Members: M. Bacon, N. Bacon, Barnes, Betanabhatla, Boucher, Boyer, Chundi, D’Souza, Dwyer, Elder, Gershovich, Heidel, Hewins-Maroney, Holley, Ilcisin, Lamsam, Mei, Miller, Morcous, Morcous, Noble, Ottemann, Parnell, Paterson, Reames, Reilly, Smith, Sollars, Stanton, Tarry, Thorp, Tixier y Vigil,

Excused: Edick, Novikov

Absent: Lin, Mordaunt, White, Winter

Presentations:

A. Ivory Bobb, Jr, Staff Advisory Council President: SAC issues/tasks for 2008

B. Linda Mannering, Director, Institutional Research: Reminder to fill out UCLA survey

II. The meeting was called to order at 2:17 p.m.

III. The December 12, 2007, minutes were approved as written.

IV. Officers’ Reports

A. President’s Report: Senator Tarry reported:

1. The EC & Admin meeting was held December 19, 2007. UNO Student Government has expressed concerns about the ever-increasing cost of textbooks and has asked the Administration and Faculty Senate to discuss the issue. The Chancellor noted that Dean Hendricks in Arts & Sciences has been working with faculty in his college to address this issue and has developed some innovative strategies. While textbook costs are certainly a concern, it is not the only concern. Faculty must retain the right to select and use pedagogically appropriate materials in their courses. The Senate could play a leading role in addressing this issue. As noted previously, the Chancellor determined that the original Chancellor’s Commission on Multicultural Affairs, which he inherited from his predecessor, was no longer effectively serving the campus community. It had become too large and unwieldy. The Chancellor asked Deb Smith-Howell, Sharon Ulmar, and Sharif Liwaru to explore a reorganization of the commission and prepare a draft recommendation that would be shared with the campus community. Deb Smith-Howell shared this draft, as an attachment to this agenda, and offered to
speak to the Senate if that was deemed necessary. The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor Everts provided an update on the 12 Month task force. The Chancellor noted that he is awaiting the task force report and looks forward to meeting with members of the campus community after the report is released. He noted that the task force was asked to "explore the issues" not devise a scheme or plan for reorganizing the campus.

2. The 12-Month Task Force met the morning of January 9, 2008. A report on its findings is scheduled to be delivered to the Chancellor by the end of January. The report will likely recommend that the Chancellor appoint specific working groups to answer questions raised by the task force and the campus community during the initial discussions about enhancing summer offerings or balancing the academic calendar.


IV. Executive Committee: Senator Barnes reported

A. Chancellor’s Response to Resolution: At the EC & Admin meeting the Chancellor noted that Resolution 2894, which called on the university to pursue plans to offer family and gender neutral restroom facilities on campus, is already being addressed by the administration. He noted that the resolution serves to heighten awareness of this issue within the campus community.

V Standing Committee Reports

A. Committee on Educational Resources and Services: Senator Boucher (No meeting/No Report)

   1. Common Course Evaluation Form Task Force Report: Senator Parnell reported that the committee is still in a state of uncertainty.

B. Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare: Senator Hewins-Maroney, while having had no meeting in December, and, thus, no report, requested Senate input to the FP&W committee on “Draft of Revisions to the Regents’ Policy for Emeritus Status.”

C. Committee on Rules: Senator Miller reported the Faculty Survey should be sent out in March 2008. She also moved the following resolution on behalf of the Rules committee. The resolution passed:

   Resolution 2895, 1/16/2008: Wellness Stampede Advisory Committee Member

   BE IT RESOLVED, that the following name go forward as a two-year appointment from 08/01/07, through 07/31/09, to serve as a Wellness Stampede Advisory Committee member to replace Bill Wakefield:

   Rachel A. Erb, (Systems Librarian).
VI. Non-Senate Committee Reports

A. Academic Freedom Coalition of Nebraska (AFCON): Senator Paterson reported that he has completed his term as AFCON President. AFCON is working on a Student Bill of Rights.

B. Graduate Council: Professor Blair wrote the Graduate Council met January 15, 2008. The Graduate Dean, Deb Smith-Howell, discussed plans for promoting graduate studies at UNO including the development of pages in the Alumni Newsletter and the expansion of informational panels at Eppley Airfield. The Dean also asked for other ideas from the faculty on promoting graduate studies. She feels many people do not think of UNO in terms of graduate studies. The Honors Week faculty convocation is April 10. Two new named professorships will be announced. Linda Pratt, Provost for the University of Nebraska System, has asked campus graduate deans about research on attrition rates for graduate students. It was determined that most of this type of research was being conducted at the program level. Graduate Council members asked how this information would be useful at the institutional level. Finally, Dean Smith-Howell asked members of the Graduate Council to attend the interview sessions for the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs candidates that deal with Graduate Studies. Scheduled sessions so far are January 17 and 23. The Carter Thesis Luncheon will be held on April 22, 2008. Committee A continues working on revising the Graduate College Strategic Plan. One of the first tasks for Committee A will be coordinating input to a new strategic plan from graduate faculty. Committee B approved several new course syllabi and areas of concentration. In Other Business, Dean Smith-Howell reviewed the web site on the 12-month academic calendar. She emphasized at this time that the Chancellor calls this step of the process a “campus conversation.” Questions raised by members of the Graduate Council included: what is the level of interest by students in this issue, what would be the impact on academic support services during the summer session, do we have a model or a plan to react to? In New Business, the relationship between graduate studies and the International Student Office was raised. International students often do not have adequate financial support when they arrive on campus and depend on their graduate program for external support that is increasingly not available. Dean Smith-Howell will schedule a staff member from International Studies to meet with the Graduate Council.

C. Strategic Planning Steering Committee: Senator Smith reported the committee met December 19, 2007, in the Chancellor’s Room of Milo Bail Student Center and was presided by Dr. B. J. Reed. Six proposed strategic priorities for UNO were announced by Dr. Neal Topp and Bill Swanson, chairmen of the Unit Planning Task Force and Environmental Scanning Task Force, respectively. The proposed priorities came primarily from the Strategic Planning Event of March, 2007 and further discussions and refinement by members of the two task forces. The proposed priorities are:

- Increase recruitment, retention, and graduation of students from underrepresented populations.
- Increase the percentage of non-traditional students who consider UNO their first university of choice.
- Recruit and support underrepresented students from Omaha and the
metropolitan region.

- Design, maintain, promote, and assess programs and services designed to recruit and develop student, faculty, and staff of diverse talents and backgrounds.
- Increase the visibility of UNO’s academic achievements.
- Increase UNO’s response to the needs, interests, and differences inherent in the diverse community it serves.

Departments and schools are encouraged to incorporate these strategic priorities into their operations and plans. Toward that end, units should contact members of the two task forces for assistance. Mary Lynn Reiser announced a tentative program for the UNO Strategic Planning Event scheduled for February 15, 2008 in the MBSC Ballroom. The focus of the event is to be community engagement. It was also announced that UNO will establish “community engagement links” that will be analogous to currently established teaching circles and research triangles. The links will pertain to some involvement with community organizations such as corporate boards, neighborhood centers, local school systems, performing arts organizations, and other similar activities. The term “community” is not limited to the Omaha metropolitan area. The University will provide limited funding to participants of the links.

VII. The meeting adjourned at 2:57 p.m. with announcements.