Executive Committee Meeting with Administration
Wednesday, April 22, 2009
Warner Conference Room, 3:30 pm

Present: Chancellor Kristensen, VCBF Johnson, VCUR Carlson, Dean of Student Life Zeller, President Snider, Sens. Benz, Dimock, Frickel, Miller, Summar

Absent: SVC Bicak

1. Given the importance of advising for recruitment and retention, are there mechanisms in place to support faculty in their role as student advisors? Is the effectiveness of UNK’s advising functions being assessed on some level? Are there identified “best practices” that are being used on campus that could serve as a model?

Zeller: We are currently not assessing advising, though there are plans to assess advising in the near future. Advising was assessed in 1996, and again in 2005. Mary Daake is working on a Dual Advising plan to improve both academic and career advising issues.

2. Concerning the distance education “umbrella” project for NU:

   a. What is the status of its development and implementation?
   b. In what ways will UNK departments retain freedom over their distance curriculum and offerings while participating in the collaborative effort?
   c. How will tuition be structured? (Will cost to students be standardized or different depending on what campus a course is delivered from)?
   d. How will revenue be apportioned back to the campuses?
   e. Will departments retain control of courses that are part of the department’s regular program, such as those required for the major, but are only offered via distance?
   f. How would blended courses be handled?

Chancellor: Central administration is examining the business model, including centralized marketing. The University of Nebraska as a whole has a good name, and so a centralized marketing plan would allow us to compete better. However the distance education programs will probably not be centrally controlled. The Chancellor reported that the process seems to be slowing down, as there is no momentum for change.

We don’t know anything about any possible financial arrangements yet.

3. What is the cost of the Noel-Levitz consultant services, and what funding sources are covering it?

Chancellor: Our contract with Noel Levitz runs from 2008-2012, and costs $280,000. President Milliken has been very generous, and has paid the first part of the bill. This summer, we will ask him to fund the rest of the bill.

Noel Levitz is doing more than retention work; they are working on the total enrollment package. They are working with the enrollment committee, looking at a tuition variance for the Front Range in Colorado. If this looks favorable, the Chancellor
will ask for a variance. VC Carlson noted that we have not bought the Noel Levitz marketing module, but they are helping with advice and have had a positive impact.

4. Is the limit on UNK’s bonding capacity an issue in not pursuing the creation of more parking space on campus?

VC Johnson answered no. We have a multi-year multi-million dollar housing project in the works, including Mantor, then Men’s, then Randall. We then need to decide the fate of Martin. The renovation of CTE and CTW will need to have debt issued as well.

VC Johnson noted that the land we have available is on the west side of campus, and so will not do much to alleviate the parking problems on the east side of campus. Additionally, the current price of a new 150-stall lot is approximately $1.7 million. We could demolish Cranewood to produce about 400 spots, this would need traffic control. The Saunders property will add about 30 spaces. We have filed the paperwork for eminent domain proceedings; it will take about 3-8 months to work through the process. We will have to meet with the city about traffic flow problems, hopefully before they arise.

5. Will any of the budget reductions being considered change retirement benefits, specifically phased retirements?

VC Johnson reported that there will be no reduction in benefits. We are in better shape than other states, with regard to budget issues. As far as phased retirements are concerned, that decision will be up to each dean as there is no pool of central money.

6. Reports from Administration
   a) Chancellor
      The University will not reduce its benefits contributions, period.
      We have informed Linda Pratt that, working with UNO, we will purchase DegreeWorks. The chancellor was convinced it was a good fight, and it’s the right thing to do.
      Cliff Trump will be the Commencement Speaker. He is a 50-year UNK alumnus this year.
      We are not directly getting any of the stimulus money.
      The searches are on track, and should be finished before the semester ends.
      The chancellor appreciates the way the faculty senate executive committee, and the senate as a whole, has been open and willing to work with the administration in a spirit of shared governance.
   b) SVC no report
   c) VCBF
      With regard to budgets for the next biennium, the Governor recommended 1% increase, and the Legislature recommended 1.5%. It came out of legislative committee as 2%. A 1% increase in legislative support will generate $5 million system-wide, while a 1% increase in tuition will generate $2 million system-wide. Needless to say, we would rather have a 1% increase in state aid rather than tuition.
      With regards to the bookstore contract, the Board of Regents has an agenda item to approve Follett’s as the new contractor. VC Johnson said that Follett’s offered much more in the way of student service than Validus (the current tenant). Among
other services, Follett’s will offer a textbook rental service. The transition will take place on/around June 30th. VC Johnson reported that typically the new vendor will hire the current staff. Currently, Validus owns their cash registers and computers, and will probably sell all the UNK logo stock to Follett’s.

BHS is on target, and will be completed in the fall. It may be that some classes will be able to be held there for the fall semester. The physical plant is on schedule to be complete this July. Bricks from the old plant will be used to build a memorial.

There will be a map on the facilities website that lists where 40 new trees are planted. Also, sodding south of the new Nestor complex should be finished in the next couple of weeks.

d) VCUR

We are coordinating the unveiling of the BHS artwork, the move-in, and the dedication at the end of September. The chancellor will appoint a Bruner Dedication workgroup to give advice on the timing. We may have an artwork dedication separately from a big dedication at the end of September.

The new website is live and has received universal positive feedback. The old website received about 9000 hits per day; the new web site is receiving 22000 hits per day. Ektron is misbehaving, so pagemasters are blocked from making changes right now. VC Johnson’s website has budget documents with a live response box for user feedback. We welcome feedback on the new website: nothing is sacred.

Snider asked if there is a new color tone for UNK blue and gold. Carlson replied yes, and the CYMK (and other) standards are set.

VC Carlson appreciates all the grassroots efforts; they seem to be having success.

e) DoSL

There is a ceremony coming up to honor staff for their work to support students. It will be (was) in the Cedar Room on Thursday April 23rd at 3:00. The honorees were Jayne Petersen, Rob Luscher, and Rick Miller.