings on campus. Woodman asked if VC Paul mentioned other universities that have received this kind of funding. Schubert noted that Penn State received a very large grant.

Nickerson asked if the research will mostly involve the Physics and Astronomy Department and the College of Engineering faculty. Schubert stated that he does not know all of the areas that could be involved. He reported that senior faculty members in some departments were approached about the research about a year ago. He pointed out that faculty members will be able to apply for funding from the research grant.

Woodman asked if there would be nationality restrictions on who can get funding from the grant and whether this would be in conflict with the University's policy on non-discrimination. Schubert noted that the grant can impose restrictions on who can participate in the research.

2.2 Retention Initiatives

Schubert reported that he received an email message from Associate VC Goodburn who read in the Executive Committee minutes about faculty efforts to retain students. Nickerson stated that it would be a good idea to meet with her so she can discuss the retention initiatives that Academic Affairs is creating. He pointed out that it is doubtful that the initiatives are well-known by the faculty. Woodman stated that he asked the Chancellor about MyPlan which is supposed to help with retention but it is his understanding that it was disabled a couple of weeks after being activated.

The Executive Committee agreed that a meeting is needed with Associate VC Goodburn.

2.3 AAUP Meeting

Schubert and Bender reported that they went to the AAUP meeting held on October 6. They both stated that the meeting was under attended. Nickerson and LaCost, who also attended, agreed.

Purdum reported that she received a complaint from a faculty member about the Faculty Senate sending out the message about the meeting. It was noted that the Executive Committee agreed that the notice be sent to the faculty. Purdum stated that she believes there are people who still associate the AAUP with a bargaining unit. Bender reported that UNO is the largest AAUP chapter in Nebraska and they are a bargaining unit. However, he noted that there are other states that have larger AAUP chapters that are not unionized. He stated that he brought this issue up with the guest speaker at the meeting who reported that the AAUP is reorganizing itself into three separate groups: a non-bargaining unit, a bargaining unit, and a foundation.

3.0 Approval of 10/3/12 Minutes

Rinkevich moved for approval of the minutes as revised. Schubert noted that there was discussion about removing classroom computers. He pointed out that if classroom computers are removed, the administration would need to supply instructors with laptops that will provide them with the tools they need to teach a course. Guevara stated that faculty members were supplied with laptops but part-time faculty members and lecturers were not when the idea arose to remove the classroom computers. Schubert pointed out that this was not a solution to the problem. Woodman reported that the idea of removing the classroom computers has been pulled.

Woodman reported that Professor Hartke, chair of the Information Services and Technologies Committee, indicated that the decision to remove classroom computers came from administration. He stated that it is his understanding that the administration has made a policy that faculty members will now be consulted before classroom changes are made.

Guevara noted that as a result of the meeting with CIO Askren, he was contacted by Information Services technicians regarding the Adobe reader problem he and other members in his department encountered.

Guevara seconded approval of the minutes. The minutes were approved.

4.0 Unfinished Business

4.1 ACE Concerns – Agenda Items for Meeting with Professor Nancy Mitchell

Schubert reported that he received email messages from a faculty member saying it was difficult to get the information needed for ACE assessment, however Professor Peterson sent out a follow up message disagreeing.

Nickerson asked if the Senate has the opportunity to make some substantive changes to ACE. Reisbig noted that the Senate should be able to do this since the University Curriculum Committee (UCC), a Faculty Senate committee, has oversight of ACE.

Nickerson noted that he has heard some complaints about ACE but hasn't heard of recommendations about how to correct problems with it. He asked what specific concerns people have with ACE. Guevara stated that he has heard complaints about the recertification procedures. Specifically submitting a course for recertification is time consuming and a complicated process because evidence has to be presented each time the course has been taught. He pointed out that this is difficult if a course has been taught numerous times with different instructors. There is also resentment that there is an oversight committee that does not understand what the course is about.

Reisbig asked if there is concern that the UCC is evaluating the outcomes of the course or the difficulty of collecting all the data that is needed. Guevara questioned how someone can evaluate a course, for example, that is taught in a different language or different subjects, outside of their field. Reisbig asked if the recertification form could include a question asking if the instructor is meeting the criteria for an ACE course. Guevara pointed out that would still be a centralized committee verifying the instructor's work.

Nickerson stated that an issue that should be discussed is whether some of the ACE courses, especially those which meet the Outcomes, have to be classroom only or whether research experience courses would qualify.

Guevara stated that another concern with ACE is that when a course is first approved as an ACE course it states that the course must be taught in one specific way. If someone else takes over the course but teaches it differently this can create problems and limits the instructor. He noted that professors teach courses the way they think best but ACE limits the ability to do this.

Schubert noted that he has not heard any complaints from the Engineering College about ACE and wondered if the concern has to do with the ease of getting the student coursework for verification. He noted that it could be more difficult in some fields.

Purdum asked if the UCC ACE subcommittee wants or needs all of the data that is collected. Woodman stated that the department can choose to sample all or just some of the sections taught under ACE but they need to make sure ACE content is taught in each course.

Guevara noted that different instructions were received in departments about submitting data. Purdum pointed out that from a student's perspective the ACE course should meet the criteria for the specific ACE outcome. She asked how instructors are expected to prove that this is being done in the courses. Guevara stated that providing a sample of three papers per course should be sufficient. Purdum asked if there is a coordinator in departments to make sure that all sections of a course are achieving the requirements. Guevara pointed out that this can be time consuming when you have to collect the data from all the different sections of a course. Reisbig noted that it would appear to be a reasonable change to only require samples from one section if the sections are equivalent.

Woodman asked if anyone has had a course decertified as an ACE course due to not meeting the ACE requirements. Reisbig stated that her department considered not recertifying some courses due to the amount of work required but ultimately decided against this. The Executive Committee agreed to ask Professor Mitchell about decertification of courses.

Nickerson noted that a couple of years ago one of the major themes of the Executive Committee was to protect faculty time. He asked if the Committee wants to see if the ACE procedures can be modified to protect faculty time. Guevara stated that faculty and staff time needs to be considered in the ACE program.

Ruchala pointed out that the data used in ACE recertification can also be used in college accreditation. She noted that accreditation procedures require samples of the work of the faculty and in her college and in each of the departments there is an assessment committee. She stated that the ACE program is useful from the standpoint of the students because they know what the learning objectives are for the course. She pointed out that it is the college's responsibility to think about what ACE courses are being offered and those faculty members teaching these courses should be allowed the time needed to provide the data that is required for ACE. Guevara stated that this would need to be done in each of the departments in Arts & Sciences. He noted that there are faculty members who feel that the ACE recertification is an abuse of faculty time because it might not have a real purpose for the particular class.

Woodman reported that the faculty member questioned whether the ACE program is working and suggested that this be put on the agenda. He pointed out that previous history with the ES/IS program showed that these courses implied special features fade away overtime.

Schubert stated that he is surprised to see how little information is being made on storing the required information. He noted that asking for documentation about what you have done in a course is a fair thing to ask. Guevara pointed out that his department said that

documentation should be kept for three months but Woodman stated that while he felt graded material should be kept for six months in case there are grade appeals, the actual requirement is six weeks.

The Executive Committee suggested that Professor Mitchell be asked about evaluation of the success of ACE, what data is required from each of the courses, and the need for more clear communications about what is going on with the courses.

Guevara stated that simplifying the process would be helpful. Schubert stated that he does not see anything wrong with providing examples of coursework and this could easily be put into a PDF.

4.2 Analysis of Faculty Salary Data from Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (LaCost)

LaCost noted that last week she asked the Executive Committee about what information should be publicly provided in the analysis of faculty salary data used by the Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (FCAC) this year. She reported that the FCAC looked at five topics that were newly created for the data analysis. She stated that there are a lot of n=1's which could identify the person in some departments. Purdum asked if LaCost would be willing to speak to the ADVANCE committee about the salary analysis. LaCost stated that she could meet with them.

Purdum stated that the data analysis shows that the real issue is with gender and the number of female full professors in many of the colleges. Reisbig asked if leaving the n=1's in the data raises more awareness. LaCost stated that she has the summary sheets and it is all aggregated data. She noted that the comparison of administrative salaries was interesting. Schubert asked what the outcome was for the administrative salaries. LaCost reported that there are four administrative positions here at UNL that would need to be increased to bring the salaries up to the mean value. Woodman asked how all of the different administrative positions can be compared. LaCost stated that Institutional Research and Planning has a site where it can get this information.

Ruchala asked if the FCAC creates the charts used in the analysis. LaCost stated that the analysis is generated by Institutional Research and Planning. The FCAC makes recommendations to the Chancellor on how the salary increase should be used after reviewing the data.

Ruchala stated that she thinks transparency is a good thing and that the information should be provided. Reisbig asked what the potential consequences are if the data is identifiable and what the benefits are if the information is transparent. Ruchala pointed out that all of the information is publicly available through the Board of Regents website. Purdum stated that the information can assist in hiring efforts. Schubert pointed out that a ramification of publishing the data might be that it brings to attention an issue that might be picked up by the news media and focused on negatively.

Ruchala noted that this is a public university with a committee that gives an annual report to a meeting that is open to the public. LaCost pointed out that in the past only a summary was provided and this did not identify individual departments. Ruchala noted that given the Chancellor's comments at the recent Faculty Senate meeting about targeted hires and the push for hiring faculty members at all levels, the transparency provided in the salary analysis could be helpful with targeted searches. Reisbig asked if the summary would still be helpful to targeted hires if the n=1's information was removed. Ruchala stated that it would probably not be helpful to a college as large as Arts & Sciences.

Reisbig asked Ruchala to share the rationale why the data would help support targeted searches. Ruchala stated that targeted searches seek an established group of faculty members but would not guarantee that the search would be open for gender or ideology differences. However, with more transparent data there would be greater justification for basing the targeted hire on gender, race, or ideology. Guevara pointed out that to some departments releasing the data would be equivalent to publishing how much faculty members are making. Ruchala stated that the data can show where there are problems which can begin conversations.

Bender moved that all of the data be released, subject to approval by Associate to the Chancellor Nunez unless he identifies specific data that is not otherwise public. The identified data would then be pulled from the analysis. The motion was seconded by Ruchala.

LaCost noted that the data would just be given to Senators but they can share this with their colleagues. Ruchala pointed out that the data can also be put on the Faculty Senate website.

Woodman asked if faculty members with partial FTE's are included in the data. LaCost stated that she did not have this information. Woodman asked if non-tenure track faculty members were left out of the analysis. LaCost stated that it is her understanding that they were included.

Purdum suggested that a memo go out with the data stating that the analysis is for general information purposes only and not for specific targeted complaints. She noted that Senators might look at the data as they move forward with targeted searches with the intent of getting more diversification in their unit. Woodman pointed out that if departments want to make a serious difference with diversity they need more specific data which the analysis could provide.

Reisbig stated that there needs to be very good rationale for why we are releasing the information and we need to counter act the negative responses that could be received. She pointed out that releasing this kind of information could create stress and impact the self-esteem of some faculty members. LaCost stated that the document could bring up salary inequities at department meetings. Purdum pointed out that this would probably not be a discussion that is legal. She noted that the data could create anxiety for some.

Schubert asked if the analysis just compared faculty salaries with our peer institutions, not within UNL departments. LaCost stated that there are several tables that make comparisons within UNL departments. Schubert pointed out that these should be removed. Woodman asked if the intent of the analysis was to look at gender comparison. LaCost replied that this was one intent, but minority and rank are also variables of interest.

Purdum suggested that only the summary data be released. She noted that some differences exist in the data and if colleges want to get the full analysis the data can be made available. She moved to table the motion until next week so the Executive Committee has time to fully review the data and determine the reasons for releasing the information. Zoubek seconded the motion. LaCost stated that she will check with Associate to the Chancellor Nunez about whether all of the information can be released to the Executive Committee. The motion was approved with eight in favor and three against.

5.0 New Business

5.1 Review of Senate Meeting

Guevara stated that he would like to know whether Associate VC Goodburn reports back and justifies her decision to the Academic Standards Committee when she over turns the Committee's decision on a dismissal case. He questioned who has the ultimate say in this situation. Woodman stated that Associate VC Goodburn has the final say. Guevara stated that the role of the Academic Standards Committee then would be one of advising, not deciding. He worried that tuition dollars, especially out-of-state tuition, could become a factor and thus it would not be "an academic standard" that we uphold. Woodman pointed out that it was reported that the cases had inadequate information when the Academic Standards Committee made its decision. Griffin stated that she will send Katie Kerr, Assistant Director of the Exploratory and Pre-professional Advising Center, inquiring whether Associate VC Goodburn justifies her decision to the Academic Standards Committee.

Woodman reported that instructors usually do not receive any notification back from Student Judicial Affairs regarding cases of academic dishonesty. As a result, some professors are unwilling to file a complaint of academic dishonesty.

5.2 Parking Issues for Dan Carpenter, Director of Parking and Transit Services

The following items for discussion were identified for Director Carpenter:

- Is there information on the percentage of increase in parking fees in the coming years? Will the fees decrease once all of the garages are built?
- Has Parking considered the congestion and resentment that is created in adjacent neighborhoods by students and employees parking in these areas and has consideration been given to creating perimeter parking?
- Fees based on salary
- Has Parking considered suggestions that have been submitted on ways to alleviate the parking problem?

- What efforts are currently underway to help parking be affordable in the future?

The meeting was adjourned at 5:01 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 17 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.