UNK FACULTY SENATE MEETING MINUTES
March 3, 2004
APPROVED April 7, 2005

I. Acting President Kruse called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Albrecht, Barton, Brown, Craig, Damon, Elder, Exstrom, Fredrickson, Fronczak, Hartman, Hodge, Kelley, Kruse, Lewis, Lightner, Lilly, Miller, Moore, Obermier, Rieder, Scantling, Strawhecker, Taylor, Unruh, Wozniak, Younes, Young

Absent: Bridges, Buckner, Darveau, Davis, Jackowiak, Nelson, Seshadri, Snider,

Guests: John Lillis

III. Wozniak / Kelley moved to suspend the agenda for Oversight Committee Elections. Motion Carried.

Bob Young reported that Rob Luscher resigned from the Faculty Senate. The Oversight Committee brought forth Herbert Craig as a nominee to fill the vacant seat for the remainder of this academic year. College elections will be conducted to fill the vacated seat during the 2005 – 2006 academic year. Hodge / Hartman moved that nominations cease and a unanimous ballot be cast for Herbert Craig. Motion Carried.

IV. Action on Faculty Senate minutes of February 3. The minutes of the Faculty Senate meeting from February 3 were reviewed. Herbert Craig expressed concern regarding the accuracy of the Cultural Diversity Credit for International Experience proposal as passed by the Faculty Senate in October of 2004. It was determined that Senator Miller could possibly resolve the issue. The Senate agreed to postpone review of the minutes and move on with the agenda until the arrival of Senator Miller.

V. Reports from Academic Councils:

A. Graduate Council: The minutes of December 16, 2004 were received and reviewed by the assembly without comment.

B. General Studies Council: The minutes of December 2, 2004 were received and reviewed by the assembly without comment.

C. Council on Undergraduate Education: No report

VI. Reports of Senate Representatives to Non-Senate Committees:

A. Assessment Committee: No report

B. Affirmative Action Commission: No report

C. Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Committee: The minutes of February 21, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly without comment.
D. Council of Chairs: No report  

E. Ethnic Studies Advisory Council: no report  

F. Gender Equity Committee: no report  

G. Fees Committee: no report  

H. Honors Council: The minutes of February 9, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. Concern was expressed by the assembly regarding the clarity of the report. Some language in the report seemed to be taken out of context. The suggestion was made that someone on the Senate review the minutes of the Honors Council to help make them more helpful for the Senate. Senator Fronzak agreed to serve in this capacity. Concern was further expressed regarding one particular sentence in the minutes. “We don’t want the honors students dropping out of the program because the work is too time consuming or demanding.” The question was asked if the Honors Program Director was speaking for the Honors Program or if the statement was the perspective of the committee. Representatives of the committee confirmed it was the Director speaking about the program.  

I. International Education: no report  

J. Parking: no report  

K. Student Retention committee: no report  

L. Safety Committee: no report  

M. Strategic Planning Committee: The materials of February 3, 11, & 25, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. Discussion began with the first set of materials dated February 3. Concern was expressed that some items are missing from the report and there are items that might need to be changed. Specifically in the category of strengths the statement “Faculty involved in all phases of student life, from initial recruitment to graduation.” Concern was expressed that UNK should be careful about implementing “rules” that require faculty to be involved in “initial recruitment” due to the lack of consensus of whether recruitment is actually part of the faculty role. This concern is also expressed in weakness #5 Communication, with the statement “Perception by some faculty recruitment not their job…” Regarding strength #4 Value, one Senator’s opinion was to move the last statement about providing personalized attention to students to the top of the list. Concern was further expressed that the “Opportunities” portion in the SWOT analysis was missing from the report. Senator Obermier interjected that due to the unique nature of the strategic planning process and the need to carefully document and record the specific comments of Senators, the Faculty Senate meet as an assembly in the Distance Learning center to more effectively document all the comments so the strategic planning committee could review a video of the discussion. Support for the idea was provided by multiple Senators. Senator Rieder expressed concern that systematic communication has not been occurring to keep faculty apprised of the discussions. This was confirmed by Senator Kruse. Further concern was expressed regarding the lack of a list of individuals that serve on the opportunities portion. Concern was expressed regarding the attendance by committee members. Senator Kruse responded that generally attendance has been good.  

Discussion switched to the second report dated February 11. Concern was expressed regarding the brevity of the mission statement. It may be so short that it doesn’t
mean anything and could be applied to almost any institution. Senator Kruse responded this would be a good question to bring up in the April Faculty Senate meeting. Concern was expressed about the use of the word “residential” in that UNK is not truly a “residential” campus and we will fall well short of comparisons to other residential campuses when we begin to implement assessment procedures based upon the new mission statement. Additional concern was expressed that if the goal of the Regents was for UNK to perform at the midpoint of our peers why would we employ a mission statement that uses the word “premier” to describe our ranking among other institutions around the nation. Clarification was provided that the “midpoint” concept is by state law how we negotiate salary rather than a benchmark for evaluation of academic standards. Concern was expressed that we don’t draw students from the nation, UNK is a regional University.

Discussion switched to the third report dated February 25. Congratulations were offered to Professor Pothoff for providing ideas to pursue during the campus discussion of the UNK mission and strategic plan. The point was brought forth regarding previous concerns that UNK doesn’t draw students from nation-wide, but this is something we may aspire to achieve. This thought is reflected in the first paragraph of the February 25 document.

VII. Action on Faculty Senate minutes of February 3. The Senate returned to the review of the previous meeting minutes. Senator Miller indicated the draft copy of the Cultural Diversity Credit for International Experience proposal was forwarded rather than the correct version. He assured the assembly he would retrieve the correct version and forward it to the Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. Wozniak / Hodge moved approval of the minutes for the Faculty Senate meeting of February 3. Minutes were approved with emendations.

N. Student Support Service Committee: no report
O. Technology Advisory Committee: no report
P. Women’s Studies Advisory Committee: no report
Q. Writing Center Advisory Committee: no report

VIII. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

A. Oversight Committee: The minutes of February 4, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. The Oversight Committee conducted the election for the seat vacated by Rob Luscher at the beginning of the meeting during the suspended agenda. Bob Young noted the number of Senators allocated to each College remains the same as last year. He also encouraged everyone to become active and vote in the upcoming elections for the Faculty Senate. Bob Young reported to the Senate that Roger Davis won the election for the Senator-at-Large seat for the 2005-2008 term.
B. Executive Committee: The minutes of February 23, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. The item noting the Foundation is trying to purchase the Cranewood property received an inquiry as to the location of the property. It is the motel located across and to the east from West Center. Concern was expressed regarding the problems associated with Blackboard and that something needs to be done. Questions were raised as to why we use Blackboard when other packages are available that are better. Senator Kruse responded that the University has one more year with the contract with Blackboard and then it will be up for discussion. The question was raised as to who makes the decision regarding the package selected and the point made that faculty should have some input as to the package selected. Senator Fredrickson noted that UNK first chose to use Blackboard independent of the other campuses, following which the University decided to negotiate usage for all the campuses. Part of the concern now is the disparity in the licensing agreement causing UNK to pay a disproportionate amount of the licensing costs. Senator Miller indicated that UNK administration is working to correct the disparity. Support existed for the Information Technology committee to consider other additional packages and to involve the use of faculty in the selection process. Senator Miller informed the assembly the Consensual Relations policy was approved by the University attorney with only minor changes.

Concern was expressed by the delay of the hiring of an admissions director and this could be a mistake due to the importance of this function on campus. A lengthy discussion followed regarding whether or not it is the job of faculty to recruit. Several Senators supported the need to develop innovative recruitment techniques. It was noted that freshman admissions are down 7 ½ percent over last year. Further discussion revolved around the lack of resources available to the Admissions Director in the form of full-time staff. The suggestion was made to seek out what other institutions are doing in the form of recruitment and how they are staffed. Further, the process of recruiting needs to be revamped and expanded to something that is more inventive than past activities. The point was made that other problems may be at play other than recruiting techniques due to one Senator’s negative experience with attempting to deal with the admission of a child to UNK. The conversation turned to the reasons why students don’t attend UNK. It was stated the number one reason why students don’t attend UNK is the academic program wasn’t perceived to meet their needs. The point was made that we should improve academics rather than converting faculty into recruiters, focusing time away from the continual improvement of the academic program. Concern was expressed that current recruiting efforts are ineffective and need to be reviewed. Support was given towards collecting data on best practices for recruiting. Support also exists to take a close look at the programs we are offering to see if they meet the needs of students rather than focusing on becoming recruiters. On a different topic, a question was raised as to the lack of timely notice provided to individuals in advance of the Board of Regents meeting with emphasis placed upon the need for presenters to have more advanced warning to more effectively prepare.
C. President's Report: No Board of Regents report was available for comment. Discussion centered upon the General Studies Roundtable. It was suggested that due to the unrest regarding the Roundtable discussion process the notes should be distributed via the announce email feature to allow for broad distribution of the information. Clarification was sought regarding the absence of a member at the Roundtable discussions. Apparently in past meetings absent members were allowed to have someone fill in for them, however, this practice will not be continued due to multiple representatives from each College. Senator Kruse will ask Senator Bridges about the issue. The point was made that item 4 on the list represented a brainstorming session that will be refined in future meetings.

D. Academic Affairs: The minutes of January 20, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. Senator Damon sought clarification on item #21 regarding the request to create the course FORL 110 Introduction to a Language & Culture. Senator Exstrom sought clarification on the item to create the course BSAD 100 Exploring Business.

E. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee: no report

F. Academic Information and Technology Committee: The minutes of February 10, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly without comment. The Response to the Faculty Senate Resolution of 7 October 2004 from the Faculty Senate Information Technology Committee and the Faculty Senate Welfare Committee memo was the center of discussion. Lightner / Wozniak moved to postpone review of the Response to the Faculty Senate Resolution of 7 October 2004 until the April 7th meeting to allow Senators to review the original resolution. Motion Carried.

G. Artists and Lecturers Committee: no report

H. Athletic Committee: The minutes of February 04, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly without comment.

I. Continuing Education Committee: The minutes of January 28, 2005 were received and reviewed by the assembly. Discussion centered upon the Distance Education Assessment Report. Concern was expressed regarding the course evaluation instrument included in the report that could possibly be used to replace the traditional faculty course evaluation instrument. It was noted the most Faculty Senate could do with the report is potentially recommend that Colleges review the evaluation instrument and consider it’s use for online courses. It was further noted the proposed instrument could be adapted by each College and the committee created the evaluation instrument as a service to the Colleges to assist with conducting evaluations of online courses.

Miller / Young moved: The Faculty Senate endorses the evaluation instrument in the report and forwards the report to each appropriate College committee for their examination. Upon concern expressed during discussion Senator Miller suggested a friendly amendment to the motion to read: The Faculty Senate endorses the evaluation instrument in the report and forwards the report to each appropriate College committee for their review and adaptation for their use.

Discussion: Support existed during discussion for an instrument of this type due to the ineffectiveness of the traditional evaluation instrument when used for online courses. Concern was expressed regarding the need for course evaluation rather than instructor evaluation. It was pointed out the motion recommends Colleges review the instrument
in the report rather than the entire report. Additional concern was expressed regarding the potential security issues of administering a course/instructor evaluation for an online course and the point made that the appropriate College committees consider security as an issue when reviewing the evaluation instrument. Further clarification was sought as to if the faculty member is being assessed or if the course if being assessed. Senator Miller pointed out the instrument is designed to replace the current course evaluation tool.

Motion Carried.

J. Faculty Welfare Committee: no report
K. Grievance Committee: no report
L. Library Committee: no report
M. Professional Conduct Committee: no report
N. Student Affairs Committee: no report

IX. Reports of Faculty Senate Special (Ad Hoc) Committees

A. First Year Experience Committee: no report
B. Encouragement of Study of Modern Languages: no report
C. Writing Intensive / Cultural Diversity Committee: no report

X. Unfinished Business: No unfinished business.

XI. New Business:
A. Data Benchmarking Committee: An attempt was made to seek nominations for a Faculty Senate representative to serve on the Data Benchmarking Committee. No nominations were received. Senator Kruse indicated that if anyone was willing to serve but too modest to nominate themselves, to contact her personally.

B. A Report on Assessment:
Senator Wozniak reported this is a report on a trip to Atlanta to attend a conference on general education and assessment. The report is provided to the UNK campus through the Faculty Senate. He noted that many of the people at the conference were experiencing similar problems that UNK is facing with assessment of the general studies program. Many of the reported problems with assessment were due to a distributed-style general studies program like that here at UNK. Wozniak reported that a survey will be distributed to the campus to obtain feedback about the General Studies program.

A question was raised regarding what a “distributed model” general studies program was. UNK’s current GS program is a distributed model in that students take several courses from different departments with each student’s GS program potentially different from all others. Other alternate GS program models include one in which all students take a “common core” of classes or a “great books” model. A question was raised whether UNK was looking to change its GS program. Senator Wozniak stated that the question would be answered in the course of the General Studies Roundtables. Additionally, Senator Wozniak indicated a pilot general studies assessment in the areas
of English, Social Studies, Natural Sciences, and Math will be administered to 10 students. Senator Wozniak further noted that he is stepping down as Director of the General Studies program effective in July.

XII. General Faculty Comments:

Senator Fredrickson noted that SVCA Finney has agreed to install wireless access in the Ockinga Center to allow Faculty Senators to access the meeting packet with their wireless laptops. It should be up and running by the April 7th meeting.

Senator Elder noted that Larry and Betty Becker Tye would be at the faculty Friday afternoon club meeting at the Alumni house on March 4th.

Senator Young encouraged everyone to attend the World Affairs Conference.

Elder / Miller moved adjournment at 8:50 pm. Motion Carried.

Tim Obermier,
Acting Faculty Senate Secretary