Attendees: Adkins, Akers, Allen, D’Souza, Skreija, Watson

Excused: Arbelaez, Bacon, Glaser

I. The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m.

II. The December 1, 2004, minutes were approved as written.

III. Officers Reports

A. President’s Report: Senator Bacon reported:

1. The University of Nebraska Board of Regents met in Lincoln on December 10th and 11th. It was the last BOR meeting for Regents Don Blank of McCook and Jono Croskey, UNO’s Student Body President-Regent. On Friday, December 10 the Academic Affairs Committee hearing was dedicated to the University’s response to LB 174. The legislative task force created by the bill set three priorities for the University: 1) Increase the number of students who enter postsecondary education in Nebraska; 2) Increase the percentage of students who enroll and successfully complete degree programs; and 3) Reduce, eliminate and reverse the net out-migration of Nebraskans with high levels of educational attainment. The University’s response has been threefold: 1) Assure affordable access to quality higher education to Nebraskans and others; 2) Achieve academic program excellence throughout the University; and 3) Enhance research for economic growth. The growing Hispanic population of Nebraska, running counter to negative trends in other populations, must be targeted for secondary school completion and admission to the University, which gives UNO an urban advantage.

The next hearing was of the Business Affairs Committee dealing with the University’s financial responsibility for environmental clean-up at the Mead ARDC. The University’s share of the cost will be at least $6 million over three years and more. The last hearing was of the Information Technology Committee. Blackboard usage was the topic. It should be noted that UNO has proportionally more courses using more functions on Blackboard than UN-L and UNK combined.

At the Saturday BOR resolutions honoring UNO’s Service Learning Academy and our Community Technology Center were passed. The Strategic Issue was the state’s 2005 economic outlook, presented by Gerry Oelligmuller, State Budget
Administrator, seconded by Mike Calvert of the Legislature’s Fiscal Office. While there is optimism that recovery has begun and that revenues will be increasing, the presenters cautioned that Medicaid and K-12 aid would be more that 40% of the budget and are increasing at higher rates than other agencies and programs. Regent Hawks expressed the opinion of the Board when he noted that the Legislature has to be visionary and preemptive in dealing with this dilemma. President Milliken said that the University drives economic growth in that we are the primary provider of an educated workforce. A second consideration is how the state will pay the low level waste compact nullification costs ($145.8 million).

The January 2005 BOR meeting will be held on the UNO campus.

2. Nancy Castilow, Asst. to the Chancellor, sent the following e-mail on December 14, 2005: The Chancellor accepts Resolutions 2758 and acknowledges for information purposes, Resolutions 2759 and 2760, with congratulations to Hollis Glaser as incoming Senate President-Elect!

B. The December Budget Report was approved as submitted.

IV Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Professional Development: Senator Adkins reported the committee met on December 15, 2004, and composed the following resolution:

WHEREAS the University of Nebraska at Lincoln offers a number of degree programs on the campus of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, such as Architectural Engineering, Civil Engineering, Computer and Electronics Engineering, Construction Systems, and Fire Protection Technology; and,

WHEREAS the students in these degree programs are enrolled at the University of Nebraska at Omaha; and,

WHEREAS the administrative and budgetary components of those programs are housed on the Lincoln campus; and,

WHEREAS cooperative efforts between the four campuses may fail to consider how to appropriately support affected faculty in improving classroom instruction; and,

WHEREAS current guidelines on professional development limit the expenditure of resources to full-time faculty of the University of Nebraska at Omaha;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha supports the principle that the UNO Administration maintain quality instruction by providing professional development services to all faculty;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha encourages the UNO Administration to take all measures possible to fund professional development activities of all faculty of the University of
Nebraska system teaching on the campus of the University of Nebraska at Omaha; AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha urges the UNO Administration to work with the Central Administration to achieve equity in all similar cooperative efforts among the four campuses.

This was approved and will be presented to the full Senate next week.

V Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee Reports

VI Non-Senate Committee Reports

A. Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska (AFCON): Senator Paterson reported the AFCON meeting was held December 11, 2004. Prior to the meeting I learned that AFCON is a one-of-a-kind organization. No other state has a state-wide network of educators and community participants. Moreover, the educators include teachers, librarians, and administrators from all levels of education K – 12, two- and four-year college, and universities. It was formed in 1988. There have been discussions as to whether the organization should attempt to set up more AFC’s (without the chicken) in other states. The meeting began at 10:00 AM at the Eisley Library in Lincoln and Subjects covered included:

1. Ted Koosier being given the 2005 Book award.
2. An ongoing essay contest about academic freedom involving high school students.
3. What the future might hold given recent elections.
4. Actively recruiting Academic/Faculty Senate Presidents to get their organizations to join AFCON. This would also apply to local AAUP organizations.
5. Whether AFCON qualified for tax-exempt status. Matter will be investigated.

B. Academic Planning Council: Senators Glaser reported the reviews will take place the week of February 21st.

VII New Business

A. College of Communication, Fine Arts,& Media:

The Constitution and Bylaws of the new College were reviewed and the following resolution was approved to send to the full Senate next week:

WHEREAS the faculties of the departments, school, and support units involved have spent the past two years reflecting on, discussing and approving creation of a new college, and

WHEREAS the School of Communication will no longer be part of the College of Arts & Sciences and will no longer award a Bachelors of Arts or Bachelors of
Science,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha approves the creation of the College of Communication, Fine Arts, & Media, combining School of Communication, the departments of Theatre, Music, Art & Art History, and Writer’s Workshop, KVNO and UNO-TV,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves the creation of the Bachelor of Science in Communications and the Bachelor of Arts in Communication.

B. The Executive Committee and Cabinet approved the following resolution:

Resolved, that the Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha approves a proposed bill to remove from the statutes pertaining to the UN Board of Regents language that caps the retirement contribution of the university to an employee at no more than 8%.

VIII The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m.