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Budget cuts, lay offs, student demonstrations, developmental courses, and strategic advances-all held the attention of the Faculty Senate during November of 2002.

Among the resolutions passed was 2650, which asks the Board of Regents not to increase funding for Programs of Excellence during the biennium if the university budget remains flat or is cut. Two items must be emphasized here. First, the Faculty Senate did not go on record against funding for Programs of Excellence. We expect that the base amount for Programs of Excellence will remain in the budget. Second, our recommendation holds only if the university budget remains flat or is cut. The amount of the proposed increase in this funding for the biennium is considerable, \$6,000,000. This figure is equivalent to approximately 100 currently existing faculty lines that might have to be reallocated should the budget not increase a corresponding amount. These reallocations could cause the university to suffer wrenching dislocations beyond those caused by the looming state budget shortfall-something the UNO Senate feels strongly should be avoided.

Resolution 2651 was, at least in part, a response to the Chancellor's public letter of 27 September 2002. In that letter, the Chancellor asked the campus for ways to improve the process by which faculty and staff positions are eliminated as a result of budget reductions. In this resolution, the Senate asked not only to be more involved in future reduction decision making but also that the Administration consult with faculty experts on personnel reduction in formulating its termination policies. In response, Chancellor Belck shared with the Senate a new draft of the "UNO Reduction in Force, Supervisor's Guide," which makes good progress in addressing campus concerns about the lay-offs. We also were able to examine Steve Kuss and David Kimble's letter to Chancellor Belck of 8 November 2002, which sets out in clear detail and from the staff's perspective multiple suggestions for improving the process of making staff reductions. The Senate will have a chance to comment on these suggestions in the December meeting. Chancellor Belck was also invited to the next meeting of the Senate Executive Committee and Cabinet on December 4th. The idea is to conduct a budget cutting debriefing. We will examine how the budget cutting process was carried out over the past summer and early fall and decide what if any changes the Faculty Senate would like to see with respect to faculty input in the process.

In Resolution 2654, the Senate commended the organizers of the recent student demonstrations because they brought the consequences of recent budget cuts to the attention of the public and because they conducted their demonstration in a dignified and appropriate manner.

A quick review of Senate committee reports indicates that the Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee, led by Nora Bacon, has been discussing the effects of the elimination of developmental courses such as English 1050. They have brought their concerns to Vice Chancellor Hodgson, and a report on what they learned will be presented at the meeting of the full Senate on December 11th. Laura Dickson and her Committee on Educational Resources and Services were discussing the following issues: new student ID cards, the Paul Beck Scholarship, department chair search procedures, a colloquium on library serials, and a tuition reduction for our neighbors in nearby Iowa. The Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare, led by Vaughn Johnson, was crafting Resolution 2651. The Committee on Goals and Directions, under the leadership of Bruce Garver, was concerned that official faculty representatives have more of an input at Campus Strategic Planning Advances and, thus, encouraged us all to attend the advance on November 22nd. The committee was also concerned about fostering greater cooperation between the UNO Library and other libraries in the NU system. For complete committee reports, see the agenda of the November 13th Senate Meeting at the web address below.

This December Wally Bacon's term as Past President will come to an end. Wally served as President of the Senate with distinction during AY 2001-2002, and he has continued to contribute to the smooth functioning of the Senate during his time this fall as Past President. We will miss his advice and guidance, his facility with crafting eloquent resolutions. We wish him well in all his new endeavors and hope to see him back in the Senate before too long.

This is a good point to remind you that the winter Commencement Ceremony will take place on Friday, December 20th, at 2 p.m. in the Civic Auditorium. The UNO Jazz Band, led by UNO Professor Peter Madsen will enliven the ceremony with its own special style of music, and UNO alumna Karrin Allyson will SING her commencement address! It looks to be a very festive ceremony. Please consider joining your colleagues, and help us to honor our December graduates.

Reflecting upon the season and the joyous celebration at the Civic Auditorium leads me to conclude with a festive quotation the

Gawain-poet, who describes a medieval holiday celebration as follows:

*The feast was in force full fifteen days,
With all the meat and the mirth that men could devise,
Such gaiety and glee, glorious to hear,
Brave din by day, dancing by night.
High were the hearts in halls and chambers,
These lords and these ladies, for life was sweet.*

Despite all the grim economic news and the predictions of more budget cuts to come, despite wars and rumors of wars, it is good to put aside our cares for the short span of the mid-winter holidays and to enjoy "brave din by day" and "dancing by night." No matter what your faith tradition, the Faculty Senate wishes you a winter break filled with holiday "gaiety and glee" and, if your plans include travel, a safe and easy voyage.

Greg Sadlek
Faculty Senate President

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