Wednesday, March 9, 2005

Attendees: Adkins, Akers, Allen, Anderson, Arbelaez, Bacon, Benjamin-Alvarado, Bernstein, Corcoran, Dasgupta, D’Souza, Elder, Garver, Glaser, Kosloski, Latchaw, Mei, Merkel, Metal-Corbin, Mitenko, Ortman, Owens, Pasco, Patterson, Randall, Sather, Scherer, Shaw, Skreija, Stroope, Watson Wetig, Williams, Wolcott

Excused: Fruhling,

Absent: Adidam, Bramlett,

Before the meeting began Linda Mannering, Director, Institutional Research, very briefly discussed the National Survey of Student Engagement survey and encouraged the return of a parallel faculty survey soon to be sent to all faculty on campus. Bill Swanson, UNO’s Legislative Liaison, gave a Nebraska Legislative update.

I. The meeting was called to order at 2:15 p.m.

II. The February 9, 2005, minutes were approved with correction.

III Officers Reports

B. President’s Report: Senator Bacon reported:

1. The University of Nebraska Board of Regents met on Friday, March 4, at UNK, and on Saturday, March 5 in Lincoln. The Academic Affairs Committee reported approval of the establishment of the UNO College of Communications, Fine Arts and Media as well as the UNO BA and BS in Aviation. An overview of the Honors Programs at all the three undergraduate campuses was presented. There was a discussion of LB 239, the Nebraska Dream Act. Vice President David Lechnor presented reports on higher education salary trends and Provost Noreen gave an update on the proposed budget. There is a proposal before the Nebraska Post Secondary Education Coordinating Commission to approve a new four-year campus in South Sioux City, supported by Wayne State College and Northeast Community College. The University’s position is that we already have excess capacity in colleges and universities and that, despite the region’s being under served, such an undertaking would be redundant and costly.

On Saturday in Lincoln, the Board recognized the UNO-OPS internship program as of great importance and value in the mission of providing a more diverse teaching cadre. Outgoing UN-L Student President-Regent Katie Weichman was
thanked for her service. The strategic issue presented was the University’s role in encouraging entrepreneurship in Nebraska. During the public comment period State Senator Chip Maxwell, the Director of the Nebraska Coalition for Ethical Research, presented that organization’s opposition to a recently announced UNMC research project using embryonic stem cells. By vote of the BOR all its standing committees, with the exceptions of Academic Affairs and Business Affairs, are placed on a one-year hiatus. LB 239, the Nebraska Dream Act, which would grant in-state tuition to undocumented aliens who have graduated from Nebraska high schools and who have taken steps to gain legal residence status, was passed with two abstentions, Miller and McClurg. UNO’s new college and the degree programs in aviation were approved as were UNO’s and UNK’s collective bargaining agreements. Additionally, a number of reports were distributed including an impact assessment of the effects of President Bush’s budget proposals on higher education.

2. Nancy Castilow, Asst. to the Chancellor, sent the following e-mail on February 14, 2005: The chancellor acknowledges Resolution 2762 (Task Force on Faculty Development Report) for the purpose of information.

B. Senator Allen submitted the February 2005 budget report.

IV Executive Committee Report: Senator D’Souza moved the following resolution for the Executive Committee, which passed:

Resolution 2763, 3/09/05: Replacement Senators

WHEREAS a caucus of the majority of the remaining Senators from the College of Arts and Sciences have elected Mark Scherer and Paul Williams to replace Natalie Bennett and Beth Ritter for the remainder of the 2004-2005 Senate, and

WHEREAS Kenneth Merkel is the external faculty member next in line to serve as a replacement for Senator Krause (2002-2005), who has resigned due to class scheduling, and

WHEREAS the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate recognized that these replacements would take effect at the March meeting,

THEREFORE the Faculty Senate welcomes Kenneth Merkel, Mark Scherer, and Paul Williams to service in the 2004-2005 Faculty Senate.

V. Standing Committee Reports

A Committee on Academic and Curricular Affairs: Senator Akers reported that the committee is looking into the current grading scale as requested by the Deans. He handed out surveys to the senators to fill out and return during the meeting.

B Committee on Educational Resources and Services: Senator Watson reported the
committee met on 23 February. Senators Wolcott, Shaw, Ortman, Pasco, and Watson were in attendance. Associate Vice Chancellor for Technology John Fiene joined the committee to discuss faculty incentives for integrating technologies into teaching. Fiene reported that the ITS Strategic Plan is updated every two years, and what ITS tries to target in their Strategic Plan are “order of magnitude” instructional technologies. Incentives were part of this planning. UNL, like UNO, offers grants for development of Distance Ed courses, although the grants offered at UNL are quite a bit larger ($10,000) than the mini-grants offered to UNO faculty through ITS ($2500). Feine also noted that UNL offers a summer, online institute on instructional technologies to its faculty. This online institute is also available to UNK faculty. ITS is currently working with UNL to make the institute available to UNO faculty. There are no other incentives available to UNL faculty for integrating instructional technologies into their teaching. Feine noted that there are a number of other types of incentives open to UNO faculty, including:

- COE summer inter sessions that generally focus on emergent instructional technologies.
- An abundance of Blackboard training options, such as Ask? Sessions, one-on-one, small group and departmental customized training sessions, as well as a Digital Media Team who will assist faculty in instructional design with current media technologies.
- ITS will sponsor one Faculty Development Fellowship in Instructional Technologies.
- The ePortfolio project.

UNO now offers 29 degree programs Distance Ed, most of which are graduate programs (Distance Ed students account for 10% of graduate hours). It was also noted that each semester 1500-2000 courses use Blackboard at UNO. Out of approximately 1000 instructor accounts in Blackboard, there are 609 instructors actively using Blackboard.

In addition to items from the committee’s meeting, Senator Watson reported on the status of applications for the Paul Beck Scholarship. In response to comments from the floor, Watson described options available to faculty for dealing with spam e-mail, and noted that while John Fiene said he is willing to listen to specific complaints about Lotus Notes, that changing to another program would be an extensive and expensive project.

C. Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare: Senator Skreija reported the committee met on Wednesday, February 23, 2005. Present: Bernstein, D'Souza, Mei, Skreija (Chair). Absent: Mitenko, Owens. The Committee discussed the draft, dated November 19, 2004, of the "Policy on Conflicts of Commitment and Conflicts of Interest." It was decided to solicit evaluations and reactions regarding the implications the policy, as set forth in this document, would have on UNO faculty.

Senator Bacon then announced that during his meeting with presidents of the other NU faculty senates last weekend he was informed that the central administration had withdrawn the policy draft after UNL Senate opposition.
D. Committee on Goals and Directions: Senator Allen reported the committee met on February 23, 2005. Present: Allen (chair), Fruhling, Garver, Sather, Wetig. Guest: Cicotello. The committee continued to develop the Minority Recruiting Strategic Plan. The committee hopes to present it at the April Senate meeting.

E. Committee on Professional Development: Senator Adkins reported the committee met on Wednesday, February 23, at 2:30 p.m. Present at the meeting were Senators Adkins (chair), Bramlett, Kosloski, and Paterson. Deb Smith-Howell, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs was present to discuss the future of the Service Learning Academy. She informed the committee that UNO will begin the process of searching for a permanent director, who will hopefully be in place by May of 2005. On behalf of the committee Senator Adkins moved the following resolution, which passed:

Resolution 2764, 3/09/05: Service Learning Academy

WHEREAS, since 1998, 3,889 students have completed a service learning course; 240 service learning courses have been taught; and 35 faculty members have participated in scholarly activities through peer-reviewed publications and presentations at professional conferences; and,

WHEREAS, the main issues confronting the Service Learning Academy are (1) the lack of stable funding, and (2) the need for permanent leadership; and,

WHEREAS, approximately one-half of the Service Learning Academy budget comes from private funding; and,

WHEREAS, the program has been funded one year at a time, making it impossible to engage in long range planning or commit to activities beyond that time frame; and,

WHEREAS, the UNO Administration has reported that funding will be allocated to hire a permanent director.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the UNO Faculty Senate commends the Administration for recognizing the importance of hiring a permanent director for the Service Learning Academy,

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the UNO Faculty Senate commends the Interim Co-Directors of the Service Learning Academy, Nora Bacon and Paul Sather, for their leadership over the past year,

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate respectfully requests that the Administration continue to give priority in allocating permanent funds to the Service Learning Academy.

F. Committee on Rules: Senator Arbelaez reported the campus and university committee survey has been e-mailed to all full time faculty.
VI Non-Senate Committee Reports

A. Academic Planning Council: Senator Glaser reported that the review of the Psychology department has been completed and the report is being written. The Gerontology department will be reviewed later this month.

B. Alumni Association, Board of Directors: Senator Fruhling was not able to attend the meeting. Senator Bacon submitted her report. New alumni board members are Ray Barr, Bob Danenhauer, Tom Warren, Kevin Munro and EvaJon Sperling. The board approved the alumni center renovation proposal. The construction will begin August 1, 2005. Stuart Wheat presented an overview on the new UNO web site.

C. American Association of University Professors (AAUP): Senator D’Souza was unable to attend the State Conference. Senator Garver, who did attend, reported that the panel discussion of Dual Enrollment was very interesting and well received.

D. Strategic Planning Steering Committee: Senator Allen reported the SPSC met on February 23. The Advance is set for Friday, April 8. The theme will be Academic Excellence. The format will be students and teachers who present research in poster form. He urged all Senators to attend.

E. University Committee for Professional Development: Senator Adkins reported that there has not been a meeting since last reported. Two forums have been scheduled for this week and all faculty are invited to attend and discuss the recommendation of the January 2005 Task Force on Faculty Development. Dr. Smith-Howell will be soon sending out a survey in order to rate faculty Development.

VII Old Business:

Senator Akers reported that of the surveys just filled out by the senators, 30 were returned. Of those, 80% said the current grading system was acceptable, and 25 of the 30 had not received any complaints about the grading system. The Academic and Curricular Affairs Committee will now make the decision whether to proceed or not.

VIII New Business

Senator Bacon tasked the Goals & Direction Committee to look into the matter of advertising for the University of Nebraska at Omaha which should increase public awareness of the institution and in turn will give UNO a "market presence" and perhaps increase the number of quality applicant, to their research on recruiting.

IX The meeting adjourned at 3:20 p.m.