

Policy generates comments

From Staff Reports

UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier told the Academic Senate Tuesday that 22 comments about a proposed sexual harassment and discrimination policy have come to the Affirmative Action office so far.

The Policy Statement on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination deals with issues ranging from sexual harassment to university relationships.

Spanier said the comments have included small details that were easy to fix and large disagreements that will be harder to address.

"The small stuff is easy," he said.

The issue bringing in the most comments are the sections on relationships with a power differen-

tial, Spanier said. A power differential relationship can be a professor/student or professor/administrator relationship. The proposed policy would require couples involved to report their relationships to a supervisor.

"There are very differing points of view," he said. However, Spanier said, all the comments made about the policy could be accommodated.

Spanier said five of the comments were from organizations.

He said a final policy should be ready next spring.

In other business, senate members were given a summary of the task force report dealing with engineering education in Nebraska. Many senators were not present, and discussion on the report was sparse.

Decision raises questions for engineering college

By Julie Sobczyk
Staff Reporter

Engineering professors had mixed reactions to Tuesday's news that Stan Liberty will step aside from his job as engineering dean.

Liberty informed faculty of his departure Tuesday in a letter.

For some professors, the news was not unexpected.

Maher Tadros, an engineering professor who teaches at the University of Nebraska at Omaha, said he thought Liberty was leaving because of the conditions of his job.

"I think the situation of managing a college that is divided by 50 miles is a system that no one, no matter how good he is, can manage," Tadros said.

Roy Sneddon, an associate professor of civil engineering, said the change possibly was made as a solution to recent controversies about the engineering college.

"I'm sad to see him go, but I'm not surprised," Sneddon said. "Things have been hectic. Some solutions are to change the dean or the chair."

But Sneddon said the timing of

Liberty's departure would hurt the college.

"I think it will further confuse the issue," he said. "When things are hectic, it's nice to have someone there you have confidence in."

William Kelly, a civil engineering professor, said the decision might be connected to the upcoming regents decision about creating a separate engineering college at Omaha.

"Maybe they are connected somehow," he said. "Most people are as in the dark as I am."

But, he said, it was too soon to know the exact reasons.

"It will become clearer in the next week or so," he said. "Right now there are a lot of unanswered questions."

John Ballard, associate dean of the college, emphasized the departure wasn't a resignation. Ballard said he did not know why Liberty was not reappointed, but he was surprised by the timing of the announcement.

"There is enough uncertainty now," Ballard said. "I have no idea what effect it will have. The faculty will be very upset and dismayed."

Liberty

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NU administrators said Tuesday central administration was not involved in the decision to remove Liberty. Smith did not return telephone calls seeking comment Tuesday.

Loudon said he thought UNL was sacrificing Liberty to prevent a separate college from being formed in Omaha. Instead of getting a separate college, UNO would get more money, scholarships and expanded programs under the new dean, he said.

"For Lincoln to win, the dean would have to go," Loudon said.

However, Liberty said the decision was not part of any deal he made to keep the state's engineering college intact at Lincoln.

Chancellor Graham Spanier said Liberty was not asked to continue as dean because it was time for new leadership in the engineering college.

"In looking to the future, the conclusion was that it was an appropriate time to have a new dean to lead us into the new era," Spanier said.

"Sometimes a new dean can provide something an incumbent dean cannot," he said.

Pacifying Omaha interests didn't figure into the decision, he said.

"We don't do business that way," he said. "We would not be comfortable doing business that way."

Spanier credited Liberty on leading the college for more than 13 years. And Spanier insisted Liberty had done nothing wrong.

"You shouldn't draw the conclusion someone wasn't doing something right," he said.

Spanier said the decision not to renew Liberty's contract was reached through a mutual understanding.

Joan Leitzel, senior vice chancellor for academic affairs, said she de-

cided not to recommend Liberty for another term after meeting with him recently for a five-year review.

She said that her decision was not motivated by the engineering debate and that administrators were not forcing Liberty out of his job. But she would not comment about what she based the decision on.

NU Regent Rosemary Skrupa of Omaha said she wasn't surprised by the announcement.

"The fact that he made certain decisions probably led to him to be evaluated less than 100 percent positive," she said.

Skrupa said Liberty was an able administrator with integrity. However, he often ignored engineering needs at UNO.

Leitzel said she would choose an interim dean before the first of the year.

A committee to conduct the nationwide search for a new dean will be formed after the NU Board of Regents decides this weekend whether to create a separate engineering college at Omaha.

Leitzel said that decision would affect the number of UNO representatives on the committee. If the regents create a separate college, UNO will need its own search committee to find a dean for its engineering college, she said.

Spanier declined to say whether an Omaha candidate was being considered for the dean's position. He also said he couldn't say whether the interim dean would come from the Lincoln or Omaha campus.

After Liberty leaves his position, Leitzel said he would assist in the development of the Technology Park.

"That is moving quickly, and he has experience and expertise," Leitzel said.

Senior Editors Jeffrey Robb and Senior Reporter Matthew Waite contributed to this report.

Investigation

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Manslaughter charges, he said, might deter police officers from abusing their power.

"You assault a police officer, and you get time in jail," he said. "Police assault people and they don't get anything when they are supposed to protect and serve the community."

Bartle said changing the charges was a question of Nebraska statute.

"It has yet to be demonstrated to me that I have any such authority," he said.

Veskrna

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and now we've got a Latino community member dead," Noriega said.

He said Veskrna should be charged with at least third-degree assault. Noriega said he wanted the other officers involved in the incident also removed from their jobs.

"If they try to cover this whole

County Attorney Gary Lacey said he didn't think Bartle could change the grand jury indictments unless the special prosecutor knew of evidence that wasn't presented to the grand jury.

Noriega said respect for the Hispanic community was part of what prompted Intercultural Coalition members to write up the petition.

"We can't keep our eyes closed. This is just a wake-up for all of us Latinos to stand up and say enough is enough," he said.

Senior Editor Angie Brunkow and The Associated Press contributed to this report.

thing up, they don't deserve to wear the badge they wear," he said.

Noriega said the petition still was in the planning stages, and no signatures had been collected.

UNL Police Chief Ken Cauble, who had not heard about the petition on Tuesday night, said the coalition had a right to file a petition.

He said he would be willing to discuss the issue with any members of the Hispanic community.

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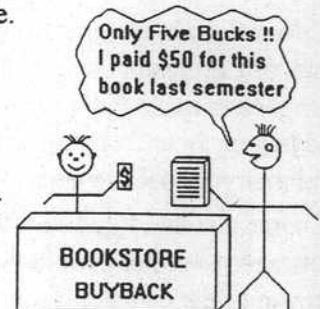
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