

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
City Campus Union,
December 6, 2011
Presidents Mathias Schubert and John Lindquist, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President Elect Schubert called the meeting to order at 2:34 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Employee Plus One Benefits

President Elect Schubert reported that there is pressure on the Board of Regents from outside groups not to support the proposed Employee Plus One Benefits. He stated that faculty members are being asked to email the Regents to let them know what their position is on the issue.

2.2 Donation from the Nebraska Cooperative Educators' Association

Professor Varner, Southeast Research & Extension Center, reported that the NCEA is a non-profit organization comprised of approximately 200 Extension Specialists, Educators, and Assistants from across the state. He noted that the NCEA has once again chosen to donate \$1100 to help support the operation of the Faculty Senate. He pointed out that the donation from the NCEA will be used to support the travel of President LaCost and Secretary Shea to attend the CIC faculty leadership conference. He noted that the Senate is experimenting with streaming meetings which will allow Senators to take part in the meeting even if they cannot be physically present. He stated that the donation will help pay for the streaming equipment that will be needed.

Professor Varner asked all of the NCEA members to identify themselves. He presented a check to President Elect Schubert and noted that it is made out to the University of Nebraska Foundation and will be deposited into the Schwartzkopf fund. He noted that the fund was created by former Regent Ed Schwartzkopf to help support the Faculty Senate Office. He challenged other Senators who are part of a professional organization to donate funds to the Faculty Senate to help the faculty. President Elect Schubert graciously thanked the NCEA for its very kind donation.

3.0 Chancellor Perlman

Chancellor Perlman reported that the administration continues to plan for how the campus can achieve its goals of growth. He stated that the administration is looking at the physical facilities to see if we have the land and the buildings that will be necessary to accommodate 30,000 students. He reported that our current master plan developed in 2006 was suppose to carry us through to 2015, but since many of the goals of the plan have been accomplished, such as the near completion of the Antelope Valley plan, the purchase of the Textron building, and the approval and construction of the arena, he has concluded that we need to think about what the campus needs to do next. As a result, the decision has been made to redo the master plan now rather than waiting until 2015. He stated that he will report this to the Board of Regents on Thursday and the master plan will be started this academic year. He noted that developing the master plan in 2006 was a transparent process and he hopes to have the same transparency with the new plan.

Chancellor Perlman pointed out that the campus is not as landlocked now as it was in 2006 and property has been added to the campus inventory, but we do not have vast open ground to build on. As a result, we may have to take a hard look at the campus and changes may need to be made. He pointed out that we will need to look at the scale of our current buildings and we may have to think about scaling up. He stated that the density of the campus will need to be considered and we might need to become more intense with land use, but there will be an effort to preserve the character of the campus and to preserve some of the green spaces. He reported that there are nine building sites remaining on city campus but only one of these sites does not already have something on it. He noted that this will create a challenge for us in our efforts to construct more buildings.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the transition of administrative duties between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs is going well and that in the long run things will work well. He noted that some physical adjustments of offices may need to be made and some units will be moving around from time to time as the administration thinks through the transition.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the candidates for the dean of the Hixson-Lied College of Fine and

Performing Arts are now being interviewed on campus and he hopes that faculty members can contribute to the search. He noted that the search for the dean of the College of Architecture will begin relatively soon and he hopes that it will be successful.

Chancellor Perlman wanted to call the Senate's attention to the increasing debate in the country about the cost of higher education and its potential consequences for us. He noted that there is intense concern about whether the increasing cost of higher education is foreclosing peoples' access to attending universities. He reported that President Obama recently met with a few university presidents about whether universities are being efficient. He pointed out that what is being lost in the conversation is that the cost of attending colleges is going up because state support for universities is going down. He stated that we need to pay attention to the national debates taking place because they could have serious implications on funding, particularly for providing support for Pell grants. He noted that we have a lot of students who are supported by Pell grants and if this funding decreased it would definitely have an impact on us. He agrees that there are ways in which information technology can help make us more efficient, but it is not a substitute for having a live faculty member in front of the classroom. He stated that the faculty should be vigilant on these discussions because of the potential impacts on higher education.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the Employee Plus One benefit will not be voted on by the Board of Regents until the January meeting. He stated that while it is appropriate for faculty members to express their view to the Board, he suggested that it be brief, or better yet, to make a collective statement.

Professor Carlson, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences, asked if the campus master plan will consider renovation or the construction of dorm facilities on east campus. Chancellor Perlman stated that one of the questions that need to be considered in developing the master plan is whether it wouldn't make sense to create a cluster of student housing and student life on east campus. He pointed out that students residing in these dormitories would not need to be in CASNR or studying agriculture, that we are providing space for students. He stated that having a new recreation center on east campus will help to attract students to living on east campus and development along Holdrege Street might generate small retail convenience stores that would be helpful to east campus students. He pointed out that there are some advantages to focusing student activity in one place because it helps to facilitate communication between students. He noted that city campus alone cannot support 30,000 students.

Professor Rudy, Nutrition & Health Sciences, noted that the campus has outside entities that use our facilities, particularly during the summer months, and he asked the Chancellor, in light of what recently has happened at Penn State and Syracuse University, to outline procedures that are in place should a case of child abuse happen on campus. Chancellor Perlman stated that he does not think that there are policies and practices in place that can ensure that such a case cannot happen on campus, but anyone aware of a case of abuse should report it and keep reporting it until someone takes action. He stated that policies and procedures need to be easily found on our website and we need to review these to see if there are no gaps in them. He noted that we are already pretty far along in trying to ensure the safety of all who come to campus. He pointed out that background checks are conducted on all staff and anyone using our facilities is subject to the same rules. He stated that there are policies in place on reporting acts of misconduct. He noted that the major groups on campus that do mentoring and work with young children already have specific policies but these policies will be reviewed to see if they are current. He reported that as a response to what occurred at Penn State and Syracuse University there have been discussions among administrators and the deans about how we need to create a culture that makes it possible for someone to report acts of misconduct to people in authority. He stated that the question is what has been done to make certain that someone that is subject to our authority would feel safe in coming to us with a problem. He pointed out that this is not just an athletic issue.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the second thing that came out of the Penn State incident relates to athletics, and whether a university ends up with individuals or programs that are so powerful because of their strong support and connection with alumni that it becomes difficult to manage these units. He noted that Joe Paterno insisted that he was the only person who could discipline football players but this is a violation of NCAA rules. However, it points to the difficulty that universities have in controlling people with this kind of power. He stated that throughout his tenure as Chancellor, with all of the issues that have come up with athletics, not one donor ever called or one Regent tried to put pressure on him about decisions he had to make, but nationally this is an issue. He stated that he suspects the Big Ten will have something to say about this issue. He stated that if the faculty thinks there are other things that we ought to pay attention to in this matter he is certainly willing to take a look to see what else can be done. He pointed out that the integrity of higher education is at stake because of what has occurred.

Chancellor Perlman wished everyone a good holiday break.

4.0 Approval of 11/1/11 Minutes

Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, moved for approval of the minutes. The motion was seconded by Professor Wysocki, Computer & Electronics Engineering. The motion was approved.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Academic Planning Committee (Professor Bryant)

Professor Bryant noted that the APC is one of the more unusual committees at the university because it is comprised of faculty members, administrators, and students making it a difficult committee to administer. He reported that recently he and Professor Lahey, a member of the APC, met with the Senate Executive Committee to talk about the charge of the APC. He noted that the charge currently states that the APC is to be proactive in academic planning for the campus, but in fact the work of the Committee is more reactive with much of the work being consumed with academic program reviews. He stated that the reason for increasing the number of faculty members on the APC is to help with the workload. He noted that the APC needs to function as efficiently as it can. He reported that a goal of the APC is to support the Chancellor's initiatives by acting as quickly as it can when the initiatives are presented to the APC.

Professor Nickerson, School of Biological Sciences, noted that the Chancellor just reported that the campus master plan will be updated. He asked if the APC will be involved with the master plan. Professor Bryant stated that most of the work of the APC is reactive and is not involved at the planning stage. He reported that this has been a concern of the APC and the Committee is still working on how it might become more actively and meaningfully involved with academic planning. He pointed out that many things occur in the summer when the number of faculty members on campus is limited, and the APC is not scheduled to meet with the Chancellor until May. He stated that the APC is hoping to provide some input on initiatives that are hatched. He pointed out that some of the changes that have been occurring on campus have been quite significant such as the changes to the management of summer sessions, the change in the 120 credit hour requirement, and the plan to add 160 tenure track faculty members, yet these were not discussed with the APC. He noted that he asked the Senate, through communications with the Executive Committee, to have the Senate give thoughts on where these new faculty members need to be. He stated that he believes the administration would like to hear what faculty members think on this too. He pointed out that the initiatives are very exciting but it is equally important that the faculty express its view on where there are real pockets of need.

Professor Carlson stated that he is curious to know how Professor Bryant sees the APC as being a better part of the planning process and not just reacting to things. Professor Bryant pointed out that there is no easy answer to this as the university is very complex and he has other responsibilities besides serving on the APC. He stated that the APC meets with key people. He noted that the implementation of the new email system, which will impact faculty members significantly, will be discussed at tomorrow's APC meeting. He stated that the APC has questions on how the transition to the new email system will take place and whether there will be training for people. He stated that another thing coming down the pike is with extended education and changes to how these courses are funded.

Secretary Shea noted that most of the comments that have been made are about activities that primarily deal with how to implement intended plans or plans that have already been made, but the committee is a planning committee. He asked if this is a misnomer. Professor Bryant stated that the APC does very little actual planning. He stated that the hope is that after meeting with the Chancellor the Committee will be able to provide input into planning. He noted that the APC's charge is to formulate and recommend to the Faculty Senate, the Chancellor, and to the Colleges goals for UNL in the areas of education, research, and service but the APC does not do this. It considers plans but it does not create new initiatives. He stated that the APC hopes to come to grips with the policies of the Bylaws and to do the work that it is charged to do.

President Elect Schubert noted that Professor Bryant mentioned that the APC is involved with facilities initiatives and projects. He asked if the APC has been involved with identifying programs of excellence. Professor Bryant reported that the programs of excellence are brought to the APC by the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. He stated that the APC used to be very involved with facilities initiatives but does not do as much today with plans for facilities because it has been more involved with academics. He stated that he is not sure how involved the APC is with the programs of excellence. Professor Nickerson pointed out that when the programs of excellence were first instituted the APC was involved in ranking the proposals that were suggested by the administration. Professor Bryant stated that the APC created the process to decide which programs of excellence would be funded but the final decision on the funding was not made by the APC.

Professor Stockton, West Central Research & Extension Center, stated that in recent faculty meetings in CASNR there has been discussion on whether to offer B.A.'s in addition to the B.S. degree. He asked how much of this would involve the APC. He noted that there is some concern among faculty members regarding how much science will be required for a B.A. degree. Professor Peterson noted that this is an issue that has come up in CASNR through the Life Sciences program. He stated that there will be discussion on a proposal about offering a B.A. degree because CASNR does not offer it now.

Professor Bryant reported that the APC was not involved in the decision to reduce the required credit hours to 120. He noted that this decision came down from Central Administration. He stated that he does not think the 120 credit hours is a rigid requirement because departments that have good cause could provide adaptations to this requirement. Professor Peterson pointed out that the Chancellor spoke about this and the Senate was told that the 120 credit hours was a hard and fast rule with some exceptions in the College of Engineering. Students can take more credit hours if they wish, but we have to offer degrees that require only 120 credit hours.

5.2 University Appeals and Judicial Board Report (Dean Hecker)

Dean Hecker reported that his office tries to be careful with the amount and types of cases that both the Appeals Board and the Judicial Board need to review. He stated that the cases the Boards hear are the most complex and delicate cases the university sees in a year. He stated that he is profoundly grateful to the Faculty Senate for appointing faculty members to serve on the Boards because we could not maintain the integrity of the academic environment without their help.

Dean Hecker reported that the cases the Boards deal with are increasingly the kinds that are problematic for the university. These cases include academic dishonesty, sexual assault, and sexual harassment cases. He noted that there have not been many of these cases but they are high profile cases.

Dean Hecker stated that the Senate might be aware that the Office of Civil Rights offered a dear colleague letter to the university wanting the university to be more vigilant on sexual assault and sexual harassment. He noted that these cases are frequently underreported on campuses. He stated that efforts will be undertaken to encourage people to report these cases. He pointed out that sexual assault and sexual harassment not only violates University policies, but U.S. Education policy and guidelines as well.

Dean Hecker reported that the last time the Student Code of Conduct was revised was in 1991 and the world has changed dramatically since that time but most of our policies have not. He stated that the Office of Student Affairs is in the process of revising the Code. He reported that ASUN is working on the revision and will bring forward provisions. He stated that he will be turning to the Faculty Senate and Executive Committee to help with revisions on the Student Code of Conduct, particularly regarding academic dishonesty. He pointed out that this section needs to be owned by the faculty and needs to reflect how the faculty wants the Judicial Board to enforce the policy on academic dishonesty. He noted that once the document is completed it will need approval from ASUN, the Faculty Senate, the Chancellor, and the Board of Regents. Secretary Shea noted that this activity was not listed in the report and he asked Dean Hecker to revise the report to include this information. Dean Hecker pointed out that the report is specifically on the work of the Judicial and Appeals Boards and the cases they have heard. He noted that the Boards are involved in violations of the Student Code of Conduct. He stated that his office is taking the lead on revising the Code and he will be forwarding the proposed revisions to the Faculty Senate.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Revisions to University Curriculum Committee Syllabus

President Elect Schubert stated that further revisions are being considered requiring the motion to approve the suggested changes to the syllabus and the Executive Committee is postponing the motion.

6.2 Revisions to Definition of Disciplines

President Elect Schubert noted that the proposed changes were presented to the Senate at the last meeting. Secretary Shea reported that the Executive Committee reviewed and made some minor revisions to the Definition of Disciplines. President Elect Schubert called for a vote of the motion to approve the revisions. The motion was approved.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Contacting Board of Regents Regarding the Employee Plus One Benefits

Professor Reisbig, Child, Youth, & Family Studies, reported that she emailed her department and asked them

to send her comments regarding the proposed benefits. She then incorporated these comments into a short paragraph stating that they agreed with President Milliken on the need for the University to offer this benefit. She noted that faculty members could add their names and an impact statement about the proposed benefit to the message. She stated that she hoped the email message will be helpful in convincing the Regents of the importance of this benefit to the University.

8.0 Motion to Adjourn

Professor Anaya moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Professor Rinkevich, Classics and Religious Studies. The motion was approved.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:33 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, January 10, 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union, Great Plains Room. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Patrick Shea, Secretary.