

**Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts
Spring Faculty Meeting
via Zoom Video Conference
Friday, April 9, 2021, 3:30-5:00 p.m.**

Approval of Minutes

- Peter Lefferts moved to approve the minutes from the previous Fall Faculty Meeting and Sandra Williams seconded. The motion carried and the minutes from 10-23-20 were approved as written.

Important Changes to Make – Chuck O’Connor

- Our college, over the last year, has been focusing on student success and the N-2025 strategic plan. Our goal for these upcoming years is to pay more attention to retention and graduation rates. The University wants us to increase our 4-year graduation rate to 55% compared from our current rate of 40%. The University is considering embedding student success measures such as retention rates into our funding model.
- We are working on providing a more inclusive place for anyone coming to our college. Our diversity taskforce has been meeting every month doing research and writing a document that contains core strategies.

Update on Student Affairs – Jackie Mattingly

- Chuck mentioned that we are the only college in the University that still exclusively assigns faculty as advisors to our students. The other colleges on campus use a professional advising team. The EVC Office is piloting and partially funding a student success initiative in our college.
- Jackie welcomed Jenna Brende as the new student success coordinator in the Hixson-Lied College who has taken on the role of assisting with the implementation of implementing retention efforts and providing referrals to students in need with additional support services. She supports well-being pop ups in conjunction with Big Red resilience in our units, reaching out to students with holds on their accounts to help them navigate enrollment. She has also coordinated a REACH Training session for faculty and staff which is the campus suicide prevention gatekeeper training program. For more information on REACH, including a way to complete it individually, visit <https://preventsuicide.unl.edu/reach-training-0>. Our college is working to provide a smooth transition for new students by offering a summer Start Smart course. Students will have a network of support that provides a positive impact on the college’s retention and graduation rates.

Update on Academic Affairs – Chris Marks

- Interest and Outside Activity Reporting Form (IOARF)
 - Discloses professional activities outside the university and is required by the Board of Regents; helps us manage potential conflict of interest; keeps us in compliance with federally funded research; and needs to be completed every year.
- Research, Grant Assistance, Podcasts, and Other Updates
 - Grant information session: Friday, April 23rd, 8:30-9:30 am via zoom.
 - HL Faculty Grant update – in consultation with the College Exec Committee, we are adding an application deadline for the Research/Creative Activity Grant. There will now be a Fall and a Spring application, each tied to a one-year funding cycle.

- We are now almost fully transitioned to working with the Big Red Business Center. They offer support with grants that are both pre and post award that are either external or internal. Let them know if you need help preparing budgets or the grant applications.
- Faculty Research – have been looking at how to promote our faculty’s research and creative activities so we are more aware of what our colleagues are doing. There are slides spotlighting these activities on the screens in the buildings and on social media. We also have a podcast that talks about faculty and alumni’s research and creative activity. There are two episodes up already. The podcasts will be released once per month.

Update on Business Affairs – Steve Thompson and Joe Morris

- Migration to Microsoft OneDrive and SharePoint has begun. We are starting to move the departmental files from Box to SharePoint. The Dean’s Office is reorganizing the folder structure so we can be more consistent and intuitive when saving and sharing files.
- As of 5-12-21, the user migration opt-in ends. As of 5-17-21, no new Box accounts can be created and NU ITS will lock editing of files in department folders.
- Every user who works at the university, and has a box account, will be notified three days in advance of their box folder being relocated to OneDrive. ITS will notify you and may rename some of your files if they contain invalid characters.
- If you have shared files with someone from UNK or UNO, they will still work. If you have shared with someone outside of the University system, the links will have to be recreated.
- CFPA ITS has been working with the departments to coordinate the migration as it is a very large and complex process. The departments will prepare files for migration by consolidating all their files into a central location within Box so the IT Office can push those files into SharePoint.
- A link has been created for faculty who want to opt-in to have their files moved from Box to SharePoint.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan – Chuck O’Connor

- The events that have happened over the last year have caused us to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in our college. Many of our students are first generation students and this is especially true for people of color and women. Our past intolerances still have had disparate effects on getting a college education, employment opportunities, housing, medical care, etc. Our college can and will be part of the solution. The arts in particular have a large part in expressing a more just society.
- Our college has been working for the past year on developing a strategic plan for diversity, equity, and inclusion so that we can be the best artists, educators, and scholars that we can possibly be and make our campus a more welcoming place for anyone coming to our college.
- The changing demographics of our state require us to think about who our future students will be and we need to prepare ourselves today to attract those kind of students and meet their needs.
- Our diversity taskforce has been meeting every few weeks doing research and writing a document that contains core strategies. They read literature and reviewed some of the best plans from other arts colleges around the country. In addition, we convened a small group of alumni and students put together by Marques Garrett to get their views on what being a student of color is really like. The document was also sent to all the Deans and Administrators across the Big 10 and gained insight from them.
- Following today’s meeting, our Task Force will gather the insight gained and get back to you later in the Semester with a more complete strategic plan. We will also consult with our Executive Committee and Directors.

- Almost every plan talks about how to create an inclusive atmosphere, climate, and culture in the College and how we can support curriculum that is diverse. How do we support research and creative activities that build a sense of belonging? How can our community and state help us with this?
- Working Session and Breakout Groups
 - What are the barriers that we have seen that have prevented this college from advancing with a more diverse agenda? What has kept us from achieving the goals that we may have had in the past?
 - What do you see from the document that can be used as solutions to become a more diverse inclusive college in the future?

Group Reporting:

Walker Pickering:

I really like talking to my colleagues throughout the college and think we could have more conversations like this and want to think of ways to collaborate with my peers. The small breakout group in today's meeting was very helpful.

Dana Fritz:

We need to hire a non-Western art historian who can address these courses and there would be no downside. It would do a great deal for the SAAHD and the university because those classes could be done with one line.

Byron Anway:

We have a real opportunity to hire a non-Western specific art historian. Two years ago, the first-year research experience was started, which gives students the opportunity to work with faculty. It assists them in their research but is also a recruitment and retention tool. It's a way for us to give our most vulnerable students employment in their first year, introduce them to undergraduate research, and help them have mentorship with a faculty member. It's a program that involves some time, but it's really great and the college can do it as a whole.

Daniel Ikpeama:

We need to look at the curriculum that we have set for students that we want. If we want a more diverse student body, we need a more diverse set of curriculum to actually reach those different diversities and not just specifically for what color or orientation they are. There is a fear that reasonably arises when we talk about the inclusion of diversity and more diverse areas of expertise because the people that we already have established may not be as familiar with these new areas that are being brought in. A good solution is collaboration. Through it we can actually find ways of elevating the importance between the areas that we may have originally thought were not possible. There's an issue with orchestral music and continual decline in people's interest and programs being folded. But there's other growth that is happening in the same realm of orchestral music such as electronic music being rearranged or the ideas from electronic artists taking those same ideas and putting them into another medium that others wouldn't have thought of before. If we encourage that sort of collaboration between areas and disciplines, we provide an opportunity for growth that supports that idea of diversity that we really want. It can only be achieved if we really lean into the idea of collaboration.

Kevin Hanrahan:

It's important to identify the groups that we want to attract to the college and talk to them about what it is missing. Doing it more broadly, with the aspirational people that we want to attract and not just the people who have been here. We make certain assumptions about curriculum that aren't always necessarily accurate. The more we can reach out to the populations that we're wanting to bring into the college and find out what they want would be a better approach than just deciding what they want. Lincoln has a large international population, but there is a language barrier at times. We need more support for those individuals and should look at our admission criteria. We have a higher TOEFL score requirement than the university does for graduate education. When we do preferred qualifications around diversity, generalizing those requirements wording would be helpful. The current wording has us locked into having people who had not only experience with diversity, but it had to be specifically mentoring and advising, and had to be first generation mentoring and advising as opposed to more general. How can we tailor some of our job announcements and qualifications to be compliant with NE law and not fight the very objective we're trying to achieve?

Sandra Williams:

We should talk with the students who are involved in the Women's Center and the LGBTQ Center because they have a lot of insight to share. They might not be in our college, but they feel like administration only placates and patronizes them and their concerns are not heard. There are a lot of things that we can do visually. Some students don't feel safe on campus or don't feel wanted. We could have a place that honors their religion. The restrooms could become even more inclusive to all gender identifications. If we had a website that was in multiple languages, it would show that we are a global university. We have a toxic history. We have students that have not forgotten and ones that are coming in are very aware that there has been a white supremacy issue on campus, particularly with Daniel Cleave, and it needs to be addressed.

Michelle Harvey:

From a university level, we need to make sure that we know all the talking points so that the students know where all of those supportive places are.

Susan Ourada:

We need to create a safe space here for people who feel marginalized and who feel that they are not safe in the world. It is critical to the way that we portray what we have available here.

JD Madsen:

We want to recruit diverse students, but a lot of times they want to go to a school where there is diverse faculty. The traditional gate keeping institutions that provide people with higher education degrees aren't diverse, therefore, the faculty that they're generating that we can hire aren't diverse. We need to break the loop and start thinking more flexibly about possible things like real life experience equivalency to terminal degrees, so that we can broaden the pool of applicants that can come into our pool to teach our students. Without us pursuing the idea of professional equivalency inside of our hiring structure, we may be continually stuck with a very narrow bandwidth of individuals to consider for our teaching positions.

Peter Pinnell:

We've lost a couple of potential hires over the years because we couldn't provide a spousal or partner hire to go with it. We have to commit ourselves financially, but if we're really going to bring in qualified people, we need to be prepared ahead of time to have a position for a qualified spouse or partner. We need to help nurture programs in places where they don't currently exist which are underfunded schools where people of color aren't going to be exposed to the kinds of fields that we teach here.

Room 7: Jamie, Kathe, Marques, Tony

Scholarships and funding are very important. The challenge is trying to convince the people with actual power to do these things and get them done. We never seem to get past the stage of talking in a group or working off a document to effect the change. That has to become actionable. The curricular part seems to be one of the more reasonable and easily affected things that can be done past the stage of talking and working from a document.

Room 8: Anna, Peter, Raphael, Walker

There needs to be a greater intentionality and focus on our recruiting beyond the near reach of suburban schools. All the funds for guest artists should go to people of color so it's very deliberately skewed to bring diversity in front of our extraordinarily white student body. We want to do this with faculty as well and pay special attention to the applicants and actively recruit people so that we have a more diverse pool to pull from. We need to support underrepresented students to help them not feel pressured or tokenized by having student groups, clubs, and extra support as they move through the program. Once they get here, we want to keep them here.

Room 9: David, Francisco, Jamie, Rick

Nebraska is a conservative state that tends to not be progressive in terms of making change without resistance. We want to think about the NE students, that we are charged to serve as a flagship institution, and how we can help those students that may have never had a culturally diverse experience growing up in rural NE. How can we bring them into this idea of a culturally diverse world and help them understand things in a different way? There are some opportunities that can be naturally built into the curriculum such as teaching about underrepresented composers or a graduate seminar that can speak to music theory or music history or art history of non-Western white men. We have a multicultural student union on campus that does events for multicultural students. That kind of organization could be sized down to fit our college and could develop a social network group that gives multicultural and diverse students a place to fit in socially. For many of our disciplines, early training is significant and does make a difference when students come through the door. If we had a grant program or some sort of funding program where we could offer free lessons and experiences for underrepresented students, it could give them a better chance at being competitive with those students whose parents have the ability to pay for lessons.

Room 10: Aaron, David, Ian, Pete

If potential students only see white faculty, then things like the association with St Louis Black Rep become very important because they give us a way to address diversity that we don't normally have. Without money for recruitment and scholarships, we are handicapped. We are competing with many other schools that are working on the same thing.

Room 11: Chris, Glenn, Rhonda, Tom

Our training is mostly in the Western canon and that affects the literature and how we analyze music. If we're going to make curricular changes, it will take some professional development and work to make it more diverse and inclusive. The committee did a good job addressing all of the types of diversity that we should be thinking about.

Room 12: Jackie, Megan, Tony

We can look at diversification of artists in residence, people on our advisory councils, and the diversification of the curriculum so it's not just the white Western canon, but they're integrated and interlinked. We can be intentional with the recruitment of students, appreciate earmarked money, welcome families, and provide residences for people of color. We need to find out what the barriers are before students enter the college and be conscious of what we're asking in our application process so we're not discriminatory.

Room 13: Bill, Margaret, Robert, Stacy

There is a need to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in a purposeful way such as diversifying the faculty possibly through hiring or how we teach, and also in targeted outreach in terms of diversifying the student body.

Room 14: Ann Marie, Alfonzo, Sergio

Ear marking money is important especially with the challenge of being in Lincoln NE where the population is not very diverse. Even if we have a diverse community on campus, once we step off campus, we need to make sure that it's a welcoming and inviting community for our friends of color. Recruiting at the high schools and getting the lay of the land is important. We need to improve faculty searches and recognize the challenges of not allowing affirmative action choices and finding ways to check biases at the committee level.

Room 15: Alan, Hannah, Hans, Bill

We need to find out how are we not being inclusive and diverse. Are we trying to compare ourselves to the demographics of NE as opposed to the entire country? Quite a few things are already occurring with each of the faculty members and they are doing things to help promote diversity, inclusion, and equity. We tend to only pay attention to the big-ticket items and we need to start gathering information from individuals about what they are already doing to broaden our diverse and inclusive footprint.

Meeting adjourned