



The New UNO Senate Review

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"The Virtue of *Prosperitie* is Temperance; the virtue of *Adversity* is Fortitude, which in Morals is the more Heroicall Virtue."
Francis Bacon (1625)

Adversity, indeed. After three rounds of budget cuts during the last academic year, the University of Nebraska system is preparing for another even more significant cut for AY 2003. The planning for this massive cut is well underway, but the exact size of the cut is not yet known at this time. As you recall, the Governor proposed a real cut of 10% off the total last year's funding. In reality, because of rising university fixed costs, a 10% reduction from last year's appropriation would have the effect of an even larger cut. Fortunately, the Appropriations Committee of the Unicameral at first reduced the level of cuts to 7% and then, in a surprise move, on March 31st, tentatively recommended an even lower cut of around 3%. No one yet knows what the final figure will be although most observers are not counting on the lower figure. This uncertainty is the reason why full details of how UNO would handle a 7% cut were not made public on April 16th.

Faculty can still have a direct impact on the Unicameral as it makes its final decisions on university funding. It is not too late to contact your state Senator and urge that he or she support adequate funding for the university. Faculty can also help lobby the members of the Unicameral in Lincoln on April 28th. Even a few reasonable voices can have a great impact. (Please contact Sue Bishop for details.)

The Faculty Senate has continued to represent its constituents in the budget cutting process. On March 12th we heard a report on the economic state of the university from President Smith. On March 28th and then again on April 11th, the Senate's Executive Committee and Cabinet, as a part of shared governance, met with members of the Administration to review the most recent figures and strategies for the budget cuts. We will also invite the Chancellor and Vice Chancellors to give an up-date on the budget cutting process to the full Senate, on May 14th.

Here are some other issues the Senate is working on. The Senate's Goals and Directions Committee has been working with UNO librarians to try to address the problems of serials acquisitions on the various UN campuses. The costs of the serials keep escalating, making it more and more difficult for libraries to keep subscriptions. The committee's sober report on this issue is included in the agenda of the March 9th Senate meeting. Among their recommendations was that a member of the library faculty should have a permanent place on the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. Another recommendation is that VC Hodgson work with the administration at UNL to expedite UNO requests (to Love library) for inter-library loan materials. These concerns are also shared by members of the Committee on Educational Resources and Services.

In light of the recent decision to discontinue the recycling program at UNO, the Goals and Directions Committee has been asked to study what the faculty can do to continue to support recycling efforts on campus. The committee will give its report at the May Senate meeting.

The committee has also been asked to study the possibility of a review of priority programs. They will begin to look at the question: Based on the new environment at the university, do our old priorities still remain valid? It has been proposed that the Senate retreat in August be given over to this issue.

The Professional Development Committee proposed resolution #2666, noting the importance of Faculty Development support, especially for tenure-track faculty, and calling upon the Administration to make faculty development a priority. This resolution was passed in the April 9th meeting of the Senate.

The Committee on Educational Resources and Services is also working on a number of issues. One of these is the question of in-state tuition rates for students from the Council Bluffs area in Iowa. The committee learned that, in this budget climate, the initiative has been put on the back burner. The committee was also looking into the use of social security identification numbers and their availability in the SIS system. The Registrar is currently watching some bills in the Unicameral regarding the use of social security numbers as identification. If these bills pass, there would be a major impact on the SIS system and other systems at UNO. The committee will continue to study this issue.

The Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare has been struggling with the reconciliation of Promote B in the College of Arts and Sciences' Promotion and Tenure Guidelines with the general UNO Guidelines for Promotion and Tenure. They are currently collecting and studying the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines of all UNO's colleges.

The Rules Committee has contacted all faculty members to ascertain their interests with respect to service on various university committees. The response to their mailing was very good. They are now working to fill empty slots not only on university committees but also on Senate standing committees for AY 2003-2004.

Spring Commencement is scheduled for May 9th at 3 p.m. in the Omaha Civic Auditorium. The scheduled speaker is former Secretary of Education Richard Riley. Please consider coming to hear Mr. Riley and to congratulate our young graduates as they take their leave for the larger world.

The Senate welcomes Bob Shuster to our ranks. Bob will be finishing Tom Bragg's term in office.

On April 30, Chancellor Belck will sponsor a dinner to honor those members of the Faculty Senate and Staff Advisory Council who will be finishing their terms in office. Among the Faculty Senators to be so honored will be: Nora Bacon, Robert Blair, Tom Bragg, Robert Carlson, Donna Dufner, Wikil Kwak, Shuanglin Lin, Bonnie O'Connell, Andrew Smallwood, Angela Valle, and Vaughn Johnson, who retired last December. All these senators have served with distinction over the course of their Senate careers, many serving in key leadership roles. In the face of adverse economic news, they have shown "Heroicall Virtue" in carrying out the demands of shared governance.

Bob Blair deserves special recognition. Bob not only served as chairperson of the Committee on Professional Development this year, but he also recently volunteered to serve out the remainder of Tom Bragg's term in office as Senate Vice President. Bob was elected to that position at the March meeting of the full Senate. Congratulations, Bob, and thank you.

Finally, I would like to highlight the remarkable work of other members of this year's Executive Committee and Cabinet: Ethel Williams, Secretary/Treasurer; Boyd Littrell, Chair of the Rules Committee; Laura Dickson, Cabinet Chair and Chair of the Educational Resources and Services Committee; Nora Bacon, Chair of Academic and Curricular Affairs; Henry D'Souza, Chair of Faculty Personnel and Welfare; Bruce Garver, Chair of Goals and Directions. In a year of continual uncertainty and crises, these leaders worked tirelessly, even through the summer, to keep the Senate's business moving forward. They are a team filled with "Heroicall virtue."

This will be the last issue of The New Senate Review before the summer. I hope that you have found it helpful in keeping up with the work of your Senate. I will publish the Review only on an "as needed" basis over the summer. Regular publication will resume in the fall. Have a productive and relaxing summer.

Greg Sadlek
President

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