

Spring CAS Faculty Meeting Minutes (16 April 2020)

3:30 pm: The online meeting was called to order by Dean Mark Button. There were 8 Panelists and 95 Attendees.

1. Updates from the Dean

Button: it has been a difficult time for all of us and thank you for your efforts with a special appreciation to the staff who continue to sustain our operations and maintain contact with everyone.

A few guidelines for our online meeting. The agenda can be downloaded from the college website, votes will take place remotely and polls will appear on your screen, and the chat function is live. Chancellor Green will visit at 4:00pm. Use the raise hand function to signify assent.

Bob Gorman has agreed to serve as Parliamentarian.

Of course, we're under Level 4 restriction to relieve stress on the health care system.

However, remote learning leads to inequities with respect to student access to instruction. The college page has information you can send to students. Remote instruction will continue through the summer session. Contingency planning for Fall is underway. There is a call for new online courses.

Priscilla Hayden-Roy, Associate Dean for Faculty: Tenure extension is now available to any faculty member. Those coming up in 2021 should apply by the June 2020 deadline.

Others should engage in discussions with chairs and mentors about the issue.

Information about adjusting approved Faculty Development Fellowships is forthcoming.

John Osterman, Associate Dean for Academic Programs: There is an upcoming ORED survey to faculty about graduate students and postdocs. There is also an NU Online grant for online course development.

Button: Update on Ad Hoc Committee on Lecturers to investigate and report on status of adjunct lecturers led by Debbie Minter and Dave Woodman. They have submitted their report about salary, contracts, workload, annual evaluations, and governance. The College will move forward in using this report to develop policies in the future. There is a proposal today to include Lecturers in the definition of Faculty in our Bylaws.

Button: Although there is now a university-wide hiring freeze, units should still submit their 3- to 5-year plans to continue our discussions about the future.

2. Approval of Minutes from the Fall Faculty Meeting held on December 11, 2019. (See Appendix, pages 2-4.)

Button: The Fall minutes were titled Spring, which will be fixed. There were no comments. There was a poll in which 100% approved.

3. Opportunity for faculty to ask questions arising from annual reports of the various college committees. (See appendix, pages 5-10.)

a. Executive Committee (page 5)

b. Promotion and Tenure Committee (page 5)

c. Curriculum and Advising Committee (pages 5-6)

- d. Committee on Student Academic Distinction, Awards, and Appeals (pages 6-7)
 - e. Assessment Committee (page 7)
 - f. Research Advisory Committee (pages 8-9)
 - g. Endowed/College Professorships Committee (page 9)
 - h. Research Space Committee (page 9)
 - i. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) Committee (pages 9-10)
 - j. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Speech Committee (page 10)
- There were no questions about any of the committee reports.

4. Recommendation from the Dean and the College Executive Committee to approve the proposed changes to the Bylaws of the Faculty, Article V, Section 1. Executive Committee, V.1.D through V.1.G – Clarifying the purpose, scope and responsibilities of the Executive Committee and to better distinguish it from other standing committees in the college. (See Appendix, pages 10-13.)

Button: We recently learned that there is a Regents requirement from 2010 that any changes to College Bylaws must be approved by the university. Specifically, they must be reviewed by the Vice President before they become official.

The Bylaw change above was read at the Fall meeting and received no comments.

Clint Rowe (Earth & Atmos): Does Computer Science and Engineering need to be removed from Area III definition in both?

Button: The answer is yes but at a future cleanup date after the Department's move has taken place.

No questions or comments. The poll was 100% in favor of changes.

Kwame Dawes (English): Should there not be an option for abstention on the ballot?

Button: We'll check into that.

5. Recommendation from the Dean to approve the proposed changes regarding the Committee on Student Academic Distinction, Awards and Appeals. (Bylaws of the Faculty, Article IX, Section 1, and Policy Statement for Grading Appeals, Article III, Section A. – Giving the Associate Dean appointed to the committee a vote to decrease the likelihood of a tie vote. (See Appendix, pages 13-15.)

Button: This Bylaw change was read at the Fall meeting and received no comments. There are eight members on the committee which led the members to wonder whether there might be a tie at some point. The recommendation is to add the Associate Dean to the list of voting members.

Clint Rowe (Earth & Atmos): Does the Assoc Dean only vote in case of a tie?

Button: No, the recommendation is for the Associate Dean to vote in all cases.

There was a poll to approve. The result was 93% in favor of changes, and 7% abstain.

6. Comments from Chancellor Ronnie Green.

We're about a month into our new system of operations. In late February, the Administration saw data from UNMC that indicated the Covid-19 epidemic was concerning. In mid-March, various institutions across the nation began making decisions to change to online instruction. UNL is now in our third week of remote instruction. It is

humbling to see how faculty and staff have taken up the challenge to continue operations. Thank you. This is while you and everyone else around the world are adjusting to this new situation.

One, we are going to continue under these conditions until the end of the semester. It is possible the restrictions could be relaxed at the end of the month. In Nebraska, we don't appear to be experiencing a peak like the rest of the nation, although the Grand Island area is an exception. In meetings with state officials, he is arguing in favor of relaxing after the end of the semester.

Two, there is a requirement to host summer online only and there is a call for creative new courses. This is in part because our students' summer plans have been disrupted. We want to provide opportunities for them.

Three, Fall planning currently assumes courses will be held in person. Enrollment is being monitored closely. The economics could be causing many families to re-assess. Many of our international students are still on campus. They were unable to leave due to the shutdown.

Four, the message from President Carter earlier this week mentioned the expectation about budget reductions. Planning is underway to respond. One decision was to place a hiring freeze. Decisions about open and active searches will require local leadership. New hires will require significant justification and must be tied to being highly essential. The economic impact on UNL's budget is not insignificant due to lost revenue and refunds. UNL will probably lose over \$40 million, which is manageable but significant. This is a problem across the Nation, but we are better positioned than most to handle this.

Susan Hermiller (Math): What does UNL plan do to protect the safety of employees and students who are in "high risk" groups for covid-19 while reopening the campus before a vaccine is developed?

Green: Right now, staff are distancing and have access to PPE. There are protective measures in place in the event that someone develops a case of coronavirus.

Mark Griep (Chem): Will there be a distancing recommendation for students attending classes in the Fall. This is important for my classroom with its 192 students. By Fall, there probably won't be a vaccine and it isn't clear whether there will be access to rapid testing.

Green: I don't know. No one expects a vaccine to be ready by then. By Fall, we'll probably know more about distancing recommendations. It's too early to tell.

Debbie Minter (English): If we had to rethink the upcoming year's budget, is there a set of priorities you have in mind?

Green: We could have at least 10% budget reduction from the State (\$47 million). We will focus on our mission and not on discretionary items. Contingency planning for revenue and cost. For instance, UNL remits \$100 million per year, which is now under serious review.

Kathy Castle (Comm Studies): In talking about tuition remission, are you making distinction between those receiving remission that also generate SCH and those that don't?

Green: An example at the UG level are the Regents Scholarships.

Question from unknown. Is there a plan to develop an Ad Hoc Committee to consider other measures for pre-tenured faculty and graduate students who have been affected?

Green: Probably. Academic leadership has discussed the role of Pass/No Pass. The impact is not distributed equitably so the accommodations will need to be fair and equitable.

7. Discuss recommendation from the Dean and the College Executive Committee to approve the proposed changes to the Bylaws of the Faculty, Article II, Section 1. Members of the Faculty – to include Lecturers in the definition of Faculty and better align the College’s Bylaws and faculty governance practices with University policies (see UNL Bylaws 3.1.3.1). (See Appendix, pages 15-16)

Button: This change enfranchises lecturers and aligns us with university policy. For instance, the Faculty Assembly and Faculty Senate both include lecturers. This is a significant issue because there are over 50 lecturers in the college. This is the first reading of this proposal, which means we will vote on it in the Fall. Right now, we are gathering your input.

Jolene Smyth (Soci): Does this change affect voting rights for these people in departments?

Button: This change effects only their status in the College. In the future, we will likely provide information to departments about including lecturers when discussing curricular issues. The majority of college lecturers have greater than 0.50 FTE appointments and have been in the College for more than three years.

Sophia Perdikaris (Anth): Since service is not usually part of lecturer apportionment, how will they be compensated for committee work etc.?

Button: The College is developing contracts to address this issue.

Pat Dussault (Chem): Same argument (service) will come up for research assistant professors, who are typically supported on research grants.

Button: This is a related issue. The goal is to align the College with the university’s definition and treatment of faculty.

Kathleen Nashleanas (Geog): Would there be an option that after three years of consistent services lecturers could be promoted to PoP?

Button: Not at this time because the positions are defined differently but the College is working on other mechanisms.

8. Group Discussion: Questions and Feedback (Please submit through the “Chat” function on Zoom)

Question: Can there be an extension on the deadline for receiving Departmental hiring plans?

Button: Yes. We just learned about the freeze but are continuing to discuss as it develops. This year’s hiring plans don’t have to be as detailed as usual.

9. A “Virtual” toast (BYOB)

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mark Griep