

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Purdum, Zoubek

Date: Wednesday, October 17, 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 3:04 p.m.

2.0 Nancy Mitchell, Director of Undergraduate Education

2.1 Concerns with ACE

Schubert stated that constituents of the Senate raised several concerns regarding the ACE program, which were then discussed by the Executive Committee who suggested speaking with Professor Mitchell.

Mitchell noted that in 2008 the faculty from all of the colleges voted on new general education revisions called ACE. The four ACE documents voted on by the faculty included a document on governance and assessment of the ACE program and she suggested that faculty members might want to refer to this document. She stated that efforts to implement the ACE program focused on making the outcomes of the program, and what the students are trying to learn from the course, transparent to students. She pointed out that all ACE courses must state what students will learn from the course. She reported that at new student orientation each student and his/her parents receive a handout outlining what ACE is and listing the ten institutional objectives and assessable learning outcomes of the program.

Mitchell stated that before the creation of ACE, each college basically had its own general education program. As a result, students frequently had difficulty transferring into a different college because they would be told that they did not have the necessary requirements. She pointed out that ACE has alleviated these problems.

Mitchell stated that the ten outcomes of ACE are shared by the eight different colleges and help students to develop skills, knowledge, and responsibilities. She noted that the ACE program helps students learn and achieve progress toward the outcomes, and moved away from a disciplinary approach to general education. Because of this approach the faculty representative from each college on the University Curriculum Committee ACE subcommittee (UCC-ACE) needed to agree on all courses designated as an ACE course.

In the governance documents two processes were established to monitor general education, and both require assessment: course recertification and program assessment.

Mitchell stated that there were concerns with the long-term continuity of ACE and how well it was working and the University Curriculum Committee determined that three main questions needed to be addressed for recertification of courses to ensure that the outcome continues to be met over a period of time: 1) What have assessment data revealed about how the course helps students achieve the designated Student Learning Outcome; 2) How have those assessment data been used to help the course meet the certified Student Learning Outcome(s); and 3) If there have been any changes to the assessment process or course since certification was obtained, please explain them. She reported that the assessment process was not well established in some courses as ACE was implemented. She pointed out that the concept of assessment has not been much of a problem in the professional colleges because they must provide assessment materials in order to be accredited. She reported that in recertifying an ACE course the UCC-ACE reviewing the courses will look at the syllabus to see what was proposed for the course when it was developed.

Mitchell stated that the UCC-ACE will ask if there have been any changes to a course since it was first certified. She pointed out that there is flexibility within the governance of the ACE courses for instructors to initiate changes to a course and instructors should not wait until the course is up for recertification to make the changes. She stated that the recertification process is just asking how the instructor is accomplishing the goals of the course. She noted that UCC-ACE is not telling people how they must teach the course. She stated that the UCC-ACE wants to provide faculty with enough guidance in how to do the assessment for these courses but do not want to prescribe how it must be done. She stated that the UCC-ACE wants to know if some assessment activity occurs in the recertification process.

Nickerson asked if assessment and recertification is the same thing. Mitchell noted that this has caused some confusion. She stated that in the governance document assessment and recertification were separated, but recertification does have an assessment component to it. She stated that assessment of the outcomes occurs at the department/program level and recertification happens at the course level. She stated that if a department has several courses that meet the same ACE outcome, the department could summarize the assessment occurring as part of the recertification in these courses to present it to the University-wide Assessment Committee (UWAC) for its report evaluating assessment of the outcome.

Woodman asked what assessment is, if it is introspection on your ACE course. Mitchell stated that the UCC-ACE will look at whether the course clearly addresses the identified learning outcome(s) and other questions initially asked when the course was first being considered for certification. She stated that the challenge is that everyone is handling the assessment differently. How the English department chooses to assess writing differs from how statistics does assessment, for example.

Woodman stated that a question raised in a previous Executive Committee meeting was how someone from outside a discipline can judge a course. Mitchell pointed out that evaluation of assessment needs to be done at the department level. UWAC and UCC-ACE monitor process; the department and college monitor the content of assessment.

Mitchell stated for recertification, the faculty member just has to answer the three questions that are required for recertification and include a copy of the course syllabus which should include the outcome for the course. The course travels through the CREQ, electronic approval system for courses, and the department reviews this information, then the college reviews it, and finally it goes to the UCC-ACE. She reported that for the most part ACE courses being recertified have been approved quickly, but if the syllabus does not include the outcome a red flag will be raised which could delay the recertification.

Nickerson reported that he spoke with colleagues in his department who are involved with ACE courses and asked for their comment on the recertification process. He stated that the comments he received were that the recertification was a total waste of time and he asked what would happen if recertification was eliminated. Mitchell noted that the less work the faculty have to do the better, but the faculty do not always adhere to the requirements for having an ACE course. She pointed out that faculty members were required to include the outcome in the course syllabus but there are faculty members who have not done this. Assessment becomes an accountability factor, which is particularly important for accreditation.

Mitchell pointed out that faculty members only have to answer a few questions for recertification. Woodman asked if there are ten different sections of a course whether each one would require recertification. He noted that some departments have temporary instructors for these sections and obtaining the necessary information for recertification would be time consuming and difficult. Mitchell stated that she has worked with departments, like English which has numerous sections of courses, and the department needs to indicate how it plans to make sure that each section meets the outcome(s) of the course, particularly if they are not going to require obtaining materials used for assessment from each section. Woodman noted that this responsibility will increase faculty work. Mitchell suggested that some departments appoint a course coordinator who can help make sure every section certified for ACE offers opportunities for students to achieve the outcome. She pointed out that students should be able to attain outcome(s) for a certified ACE course regardless of what section they take. Woodman pointed out that this all boils down to a trust issue of the faculty member teaching the course. Mitchell asked how we can make sure that students are meeting the outcome(s) that are described for a course if there isn't a recertification and assessment process.

Guevera stated that a committee telling an instructor that they are not teaching a course in accordance to the ACE program is getting into thornier issues. He stated that submitting sample work of the students seems symbolic and few people will be able to evaluate the work and some faculty members feel it is unnecessary. He asked if instructors are required to submit samples of work for a course every semester it is taught or just for the

year it was taught. Mitchell asked if uploading a couple pieces of work over a five year period is really considered onerous. She reminded the committee that ACE courses only need to be recertified once every five years. Mitchell reported that she has worked with colleges and departments on this issue and tried to come up with plans on submitting the required documentation. She noted that Economics 211 has numerous sections and they have sampled certain sections and at the end of the semester they attached three assignments for recertification. She pointed out that the recertification process allows faculty members to review the course and how it is being taught. She noted that Communication Studies realized through the recertification process that their sections of a course were not being taught evenly and that more coordination was needed.

Woodman asked how many faculty members are on the UCC-ACE. Mitchell stated that eight people, one from each college are on the committee. She noted that it was the representatives from each of the colleges who put the questions together for the recertification template. Nickerson asked if the UCC-ACE could revise the questions or whether the Faculty Senate could request that they revisit them. Mitchell pointed out that the UCC is a Senate committee and the Senate could make this request.

Mitchell stated that she has concerns that the process was called a Byzantine process. She reported that she met with the Associate Deans from every college to discuss the ACE program and recertification. She stated that what was uncovered in the discussions was not that the ACE program was cumbersome, but that faculty members are being overwhelmed with all of the different software systems they have to use, some of which do not work well or do not interact with other needed software.

Mitchell stated that a suggestion was made to have the assessment and recertification done in the college followed with a report to the UCC-ACE. Another college asked if a rubric could be required for every outcome.

Mitchell reported recertification for outcomes one, two, and three were conducted last year. Woodman asked how many courses up for recertification did not meet the requirements. Mitchell reported that all of the courses submitted were recertified. She noted that one piece of the process that needs to be fixed is feedback to the instructor after recertification.

Guevara pointed out that instructors already assess students on courses by assigning a grade at the end of the course and asked why samples need to be provided for recertification. Mitchell noted that courses may not always cover all aspects of the outcome(s). Guevara stated that no clear answer has been given as to what needs to be submitted as samples of coursework: papers, exams, or other assignments. Mitchell stated that five different workshops were held to answer questions instructors may have on the assessment and recertification process. She noted that there is a website where information can be found (<http://ace.unl.edu/>) and she encourages people to call her office. She noted that due to the wide-spread diversity of courses on campus it is difficult to prescribe exactly what instructors need to submit as examples.

Schubert pointed out that there are many faculty members on campus who do not disagree with the process and think it is just fine. He noted that problems with ACE assessment and recertification are not across the board and are more random. He wondered if problems might come from units that rapidly change instructors. He suggested that the Executive committee suggest improvements that the UCC can look at for the process. Guevara stated that he thinks problems are just beginning to arise as the recertification process has only recently begun. He stated that some faculty members did not know about the recertification process and what would be required for it. Reisbig pointed out that this confusion might be cleared up if faculty members read the ACE governance documents.

Woodman asked about transfer students and whether some of their classes from the community colleges would transfer in under the ACE program. Mitchell stated that courses must fulfill the same requirements as an ACE course. She stated that if the course is a direct equivalent of our certified ACE course they will be allowed to transfer in the credits as having fulfilled the ACE requirement. Woodman asked if this happens even though the community colleges do not have an ACE program. Mitchell reported that she and a team met with every single community college in Nebraska and discussed the ACE program and what UNL was proposing to do before the program was implemented. She pointed out that we cannot require the community colleges to have a similar program, but if a UNL department has approved a community college course as being equivalent to a UNL course, we need to accept the transfer. Woodman noted that it appears with the assessment and recertification process that UNL does not trust its own faculty but does trust the community college professors to teach the course according to the ACE program standards.

Schubert pointed out that it is easy to show the work that has been done in a course. An instructor simply needs to select three assignments, which can be scanned and uploaded on to a computer and sent. Woodman stated that it is still uncertain that this information is not being evaluated. Guevara stated that there is concern that there is a centralized committee that is verifying the work of an instructor. He stated that departments should be told that they must keep documentation of work assigned by each course. Reisbig pointed out that departments need to evaluate whether course content meets the outcome, not the UCC-ACE.

Mitchell reported that the timeline for recertification of courses that meet outcomes four, six, and seven is now occurring. She noted that outcome five will be done later in order to relieve pressure for departments in Arts & Sciences.

Mitchell stated that with the ACE program we want students to get a broad education and we need to determine if this is really happening. She stated that graduation rates have risen and she believes that ACE has simplified things for the students making it easier for them to get through the required courses. She noted that there are some people on the UCC who want to make some changes in the wording of outcome eight.

Mitchell stated that departments looking to decertify a course can simply go into CREQ and remove the course from the ACE program.

Schubert stated that the Executive Committee will come up with suggestions on how to improve the recertification process.

3.0 Dan Carpenter, Director of Parking and Transit Services

Carpenter stated that he and Associate VC Phelps thought that the last parking garage that needed to be built was the one constructed at 19th and Vine streets, but now two years later after meetings with Housing and Campus Recreation it was determined by the administration that another garage would be needed. As a result, a proposal was presented to the Parking Advisory Committee for discussion and recommendation that there be increases of \$1 per month for parking permits each year from 2013-2015. He reported that Parking and Transit Services is also dealing with the issue of how to fund the transit system. As a result, student non-reserved parking permits are being raised \$2 per month to be in alignment with faculty/staff permits. He reported that this year's parking fee increase was the first since 2009.

Carpenter reported that the increase in parking fees, which is \$12 a year increase, will help finance the 18th and R Street garage. He noted that garage parking will increase by \$24 a year. He stated that the Parking Advisory Committee is trying to decide about splitting the transit fee and noted that we will need to make up about \$400,000 in order for us to switch our transit service over to StarTran. He stated that one of the challenges is whether to shift more of this cost to student fees. He pointed out that students are opposed to this as last year 85% of the \$300,000 increase in student fees was used for transit services. He reported that student fees pay for 5% of the revenue generated by Parking & Transit Services.

LaCost asked what the cost is for using StarTran for transit services. Carpenter reported that the cost is \$400,000. He noted that changes in the routes made great improvements in transit services and there has been 9% growth in the use of the services each year since 2009, but UNL's fleet of buses is getting old and the buses that were originally purchased were not well built. He stated that the fleet was evaluated and a recommendation was made that UNL needed to invest in a good fleet. He stated that once the buses are paid for the transit services fee will decrease. Ruchala asked if there will be changes to the hours and routes of the transit service as a result of the contract with StarTran. Carpenter stated that no changes would be made.

Carpenter stated that a factor that could impact the parking fee schedule is the proposed 18th and R Street parking garage because it might have mixed use because of a housing component of the garage that is being considered. He noted that the Board of Regents had reservations about this and they will review it again on October 26. Schubert stated that the Board wants to have guarantees in place that whoever operates the structure adheres to the university's regulations.

Guevara asked if the figures Carpenter provided include revenue obtained from athletic events. Carpenter reported that Parking and Transit Services received \$15 per parking space per game. He believes the total revenue received from Athletics is approximately \$400,000 a year. Woodman asked if Parking would get more money if it handled game parking itself. Carpenter pointed out that the current contract with Athletics works well because he does not have to provide staff for the events and Athletics is charged for miscellaneous staffing needs that are required on game days.

Schubert stated that when he first arrived on campus in 1989 parking only cost \$89 a year. Now it is up to about \$550 a year. He stated that Parking has created a business, building garages and drawing income off of faculty and staff salaries. He noted that most of Parking and Transit services revenue comes from people who can't afford the high parking fees of the garages and draws off the salaries of faculty and staff. He pointed out that those people paying for surface parking will never wind up using the garage that they are helping to build through their fees. He stated that the Parking business has evolved into a self-containing market inside of a protected market and said that this needs to stop.

Carpenter reported that Parking and Transit Services receives no other funding source other than what it generates through parking permit fees and use of the parking facilities during game events. He stated that parking demands are looked at and the administration determines what the best use of the land is.

Schubert asked if we really need another garage. He pointed out that he has never seen a survey coming around to the campus asking if faculty/staff and students feel that another parking garage is needed. The faculty/staff and students only get notified that fees are going up again to pay for another parking garage. He asked where the faculty involvement is in the decision making. Carpenter noted that the Parking Advisory Committee has three faculty representatives on it and suggested that the Executive Committee speak with them to voice their concerns.

Griffin noted that the information Carpenter provided shows that the greatest revenue Parking and Transit Services receives is from surface lots, yet these lots are continually being removed so a building can be put on them. She asked why the best source of funding for Parking and Transit Services is continually being eroded. Carpenter stated that this is a decision that is made by the administration, not by Parking and Transit Services.

Ruchala asked if there is perimeter parking. Carpenter stated that there is perimeter parking around the Devaney Center but it is not well used. He noted that he is considering lowering the cost for perimeter parking to try and encourage more people to park there. Anaya suggested that once the limit of on-campus parking permits has been reached, anyone else seeking a permit should be offered perimeter parking.

Anaya pointed out that there are always complaints about the cost of parking but people will find excuses not to park in perimeter parking because it is not as convenient. Ruchala stated that it is only rationale that people have to pay more for convenience.

Anaya stated that the question with raising the price of parking fees is when to draw the line.

Schubert stated that looking at the provided figures from 2007 shows that the largest population of employees at the university is in the below \$20,000 salary range yet only 8% of these people purchase a parking permit. The greatest number of permits issued was at the \$20-\$40,000 range while employees making over \$40,000 had the lowest amount of permits issued. He pointed out that 50% of the permit holders earn below \$50,000 yet they have to pay the same amount as those making over \$50,000.

Carpenter stated that the problem is that Parking and Transit Services is self-operating and has to generate income. He noted that there is a limit as to how much people over \$100,000 will pay for a parking space. He reported that when the price of reserved permits was increased, there was a 40% drop in requests for these spaces. Woodman asked if reserved parking is a worthwhile investment. Carpenter stated that it is not a good investment but it serves a purpose, particularly for those people willing to pay the money.

Schubert suggested that another way to create the \$2 million needed for Parking & Transit Services is to partition this into the university budget. Carpenter stated that he does not think this is possible. He stated that the challenge with the permit fee increases has to do with the bonds that are needed to build the garages. He noted that in order to build the garages we had to show a revenue stream and the only solid revenue stream was from parking permits. He stated that he does not know where the \$2 million can come from and the administration would have to support it.

Carpenter noted that the consultant's report stated that existing parking spaces should be maximized before another parking garage is built, but there is demand for resident hall parking and the idea is to provide close, safe parking for resident students. He pointed out that other institutions have storage lots where resident students who do not use their cars frequently can park at a reduced cost. He stated that some institutions do not allow freshmen to bring a vehicle to campus but there is concern that this would affect enrollment.

Ruchala noted that many people park in the adjacent neighborhoods because it is free parking. Carpenter stated that he is concerned with the neighborhoods, particularly by east campus. He stated that most of those parking in the neighborhoods are students but increasingly more of them are staff members. He stated that he has obtained this information by conducting occupancy counts around the neighborhoods. Nickerson noted that during fall break there was very little parking around the east campus neighborhoods.

Griffin stated that the idea of allocating users to individual parking facilities will not work well for some faculty and staff who have to travel between the campuses. Carpenter stated that permission can be granted for people who need to go to the other campus for their work. He stated that a study needs to be done to observe the movement

of students, faculty, and staff throughout the day to see how parking needs can best be accommodated for the various groups.

Carpenter stated that 420 spaces will be lost with the closing of the surface lot at 18th and R Street. He noted that the recommendations from the consultant include Parking & Transit Services looking at its infrastructure.

Schubert stated that the Executive Committee will bring up parking concerns with the Chancellor. Carpenter suggested that the Executive Committee discuss concerns with the faculty representatives on the Parking Advisory Committee.

4.0 Announcements

3.1 Meeting with Associate VC Goodburn

Griffin announced that the Executive Committee will be meeting with Associate VC Goodburn on October 31 to discuss retention initiatives.

3.2 President Milliken to Speak to Faculty Senate

Griffin announced that President Milliken will be speaking to the Faculty Senate on November 6. Schubert stated that anyone with items for discussion with the President should be sent to him or the Faculty Senate Office.

3.3 Allan Cerveny, Dean of Enrollment Management and Amber Hunter, Director, Office of Admissions

Griffin announced that Dean Cerveny and Director Hunter will be speaking to the Senate at the December 11 meeting.

5.0 Approval of 10/10/12 Minutes

Bender moved for approval of the minutes as revised. Motion seconded by Rinkevich. The revised minutes were approved.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Faculty Salary Analysis Data

Item postponed due to lack of time.

6.2 Update on Overturned Decisions of the Academic Standards Committee

Griffin reported that Associate VC Goodburn does not report back to the Academic Standards Committee explaining why she overturns the Committee's decision on dismissing a student. She noted that the Executive Committee can ask her about this when it meets with her on October 31.

6.3 Faculty Senate Schedule Change

Griffin stated that she was able to get the Arbor Suite for all of the East Campus Union Senate meetings for the academic year.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Agenda Items for Chancellor Perlman

The following issues were identified for discussion with the Chancellor:

- Parking
- What Sustainability Efforts are Being Made to Encourage People Not to Drive to Campus?
- What is the status of the new parking garage and housing?
- Is Another Parking Garage Really Needed?
- Update on the Privatization of the Health Care Facility
- Status of International Affairs – Who is Replacing Peter Levitov?
- USSTRATCOM grant and implications for research facilities on campus

The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, October 24 at 3:00 pm. The meeting will be held in 201 Administration. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator and David Woodman, Secretary.