

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES

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

Absent: Anaya, Purdum

Date: Wednesday, October 31, 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 3:05 p.m.

2.0 VC Green

2.1 Decline in Graduate Student Enrollment

VC Green reported that the actual figures for IANR indicate that graduate enrollment is flat and has been for the last three years. He noted that there are a total of approximately 600 graduate students in IANR and the Institute has a significant goal for increasing this figure. He noted that in previous times of economic difficulties the trend was for graduate student enrollment to increase, but this is not currently the case. He stated that one cause for this may be due to the tightness of available funds for assistantships.

VC Green pointed out that all universities are competing for the same students from the same places. He noted that for public institutions China is the number one market for graduate students followed by India. He noted that we have more Malaysian students at UNL than many other institutions, but many of the other institutions are seeking these graduate students as well as students from Brazil. He pointed out that what makes recruiting graduate students difficult is that many European universities are offering free tuition. He reported that we are seeing an uptick in recruiting graduate students in some areas, but there is also more competition for these students.

VC Green stated that the proportion of Chinese graduate students is increasing and we are emphasizing increasing this student population and also students from Brazil. He noted that Mark Doyle, the new IANR director of Global Engagement, wants to substantially increase all graduate student enrollment.

2.2 Activity Insight Update

VC Green noted that this is a significant issue for the Institute because of its previous use of eARFA for reporting the work of the faculty. He reported that there has understandably been some frustration for the faculty because they feel they have to re-enter information that was previously entered into eARFA. However, Activity Insight will be more efficient and will work more smoothly to populate information. He noted

that Activity Insight was tested last year by a subset of faculty members. The test went well and the feedback on the new program was positive. He stated that the biggest challenge now is to repopulate the databases to create faculty vitas. He noted that the University Libraries is assisting with this project.

2.3 Rural Futures Institute

VC Green reported that the Rural Futures Institute (RFI) was officially approved by the Board of Regents on Friday. He stated that the first phase will be to reallocate funding from the previously existing Rural Initiative. The University will leverage these resources and the expertise of University faculty to secure additional funding through private gifts, competitive grants, and contracts.

VC Green stated that the RFI will be a system-wide Institute similar to the Daugherty Water for Food Institute. He reported that the budget for the RFI should reach \$3.8 million by 2015. He stated that faculty members from all of the campuses have been engaged in the formative stage of the RFI, particularly UNMC and UNO. He stated that there has been very good engagement from across UNL. He reported that he recently met with President Milliken to discuss staffing for the RFI and he will be searching for an Executive Director directly once a search consultant has been hired.

VC Green reported that RFP's have been put out for grants to faculty across the university system in both research and teaching related to the RFI. He stated that \$750,000 in grants will be available initially and so far 69 applications for research and 42 for teaching have been received. He noted that these applications are currently being screened and in February the awards will be announced.

VC Green stated that UNL Extension is strategically planning what their role will be in the RFI. He stated that the new Dean of Extension, Dean Hibberd, has actively been working on getting Extension involved. He noted that Extension will be a key player in the RFI.

2.4 New Developments for East Campus

VC Green reported that the construction of the new east campus recreation center is underway. He noted that the recreation center has been temporarily relocated to a facility on N. 33rd Street. He stated that Sasaki Consultants have just reported back on three potential models for the campus master plan. He stated that he liked various aspects of what they have presented and all three proposed plans have some possibility. He noted that it is likely that we will have a hybrid of three of the proposed plans. He pointed out that he particularly liked the two different models that changed the traffic and pedestrian flow. He noted that the current East Campus Loop design is not conducive for a great campus environment to link all components of the campus (i.e. IANR, Law, Barkley Center, Vet Med, Dental College, NET, etc.).

VC Green reported that he had a session yesterday with a firm that has been engaged by Housing Services to look at housing students on east campus. He stated that a market

study is being conducted to assess the need for this housing. He pointed out that the housing currently available on east campus is old and out dated.

VC Green stated that there is some discussion occurring with University Libraries regarding the CY Thompson library. He pointed out that this is a very traditional library and is not heavily used. He stated that the question is being asked whether we need a library on east campus. If not, how could the building be used? He pointed out that this is merely a discussion right now that has been initiated by the University Libraries.

VC Green stated that there will be a ground breaking ceremony later this fall on construction that is occurring on Holdrege Street. He stated that a residential commercial building will be developed just west of the new AGR house on the Valentino's block and the lot to the west of it. He pointed out that both the city and the neighborhood have approved the project for a new town center complex. He reported that the University has been approached by the developers to see if the University would like to have some space in the building. He noted that east campus does have some space needs. He stated that a small hotel facility is being considered for the space to house visitors to the campus. He reported that students from the Hospitality, Restaurant, and Tourism Management program could get direct experience by working in the hotel facility. Nickerson asked if the hotel would be open to the whole campus, not just IANR. VC Green stated that it would but it would operate as a business so it would need to be as full as possible. He stated that this is just in the conceptual stage and information is still being gathered.

VC Green reported that efforts are underway to get funding for the new Veterinary Diagnostic Center. He pointed out that the State Legislature required that \$5 million be raised in order to get the start-up funds and with the next Legislative session coming up he is working hard on raising these funds. Nickerson asked what the total cost of this project is expected to be. VC Green stated that initially it was \$70 million but the project has been scaled back and he thinks it can be built for \$40-\$42 million.

Woodman asked if getting a new nursing college on east campus is a dead issue. VC Green pointed out that he does not think it is a dead issue. He noted that the University has been asking for this for a number of years and it was disappointing to have this passed over by the Legislature but it is still a goal for the University.

Schubert stated that the Executive Committee wants to do a short survey to determine the need for short-term housing for visiting scholars. VC Green reported that his office just analyzed how much the Institute is spending on housing costs and found that the Institute is paying for up to 1500 room nights a year in Lincoln to house UNL out-of-state personnel who come to campus, and outside visitors, as well as interviewees and visiting faculty. He stated that it would be useful to know if there is a greater need for more temporary housing space. He stated that this is a good time to ascertain what we could do to provide this kind of housing.

Schubert asked if there are any expectations of what these rooms would cost for an evening. VC Green stated that his preference would be to have it priced slightly under

that market, but this has not been thoroughly discussed. He stated that he hopes that this will be a money saving exercise for the University and an educational opportunity for students.

Nickerson stated that the east campus neighborhood is still experiencing problems with parking because students, faculty, and staff are parking in the neighborhood rather than parking on campus. VC Green stated that this is a root issue and he understands the concerns of the neighborhood. He pointed out that there is also a safety concern with so many people crossing Holdrege Street. Schubert pointed out that more people will stop buying parking permits if the prices continue to rise and as a result more university people will be parking in the nearby neighborhoods. VC Green stated that he was encouraged to see some thinking on this with the proposed campus master plans. He noted that transit routes and biking routes are part of the proposed plans and thought has been given to transitioning people between the campuses hopefully relieving some of the parking needs.

3.0 Associate Vice Chancellor Goodburn

3.1 Retention Initiatives

Associate VC Goodburn reported that one of the Chancellor's goals has been to increase undergraduate retention rates. As a result efforts have been focused on undergraduate education, academic advising, and learning communities. She stated that the Chancellor's goal is to increase six-year graduation rates from 63% to 70% by 2017.

Associate VC Goodburn noted that one of our challenges to increasing retention rates has to do with having a decentralized system which is not uncommon for a university of our size. She pointed out that we have eight colleges and one unit for undeclared majors. She reported that one of the main priorities last year was to mobilize people to think about the goals and how colleges can work collectively together to meet the goals. She reported that as a member of the Enrollment Council she was involved in an initiative to develop a campus blueprint for reaching our goal of increasing enrollment and improving six-year graduation rates.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that two different retreats were held in the fall to discuss what the impacts would be if enrollment is increased up to 30,000 students. Different task forces were developed and in March there was a retreat for chairs to have a more sustained conversation on academic issues and processes.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that she and Professor Mitchell met with leaders of units across campus to ask what could be done better to promote student success. She noted that previously there were no common groups focused on student success, but now a student success council has been created with thirty different faculty members and other representatives from Student Affairs. She stated that an academic policies and scheduling advisory group has also been created and this group identifies issues such as the policy of x-courses not being allowed to run during the summer.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that one priority has been to improve and coordinate academic advising. She noted that this was identified by the consultant Noel Levitz as a key to improving retention rates. Other priorities are expanding high-impact practices such as learning communities, undergraduate research, and capstone courses; improving the transfer students' experiences; targeting populations for programs and services; creating and disseminating academic messaging; and resourcing student success projects and structures.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that the first priority was on improving academic advising. She reported that it became apparent that we needed to have an electronic advising system since many colleges have different systems that could not communicate with each other and advisors did not have the capability of pulling up a student's record if the student was not enrolled in their college. She pointed out that in general, there has been no campus-wide coordination of advising across the campus. She reported that after much discussion UNL decided to purchase the Starfish program which allows all advisors on campus who have access to the system to view undergraduate records, regardless of their home college. She pointed out that users of the Starfish system could provide notes on a student's record allowing other advisors to see what has transpired with the student. She stated that the Starfish system will allow advisors to see if a student might need tutoring or help in some areas. Guevara noted that before Starfish the files were in paper format and most of the advising was done orally so there was little record of what the student was advised. Associate VC Goodburn stated that most advisors now bring up the student's record electronically and then send an email message to the student. She reported that advising notes were entered for 41% of undergraduate students in the first semester of use.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that another feature in MyPlan is that students can find services through an on-line catalog. These services include writing centers, chemistry centers, and other centers to assist students, but it is not limited to centers. She stated that faculty members can use it to set up office hours.

Guevara asked if there is a way to have tutoring centers that help students in particular disciplines included in the system. Associate VC Goodburn stated that this is possible and anyone interested in adding a service should contact Vanessa Roof, Institutional Retention and Assessment Research Analyst. She noted that Roof will be able to reference a department's resource center. Reisbig asked if the UNL Counseling Center is included in the list of available resources. Associate VC Goodburn stated that any center can be listed, but online scheduling for centers like the Counseling Center is not available because they use a different system for confidentiality.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that a key priority is for us to provide an academic hub for all students. She stated that a student seeking help, whether it is for improving study skills or time management, would be able to go to the academic hub. She noted that student athletes have an academic hub available to them. Woodman pointed out that historically we used to have a center but it was eliminated with budget cuts. He hopes that this is something that will be restored because there are some students who need help

in learning how to develop good studying skills. Associate VC Goodburn agreed and stated that the issue is how to study effectively.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that MyPlan initiatives for last year included the piloting of an early warning system with the William H. Thompson scholars. She pointed out that the system also identified students who did not register for the following semester. She stated that a flag was sent to the students reminding them to register. As a result 12% registered and 11 students met with an advisor within 24 hours to discuss registering. She reported that the pilot test will be conducted again to see how well the automatic flagging system works.

Woodman stated that he had William H. Thompson scholar students come in with a paper slip and wondered if MyPlan was giving up on using the flagging system. Associate VC Goodburn noted that there is some confusion with the use of flags. The WHT community piloted the flags with midterm grade reporting but decided that it was too confusing to students because a flag is usually an indicator that something negative is occurring. She stated that a professor can use a feature called a kudo to indicate that the student is doing excellent work. She reported that Starfish has been asked to create a function for grading through the system that could be used to report mid-term grades.

Guevara stated that he received an email message for a student about MyPlan. He noted that there is a space for him to add comments but such comments show up as a flag regardless of whether the student is doing well and the comments do not seem to make it into the record of the student. Associate VC Goodburn stated that all comments appear as a flag which is misleading because all flags are not negative. She stated that there is a system called Kudos that allows instructors to notify students that they are doing well in a class and this could be considered for use.

Woodman asked if paper notification of mid-term grades will be temporary. Associate VC Goodburn stated that it will. She noted that Athletics uses a system called Gradeworks which is geared towards athletes because it complies with all of the national requirements for student athletes.

Woodman asked if MyPlan has an option that will allow the sorting of grades so students having difficulties are identified. He noted that this can be done in Blackboard. Associate VC Goodburn pointed out that Starfish is a program for advisors and only people who are directly linked as an advisor can see a student's file. She noted that information on each student is pooled from PeopleSoft, not Blackboard. She reported that linking Blackboard and Starfish is a much more complex process that we are not ready to do yet.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that we will be issuing flags for students that are on probation. She noted that we have a clear number of students that are probably going to be on probation and we will let advisors know who these students are and will refer the students to the resource index.

Woodman asked if MyPlan can be set up so instructors can look at their class. Associate VC Goodburn stated that it can be used to record attendance but not for tracking grades. Woodman asked if there is a way for instructors to send flags to let students know they are in jeopardy in a class. He pointed out that this could also be sent to the advisor making him/her know that the student is having difficulties. Associate VC Goodburn reported that the administration is considering whether flags in general should be available for instructors to use however they want, but there are a number of questions that need to be addressed first before this will be available. She noted that other universities that have used the flags have improved retention rates but there is concern that advisors could become inundated with flags.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that another goal is to expand the learning communities. She stated that a new Housing Learning Communities Coordinator has been hired and ten more learning communities will be added bringing the total number to twenty five. She stated that the learning community coordinators are working with different departments to get learning communities established.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that a priority is to expand undergraduate research opportunities for students. She stated that UCARE has been moved to Academic Affairs and the Office of Graduate Studies and a new faculty advisory board has been established to help promote undergraduate research and a student ambassador program has been developed. She stated that a summer program is being developed that will be connected to the Summer Undergraduate Research Program and the website for UCARE is being redesigned to focus more broadly on undergraduate research.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that Academic Affairs is working hard to streamline the transfer process. She noted that a temporary person was hired in February to work on establishing course equivalencies which allow a student to know immediately whether a course will transfer. She reported that use of the TES (Transfer Equivalency System) is now in place and Academic Affairs is exploring the possibility of creating a learning community for transfer students. She stated that two focus groups with transfer students are planned for the near future. She stated that approximately 2,300 course equivalencies have been created since February and 80 international courses have been evaluated.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that Pat McBride has been named coordinator for student engagement and Academic Affairs is conducting a pilot project with Scarlet Guard to target students such as first generation students and undeclared majors for participation. She stated that about 300 out of state students attended a welcome reception at the Big Red Welcome and several units are focused on creating International Student programming. She stated that the goal is to intentionally create connections between the students and UNL.

Associate VC Goodburn reported that academic messages are being coordinated. She noted that the current student web page has been revised and there are new features. She stated that a parents' newsletter has been developed that provides messages about what their student might need. She stated that ten top academic messages have been developed

with one of those messages being that students can graduate in four years if they take 15 credit hours a semester in their academic program.

Schubert pointed out that there is a striking contrast in what Associate VC Goodburn is reporting and the figures revealed in the PowerPoint presentation. He noted that the figures have remained fairly the same over the years and asked how we are going to increase enrollment to 30,000 students in the next few years. He pointed out that retaining students is not going to increase the overall number of students. Associate VC Goodburn stated that her focus is on retention, not on recruitment of students, but one issue in terms of enrollment is the recruitment of transfer students. She noted that UNL has been very negative with recruiting transfer students compared to other institutions and we need to be meeting these students' needs more proactively. She stated that these students want to know up front what investment they will need to make to transfer here.

Schubert stated that a similar topic was discussed at the Board of Regents meeting. He noted that all of the campuses are looking for new students but the issue of quality has not been addressed. Associate VC Goodburn pointed out that providing high impact practices such as undergraduate research and learning community opportunities is one way to address quality. She noted that these high-impact practices are focused on engaging students with faculty and have been demonstrated nationally to support retention. Schubert stated that he gets quality students to participate in undergraduate research by paying them in the summer, but he does this through his own grant money. He noted that the administration does nothing financially to support undergraduate research efforts. He pointed out that any money from UCARE comes through the Pepsi Endowment Funds, not through administration. Associate VC Goodburn noted that Graduate Studies has already done some great mentoring to support undergraduate research and a faculty advisory board has helped to develop some best mentoring practices. She reported that there has been some discussion on giving an award out to faculty members for mentoring undergraduate students and this is a topic scheduled for further discussion.

Nickerson asked if there is a database of undergraduate students who have participated in research and have been published. Associate VC Goodburn stated that there is a list of those students who have participated in UCARE but does not think there is information on undergraduate research that may have been published. Reisbig suggested that including mentoring of students for UCARE and other research be included on the Activity Insight reporting program.

LaCost noted that a lot of initiatives are in place, but these need to be monitored before any success can be claimed. Associate VC Goodburn agreed and stated that most of the initiatives have only been in place for a year or less. She stated that efforts are focused on getting students through in four years although the benchmark is for six year graduation. She noted that the ACE program has eliminated some barriers in getting students through their programs in a timely fashion. Ruchala pointed out that parents have been more forceful with their child in completing within four years because of the cost of going to college. She noted that not all universities are focused on telling students

what courses they can transfer. She stated that for many students knowing the financial aid package they can get and knowing what courses are available for their major is more important. Associate VC Goodburn reported that Dean Cerveny has been looking at ways to repackage some of our scholarships.

Schubert suggested that Associate VC Goodburn sit down with VC Paul to see if some of the overhead research dollars can be tapped into for funds to help with undergraduate research. He noted that once students work in a laboratory and see some real work it makes a major change in their attitude towards their classes and is a great retention tool. Reisbig stated that we need to think systemically to understand what is being done. She pointed out that the average student needs to be helped too and might have different experiences. She pointed out that helping these students to achieve allows faculty members to do more work. Associate VC Goodburn noted that the primary factor in retaining and attracting students is close interaction with faculty members. She stated that we need to create an environment where students matter and can participate in research.

Ruchala stated that neither the Enrollment Management Blueprint nor the presentation that was just shown pairs students up with the activity that is being targeted. She stated that students need to be segmented based on their needs. She pointed out that not all programs fit one size and some of the ones presented fit particular people. Associate VC Goodburn stated that she believes the presentation has this idea in mind, but first we need to determine how we define the students into segments. Ruchala stated that it would be difficult to sort out the resources that are needed for particular students.

Associate VC Goodburn stated that there has been discussion about creating an academic hub for students in the Libraries. She noted that this would not be a hub in terms of students who need remediation but a hub that is vital to all students. Ruchala stated that she would like to see a program recruiting students who have the desire to go to college but are struggling.

Schubert noted that due to the lateness of time the discussion would need to stop but he would like Associate VC Goodburn to meet again with the Executive Committee to discuss the issues further. He stated that he would also like her to speak to the Senate. Griffin stated that she will contact Associate VC Goodburn about available dates.

4.0 Announcements

4.1 Board of Regents Meeting

Schubert reported that there was a good discussion about USSTRATCOMM and who would handle the procedures for getting clearance. He noted that the National Strategic Research Institute (NSRI) at NU, which was formed in response to the creation of UARC, provides clearance. He noted that not everyone working on USSSTRATCOMM grants will require a high level of clearance. He reported that NU becomes the thirteenth UARC in the nation and joins the likes of MIT. He stated that Penn State's initial funding from these government contracts was low but they now receive a substantial amount of research funding. He pointed out that UARC is a NU wide institution and

covers research being conducted by UNO, UNMC, and UNL. He reported that biotechnology is the primary focus of the contracts at this time.

Schubert reported that VC Paul recently gave a presentation on campus on how these government contracts will function. He stated that retired Lt. General Hinson, the director of NSRI, emphasized that UARC is a door to the government contracts that can be given to NU. He pointed out that contract conditions will be negotiated by the NSRI. He noted that some people think that we are definitely going to receive \$84 million in government contracts but this is incorrect. There could be \$84 million total in contracts available but faculty members will still need to apply for the various contracts that make up the \$84 million. Wysocki pointed out that VC Paul will be a primary contact point for these contracts at UNL. Schubert noted that Associate VC Kurt Preston was recently hired to increase defense-related research at UNL.

Schubert stated that retired Lt. General Hinson mentioned that within the structure of the NSRI there is a core competency coordination which includes a team of faculty members. These faculty members are from all of the campuses and there is a scientific advisory board that involves faculty members.

Schubert reported that an enrollment update was provided to the Board and it is his understanding that the decline in enrollment is primarily due to a decline in graduate students. He stated that what is interesting is that neither entering into the Big Ten or the institutional initiative to increase students by 5,000 has caused any substantial change in overall enrollment numbers. He pointed out that the top 25% of Nebraska High School students continue to go to other schools and this figure has remained constant over the past six years. He stated that the current demographic decline in high school graduates is compensated mostly by international transfer students and there is little change in the number of students that are from out-of-state.

Schubert reported that there has been a 3.5% increase in on-line only students. Guevara asked if these are degree seeking students. Schubert reported that this information was not provided.

Schubert noted that three Regents will be leaving the Board this year resulting in a substantial change to the members of the Board.

Schubert reported that the parking garage which will include housing on 18th and R Streets was approved and it was mentioned that several of the units would be reserved for faculty housing.

Schubert stated that the Board also heard a presentation on a proposed arena for UNO for their hockey team. However, this could be jeopardized if there is an 8% cut for all government spending.

Schubert reported that Mike Miller, Director of Facilities Planning and Construction, gave a report on energy efficiency at NU. He noted that representatives from each

campus discussed energy objectives and UNL plans to have a 10% reduction in energy use by 2015. He stated that UNK reported on solid state light fixtures in classrooms and UNO showed prototype lighting for parking garages. He noted that this kind of lighting produces a real optical effect and people report feeling safer because the light is more distributed. Nickerson asked if the solid state lighting fixtures would still allow for having windows. Schubert reported that he did not know this information and pointed out that it would be interesting to have the UNL representative come and speak to either the Executive Committee or the Faculty Senate.

5.0 Approval of 10/24/12 Minutes

Reisbig moved for approval of the revised minutes. The motion was seconded by Wysocki. The minutes were approved.

6.0 Unfinished Business

7.0 New Business

7.1 AAUP Message to All Faculty Members

Schubert noted that there has been another request to send out a message to the faculty about an upcoming meeting of the AAUP. Nickerson stated that he thinks the Senate should help the local AAUP chapter get back on its feet. He pointed out that they are separate entities and the AAUP is not trying to unionize the faculty. He stated that the focus of the AAUP is academic freedom, academic values and preserving tenure and says the Senate should help publicize the next meeting. Wysocki suggested that this might be something that the entire Senate needs to decide. Ruchala stated that the issue warrants further discussion. She moved that the current announcement be sent out but hold off sending any further announcements until discussion can be had on the topic. The motion was seconded by Nickerson. The motion was approved.

7.2 Questions for President Milliken

The Executive Committee suggested the following questions for President Milliken when he meets with the Faculty Senate on November 6:

- Discuss quality and how teaching and research can be improved to attract quality students and for us to become a leading research institute in the Great Plains.
- What is his perspective on the STRATCOMM and UARC connection?
- How do we increase student enrollment when we are competing amongst our sister campuses for students.
- Inside knowledge of what will happen with Pell grants if elections are not favorable.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 p.m. The next meeting of the Executive Committee will be on Wednesday, November 7 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.

