

11-2012

November 30, 2012 - ALEC Department Meeting Minutes

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"November 30, 2012 - ALEC Department Meeting Minutes" (2012). *ALEC Committee Minutes*. 254.
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November 30, 2012, ALEC Departmental Meeting East Campus Union

Attending: Cheryl Alberts, Mark Balschweid, Lloyd Bell, Allison Bennett, Steve Burkey, Karen Cannon, Betty Castan, Marcia Claesson, Nic Colgrove, Dick Fleming, Mary Garbacz, Gary Goodding, Jennifer Greenlee, Janice Hamer, Lindsay Hastings, Mark Hendricks, Dann Husmann, Lisa Jasa, Lana Johnson, Michelle Kang, Sandi Karstens, Matt Kreifels, Charles Leslie, Gina Matkin, Brad Mills, Anne Moore, Dan Moser, Judy Nelson, Marcia Oetjen, Janet Owens, Pam Peters, Anita Schaepe, Jennifer Schoen, Brandon Schulte, Shawn Sheets, Vishal Singh, Kelli Smith, Roddy Spangler, Roger Terry, Linda Ulrich, Adam Wagler, David Wiens, Judith Wolfe, Malika Yadgarova and Yan Zha. Chuck Hibberd also attended.

Meeting started at 10:00 a.m.

Introductions and Getting to Know Each Other

Dr. Mark Balschweid welcomed everyone and asked meeting attendees to introduce themselves.

“Guess Who”

Using information from the ALEC “Getting to Know One Another” Questionnaire, Jennifer Greenlee had the meeting participants guess four staff members from their descriptions – Roger Terry, Marcia Claesson, Mary Garbacz and Will Bird.

Program

Dr. Chuck Hibberd, Dean and Director of UNL Extension, joined the meeting. He discussed his vision for Nebraska Extension. He stressed that staff members need to think differently about what Extension is and how Extension staff members go about creating learning experiences, as well as changes in behavior and practices that are valuable and make a difference. Nebraska Extension needs a portfolio of resources and strategies to use to be highly effective. Dean Hibberd stated that he would like to see Nebraska Extension:

1. Be relevant by working on things that are important. Extension needs to think ahead and be proactive, be in the “problem prevention” mode. The old Extension model of being all things to all people no longer works. Extension needs to narrow the focus, which, in Nebraska, means the six spires. Nebraska Extension needs to be better than anyone in the country in the six spires, which center on Beef Systems; Child and Youth Development; Crops for the Future; Food, Nutrition and Health; Water, Climate and Environment; and Entrepreneurship.
2. Create learning experiences where real learning occurs and that learning leads to the confidence where people will choose to try. Nebraska Extension should be providing learning, insight, understanding and experience so that the clientele can do it, has a sense of how to implement, and is willing to try it. Creating this environment is not easy, because issues that are important in Nebraska are not the simple issues of 100 years ago. Current issues are more complex.

Dean Hibberd explained that Extension does not know enough about how non-credit learners learn. Extension staff members need to determine the kind of messaging that works to create the conversation

that engages them and then determine the best learning environment. Questions that need to be asked include:

- How do young people use technology to learn?
- How much has Extension invested in the issues around nutrition and wellness?
- What are we missing?
- What does Extension not understand about the learning environment or the implementation of programs so the people can achieve what they would like to achieve?

Additionally, Dean Hibberd questioned, “How will we know if we have succeeded?” If Extension is focused on being a continuous quality improvement organization, what data and information is needed? He explained that there are great tools available but continual work is needed in that area because there are not enough people with expertise in evaluation.

Dean Hibberd provided information about a current national study where Extension has engaged highly effective Extension professionals and asked them, “What makes you a highly effective Extension professional?” Around the country, Extension deans and directors nominated 75 people to participate in focus groups. Additionally, Extension deans and directors completed a survey and reviewed position description announcements looking for the necessary characteristics, traits or experiences or skills of “highly effective professionals.” He expressed his hope that this study will provide a better sense of skills, traits or attributes for the next generation of Extension professionals.

Old Business / Strategic Plan Goal Updates

Mark Hendricks began his discussion of goal #3, Invest in EdMedia Research and Development to Create Emerging Technologies, by introducing the committee members. Mark explained that the goal is to create a systematic effort for investing in research and development of new products and technologies. The committee members are working to create the process whereby people – students, staff and faculty – can apply for mini-grants (matching funds or small or large grants). Mark indicated that \$30,000 has been provided for the grants; this equates to approximately 750 programming hours. There would be the potential for small grants that would help get projects to proof of concept phase so that a funding request could be submitted to a different organization (e.g., NIFA). Another approach would be to take a project from beginning to completion. Mark explained that while the initial project might fail, which might happen, we would learn something from the experience. The grants are for innovation only; no funds would be used to purchase hardware. Software would be open source, not proprietary. The committee created a draft of the call for proposals. A different committee would be established to assess the submitted funding proposals. The original committee plans to have the draft call for proposals ready by early 2013. Mark indicated that he hopes the first grant announcement will be around April 15.

Mary Garbacz informed the attendees on progress made toward completion of goal #9, Increase New EdMedia Partnerships and New Jobs/Projects. Mary introduced the committee members and stated that the goal is important because EdMedia wants to increase business by 10% annually for the next three years. Mary indicated that the most important audience is the internal audience – ALEC/EdMedia faculty and staff – so it is important for everyone to know what EdMedia does (the services offered by EdMedia) and the customers EdMedia wants to reach. With the help of colleagues, Mary developed a sheet about EdMedia services. She asked the meeting attendees to review the list and let

her know the services that were not on the list. The committee's goal is to have a nearly comprehensive list of EdMedia services available in print and on the Web.

The committee's informal mission statement is: "Inform potential customers of the scope and depth of excellence represented by EdMedia specialists in publications, information technology, electronic media, IANR News and with distribution and warehouse services."

From the initial goal meeting, the committee identified milestones as:

1. Education of the client to create a more successful client-provider relationship
2. Build relationships with both existing and potential clients
3. Education of EdMedia specialists about the work of other specialists
4. Visibility of EdMedia to the university community first, then to external clients

Toward completion of these milestones, Brandon has arranged with NET for partnerships as in the following:

1. EdMedia's off-site studio backup will be at NET
2. Utilize NET's relationship with K-12 education
3. Maintain Backyard Farmer and Market Journal
4. Work on video streaming
5. Cooperate and work with NET on various programs

Brandon is working with NET on various projects including:

1. Expanding Backyard Farmer to include an off-season program
2. Developing a contract for Backyard Farmer, as well as any spinoff programming resulting from the show, as opposed to a handshake agreement
3. Identifying and expanding demographics
4. Fundraising, so Backyard Farmer-related costs will be funded in perpetuity
5. Investigating additional opportunities for app development

Additionally, Mary indicated Brandon, she and other EdMedia staff members met with Dave Ulferts, Extension Director of Programmatic Partnerships, to learn about external partnerships and his approach to obtaining internal partnerships.

In-progress or planned committee items include:

- Developing profiles of EdMedia specialists so they are available on the web
- Identify system-wide barriers to excellence, then create solutions (e.g., processes, communication, visibility)
- EdMedia video display in the Ag Communications Building lobby
- Continuation of customer appreciation luncheon
- EdMedia internal memo, fashioned after the "Monday Memo"
- Continued marketing visits to UNL department heads (City and East Campuses)
- Continued attempts to obtain partnerships/business from Nebraska Innovation Campus, the Daugherty Water for Food Institute and other centers of excellence

Gina Matkin updated the group on goal #14, Formally Review the Agricultural Leadership Academic Program. A description of the goal is: “Agricultural Leadership faculty will conduct a comprehensive review of the current Agricultural Leadership Option within the Agricultural Education Baccalaureate Degree Program as well as our Leadership Communication Minor.” Gina explained that people have been working on this review for over a year. While the description of the goal indicates that “faculty” will conduct the review, the goal owners – Gina and Will Bird – want more people to be involved.

Gina indicated that specific questions to be answered include:

- What is the purpose of the undergraduate Agricultural Education Leadership Option program?
- Who is served by the program?
- How is the undergraduate Agricultural Education Leadership Option different from or how does it complement Ag Education teaching option, Ag Journalism or other programs?
- Is there overlap in these programs? Could faculty and staff do a better job of sharing forces in these programs to meet the needs of the students?
- What is the career path of students who graduate with an Agricultural Education Leadership Option program?
 - What competencies and capacities should students have to be able to pursue those careers?
 - What does success look like?
 - What experiences do they need to get them to success?
- How well does the current program do that? What needs to change? What needs to stay the same?

Gina indicated that they are in the data collection phase (Phase 1). Gina and Will are gathering information to gain a better understanding of the history and evolution of the program to provide perspective to help move forward in the program. A survey was developed to gather the opinions of faculty, staff, current students, past students, alumni, instructors, etc. as to what is the purpose of the program, what are the skills and competencies that people need, and what kinds of technologies do they need. Gina and Will piloted the survey. While they have the data from it, they have not yet analyzed it. Using the information from the pilot survey, Gina explained they would edit the survey and send it out. Focus groups are a possible follow-up to the survey.

In gathering information, Gina and Will are looking at other Ag Leadership programs across the country. What is happening in those programs? They will use this information to move into Phase 2, which includes visits to specific programs to learn about those programs. Additionally, committee members contact programs not visited to get information about the courses they offer, and obtain comprehensive syllabi and advising checksheets.

Gina explained that, initially, this was a short-term goal, but, with the human element, it might need to become a medium- or long-term goal. Vice Chancellor Green announced a new faculty position for Community Leadership Development. When this person is hired, he/she would have a new perspective on the program, a new leadership development specialization and perhaps a distinct connection to the Nebraska Human Resources Institute. Additionally, there is a new partnership with

the Engler Entrepreneurship Institute through a new approved minor, "Leadership and Entrepreneurship." Gina explained that all of this could affect how the committee moves forward on the goal.

In closing, Gina stated two other areas of consideration. First, Ag Leadership is currently an option but she asked if there was any wisdom in moving it from an option to a major. If so, what would it look like? What would be the pros and cons for a major? Secondly, CASNR recently approved a Bachelor of Arts degree. Should this program be changed from a Bachelor of Science degree to a Bachelor of Arts degree?

Old Business / ALEC Operating Guidelines

Dr. Balschweid explained that he asked Dr. Dick Fleming to update the ALEC Operating Guidelines, as they are outdated. Initially, this document was prepared in the mid-1990s, and Dick has been working on this project for several months. Dick explained that the guidelines include information for every person in the department because the document is to cover everything we do. Currently, the document includes much information on academic programs and faculty appointments, but it does not include much on managerial/professional and clerical/service employment classifications. The document will also include ALEC departmental committees as well as departmental representatives to University committees. Dick indicated that this is a work in progress and he welcomes suggestions on input. He hopes the document will be updated by July 1, 2013.

New Business / EdMedia Update

Brandon Schulte started by providing a financial summary (comparison of the same period in 2011 to 2012):

- Revenue is up 75% to \$843,277
- Expenses are down 3.3% at \$883,526
- Unbilled hours reflect reported time that has yet to be billed; when they are added back in with revenue, the adjusted accrued profit/loss is \$159,105 profit.

EdMedia total productivity is 72.4%, which is up 10% from the end of the 2011-12 fiscal year (June 30, 2012). Brandon indicated that he expects a lower productivity in December due to the holiday break but he anticipates a bounce in January 2013.

Brandon stated that customer service is trending higher. For October, the response to question #1 (What is your overall satisfaction with your final EdMedia product?) was .82 and .77 for question #2 (How likely are you to refer a colleague to use EdMedia's services?). Except for May 2012, the rating trends continue to improve – slowly going up.

The Software Development Specialist (programming) position is being advertised and there is a Search Committee assigned. The Electronic Media Producer position should be approved shortly; then it will be advertised.

Brandon indicated some people in the Ag Communications Building are being temporarily relocated so that Facilities can remove the asbestos in the ceiling on various offices on the first and second floors. The University is paying for this asbestos abatement, and Dr. Balschweid secured IANR funding for paint, carpet and new workplaces.

The second customer appreciation luncheon, spearheaded by Mary Garbacz and Sandi Karstens, will be held on January 25, 2013. This event, to thank customers for using EdMedia, will also provide the option for highlighting some of the new, innovative things EdMedia is undertaking.

Brandon indicated that recent happenings include:

- Design, layout and printing of the Senator Ben Nelson Book – Mary Garbacz and Renee Lanik worked with Senator Nelson’s staff on this project.
- Extension TV – Nic Colgrove, Adam Wagler and Mark Hendricks are working on this to integrate all of the Extension video resources in one location.
- “Growing a Healthy Future” Magazine – The second issue came out recently. Cheryl Alberts, Judy Nelson, Gary Goodding, Dan Moser, Sandi Karstens, Nick Manes and Anne Moore were involved in the magazine and the interactive PDF.
- Amazon.com – Brandon explained that this is another way to promote and sell Extension publications. We received our first order on November 26. A person from South Dakota purchased EC1557, “Integrated Turf Grass: Management for the Northern Plains.”
- Electronic Media worked on an entrepreneurship video for Connie Hancock. Charles Leslie did a presentation on security, Adam talked on the cloud-based (offsite) storage and Mike Kamm put it all together.

Social Committee

Anita Schaepe mentioned the December 3, 2012, Coffee and Cookies ALEC Social that will be held from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. She encouraged people to bring two to three dozen of something to 102 Ag Communications Building. If the item is homemade, please bring the recipe, as the Social Committee is working on an ALEC recipe book. Anita indicated that future social functions are being planned. Mark thanked the Social Committee for this event as well as the ALEC in Action Kindness cards to “make someone’s day” by doing something nice for someone else in the department.

ALEC Gift Fund

Mark indicated both ALEC and EdMedia have efforts to contribute to funds to recognize marriages, births of children, retirements, etc. but, up to now, there has not been a unified approach for such gestures. Kathy Bennetch and Janet Owens are updating the gift fund guidelines as developed for the academic program. The purpose of updating the guidelines is so that the recognition of acknowledgement is universal across the entire department.

Recruitment Update

Jennifer Schoen provided a recruitment update. The Facebook account has been improved, so if you have recognition, announcements, events, etc., please let Malika Yadgarova or her know. They are sending out around 300 holiday postcards to interested students. CASNR Salute is scheduled for

4:00 p.m. on December 14 with an ALEC reception at 2:30 p.m. Faculty members with graduating students have been alerted but everyone is invited to attend. Students and parents appreciate seeing all ALEC faculty and staff members at the reception.

Announcement

Via Facebook, Dr. Will Bird announced that he and his wife, Kristin, are expecting a baby.

Meeting adjourned.