

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
East Campus Union,
September 9, 2008
Presidents Kathy Prochaska Cue, John Fech, and Steve Bradford, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Prochaska-Cue called the meeting to order at 2:37 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Earl Scudder, Candidate for Board of Regents

President Prochaska-Cue stated that the purpose for inviting Mr. Scudder is to get to know the candidates for the Board of Regents. She stated that Mr. Tim Claire will be speaking to the Senate at the October meeting.

Mr. Scudder thanked the Senate for allowing him to speak to the group. He stated that he thinks it is crucial for a Regent to understand the value of education and he hopes to continue working towards improving UNL. His goal is to promote innovation on the campuses and to keep education affordable.

Mr. Scudder reported that he was a co-founder of the UNL Parents' Association and was President of the organization for three years. He stated that during this time the organization became a bit of a lobbying organization and he testified in support of raising faculty salaries.

Mr. Scudder stated that he supports the Board of Regents' policy of getting faculty salaries to the mid-point of their peers but he would like to see faculty salaries higher than the mid-point. He noted that faculty salaries are important in retaining and recruiting good faculty members. He pointed out that the Board of Regents has total independence from the Governor and he is ready to stand up and take issue with the Governor in order to support the university.

Mr. Scudder noted that he was a member of UNL's 2020 Task Force and contributed to its Report. At the time the report was written UNL didn't even rank in the top 100 public universities and UNL would not have been able to join the AAU. By following the blueprint of the 2020 Task Force, UNL has been able to make great strides. It is now ranked 40th among public universities, there are record numbers of honor students, and a record amount of research dollars has been obtained.

Mr. Scudder pointed out that a research university has to innovate and needs to make outstanding discoveries. He stated that he is a strong supporter of scientific freedom and supports stem cell research. He noted that this will become more important because each of the Presidential candidates has stated that they will remove the ban on stem cell research. He stated that scientific freedom allows faculty members to do their work. He noted that the state of Iowa instituted a ban on stem cell research and lost scientists to neighboring states and had difficulty recruiting and retaining faculty members. Iowa finally repealed the ban. He pointed out that scientific and academic freedom is essential to a university.

Mr. Scudder stated that he recently spoke with Senator Nelson who indicated that the Innovation Campus is likely to be approved once the feasibility study is completed. He stated that he believes the Innovation Campus is one of the best things the university can do.

Mr. Scudder stated that keeping education affordable for students is essential, not just by holding tuition back but also by increasing scholarships as well. He stated that it is important to teach students how to budget their money properly and we need to be careful controlling costs. He pointed out that when state funding for the university drops, tuition increases. He stated that he would like to tell the Governor that we are taxing the students and their parents if we don't support the university but we need to deliver the message that it isn't about raising taxes for education, it is about allocating funds properly. He pointed out that educating people helps them to have a higher earning capacity which in turn stimulates the economy, and that higher education leads to economic development in the state.

Mr. Scudder invited the Senate to support his candidacy and hopes they will vote for him.

2.2 Information Technology Survey

President Prochaska-Cue reported that the Senate Executive Committee has been asked by the Chancellor to take part in a survey on Information Technology. She noted that the Executive Committee will be discussing the survey and it welcomes any comments faculty members may have. She noted that the questions on the survey have been sent to the Senate in an email message.

2.3 Faculty Dialogue on Student Engagement (Assistant Vice Chancellor Alvarez)

Assistant VC Alvarez stated that there will be a dialogue on student engagement on September 18th at 3:00 p.m. in the City Campus Union. He pointed out that in 2005 the retention figure was 84.4% but this dropped to 82.9%. As a result there has been a loss of nearly \$1 million in tuition over four years. He stated that he is hoping faculty will participate in the event. He noted that there is a better chance of retaining students if they are engaged in the classroom and our goal is to retain more students. He stated that information from the National Student Survey on Engagement will be presented at the dialogue.

Professor Starace, Physics and Astronomy, asked if there is a summary about why students left the university. Assistant VC Alvarez stated that this information will be shared during the dialogue. Professor Starace noted that it is important to find out why students are leaving in order for this problem to be corrected.

Professor LaCost, Educational Administration, stated that anyone interested in attending the dialogue should register with the Faculty Senate Coordinator, Karen Griffin.

2.4 Rules of Order of the Faculty Senate

President Prochaska-Cue noted that a copy of the Senate's Rules of Order were included in the Senate packet. She pointed out that on page three of the Rules there are instructions regarding motions. She stated that when she first began serving on the Senate it was standard procedure to present the motion in writing as per the Senate Rules. She asked the Senate to please adhere to these Rules.

President Prochaska-Cue stated that as a courtesy when a Senator stands up to speak that they should say their name and what department they are from. She pointed out that not everyone knows everybody else in the Senate and it is particularly helpful to the Senate Coordinator when she is taking the minutes.

3.0 Chancellor Perlman

Chancellor Perlman welcomed the faculty back to campus and stated that he is looking forward to working with everyone. He pointed out that the election for Regent is very important and urged the faculty to consider the candidates carefully. He noted that he is forbidden from taking a public position in the Board of Regents election.

Chancellor Perlman pointed out the in the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee report there is mention of changes that will be taking place in the commencement ceremonies. He stated that due to the capacity of Bob Devaney Sports Center and concerns of the Fire Marshall there will need to be two ceremonies. He stated that the number of people attending each ceremony will not seem so overwhelming which should make the event more exciting for the graduates and their families. He stated that there will be some other minor changes that will remind everyone that the students are graduating from UNL.

Chancellor Perlman stated that he wanted to address some of the controversy that seems to be floating around about the use of TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language). He noted that UNL requires that non-native, English speaking students provide proof that they can survive and succeed in our classrooms and this has been determined, in part, with the TOEFL scores. He reported that over the past two years some legitimate issues have been raised regarding the use of TOEFL and it is not unusual that some of these issues have been raised by Athletics. He noted that we are making an effort to attract international students. He stated that we are a global community and we need to pay attention to what we ought to be doing for students as a whole.

Chancellor Perlman stated that consideration may need to be given to students who have a good academic record but who may not have a good TOEFL score. He provided an example of a student wanting to transfer from a community college who was in this very situation. After reviewing the rules it was determined that they do not apply to transfer students and furthermore there was no record of who made these rules. He pointed out that if the transfer student had already demonstrated success in American classes and it was felt that the student should be admitted to UNL.

Chancellor Perlman reported that he has had a committee looking at the use of TOEFL and other means to determine effective use of the English language. He stated that he has asked the Advisory Board in DC to

conduct specific studies to see what other institutions use as best practices for determining English proficiency. He emphasized that whatever rules or changes are suggested, they would be applicable for all students, not just student-athletes.

Chancellor Perlman noted that a survey is being conducted on information technology on campus. He stated that the hope is that ideas about what the campus needs will be generated. He pointed out that the Computational Services and Facilities Committee and an outside consultant both raised some of the same issues about technology on campus. He noted that the survey asks what services should be provided centrally and what should be left to individual units. He pointed out that the idea is not to interfere with the work of the faculty and staff but to provide better service.

Chancellor Perlman pointed out that one of the concerns with information technology is making sure that our websites are compliant with disability requirements. He noted that there was a recent lawsuit against Target that resulted in a \$6 million settlement because their website was not handicapped accessible. He stated that there are some departments that still do their own websites and they are not compliant. He urged the faculty to look at the survey and respond with their best thoughts on the issues it raises. He reported that the administration is looking for a Chief Information Officer and the survey will serve as a basis for conversation with possible candidates.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the arena proposal for the Haymarket area is an upcoming issue for Lincoln. He noted that last week the public could view plans of the proposed development and in April or May there will be meetings regarding the financial needs for such a project. He stated that there is a high level of interest in moving the basketball games to a new arena because it is difficult to get to the Devaney Center and going to a game could be more enjoyable. He stated that if the arena materializes it will provoke development of the west Haymarket area and will add a lot of vitality to the economy of Lincoln.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the university has received interesting proposals on how to develop the state fair property to turn it into a research corridor. He stated that the financial implications of the proposals are now being looked at but there are some real issues that need to be addressed. He stated that there are some environmental issues but nothing that will prevent the development from occurring. He stated that the university will be certifying that there are resources to comply with the agreement to acquire the property. He noted that there are two ways to approach the development: the university could upfront the development costs and get the money back when firms sign up or we could find a developer to build the corridor. He stated that no decision has been made yet.

Professor Starace noted that in the Chancellor's State of the University Address there was mention of some programs firing on all cylinders while others are not. He asked the Chancellor for details about this. Chancellor Perlman stated that he is not going to give details yet but some questions have been raised. He noted that there are some areas where there is a downward trend and these need to be addressed. He pointed out that in some areas enrollments and research could be higher and in other areas people are really performing well. He stated that the job is to see where we can make improvements, and that we will need to consider whether more resources should be invested in some programs.

Professor Franti, Biological Systems Engineering, asked if there have been any discussions about the arena project being a facility for our volleyball team which has been highly ranked for many years. Chancellor Perlman stated that Coach Cook believes that it is best for his team to play in the Coliseum because the players like the energy and intimacy and closeness of the Coliseum. He pointed out that other teams say the Coliseum is one of the best environments to play in. He noted that the volleyball team will play one game at Devaney.

4.0 Approval of 4/22/08 Minutes

Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, moved and Professor Flowers, Psychology, seconded approval of the minutes. Professor Zorn, Finance, noted that in the minutes it states that he made a motion which was seconded by Professor Winter but a reference was made in the minutes that Professor Winter was not a senator. Professor Zorn stated that he does not recall any objection to a substitute being able to make a second to a motion. He pointed out that this would imply that a department does not have a voice at the meeting. He asked what would happen if a Senator is ill and could not make a meeting.

President Prochaska-Cue noted that the Senate Rules state that proxies are not allowed at the meetings. Professor Jackson, Food Science & Technology, stated that there was discussion at one of the Executive Committee meetings that the second could have been objected to at the April meeting. Professor Carlson, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences, stated that people would need to know who all of the senators are if they

are going to be able to make an objection. He stated that there needs to be some kind of mechanism in place to let the Senate know if someone is filling in for someone else.

Professor Starace suggested that the Executive Committee might propose a revision of Section 8 of the Rules addressing proxies. President Prochaska-Cue stated that the Executive Committee will take this under consideration.

Motion to approve the minutes as amended was approved with one opposition.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee (Professor Vigna)

Professor Vigna, Chair of the Commencement and Honors Convocations Committee (CHCC), reported that UNL gave out approximately 4,500 degrees this past year. She stated that 63% of the graduating students attended the ceremonies. She stated that the doctoral hooding ceremony is a separate ceremony held at the Lied Center but changes will be made to include the Masters students as well. She noted that the decision to hold a graduate degree ceremony was made between the CHCC and the Graduate College. The ceremony will be held at the Devaney Center.

Professor Vigna reported that another change that was made is the inclusion of a red N to the diploma sleeves and the song "Dear Old Nebraska U" will be played during the recessional of the undergraduate commencement ceremony. She stated that ceremonial banners will be used during the undergraduate ceremony and these banners will enable parents to find their daughter/son. She noted that the Chancellor has embraced these changes and is providing funding support. She stated that hopefully the banners will be used at the May commencement.

Professor Wunder, History, stated that he wanted to congratulate the CHCC on making these changes. He felt that the Masters students have been ignored for a long time and that this was rude. He stated that the bottom line is that we are rectifying a slight that we have had for a number of years. He urged that Masters' thesis and projects be noted in some way. He noted that this is complicated to do but pointed out that for some disciplines the Masters degree is the terminal degree.

Professor Wunder stated that at some institutions there is no problem of not having enough faculty members attend the undergraduate commencement ceremony because their central administration was very forceful in saying that each college had to have some faculty representatives at graduation. He stated that the Deans were responsible for selecting people to attend and thinks it is scandalous that we do not have a similar policy. He stated that each college should send 10 or 15% of their faculty to the commencement ceremony. He noted that this could be done on a rotating system so faculty members would only have to attend once every few years. Professor Vigna stated that the CHCC has talked a great deal about this issue all of the time. She pointed out that there are 60 caps and gowns that faculty members could use.

Professor Peterson stated that a number of years ago he spoke with Dean Weissinger of Graduate Studies about getting some decent chairs for the faculty to sit on at commencement. He noted that the chairs are very small and having more comfortable seating might encourage more faculty members to attend the ceremony.

Professor Vigna stated that the Committee has several things moving forward. One is the clarification between distinction and honors and the other is a recommendation to formally add a representative from the Graduate College on the Committee. She noted that the Graduate College has been invited to have someone in attendance in the past but the Committee felt that a change should be made in the syllabus.

5.2 Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (Past President Bradford)

President Prochaska-Cue noted that Past President Bradford was not in attendance. She stated that anyone with questions can contact him at sbradford1@unl.edu.

5.3 Executive Committee Summer Report

President Prochaska-Cue stated that the report lists the activities of the Executive Committee over the summer. She stated that anyone with questions can contact any of the members of the Committee.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Motion to Add A Graduate Student to the Convocations Committee

President Prochaska-Cue noted that the motion calls for adding a graduate student as a member to the Convocations Committee. Professor Starace asked for an explanation of why there are two members from the

Nebraska Union. Coordinator Griffin pointed out that the Director of Student Involvement sits on the Committee in place of the Director of the Nebraska Union. Professor Wunder stated that he did not think it made any sense to have two voting members from the Nebraska Union on the Committee. He suggested that the motion be amended to make the Director of Student Involvement an ex-officio member. Professor Chouinard, Mathematics, pointed out that the term ex-officio means that a person is on a committee by virtue of the office that they hold. He stated that he believes that Professor Wunder means that the person should be a non-voting, ex-officio member. Professor Wunder accepted this friendly amendment. Professor Fuller, Art & Art History, seconded the motion to amend the Committee syllabus. Motion approved with one opposing vote.

The motion to add a graduate student to the Convocations Committee was approved.

6.2 Professor Zorn's Motion

President Prochaska-Cue reported that over the summer she and Professor Zorn shared email messages to clarify the motion that he made at the April 22nd meeting. She stated that Professor Zorn is agreeable to withdrawing the original motion and replacing it with a resolution. She pointed out that the person who seconded the motion at the April 22nd meeting was not present so he would not be able to agree to the withdrawing of the original motion.

Professor Harbison, Chemistry, moved to table the motion. Motion to table Professor Zorn's motion made on April 22nd was approved.

Professor Zorn distributed copies of a new resolution. He stated that he felt that one of the Executive Committee members felt that he had a particular agenda with his original motion. He stated that he has a deep philosophical belief on how we should proceed in the future and he objects to the legislation that exists that would punish the university if it does not meet diversity goals. He pointed out that he has been at the university for a long time and he has never heard an administrator or faculty member who is opposed to diversity. Therefore he was proposing the resolution to remove this legislation. The resolution was seconded by Professor Ansorge, Educational Psychology.

Professor Carlson asked if the legislative clause has ever been invoked since the passing of it by the legislature. Professor Zorn stated that it is pretty sure that it has never been invoked but the point is that it could be. He stated that he sees a potential problem because there are people who are convinced that they are not getting into some universities or programs because there is a preference for admitting minority students. He stated that he believes that this is over blown in the public mind but there are perceptions that preferential hiring and admittance of students occurs. With the current legislation we have to depend on the good will of the legislatures not to invoke the clause if we cannot meet the diversity goals.

Professor Chouinard asked if this new motion was to be treated as an emergency motion or to vote on it next month. President Prochaska-Cue pointed out that it was not declared as an emergency motion.

Professor Starace noted that the resolution simply asks that the legislature remove the clause. He asked whether the motion should actually be addressed to the Chancellor since procedurally the faculty and the Senate report to the Chancellor who in turn reports to the President who reports to the Board of Regents.

Professor Rapkin stated that Professor Zorn's intent is clear enough but the language does not expressly address the practice of punishing the university. He stated that the language is compatible with the current practice but it does not express what the current practice is. Professor Zorn accepted this as a friendly amendment. Professor Rapkin stated that the resolution would need to be rewritten. Professor Jackson noted that, according to Senate Rules, Professor Zorn has five minutes to rewrite the resolution and present it to the Senate.

Professor Zorn stated that he made the point that he wanted to make at the meeting but he can see that there is not enough support for his resolution so he is withdrawing it. Professor Angsore agreed to withdraw the motion. The motion was withdrawn.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Emergency Motion – Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee Election Ballot

President Prochaska-Cue stated that there is a vacancy on the ARRC that needs to be filled quickly. Professor Fuller moved that the ballot be approved. Motion seconded by Professor Peterson. Motion approved.

7.2 Executive Committee Goals

President Prochaska-Cue wanted to publicly thank the rest of the Executive Committee for the writing of the goals. She noted that due to a death in her family she was unable to attend the Executive Committee retreat. She stated that anyone with comments should please submit them to one of the Executive Committee members.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, October 7th, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and David Rapkin, Secretary.