



# The New UNO Senate Review

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The open Senate meeting of February 12, 2003, attracted a fair crowd of visitors to the Ballroom of the Milo Bail Student Center. At the meeting, Senators and visitors heard reports from both Chancellor Belck and Vice Chancellor Hodgson on the budget cutting process and the severity of the possible budget cuts. Those present had the opportunity to pose questions and ask for clarifications. They also had a preview of the various restructuring teams later unveiled by Chancellor Belck in her memo of February 19, 2003. These teams are now active, and the Senate would urge any faculty with ideas and suggestions to contact the relevant team. The Magenta Team, for example, is considering ways to restructure faculty development services. The Senate's Committee on Professional Development as well as faculty from UCAT and UCR provided valuable input into the team's deliberations. This kind of outside input may also be helpful for other restructuring teams.

The Chancellor has planned a rigorous schedule of "information and discussion opportunities" with various campus constituencies on various ways to cut the campus budget. These are listed in her memo. The Faculty Senate will continue to do all it can to help expedite the exchange of information between UNO administration and faculty.

The Faculty Senate is working with Central Administration to help make the university's case for a reduction in the level of the Governor's proposed cuts. The Senate Executive Committee, acting on behalf of the full Senate on a time-sensitive issue (as our constitution allows), has passed the following resolution to be passed on to the Appropriations Committee at the March 10<sup>th</sup> public hearing:

**WHEREAS** the University of Nebraska budget was reduced by \$31.1 million in 2002, and the current outlook is for an additional 10% cut (\$41 million) in 2003

**WHEREAS** the University of Nebraska is a crucial educational resource and economic driver and, thus, is essential to the recovery and long-term economic well-being of the state,

**WHEREAS** additional cuts of the magnitude proposed are likely to necessitate increases in tuition and fees that would make higher education less affordable for Nebraska citizens,

**WHEREAS** the effect of the additional cuts would be to make higher education less able to respond to the educational and service needs of Nebraska citizens,

**WHEREAS** it would take years for the university to recover from the effects of a budget reduction of the magnitude proposed,

**WHEREAS** the university realizes that it must bear an equitable share of cuts in order to resolve the current budget crisis,

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha calls upon state officials to consider means by which to reduce the adverse impact that the presently proposed budget cuts will have on the quality and diversity of education and services provided by the university.

It is hoped that the cumulative effect of four such resolutions, one from each of the four campuses, will help make the university's case for a less damaging cut. This resolution will be placed before the full Senate for confirmation in the meeting of March, 12, 2003.

The Senate also encourages all faculty members who are available to join with the Senate leadership in Lincoln at the hearings of the Appropriations Committee. UNO student leaders are making impressive efforts to organize student participation as well. Let's hope that the faculty participation in this event will be as strong as student participation. Sue Bishop has agreed to work on car-pooling. If you want to share a ride to Lincoln on that day, call Sue at 4-3598 and leave your name and referred times of departure and return. We will do our best to coordinate rides.

We will not have official response to the Student Senate's resolution calling for an attendance policy "holiday" until the March 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Executive Committee and Cabinet. My personal opinion is that while we should not respond to the Student Senate's resolution, we should not ignore it either.

meeting of the Executive Committee and Cabinet. My own personal opinion is that, while we should not cancel classes, we should encourage (or, at least, not penalize) students who wish to get involved in the political process.

Now, to some news that's not budget related. The Faculty Senate's Committee on Educational Resources and Services has teamed up with the UNO Library, the Committee on Library and Learning Resources, the University Library Friends to sponsor a program entitled "Scholarly Communication: Defining Roles for Faculty and Librarians." The focus will be on academic serials. This forum is particularly important today as we look to find various alternatives to offset the effects of rapidly rising journal costs, which have resulted in the loss of many journals from the UNO library. The program will take place on March 7, 2003, and will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will take place in the Dodge Room of the Milo Bail Student Center.

The Senate's Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare is discussing the issue of Faculty Profile B in the Promotion and Tenure Guidelines of the College of Arts and Sciences. Profile B is a tenure profile that does not require "Distinguished" (or "Outstanding") ratings in teaching, research, or service. This would seem to contradict university promotion and tenure guidelines, but the profile was reaffirmed by the college faculty last fall. The committee is working on ways to solve this apparent disconnection.

The Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee studied a proposal for a new specialization in Investment Science and Portfolio Management for the College of Business Administration. The committee found that the proposal is academically sound and that addresses student and community interests. The full Senate recommended approval at the February 12<sup>th</sup> meeting (Resolution 2659). The committee also proposed some changes to catalog language on academic integrity (Resolution 2660). The full text of these resolutions is available on our web site.

The Committee on Goals and Directions is working on some issues relating to strategic planning. One question that they discussed is whether (and, if so, how) UNO should modify its strategic goals in light of impending budget cuts of great severity. The committee has worked to improve faculty (and Senate) participation in the Chancellor's future of UNO.

The Rules Committee found volunteers to fill out the membership for the Faculty Grievance Committee (Resolution 2661).

Full text reports from all Senate committees are available in the Senate agendas, which are available each month on our web site.

Our next full Senate meeting will take place at 2 p.m. on March 12, 2003, in the Dodge Room of the MBSC. President L. Dennis Smith will be making his annual visit to the UNO Faculty Senate during this meeting. Visitors are always welcome.

Finally, the Senate election results are in, and the following UNO faculty members have been elected to three-year terms: Wally Bacon, Jeremy Lipschultz, Pamela Owens, Jack Schroder, Graham Mitenko, Richard Ortman, Rebecca Pasco, Richard Helm, Prithviraz Dasgupta. These colleagues will begin their terms in May of 2003. Congratulations! We look forward to working with you. We also want to congratulate our Senate Vice President, Dr. Tom Bragg, for his official appointment to the position of Dean of Graduate Studies. Good luck with your new responsibilities, Tom!

Greg Sadlek  
President

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