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## April 20, 2011 - ALEC Advisory Council Meeting Minutes

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**ALEC Advisory Council Meeting**  
**Minutes**  
**April 20, 2011**

Advisory Council members present: Kevin Anderson, Tony Glenn, David Grimes, Tom Hermance, Brandon Hunnicutt, Dennis Kahl, Deanna Karmazin, Eric Knoll, Karen Kollars, Jill Lander, Stephannie Mann, Todd Neeley, Gayle Starr, Leigh Wakulinski, Bruce Williams, Judith Wolf and Jeff Yost

ALEC Department members present: Cheryl Alberts, Mark Balschweid, Jay Barbuto, Lloyd Bell, Kathy Bennetch, Jason Ellis, Dick Fleming, Dann Husmann, Lisa Jasa, Michelle Kang, Dan Moser, Mike Wilmot and Malika Yadgarova

Kevin Anderson, Chair, thanked everyone for being here today to learn about the ALEC department, where it has been and what is planned for the future, as stakeholders in this department.

Dr. Balschweid outlined the schedule for the day and welcomed feedback later on when we break into small groups (Ag Education and Skilled Technical Sciences, Ag Communications, Hospitality Restaurant Management)- See Appendix A. Balschweid introduced one new Advisory Council member Brandon Hunnicutt, Giltner Farms, Giltner, NE. Brandon will be involved in the Ag Communicators area.

Recent updates:

- Matkin – received funding for placing ALEC 102 leadership course online.
- First edition of our newsletter, *ALEC in Action*, twice a year publication. If you have any topics to highlight or consider, please let us know.
- UCARE research funding - Undergraduate Creative Activities in Research Experience - funded by Pepsi, provides funding for undergraduate students working on a research project.
- Jason Ellis, named the CASNR Advisor of the Year
- Agriculture Ed Club was named CASNR Club of the Year. Dann Husmann is their advisor.
- Jason Ellis has announced his resignation effective in June in order to take a position at Kansas State University, closer to home. Two tenured faculty positions in Ag Communications will be secured.
- Jay Barbuto is leaving in August to take a position at Cal State, Fullerton, as director of the Center for Leadership.
- Two individuals took the UNL voluntary incentive program for retirement: Dr. Jim King, Distance Education and Technology who started in 1985 and Dr. Arlen Etling, tenure

home in ALEC, former Director of International Programs and CASNR's International programs.

- Dr. David Kwaw-Mensah joined ALEC in January from the Northeast Research and Extension Center in Norfolk, as a temporary Professor of Practice (18 months, pending further grant funding). He has an Ag Education and Extension background and will be teaching some courses and developing research projects.
- Research activities – Several grants submitted included:
  - o Husmann/Boren, eliminating barriers for student engagement for study abroad;
  - o Barbutor/Matkin/King, transformational advising, multistate grant including Oklahoma State and University of Florida. UNL is the lead institution for the grant.
  - o Martin/Burback/Boren- helps the faculty teach cultural competencies in multicultural communities;
  - o Terry/Randall received \$175,000 for Market Journal from the United Soybean Board;
  - o Kreifels/\$8,000, Agricultural programming for Team Ag Ed.

#### Current activities:

Last year, 2010, ALEC completed the External Review process with three days of meetings with the review team. The Advisory Council was a part of that process and met with the review team. The review team report recommendations, which ALEC received in August, are in the handout for you to review and help with our discussion groups later. Our responses are in draft form. We encourage your input before it goes forward to the Dean, Vice Chancellor and Chancellor.

ALEC launched a Strategic Planning process. Seven individuals have been asked to serve as a Steering Committee and their main function is to advise Dr. Balschweid. Leadership Resources, a Lincoln company, has been hired to work with the Steering Committee during the process. Dan Sedor and Julie Gade, Leadership Resources, came to our departmental meeting to launch this process. This is a lengthy process and allows for input along the way. What should be the priorities for this department, both short-term and long-term? A survey has been sent to all members of the department, the administrators of IANR and the Advisory Council to complete. Later today this survey will be sent electronically to you. What should the priorities be in the department both short-term and long-term? Leadership Resources will review the survey and conduct a series of interviews with the administration and Steering Committee members to get a rich or better description to help with the process.

Last year ALEC was heavily involved with the reorganization of Communications Information and Technology (CIT) Unit, in the Ag Communications building, which produces all of the

media efforts for the Institute. A budget cut, 18 months ago, mandated a change. A decision was made to move Educational Media, formerly CIT, into ALEC and utilize the expertise in our Ag Journalism program. This is a major reorganization which tripled the size of our department, doubled the budget, and has given us a lot to think about in terms of the way we do things. Ed Media continues working from a state supported entity which the Communications and Information Technology unit was, to a cost recovery model including tracking time and charging for services that are provided. The management structure was changed. An interim director is in place and ALEC is in the process of interviewing a new director. Roger Terry, former director, has taken a position in our Information Technology unit and has moved into that role. One of the changes included eliminating the section leader model for middle management to a project and client-based approach. Moving to a cost recovery base, where units pay for services, makes us more aware of customer service and client relations. Ed Media has new partners and customers. Now working with Nebraska Educational Television, Ed Media is beginning to pick up a large number of broadcasts due to the television studio in Ed Media. In the month of March, 126 new projects started in Ed Media. One of the main advantages was to utilize the strengths of those Ed Media individuals who are experts in their fields. Eleven staff have been identified who will help teach some of our classes and advise students. Progress has been made to create a classroom in the Agricultural Communications building which should be available by August.

Recruiting Efforts – Malika Yadgarova and Mike Wilmot (handouts given)

<b>Major Enrollment Estimates</b>	<b>Fall 2011</b>	<b>Fall 2010</b>	<b>Fall 2009</b>
AGED	81	56	51
AJRN	37	30	26
HRTM	32	16	11
Total	150	102	88
Estimates are current students less graduates plus incoming students; AGED includes Industrial Technology students			

Spring Recruitment Events

- Bid Red Road Show, Omaha

- Nebraska FFA Career Show
- Ag Educators Hospitality Room
- Teach Ag Day Luncheon

#### Fall/Summer Recruitment Events

- Nebraska Agriculture Youth Institute
- CASNR Experience the Power of Red
- Big Red Letter Days

#### Mailings and Promotional Materials Updates

- Updated promotional materials
- New display purchased and poster created
- Follow-up mailings to all recruitment events
- Follow-up contacts to students visiting the department/showing an interest
- Mailings campaigns to targeted juniors, seniors, and transfer students
- Congratulatory letters to Nebraska State and National FFA Degree Recipients
- ALEC materials sent to National FFA convention with CASNR representative

If you think of potential activities that the department might be engaged in your communities or your fields, please let us know. ALEC wants to take advantage of every opportunity available.

Kevin Anderson closed the meeting at 1:40.

Next meeting is October 26.

Submitted by Kathy Bennetch

Discussion points from the various groups:

Ag Education & Industrial Technology (Husmann)

- Skilled and Technical Science (formally Industrial Technology) program integration process and the impact for the faculty perceptions, State Department of Education officials, teachers across the state, and student reactions.
- Challenges for student teaching supervision coverage will double the workload for the ALEC faculty.
- 2+2 program – designed for students who complete the first two years at a Community College (Southeast, Metro, Lincoln Public Schools) to obtain an associate’s degree, then move into ALEC’s program. All the technical course work will take place at the community colleges or LPS, none will be at UNL. A transfer agreement conference is coming up in May to start incorporating other sites across the state.
- Marketing and promotion will take place at the NECT conference, school administration conference, counselor conference, teachers in high schools (catch them early) and community colleges.
- The 2 + 2 program will be an excellent model for other states. Students will see a less expensive degree. A lot of positives will come out of this 2 + 2 program. By having the community college students work side by side with the Ag. Ed. students will help them realize there are more similarities than differences.
- LPS officials expressed it is a win/win program for all of us. LPS Educators are very positive about it. It needs to be relevant. It’s going to demonstrate the “core” is a big part of what we do. We are teaching math and science. How are we teaching the essentials to the students to make it relevant for the students? We are in a better position to do that with this program.

Ag Journalism (Ellis)

- Welcomed Brandon Hunnicutt, who has the perspective of an Ag Communications practitioner because of his work with the National Corn Growers and Grower Services, which manages a lot of communication to growers, but also on behalf of the corn growers themselves to non-ag type audiences. He represents the type of target audience that our students will be communicating with once they enter professional positions.
- How’s the Ag Journalism program going to be restructured and moved into the future based on the changes that are happening in the communications industry and the communications environment? What is an integral way that we can bring in this whole new world of social media into the communications realm? Additionally, how are our

target audiences getting information to help them in their decision-making processes? It's not just how are they using social media to "keep up"—whether or not their college friends' kids are sick or what their neighbors ate for lunch—but how can they use it to get information on, "What should I be planning? What should I be doing, when I'm out in the field today? What should I be looking for in my corn and my soybeans? When I'm in the pasture, what are the things I should be looking for in my cows this summer?"

- Is there an opportunity where we can create a course or courses that not only help Ag Communications students understand how to use this technology as communicators to get the messages out, because that's where the curriculum is going with courses in the College of Journalism, but on the flipside of how do we be judicious users and consumers of the information that's coming out through these new social media strategies. When Bruce was with John Deere, and he was getting all this information, how can he use the information he can gather through social media to help him in his business of selling John Deere? In promoting their company and using that to be of service to their customers as well? So it's almost kind of on the flipside, it's not so much how can we prepare our students to be good consumers through the media, but how can we help others be good consumers of that media to help them in their careers. That kind of ties in to the futuristic appearance of the program.
- It's much more of a two-way interaction and a dialogue of the communications process. It's going to be a lot more app based in that, it's not just a push of information, and then, if you have comments or feedback or questions you'll write in a letter to the editor, but it's more of a, you'll drop an email or drop a text to that person that sent out that blog story that you received on your app today. And it's a real-time engagement of the communications and information providers with the communications and information receivers. How do we work to prepare our students to do that, and do it on a level of higher information needs?
- How do we prep our students to work in that elevated information-need environment? If they get something technically inaccurate, it loses their credentials and loses their credibility as a communicator.
- Two faculty positions - looking at one in the area of strategic communications, and from a traditional discipline standpoint, that is basically the integration of advertising and public relations. But as we talked about, people in the new media also need to work to be strategic communicators. How do they go about getting their product or their information out, having people consume their news? Just because they send out a nightly, or an evening newspaper doesn't mean people are going to be consuming it. How do the people that aren't buying it get it out there? They've got a lot bigger marketplace to compete in as information providers. That first position is kind of from that strategic thinking standpoint of getting students to the point of regardless of what communications media you're in, or communications discipline, are you strategic with your thinking? There is almost an entrepreneurial sort of aspect to it. The other

position in the area of Life Sciences Communications allows us in our expansion of the content preparation of the program to target beyond just those core traditional fields of production agriculture: animal sciences, plant sciences and agronomy. We can look into the areas of energy science, water science, biotechnologies, bio-fuels, environment, natural resources—all of those other areas that fall into the life sciences category. Those areas can benefit from having an element, kind of a science communications preparation, working with more technical content, so to speak.

#### Hospitality Tourism (Kang)

- Helping the student have a perspective about the choices within the program (instead of running a hotel or restaurant). How can they contribute to Nebraska tourism?
- How to connect our class and students to a real tourism destination and tourism community. There are a lot spaces and factors to make connections with our class and real tourism. Our students can help with community development. We need to help our students see how they can contribute to making this happen in the community. Students can feel the real sense of what they have to do in the community for the hospitality industry.
- Trends in tourism, particularly in Nebraska — Tourism in Nebraska includes culinary tourism, eco-tourism, agricultural tourism, winery tourism, and outdoor recreation tourism. We need to let our students know about these before they graduate.
- Community development through tourism — Some vectors can be developed in the future and tourism will be one of them. Our students should know about this and learn what to do to help develop tourism in their communities. They can learn at conferences, workshops, meeting tourism guides in Nebraska, and learn what is going on in the real tourism industry.
- Find internships opportunities to help our students find jobs.

#### Leadership – (Matkin/King/Barbuto)

- (Matkin) With great sadness (retirements and departures) come new opportunities to hire two new faculty positions in the leadership area. One of the positions should be an assistant professor in the area of youth development and youth leadership and the second one would be an associate professor level leadership position, looking at very high levels of leadership scholarship, and ideally having some connection to rural communities or to agriculture.
- The consensus of the Advisory Council is we're right on target with those two positions. Making sure that we're connecting research for faculty that have research appointments, find ways to connect their research to the communities here in Nebraska. We need to be involved with those communities when conducting research.

- Extension appointments that connect with some of the things that are already going on, for example, in entrepreneurship and extension. Connect people with those faculty members.
- Look at the curriculum, leadership curriculum, and look at it critically and say, is this what we want our leadership curriculum to do?
- Fulfilling the core requirements for the college — had a great solid core of leadership courses and a CASNR minor. We have a very high number of electives. Do we want to do something with those? Yes, we do want to do something with those. We want to make sure to keep our advising at the level that it is at so we use them wisely, because that flexibility provides us the opportunity to make sure our students are getting exactly what they need to pursue their careers. Perhaps we should have a second minor, as a part, use those hours and encourage our students to get a second minor. Maybe we should strengthen the courses in that first minor, making sure that the curriculum, not necessarily adding new courses, but is really helping students learn new leadership skills, like change management, conflict management, things that will help them go back and engage in their home communities.
- Encourage students to go back to home communities for their careers, but then also get involved at the community level and have the skills to be able to engage in those communities in very positive ways.
- (King) Future directions- look at internships and research areas and areas of extension programming.
- Under internships, we need to follow some of the things that Ag Ed does and maybe develop an undergraduate list of large goals, objectives for students, in terms of conflict negotiation or facilitation or other areas. By having developed that list, make sure our internship sponsors see that list and be part of that list so they would know when people went after internships, the sorts of things we would like to have them involved with to develop those skills or to even challenge them a little bit.
- Felt pretty positive in the group about the internship programs, especially with extension.
- Contact community foundations to get both money and support for projects for internships. A lot of the communities could actually use young people to come back, both as a model to get kids seeing that there's possibility in communities—that there's things they can do—and build on that also to get projects done. This might be over not just one internship period, but over a period of time where students might return to a community, or might come back and work on a project over a period of time.
- Research areas—one issue that came up was, it's very applied research in terms of empowering women. Trying to understand the lack of women's recognition and being recognized in terms of their leadership roles in communities.

- Trying to figure out how to get more men involved in communities' leadership positions. Men are involved, but not to the level we want them involved, and not to the level we need to have them involved in the future.
- Research question related to the role of social media, in particular in extension, and that might be a nice connection between communications.
- Uncertainty avoidance and looking at that in rural communities, and the idea that perhaps this is a cultural dimension. There are just a lot of issues around uncertainty, and then the whole issue of urban versus rural. Is there really a difference? Perhaps it's just the conservative nature of our state, the agriculture. People don't want to take too many risks, limit the number of risks or what, but when this gets into communities, and community development and helping young people move through this, there are some challenges here for us. We need to try to understand the difference between uncertainty and risk avoidance and what makes us up and how leadership interfaces with that.
- Questions related to community and community development and areas related to youth and youth education that we might be able to do.
- We believe there can be a real partnership between internships and extension.
- (Barbuto) The other thing we talked about, we didn't use this exact term, but it's kind of a mezzo-analytic thing, where we take organization theory, theories of organizations, and, kind of, do they apply at the community level. Many times it seemed like they kind of did. Especially when we talked about things, what's called organizational memory, which is this thing that happens in a company where this is the way we do things here, and these people are the ones that have been here the longest and they understand the way we do things here the most, and they're kind of the keepers of the status quo in an organization. It's kind of out of the organizational memory literature. We were thinking that it seems like it might actually apply at the community level, especially in the smaller communities where they actually operate like little organizations. There are thoughts that maybe there's something we could do to take what we're already studying at the organizational level and maybe some of that actually fits into the community level of analysis.
- (Husmann) I like that idea for a second minor. Did the discussion come to maybe a dual-degree? Does it appear we'll get another degree?
- (Matkin) Jay calls that super-sizing.
- (Barbuto) We supersized their minors into double majors. A student comes to the department, thinking, I want to do a minor, and we say, well, where are you in your program? And they say, well I'm a freshman or a sophomore. Freshmen/sophomore, you've got lots of time to plan your free electives. I'd say we have almost half the time, when we get them early enough, we're able to encourage them, 100% of the time. You're only talking about another semester to get a dual-degree.