
Excused: Bernstein, Elder, Kosloski

Absent: Krause, Ortman

I. After a short presentation on faculty surveys, by Linda Mannering, Director of UNO Institutional Research, the meeting was called to order at 2:10 p.m.

II. The minutes of the December 8, 2004, Senate meeting were approved as submitted.

III. Officers’ Reports

A. President’s Report: Senator Bacon

1. Board of Regents Meeting was held 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 Oligmuller, 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 an e-mail on December 14, 2005, stating the Chancellor accepts Resolutions 2758 and acknowledges for information purposes, Resolutions 2759 and 2760.

3. Senator Bacon commended Sanator Akers and appointed him as Faculty Marshal for the installation of President Milliken.


IV Executive Committee Report:

A. Senator D’Souza moved the following resolution for the Executive Committee. The resolution passed.

Resolution 2761, 01/12/05: Regarding Formation of New College

WHEREAS the faculties of the departments, school, and support units involved have spent the past two years reflecting on, discussing and approving the 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 and Media, combining the School of Communication, the departments of Theatre, Music, Art & Art History, and Writer’s Workshop, and the support units of KVNO and UNO-TV,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate approves the creation of the Bachelor of Science in Communication and the Bachelor of Arts in Communication.
B. Senator D’Souza also reported that the Executive Committee and Cabinet voted to support the 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%.

V Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs: Senator Akers reported that there was no meeting and no formal report, but his committee will be reconsidering the “minus” grading system.

B. Committee on Professional Development: Senator Adkins reported the Committee met on December 15, 2004, and formulated the following:

WHEREAS the goal of the University of Nebraska at Omaha is to place students at the center of the educational enterprise; and,

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, Constructions 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 faculty of the University of Nebraska system teaching on the campus of the University of Nebraska at Omaha when such activities are likely to impact the faculty member's use of teaching-learning processes in his/her teaching responsibilities;

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate of the University of
Nebraska at Omaha urges the UNO Administration and the Central Administration to ensure adequate support of faculty teaching in all similar cooperative efforts among the four campuses.

After the Senate discussed whether the motion clearly communicated the senate’s desire for changes in associated university policies, a motion by Senator Corcoran to recommit the item to committee passed.

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.

C. Alumni Association, Board of Directors: Senator Fruhling reported that the Alumni Association hosted a January 11, 2005, Round Table with Lee Terry at the Alumni Center.

D. American Association of University Professors (AAUP): Senator D’Souza recommended the latest AAUP newsletter material on policies and procedures for reappointment and tenure consideration, read a message from the AAUP lobbyist to the Nebraska Unicameral asking faculty to communicate with legislators, and reported negotiations on the 2005-2007 contract are in the final stages.

E. University Committee for Professional Development: Senator Adkins reported that the committee had concluded its work and sent a report to the Chancellor. The committee asked the Chancellor for feedback from various groups, and he hopes to have that report at the next Senate meeting.

VII Old Business:
A. Senator Bacon tasked the Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee to research the Dual Enrollment program. There does not appear to be any web site or centralized area that keeps track of courses offered, instructors, etc.

VIII New Business

A. Senator Fruhling moved that it is the sense of the Senate to be communicated to UCAT that External Faculty who teach UNO students can receive support. The motion passed.

B. Senator Bacon tasked the Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee to study the appropriate use and naming of “Dead Week.”

C. Senator Bacon also tasked the Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee to study how to have more faculty in attendance at graduation ceremonies.

IX. The meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.