Attendees: Barnes, Randall, Shaw, Skreija, Wetig, Wolcott

Excused: Bullock, Tarry

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

II. The minutes of the February 7, 2007, meeting were approved as submitted.

III. Officers’ Reports

A. President’s Report: Senator Shaw reported

1. The Executive Committee and Administration met February 21, 2007. The Faculty Senate's resolution (R2840) regarding a faculty appointment to the University-wide Benefits Committee was presented to Interim-Chancellor Christensen who responded that he selected Dr. David Corbin to represent UNO. Also presented was the Faculty Senate's resolution (R2851) concerning Equitable Distribution of Workload within Departments and Dr. Christensen asked Sheri Rogers (Interim Vice-Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs) to communicate it to Deans, Chairs, and Directors. Dan Blanke (Director, HPER) and Joe Kaminski (Director, Campus Recreation) addressed plans for the renovation and expansion of the HPER building. Faculty have expressed concerns about the proposed increase in fees. They will address the Faculty Senate at its March 14 meeting, so Senators will have an opportunity to confer with them directly. A proposal for the HPER renovation will likely go to the Board of Regents at their April 2007 meeting. Interim-Chancellor Christensen told us that he expects a decision about affiliation with the Mid-America Intercollegiate Athletic Association (MIAA) by June 1. The MIAA has revised its bylaws to accommodate a member having one NCAA Division I sport, so long as it has not played in the MIAA. UNO would need to add one men's sport (most likely tennis) to match up appropriately with the conference. This can be done without affecting UNO's Title IX obligations. Dr. Christensen commented on a recent story in the UNO Gateway which raised concerns about safety and security in student housing. He stated that a number of the assertions in the story (which concerned an alleged sexual assault) were incorrect, and that some quotes were wrong or mis-attributed. Wade Robinson (Associate Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs) intends to meet with the UNO Gateway staff and advisors to review the matter.
2. Chancellor’s Council met February 22, 2007. Wade Robinson (Associate Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs) reviewed UNO's work on disaster preparedness and plans for a pandemic influenza. UNO has some distance to go, but progress is being made toward continuity of business operations, which should enable critical programs such as payroll and benefits to continue during and after a disaster.

3. Testimony before the Legislature’s Committee on Nebraska Retirement Systems. Mr. Joshua Eickmeier, who works on the staff of Senator Bill Avery, asked if I would testify on February 27, 2007, on behalf of Legislative Bill 679, which would amend current law to allow the Board of Regents to set its contribution to employee retirement accounts at a percentage it deems appropriate. The Regents' contribution is capped at eight percent, which has become a cause for concern as other institutions frequently offer a higher percentage. I agreed to testify. Dr. Greg Karst, the Faculty Senate President at UNMC, was unable to attend the hearing, and after reviewing my text he asked that I include him in my written testimony.


IV. Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare: Senator Skreija reported the committee met on February 28, 2007. Present: Barbara Hewins-Maroney, Elaine Lahue, and Andris Skreija (Chair). Excused: Stuart Bernstein, Samuel Brown, and Lauree Tilton-Weaver. Because of the lack of quorum no official business was conducted. The committee noted that the invitation to the UNO faculty to participate in a survey regarding their assessment and experience of the UNO campus academic and social climate had been sent. In informal discussion the consensus was that the proposed focus groups to discuss these issues should be held next fall. The feeling was that by the time the survey results were analyzed and evaluated the end of the academic year would be imminent, faculty would be busy and reluctant to participate in such sessions.

B. Committee on Goals and Directions: Senator Wetig reported the members of the committee are continuing to collect data from each college on “Major Community Engagement Initiatives/Partnership Programs” in the following areas:
   1. Length of Partnership,
   2. Number of Faculty Involved,
   3. Number of Staff Involved, and
   4. Number of Students Directly or Indirectly Impacted.
Senator Hugh Reilly is collating data via a spreadsheet to share with G&D committee during the March meeting.

C. Committee on Professional Development: Senator Bullock reported the committee met on February 28. Those present were Senators Bullock, Mei, Noble, Corcoran and Rowland. Senator Winter was absent. The committee discussed the implementation of myMAPP Faculty across campus for the Annual Review process.
Senator Bullock solicited opinions from the committee regarding their impressions of the myMAPP tool and the response was generally positive with some legitimate concerns about the time commitments to complete the Annual Review through the myMAPP system when compared to the paper version. The strongest criticisms of the myMAPP tool revolved around frustration with certain parts of the entry process that seemed to make it exceptionally time intensive to enter similar items multiple times. A faculty member, for example, who had completed 20 media interviews during the previous year would have to enter 20 separate items. Several members of the committee also expressed some concern with the sorting function in ordering one's view, which seemed to cause some confusion. Senator Noble volunteered to participate in a focus group composed of faculty members who would offer feedback of the system for Academic and Student Affairs as the myMAPP system is improved for use during subsequent years. We also agreed to invite Dr. Karen Rolf, UNO Assessment Coordinator, to attend our March 28 meeting to discuss assessment and professional development on campus.

D. Committee on Rules: Senator Barnes reported the committee met February 28. In attendance were: Shuanglini Lin, Paul Barnes, Holly Miller, Parvathi Chundi, Amanda Randall. The committee filled Faculty Senate standing committee openings for the 2007-08 academic year. Names and assignments were forwarded to Sue Bishop. The committee also discussed the Committee Service Preference Form that will arrive in faculty mailboxes the week of March 5. Information from this form will be used to fill campus-wide/university-wide committee openings for the 2007-08 academic year.

V. Non-Senate Committee Reports

A. Alumni Association, Board of Directors: Professor Carter reported the UNO Alumni Associations Board of Directors met February 13, 2007, with introductions by the new Chairperson Deb McLarney. Dean Reed followed with an update on the remodeling of the College of Public Affairs and Community Services (CPACS) Building on campus. It is anticipated the completion of the building, with the 5000 square feet addition, to be in August 2008. The building is currently gutted and 90 percent of the renovation cost has been raised by private gifts. The architectural firm completing the project is HDR. On April 2nd there will be the ground breaking ceremony for the new campus housing on Southwest corner of campus with 430 units (similar to the Scott Village style) and a parking garage structure. Regarding the Athletics Director search, the pool of candidates has been very strong with 70 applicants. John Langan is Chair of the committee and would like to get down to 17 candidates in the next few weeks, and have five candidates for interviews in early Spring. Bill Funk is running the search for Chancellor with interviews possible this summer. Upcoming events include the Golden Circle Lunches on March 9th, April 6th and May 11th, Legislative Roundtable March 26th, UNO Commencement May 4th, and Board of Directors meeting May 8th.

B. Strategic Planning Steering Committee: Senator Holley reported the Strategic Planning Forum was held March 2, 2007. Considering the blizzard the day before there was a good showing of community members, students, faculty and staff.
PROGRAM:
Welcome from Interim Chancellor John Christensen
Panel: MyMapp (including latest re contribution of UNO to Omaha Regional Economy, e.g., $1.6 billion annually)
Panel: Unit Strategic Planning (must be updated, should “nest” with NU/ UNO plans)
Table groups brainstorm re Six Issues- to build on last year’s Strategic Planning
  · Students expect a broader variety of course delivery options
  · Competition from other local educational institutions
  · Affordability
  · Achieving diversity
  · Faculty recruitment and retention (salaries)
  · “Hard” and “soft” (e.g., critical thinking, human relations) skills UNO graduates should acquire
  · Poster session re UNO student-involved, community-based research and service
Panel: Presentations re research and service
  · Benson Alliance Planning Effort (City of Omaha, CPAR and Urban Studies)
  · Service-Learning (UNO Service Learning Academy projects)
  · LEGENDS program (Hartford Foundation and Social Work)
  · Making Beautiful Music Together (Western Hills school and Music Dept)
Lunch and “Wrap Up” by BJ Reed

VI. Old Business

A. Faculty Task Force to Design a Common Course Evaluation Instrument. Senator Shaw reported the task force has held its first meeting, a Blackboard site has been established, information is being reviewed and background reading on course evaluations has begun. This task force will report to the Faculty Senate Educational Resources and Service Committee.

VII. New Business

A. Student Senate/Faculty Senate Volleyball Game(March 28) - Senator Shaw received a request from the Student Senate to field a Faculty Senate team to play them on March 28. Sue Bishop sent a request for sign up to the senate. Only one person volunteered so far. He will see how many senators volunteer at next week’s meeting before he makes a decision to decline or accept.


VIII. The meeting adjourned at 2:35 p.m.