

IANR ALL HANDS MEETING

IANR COMMUNITY Q&A SESSION

January 28, 2020

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My teaching load has not changed in for the past 30 years. Indeed, because enrollment in my courses has increased, I am actually teaching more students than ever before. Yet, according to the 2019 “Teaching-Advising Calculator”, my calculated teaching FTE actually decreased. Was something changed in the algorithm to explain this?

Background information related to the CASNR teaching load calculation - Many institutions in higher education use a 24- or 32-credit hour base to define a full-time faculty equivalent for a 9 or 12-month appointment. The CASNR teaching load calculation was originally developed to account for the range of instructional employments among our IANR faculty as well as the variety of ways that a faculty member can contribute to the teaching and learning mission in their unit and the college. The CASNR calculation is determined through a two-part formula where the first part, instruction, is based on course information available through MyRed. The second part of the formula addresses the advising component of their teaching appointment. The advising information comes from the information our faculty submit with their activity and insight report. These two factors determine the raw calculation. Additionally, there are opportunities to adjust a faculty member’s calculation if programming changes occur or if the faculty member is engaged in a leadership role that exceeds the expectation of the position description. These adjustments are approved by the unit leader.

Regarding the specific question, the CASNR teaching load calculation has not changed since 2016. One possible explanation for the decrease is the 2019 data has not been finalized. It may be likely the calculation the faculty member is referencing may have been generated from the CASNR online calculator. This online calculator provides a preliminary estimate to be submitted with the activity insight report. Judy Carter, in IANR Finance & Personnel, does a tremendous amount of work helping to generate the calculations. Once course information is finalized in MyRed, Judy works with Erin Blankenship, one of our associate deans at CASNR, to perform the calculations for all IANR faculty that have an instructional appointment. That information is shared with the unit leaders and the unit leaders then circulate it with their faculty. I hope that helps to explain for this faculty member why they may have observed this decrease since the preliminary estimate adjustments have not been made. If you still have questions, I encourage you to reach out to Erin Blankenship as she’ll be happy to work with you on this.

One other topic related to the teaching load, which happens around the cycle of when we submit our activity insight reports, is to revisit the teaching load calculation. As we do with student course evaluations, our office will be partnering with the CASNR Faculty Advisory Council to form a working group composed of faculty and unit leaders. They will be charged with assessing the advantages and disadvantages of the current model and exploring possible modifications to the current model. They will also be charged with examining other mechanisms to assess a faculty contribution’s to student success and programing as well as advancing their teaching and learning mission in their unit and their college. If you have an interest in serving on this committee, please send me an email to share with the CASNR Faculty Advisory Council.

--Tiffany Heng-Moss, Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

Does IANR have a Diversity and Inclusion strategic plan in place? If so, would you please share it?

Yes, we do have strategic direction in the Institute and yes, our plan is to share it. The Institute is committed to valuing the contributions of each person and committed to making every interaction matter. Consequently, our strategic direction is in line with the University's N2025 strategic plan which officially publishes in mid-February. It's one thing to say that every person in every interaction matters however it's something very different to demonstrate in our actions and in what we do. So what you will see in terms of our plan, that we will share on our website for greater visibility, are "doing" sorts of things which translates to demonstrating, in meaningful ways, that every person in every interaction matters. I will say the leadership of IANR, the Vice-Chancellor, the Associate Vice-Chancellors, the Deans, the Department Heads, the School Directors, and other leaders within the Institute, are committed to engaging in practices that demonstrate the value we place on every person and every interaction. We recognize that valuing diversity through inclusive practices result in creativity, innovation and a sense of belonging. Those results are precisely the things needed as we tackle wicked, complex, and grand challenges that are being addressed by the more than 1,900 faculty and staff and greater than 3,100 students within the Institute. It is critically important we place appropriate value on creativity, innovation, and belonging so we can achieve our goals and outcomes. We recognize that diversity and marginalization can co-occur and we certainly see evidence of that happening within the Institute and within the University. In recognizing those happen simultaneously, we're being intentional in our fight to ensure it doesn't happen in the Institute in the future. We recognize that as we get a handle on diversity and marginalization co-occurring, that we will create a welcoming and inclusive environment which will increase our impact both now and in the future.

Within the Institute, we are coordinating activities with the Office of Diversity and Inclusion with Marco Barker and his team. Currently, I serve on the Council of Inclusive Excellence in Diversity with Sherri Jones, Nicole Frerichs, Tala Awada, and Dave Varner representing the Institute. The Institute is also coordinated at the system level with Stacia Jenkins and her team where I serve on the Diversity Officers Collaborative meeting twice a semester and coordinating our efforts across the five campuses.

One of the primary things many of you have seen is the provided training for our search committees for faculty and administrator searches within the Institute this year. The goal is for every search committee faculty member/administrator to receive training in explicit and implicit bias and the strategies to use to create an inclusively excellent search and hiring process. This training has also been modified for our promotion and tenure committees many

of whom have completed this training. The plan, in preparation for the 2020-2021 evaluation cycle, is for every promotion and tenure committee in the Institute to be trained in explicit and implicit bias and inclusive practices. Additionally, this training will be provided to faculty, staff, and students of West Central and Panhandle Research Extension, Education Centers NCTA in March. With this training completed, position descriptions for faculty, unit leaders and all leaders within the Institute will include a statement recognizing the necessity to create inclusive excellence. This statement will be represented prominently within position descriptions and position announcements.

Additionally, we are giving greater attention to mentoring and are intentionally inviting speakers who help us raise awareness. Some examples are “The Table Talk” summer events sponsored by the Inclusive Communities; the fall play, “Defamation Experience”; and the Teaching and Learning Workshop a couple of weeks ago where one of the primary themes was inclusive excellence within our classes and teaching. We are creating a student organization, Chapter of Manners, to provide support for underrepresented students in fields associated with agriculture and natural resources. Additionally, we provided scholarships for students to attend 2019 cultivating Change Conference in Des Moines and will provide scholarships for students to attend that same conference in Atlanta this summer. In preparation for this question, I counted events in the Institute and came up with 40 which does not include those happening in CEHS, the units and extension.

--Rich Bischoff, IANR Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Academic Leader Success

What are the plans for fixing streets, parking lots, and sidewalks on East Campus? There are numerous locations with cracked/buckling/pothole areas both on the streets and sidewalks that could be a safety issue.

On East Campus there are 15 miles of sidewalks, 28 acres of parking lots, garden spots (thank goodness for Kim Todd, our landscape architecture students and the amazing team that keeps this campus green), 3.1 miles of streets, almost 4,000 trees, and a total of 365 acres resulting in a well-balanced green and hard scape. Our sidewalks are not perfect, we have potholes and there are some in disrepair. The simple answer is we need to hear about these deficiencies by utilizing UNL’s Service Desk at 472-1550 or email servicedesk@unl.edu. Remember pictures are worth a thousand words. If you really are frustrated about a chronic issue please CC me at mboehm3 or contact Barry Shull. If it is a safety issue, and we really think it is a safety issue or it’s getting in the way of accessibility, I’ll contact Bill Nunez and Brooke Hay and Emily to expedite the safety/accessibility concern along. Some of the larger issues with our roads, for example the lay down area and the parking lot north of the Union, are getting torn up and will have to be repaired after construction is completed. Good or bad, there is a great deal of construction on campus which will continue to create more potholes and ruts. But when it comes to safety and accessibility please report that to the Service Desk. Thanks for your question.

*--Mike Boehm, Harlan Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources,
Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources*

Are there plans for off-campus parking or increased campus parking for students, staff, and faculty once the ECCO (East Campus Community Organization) restricts neighborhood parking from 33rd Street to 43rd Street and from Holdrege Street to the MOPAC bike trail?

As that East Campus Community thinks about their neighborhood, there is a movement afoot for a no parking moratorium on city streets south of Holdrege. In 2013, "The Big Plan" reviewed our physical space to see how it supported our academic environment. According to results of that plan, we have plenty of parking. Regarding a parking garage, I can tell you unequivocally we will not build a parking garage on East Campus, however expanded surface parking is a consideration. When Massengale came online, parking at the East Campus Union was re-evaluated; there was review of parking during the library renovation; and yet another parking review with the Dairy Store project. We have plans to create parking on the north side of the meadow along Campus Loop Drive where people can access the Dairy Store and various parts of campus. There is plan through Business and Finance and Physical Facilities to do another round of master planning on East Campus City Campus where parking will likely be revisited.

*--Mike Boehm, Harlan Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources,
Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources*

What are potentials for dedicating more of our research and teaching [and extension] to non-production topics that will contribute to sustainability of rural families and communities and long-term human viability?

The question basically was to look beyond production agriculture, beyond feeding, fueling and fiber to a growing world with sustainability and resilience in mind. I believe we are examining broader issues and opportunities. We have people working the Heuermann Lecture on resilience and sustainability on soil health on landscape services. We had a task force this year that Don Mackey chaired, looking at rural community prosperity. We have looked at our work in rural futures CVI and where that takes us. Chuck's earlier conversation about engaging and reciprocity and mutual benefit. These examples all target relevance and helping Nebraskans grow Nebraska. I believe there's a lot going on in this space including our hiring and our leveraging of funds, which are aligned throughout the Institute

*--Mike Boehm, Harlan Vice Chancellor for the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources,
Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources*

How can we be expected to attract and retain employees when our annual raises don't even cover inflation and our starting wages don't compete with comparable jobs outside the University?

We are quite aware that as part of the public sector, our salaries are not always at the same level as the private sector. I work continually with Jeff Bassford and Jen Muller looking at our salaries and wishing we were more competitive with the private sector. It is something we are constantly aware of. I think you recognize that not all benefits of working in a specific position are salary based. We know that some benefits cannot be used to pay the mortgage and to buy the groceries. However, one of the most important benefits of working at the University is knowing you make a difference in people's lives. You do have a generous benefit package and you do have stable employment however, we recognize that, at times, this not enough. If you recall President Carter's comments today, he mentioned that competitive salaries was an issue he wants to examine. Salaries are something that we continually keep on our priority list and is an issue we will continue to evaluate. We do review different classes of employees however sometimes budgets are not adequate to sustain salary increases. When market growth and equity increase, and we believe we can sustain a salary increase for a group of employees, we do make equity adjustments relative to the market. Our budgets are just not adequate to do what we would like to do for everyone. Be assured we are continuing and will continually look at the budgets and the salary structure within the Institute.

--Ron Yoder, Senior Associate Vice Chancellor

What is the status of the dean search at the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture (NCTA)?

Our search committee met last week and evaluated our pool of highly qualified candidates for this important position within our system. We have identified a set of candidates that will advance to Zoom interviews. Our goal is to complete these Zoom interviews, reference checks, identify our short list, and receive approval before the end of February. At that point, the list of potential candidates will be forwarded to Vice Chancellor Boehm with the goal of hosting these candidates to the NCTA campus for face to face interviews in March.

--Tiffany Heng-Moss, Dean, College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources

What is the timeline of the demolition and reconstruction of the new Mabel Lee Hall?

Local news reports have shared that the building at 14th & Vine will be torn down this semester. Currently, the construction schedule is behind waiting for gymnastics to move and for asbestos removal. The building will be demolished brick by brick and the CEHS web page will capture the

historic event. The CEHS web page will also show reconstruction updates; pay homage to the history of Mabel Lee; and display pictures of the future building. If the construction schedule is maintained, we should reoccupy the new facility in 2022. This building will join our department together by housing Teaching Learning, Teaching Education and Child, Youth and Family Studies. Additionally, a part of the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families in Schools will be housed in our new facility. Our new facility will be a place where teaching and learning will be visible with engagement opportunities between faculty, staff and students.

--Sherri Jones, Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences

What is the status of the chair openings in the Department of Child, Youth & Family Studies (CYAF) and the Department of Textiles, Merchandising & Fashion Design (TMFD)?

We are currently in the interview process for the Department Chair of Child, Youth and Family Studies. Like the Institute's leadership, I hope you connected with and engaged those candidates. Announcements have gone out for various Unit Head and IANR meetings to facilitate further engagement. One candidate was here last week, one candidate on campus yesterday and today and the final candidate will be here at the end of this week. Please provide your feedback to Nick Pace, Search Committee Chair, to a member of his committee, or to me as we continue our search for this department.

In Textiles, Merchandising, and Fashion, Yiqi Yang is currently serving as the interim chair following Michael James' retirement. The plan is to initiate a search for that department chair this fall (2020) and have a new chair in place by Fall 2021. Yiqi will continue to serve as Interim Chair until a new Chair is identified.

--Sherri Jones, Dean, College of Education and Human Sciences

What are the next steps regarding the Nebraska Center for Virology and the Morrison Life Science Research Center?

In 2019, UNL research administrators formed a faculty committee representing the Life Sciences. This committee was charged to envision the future direction for the Nebraska Virology Center and to determine a broader research domain in the life sciences to include animals, humans, plants, and microbes. This discussion was facilitated by Kirk Dombrowski, Associate Dean for Research in the College of Arts and Sciences, Interim Director of NVC and by Deb Hamernik from the Office of Research. The committee recommended development of three pillars or domains of research expertise in the Morrison Life Sciences Research Center enhancing transdisciplinary collaborative research and life sciences. UNL administrators acknowledged and reaffirmed that virology is a core theme around which to build those broader pillars or domains to add to the Morrison Research Center. The next step in this

process is to gather input around this concept from the broader community. There's an open invitation for UNL faculty and administrators to submit input regarding the composition of the additional research domains through a process leading up to a meeting with administrators on Friday, March 6. If you need additional information or details about this process, please contact ARD and/or your unit administrators.

--Archie Clutter, Dean, Agricultural Research Division

What professional development and promotion opportunities are available to full-time research and administrative staff, to help with their retention?

I think that one of the primary ways that we show our character is in how we treat our professional staff. I'm pleased to announce today, although an email went out about this a week ago, that IANR administration has approved an IANR Staff Council. CEHS has had a Staff Council for 15 years or so and is well established. There are several other staff councils that exist within the University and across the system but IANR has never had one. Our Staff Council will represent over a thousand staff members in the Institute, most who are forward deployed throughout the state working in offices, in fields, in feed yards or wherever it is that staff might find themselves. One of the challenges of our proposed Staff Council will be working through the unparalleled job diversity and varied responsibilities that exist within our staff. This Staff Council will be to provide a vehicle for professional development and to connect those with more limited opportunities with people engaged in similar job responsibilities. Through those additional networking opportunities, staff will gain an appreciation for others' accomplishments and be better prepared to recognize superior work through awards and recognitions. Within the next week of two, you should receive a nomination request. Since September, a seven-member exploratory committee representing a diversity of staff responsibilities has worked to create our Staff Council. All received nominations will be vetted through this committee. Our nine-member Staff Council will begin meeting in April or May and throughout the summer to begin offering programming for staff in the early fall semester.

--Rich Bischoff, IANR Associate Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Academic Leader Success