

UNL FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES

East Campus Union, Great Plains Room

September 13, 2011

Presidents Barbara LaCost, Mathias Schubert, and John Lindquist, Presiding

1.0 Call to Order

President LaCost called the meeting to order at 2:32 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Welcome New Senators

President LaCost welcomed the new senators and encouraged them to share the Senate and Executive Committee minutes with their colleagues. She stated that new senators are welcomed to offer agenda items for Senate meetings and should share their concerns with the Senate and the Executive Committee. She noted that new senators should report on Senate matters to their departments at scheduled departmental meetings. She suggested that senators should go to the Senate website (<http://www.unl.edu/asenate/welcome.htm>) to review the bylaws and rules. She asked that senators identify themselves when they come to the microphone to speak.

2.2 Streaming Senate Meetings

President LaCost reported that Karen Griffin, Coordinator of the Faculty Senate, is working with the Collaborate Team of UNL to set up the capability of streaming the Senate meetings. She stated that senators will be able to email comments and questions during the meeting. She encouraged senators to still attend meetings whenever possible.

3.0 Chancellor Perlman

Chancellor Perlman welcomed everyone back to campus and stated that he was looking forward to working with President LaCost, the Executive Committee, and the Senate this year. He stated that he wanted to say a few things about the goals he discussed in his recent state of the university address and urged the faculty for their help to achieve these goals. He pointed out that we cannot attain these goals without the help of an engaged faculty.

Chancellor Perlman reported that he spent a lot of time thinking about what the Big Ten implies for us and the expectations it creates. He noted that he could simply say there were no expectations but he thinks we would miss an extraordinary opportunity to make changes to better the university. He stated that if we work together and work correctly we will be at the university during some of the university's most exciting times.

Chancellor Perlman stated that in numerous interactions with the Big Ten and the members of the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC) one thing was apparent; as the Director of the CIC said, we were exactly like all the rest of the Big Ten schools, just a little smaller. He pointed out that increasing in size for size sake is not something we should consider doing. He stated that he is not shooting to have a student population the size of Ohio State or Minnesota but he believes having a student population of 30,000 would be the right place for us. He noted that the goal is to have 30,000 students, increase the graduation and retention rates, and to increase tenured faculty members to 1300. He stated that if we can accomplish these goals it will put us in a different place and he hopes the faculty will help work towards these goals because we cannot accomplish them without the faculty's help. He pointed out that the faculty is the frontline for all of the targeted goals, but the faculty won't accomplish these goals alone because the administration will help build the needed structure to meet these goals. He stated that one of the things we do know is that faculty engaging with students is one of the most important things that we can do to meet the goal of increasing student enrollment. He realizes that engaging with prospective students can be a burden, but faculty, students and departments need to be open to recruiting if we are to reach our enrollment goals.

Chancellor Perlman reported that Associate Vice Chancellor Cerveny has a plan for increasing student enrollment. He noted that these plans have enabled us to increase our enrollment over the last five years and Associate VC Cerveny is starting to work on data for getting the student population up to 30,000. He pointed out that for every two instate applications, one will come to UNL and for out-of-state students the numbers are one will come for every three applications. He stated that with the help of the faculty we can increase student enrollment.

Chancellor Perlman reported that retention and graduation rates are a very complicated issue. He noted that we lag behind the other Big Ten schools with these rates. He reported that the consulting team of Noel Levitz has been hired to conduct a best practices analysis. He noted that good suggestions were made that should help improve our graduation and retention rates. He stated that through new student orientation and two weeks after students begin their college careers we have one of the best programs in the country. The problem is that from then on we are not competitive with what other institutions do, particularly with first year students. We are not making sure that students are engaged. He pointed out that with schools as large as Ohio State, there is no way that the university can make sure that all students are engaged, but we need to be able to identify which students are at risk. He stated that students may be at risk for one reason or another. Grades can be an indicator that they are at risk but grades are not necessarily a cause. He reported that grades, academic participation and performance are key signals of how well a student is doing. He pointed out that the people who are most aware that a student is having difficulties are the faculty. He stated that we have to find a way to signal and find students that are at risk.

Chancellor Perlman stated that the administration, with some faculty input, is looking at some propriety software that would help identify students at risk. He stated that one of the software programs being considered is Starfish which would interact with all of the systems that we currently have. He reported that this program brings information together and allows advisors to see a real time snapshot of where a student is and allows for interaction with the student. He pointed out that any software is only as good as the data that is put into it and we will need to get some signal from the faculty about whether a student is performing well. He noted that we don't have mid-terms exams here, but many schools do. He stated that he knows it's a burden for the faculty to have mid-term exams, but it would be helpful to see how students are performing. Otherwise we need to find another way that faculty can alert advisors that a student is having difficulties.

Chancellor Perlman stated that we need to look at our past experiences and do a risk analysis. He suggested that we may need to let faculty members pay particular attention to those students at most risk. He noted that if there are emotional issues we can interview the student and get them help. He stated that we need a more interventionist system than we previously have used because it has been shown to be effective at other schools.

Chancellor Perlman reported that our goal is to have research funding reach \$300 million, approximately doubling over the next six years. He pointed out that some external forces will make it difficult to reach our research goals next year, but research needs to be on the forefront of everyone's mind.

Chancellor Perlman noted that in his state of the university address he indicated that we need to double faculty awards. He stated that he is thinking about national faculty awards, not local awards. He stated that the question is how to build the faculty so we are able to do this. He reported that one way to do this is to look at national honor societies. He stated that he thinks we have a lot of faculty members that could qualify for awards but they have traditionally not gone outside of the university to apply for these awards. He noted that awards vary from discipline to discipline but there are some things that can be done to increase awareness of our faculty. He reported that Professor Jim Van Etten, a member of the National Academy of Sciences and Professor of Plant Pathology, has created a visiting lecture series which will bring in a faculty member from one of the Big Ten schools each month for a year to deliver lectures on campus. He stated that we can do something similar in every unit on campus.

Chancellor Perlman reported that another goal is to increase tenured faculty members by 160. He stated that this effort will be complex and that this goal still needs to be fully thought out. He stated that increasing faculty and students will create greater demands for things like parking, football tickets, dorms, student health care, not to mention the need for more classrooms and advisors. He stated that this goal can be attained because if we increase our enrollment to 30,000, it will provide us with more resources. He noted that there will be some dry periods until we reach the enrollment target but he believes it will be worth the effort.

Chancellor Perlman stated that if you look beyond the data that is required for graduation and retention rates there is a different picture. He noted that if you track students beyond the preliminary data required you will see some students are still with us or have gone elsewhere and received a degree or working towards their degree at another institution. He stated that one of the problems today is that students take too long to graduate and nowadays students can no longer have the luxury of staying around as long as they want. He pointed out that having a long student career is not a recipe for success. He stated that there ought to be some gentle pressure for students to attain their degree in a reasonable time.

Chancellor Perlman reported that the 120 credit hour requirement posed on us by the Board of Regents is one small answer to helping students graduate on time. He pointed out that the requirements for students have

continued to grow over time. He stated that he has no doubt in his mind that the Board has the right to create a framework under which a degree is granted, but within that framework is where the faculty decision comes in. He stated that he does not think there is a problem with adopting the 120 hours, but it does impose on the faculty the need to figure out what courses will make up the 120 hours. He stated that colleges will need to make a decision on what courses are needed for getting a degree and they will have to bear the responsibility of working on their various programs to incorporate them into the 120 credit hours. He thinks that ultimately this will be good for the faculty and he believes that the faculty will make good, academically based decisions on what is needed. He just hopes that the faculty will not just cut back on electives. He stated that these changes might create some significant advantages by requiring departments to rethink teaching capacity and it is possible that some cash may be generated by eliminating the need for extra teaching of some courses. He pointed out that every rule the university has adopted was for a very good reason, but the rules did not take into consideration increasing enrollment, retention, and research. He reported that the administration is looking at everything we are doing to see if we can make improvements.

Chancellor Perlman wanted to provide an update on Innovation Campus. He noted that a faculty advisory committee was formed that came up with the proposal that he should engage the faculty to identify research enterprises that would locate on Innovation Campus and that could attract outside private companies. He reported that some intriguing proposals have been received and some more are still coming in. He stated that the hope is to get four or five of these proposals initially studied. He stated that he is hoping to create a team in the life sciences that would bring their research together and in turn create an attractive package for the private sector. He reported that he wants to partner with the private sector to see if some of these proposals make commercial sense or whether they need to be tweaked in order to make it attractive. If the proposal is not a good idea for the private sector, the research will still go forward and will evolve. He stated that he hopes to have a general faculty retreat for these teams in the spring. He noted that it will be 2013 before buildings will be available on Innovation Campus for occupancy.

Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, asked how binding the 120 credit hour requirement is. He noted that some people are suggesting that 120 credit hours is the maximum while others say it is the minimum. Chancellor Perlman stated that the 120 credit hours is the absolute maximum for establishing the requirements for a degree unless a waiver is obtained. He pointed out that this does not mean that a student cannot take more credit hours, but they have to have access to a degree that is within the 120 credit hours.

President Elect Schubert, asked if the administration has any ideas on what the mechanisms will be for faculty members to double research dollars. Chancellor Perlman stated that he intends to engage with the deans and the Senate Executive Committee to create a set of incentives so that academic units within the university will receive benefits for reaching the targets set for them. He noted that there are some disciplines where student capacity and demands can be pretty high while for others this is not possible. He stated that everyone should be able to participate in some way and he wants to reward units that are successful. He reported that there are some funds via the VSIP positions that will eventually be available and units are more likely to get these funds back if the unit shows significant increase in research. He noted that our role is to achieve these goals with the least amount of effort.

4.0 Approval of 4/26/11 Minutes

Professor Bender, College of Journalism & Mass Communications, moved to approve the minutes. The motion was second by Professor Peterson. The motion was approved.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Commencement and Honors Convocation Report (Professor Isernhagen)

Professor Isernhagen reported that the Committee is responsible for coordinating plans for three commencement ceremonies on campus along with the Honors Convocations ceremony and distributing appropriate awards. She stated that one of the major highlights this past year was the transition of the Head Marshal from Professor Mandigo to Professor Berger. She noted that Professor Berger did an excellent job as Head Marshal and is taking over the position nicely.

Professor Isernhagen reported that a significant change is the announcing of the name of all master students when they walk across the stage. She stated that announcing the names was done at the graduation ceremony this summer and gives recognition to those students who have received a master's degree.

Professor Isernhagen reported that the greatest number of undergraduate degrees ever awarded by the university took place at the May 2011 ceremony. She stated that there were 174 more graduates this year than last year and the spring graduation rate seems to be steadily growing.

Professor Isernhagen noted that the Committee has asked the Senate several times to encourage faculty members to attend the graduation ceremonies. She stated that many faculty members attend the hooding ceremonies but only a limited number of faculty members attend the undergraduate ceremonies. She reported that there were only 17 faculty members present at the May ceremony and only 19 at the August ceremony.

Professor Isernhagen encouraged faculty members to serve on the Commencement and Honors Convocations.

5.2 Faculty Compensation Advisory Committee (Past President Lindquist)

Past President Lindquist reported that the primary responsibility of the FCAC is to make recommendations to the Chancellor on salary and benefits. He stated that the Committee meets about once a year, usually in late April and is chaired by the Past President of the Faculty Senate. He stated that three things were discussed at the meeting, the charge of the committee to look at patterns and differences among gender and the colleges; gender equality issues which showed some concerns this past year but no significant differences; and review peer institutions' salaries. He pointed out that there were some huge differences in salaries in some colleges in comparison to peer colleges. He stated that there was little room to make salary recommendations because of the limitations with receiving only a 2.5% increase. He stated that the FCAC recommended that some of the salary increase should be used for promotion and tenure and the remainder should be used in a very generic way.

Past President Lindquist reported that the Committee did not look at administrative salaries although this is part of the charge of the Committee. He noted that the Committee did recommend getting more data on administrative salaries.

Past President Lindquist stated that the FCAC is interested in hearing from the faculty on what they would like the Committee to look at further in regards to salaries and benefits. Professor Peterson noted that the Office of Institutional Research & Planning has the ability to not only look at salaries based on gender, but in terms of ethnicity and other factors. He suggested that the FCAC consider doing this.

Professor Kranz, Northeast Research & Extension Center, asked if some of the salary dollars will eventually go towards dealing with salary inequities in the departments. If so, what departments would receive these funds and what would be the rationale. Past President Lindquist reported that those recommendations were not made. He noted that this decision would happen at the administrative levels. He pointed out that faculty in the College of Journalism & Mass Communications are 17% below our peers; Business Administration is 13% below our peers. He stated that all of the data needs to be considered before recommendations can be made. For instance, professors in a given college might have a huge disparity in their salaries compared with their peers, but those at the associate professor level in the same college might not have as large a disparity.

Professor Namuth Covert, Agronomy & Horticulture, asked if the Committee looked at professor of practice salaries over a period of time. Past President Lindquist reported that they have not but will put it down on the list of things to do.

5.3 Faculty Senate Executive Committee Summer Report

President LaCost reported that the Executive Committee acts for the Senate on a variety of matters during the summer. She noted that the Committee had discussions on numerous topics and for more detail people can review the minutes by going to the Senate webpage (<http://www.unl.edu/asenate/exec/summer2011.html>).

Professor Carlson, Veterinary & Biomedical Sciences, asked if Senators will be included in the quorum if they view the Senate meetings via streaming. President LaCost noted that this has not been discussed yet by the Executive Committee, but it is a good question that needs to be considered.

6.0 Unfinished Business

6.1 Faculty Senate Cancellation Policy

President LaCost reported that a draft cancellation policy was presented to the Senate last academic year. She noted that a Senator suggested that the Executive Committee reconsider the policy and revise portions of it. She stated that the Executive Committee made revisions and the newly revised policy is included in the Senate packet. She stated that the motion will be voted on next month.

7.0 New Business

7.1 Ballot to Replace Members on the Academic Planning Committee and the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panel

President LaCost stated that the motion was being brought to the Senate by the Executive Committee. She declared it an emergency motion because the APC and ARRP need to replace members quickly. The motion was approved.

7.2 Nominations to Replace Senate Executive Committee Member

President LaCost reported that an Executive Committee member had to resign due to an increased workload. She noted that an email message was sent to all Senators and identified colleges that have no representation on the Executive Committee. She asked people to consider nominating someone to serve on the Executive Committee or to consider serving themselves. She asked anyone interested to contact Karen at kgriffin2@unl.edu.

7.3 Revisions to Academic Rights and Responsibilities Procedures and Professional Conduct – A Procedures (Professor Peterson)

Professor Peterson, Chair of the ARRC, reported that last year the ARRC received a charge from the Senate Executive Committee to address three issues. One follows on a decision by the Senate to remove Professional Conduct-B from the portfolio because it is no longer relevant due to the creation of the Policy and Procedures for Responding to Allegations of Research Misconduct. He noted that the creation of this document puts the procedures into the Office of Research and Economic Development and follows federal regulations. He stated that most of the changes to the ARRC procedures are to remove language referring to Professional Conduct-B. He noted that there was some other minor housekeeping changes made to the document.

Professor Peterson stated that the other substantive change is including language relating to procedures for dealing with the cancellation of guest speakers. He noted that this change grew out of a report that dealt with the cancellation of a visit by Dr. Ayers. He stated that the report made the recommendation to have procedures created that would allow for faculty involvement if a speaker's visit is cancelled by administrators. He noted that the procedures calls for the administration to consult with the ARRC prior to a cancellation and the reason for the cancellation must be disclosed. He stated that the procedures do not give anyone veto power over what the administration wants to do it just includes faculty involvement in the decision. He noted that the changes to the procedures must be approved by the Chancellor and the Board of Regents.

President LaCost stated that the motion to revise the procedures will be voted on at next month's meeting.

7.4 Faculty Senate Goals

President LaCost reported that the Executive Committee met at a retreat to develop the goals for the Senate for this year. She stated that the Committee knows that moving into the CIC and the Big Ten is an important issue and the Committee considered this when creating the goals. She asked that anyone with any suggestions, revisions, or additions please contact Karen in the Senate Office.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, October 4, 2:30 p.m. in the City Campus Union, Auditorium. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Patrick Shea, Secretary.