I. President Bridges called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

II. Roll Call:

Present: Barton, Bridges, Brown, Buckner, Darveau, Davis, Elder, Fredrickson, Fronczak, Hodge, Jackowiak, Kelley, Kruse, Lewis (left early), Lightner, Lilly, Miller, Moore, Nelson, Obermier, Rieder, Seshadri, Snider, Wozniak, Young

Absent: Albrecht, Exstrom, Hartman, Luscher, Scantling, Strawhecker, Taylor, Terry, Unruh, Younes

Guests: FASVCAASL&DA Glen Powell, Singing Widget

III. Young / Hodge moved approval of the minutes for the Faculty Senate meeting of November 4, 2004. Minutes were approved with emendations.

IV. Reports from Academic Councils:

A. Graduate Council: October 21, 2004; November 18, 2004

Senator Davis commented that the graduate council may want to address a policy that would require registration for course credit while working on thesis. Such a requirement would be beneficial to students as it would be an incentive to finish more quickly.

Senator Young supported this idea, especially as it would increase headcount. (tongue in cheek)

Senators Miller and Brown commented that the full slate of fees along with the tuition could be problematic.

Senator Darveau disagreed stating that those fees would likely be supporting services that the thesis students would be using.

Senator Obermier was concerned about how long a student could continue registering for thesis work. At what point could the student no longer register and what would ensure due process if the student couldn’t or didn’t register?

Senator Davis noted that as this would be a new policy to UNK, the Graduate Council could look into how the policy would be used.

Senator Frederickson noted that a grade would have to be submitted and would turn to an F after a year if listed as incomplete. (Established as 2 years at Feb. 2 meeting.)

President Bridges noted that often similar schools allow pass/fail grades for thesis credits, keeping the students active on the student rolls but not assigning a grade.

Senator Rieder asked about time limits that would be placed on students to finish the thesis work.

Senator Miller stated that since he was chair of the planning committee dealing with those issues and that he would raise all these issues at the next meeting.

B. General Studies Council (GSC): October 7, 2004

Senator Darveau commented on the proposed General Studies (GS) assessment plan that included a test for juniors on topics related to GS. He indicated that many programs are structured in such a way that their students take many if not most of their GS requirements during or after their junior year. These students wouldn’t have the necessary course experience to take the test, which could skew the overall assessment.
Senator Obermier voiced a concern on the assessments discussed in Attachment 4 of the minutes which stated that departments are assessing their courses. Does that mean that each department will possibly use a different method for their assessment?

President Bridges stated that the assessments will be similar, but the department will be doing the assessment.

DA Powell stated that there are several parts in the plan. There would be a survey that would be administered online and a department part intended to give departments control over assessing their own courses within GS. Jeanne Butler and Bill Wozniak will be in contact with departments to aid in developing those assessment plans.

Senator Rieder asked if departments would be developing tools that would be making a direct measure of student learning. DA Powell confirmed that would be the case.

Senator Obermier asked if every department could then have their own set of standards. DA Powell confirmed that would be likely, and that the GS assessments would be embedded within the department’s broader assessment.

Senator Davis commented that he was all for embedding. He also commented that he thought it unnecessary to pay departments to do this work that they should be doing anyway. If there was a sound reason for doing this work, then there should be no need to pay people as an incentive to do it.

Senator Frederickson asked if departments are doing the assessment and the GS Council is no longer governing WI/CD, do we need GSC if they have no duties?

Senator Rieder confirmed that GSC still had plenty to do with future planning for GS.

Senator Lightner asked about the proposal in Attachment 2 and the listing of Fine Arts as a separate category from humanities. In essence this change creates a total requirement for FAH of 12-21 hours, far in excess of other categories.

Senator Bridges stated that this proposal had been sent to every college’s Educational Policy/Academic Affairs committee for review. Those comments will be returned to GSC for action at the February meeting.

Senator Lightner asked about Attachment 3 of the minutes dealing with prorating WI requirements. He suggested that something could be done via distance education to handle the requirements rather than prorating the amounts.

Senator Kelley raised the point that he doesn’t like the way the proposal in Attachment 2 was developed; specifically that it was created without looking at an overall plan for GS. Further it does not make comparisons to what we think all students should have, what other colleges are doing, and what any assessment data shows. It appears as if it is a proposal to address the needs of a single college.

Senator Miller went on the record with a “Here, Here!”

Senator Lilly requested that the ExCom discuss with GSC and administration how changes to the GS program should be handled.

After some additional broad discussion of the same issue, Senator Davis reiterated the request for the ExCom to hold a discussion with the Chancellor, SVC, GSC, and Deans about procedures for GS changes. Senator Davis stated that GS is the jewel of UNK.

Senator Barton stated that the GSC was attempting to address the findings of the 2001 program review.

President Bridges countered that this proposal came from FAH representatives by request of the GSC. The proposal was sent to the colleges for comments without prior comment from GSC on the merits of the proposal. The problem is that there is no set policy for making changes to the GS program. The policy only states that the colleges must approve changes, but doesn’t state who within the college or how the approval is made.

Senator Miller stated that ExCom would ask about the appropriate policies and process.
Senator Davis offered a follow-up comment that he hadn’t heard complaints about GS. Further, that facing the upcoming deadline from NCA to assess GS, we need to have the data to make changes.

Senator Wozniak agreed but noted that assessment won’t ever be completed because it is an ongoing process and that some changes are needed now.

C. Council on Undergraduate Education: no report submitted

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

A. Assessment Committee: November 11, 2004
DA Powell mentioned that the website has been revamped; now requiring a password which will be sent to faculty via email. There will be no routine access outside campus.
Senator Davis offered the suggestion that the total assessment costs in dollars be estimated from the effort expended in assessment to show the public and legislature the type of effort and priority being placed on assessment.

B. Affirmative Action Commission: no report submitted

C. Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Committee: November 15, 2004
Senator Barton made a request that all persons submitting minutes note the dates and the person writing the minutes.

D. Council of Chairs: October 26, 2004
Senator Young asked for a definition of yield as used in these minutes.
Senator Miller stated that yield is the fraction of people that applied and were accepted that actually enrolled for classes.
Senator Davis asked about the logo “UNK Advantage-A Heartland University.”
President Bridges responded that we don’t know; it appears to be used solely within admissions.
Senator Hodge asked about the prior slogan “Don’t Forget Kearney”; it is still in use? The general consensus is that the “Don’t Forget Kearney” is still being used.
Senator Rieder asked about the mention of the list of honors classes used for advising-can we get this list? Answer: available on WebEASI.

Senator Davis asked if the Council of Chairs was a recognized group. Answer: NO.

E. Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee: no report submitted

F. Gender Equity Committee: no report submitted

G. Fees Committee: no report submitted

H. Honors Council: October 18, 2004; November 11, 2004
No comments.

I. International Education: no report submitted

J. Parking: no report submitted

K. Student Retention Committee: no report submitted

L. Safety Committee: no report submitted

M. Strategic Planning: no report submitted

N. Student Support Services Advisory Committee: no report submitted

O. Technology Advisory Committee: no report submitted

P. Women’s Studies Advisory Committee: no report submitted

Q. Writing Center Advisory Committee: no report submitted

VI. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

A. Oversight Committee: no report submitted

B. Executive Committee: November 20, 2004
No comments
C. President’s Report: no report

D. Academic Affairs: October 21, 2004
   No comments.

E. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee: no report

F. Academic Information and Technology Committee: Sep 28; Oct 7; Oct 22; Oct 25; Nov 1, 2004
   Senator Davis asked about the follow-up on Blackboard (BB) problems. President Bridges stated the ExCom will ask for feedback.
   DA Powell stated that Blackboard was mentioned at the CAO meeting. Regent Miller suggested a UN-wide requirement that all courses be required to use BB. The administration’s response that such a requirement would infringe academic freedom.
   Senator Lewis commented on the unreliable nature of the BB usage numbers.
   Senator Miller stated that some courses could not realistically use BB.
   DA Powell related percent usage numbers from Regent Miller were: UNK 24%, UNO 90%.
   However data from Deb Schroeder shows 89% of UNK students use BB. A potential reason for Miller’s request could be marketing and advertising — i.e. 100% of our students use technology in their classes!
   Senator Frederickson stated that BB wanted to double its fees, but is locked into lower increases by contract with UN. Another problem with BB is that the company doesn’t fix bugs in the software in a timely manner. Other products cost less; we may want to switch providers.

G. Artists and Lecturers Committee: October 26, 2004; November 12, 2004
   Senator Buckner asked if the committee was only funding Spring programs only or would be funding into the next academic year.
   Senator Lilly responded that the committee was slow getting rolling.
   President Bridges said that a one-time snafu in SLUGO slowed funding of programs.
   Senator Lilly said that even in the best of years that it is difficult to handle early semester programs with how the committees are constituted in the fall.
   Senator Young stated that there should be nothing to prevent the prior committee from working on proposals in September for the fall semester.
   President Bridges stated that the committee would need to hold back some money for Spring programs.
   Senator Davis said that it is tough to meet the committee’s 2-week call for proposals with all the logistics involved in organizing a program from scratch.
   Senator Barton noted that the committee cannot spend money past the end of the fiscal year. The ExCom will look into the issue.

H. Athletic Committee: October 8, 2004; November 12, 2004
   Senator Davis asked a question about the “prejudicial quiz-dropping” discussion — was there a resolution?
   Senator Elder stated that there was no resolution after much discussion. There is a need to better inform new faculty on the policy.

I. Continuing Education Committee: no minutes submitted

J. Faculty Welfare Committee: no minutes submitted

K. Grievance Committee: no minutes submitted

L. Library Committee: no minutes submitted

M. Professional Conduct Committee: no minutes submitted

N. Student Affairs Committee: no minutes submitted
VII. Reports of Faculty Senate Special (Ad Hoc) Committees

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

VIII. Unfinished Business:

A. Assessment Data Analysis Committee
   DA Powell stated that the force behind the proposal is that the SVC wants a committee to help facilitate strategic planning using institutional data:
   - to look at data for trends and prioritization of planning
   - to address the comment from NCA that there is lots of data collected but not used
   - to give feedback to the assessment committee on data issues
   The SVC is seeking feedback from the Senate in order to refine the proposed committee.
   Senator Davis noted that many committees gather data and make reports.
   DA Powell stated that the purpose of this new committee would be to analyze data and not collect the data themselves.
   Senator Kelley stated that the proposal was a good idea. There is data filling boxes just getting shuffled around. This committee will make use of this existing data.
   DA Powell stated that the committee would also be able to look for unneeded duplication in data gathering.
   Senator Lilly asked about the administration’s newfound desire for number crunching in decision-making.
   DA Powell said that the SVC desires organized data to answer questions. The current SVC is more of a number cruncher, but wants data that speaks to student outcomes.
   Senator Miller said that the committee would approach two big things: it can get data, and use data to make change.
   Senator Snider stated that most schools have an Office of Institutional Research that handles this function. What does the office here do?
   DA Powell stated that the question is a good one. The office here mostly handles report generation for sending to Central Administration.
   Senator Young said that the focus of the committee is to pull together data and study trends. Would this committee be a place to get data from or just collect data from others?
   DA Powell stated that the intent is to look at what we have. It is up to others to implement and act upon the findings. We will need to look at whose function it is to gather new data. A potential major contribution of the committee would be to eliminate waste and duplication.
   Senator Obermier stated his support for the proposal, but asked that Item 2 should require reporting to a broader audience such as the Senate.
   Senator Wozniak said the committee should be able to answer if the necessary data exists to answer the questions that are posed. If the data does not, word would be sent to the assessment committee to make sure the data is collected.
   DA Powell asked that any other comments about the proposal be emailed to him.

B. Academy of Distinguished Teachers
   Senator Kelley noted that there was a lack of enthusiasm among the CTE committee members for the proposal.
   Senator Miller stated that he was partly responsible for the proposal. The principal reason for the proposal was to enhance the number of applications for Pratt-Heins, OTICA, and other
awards. The point is to create a service organization to help faculty prepare their applications. He would like to get feedback on that idea.

Senator Lilly stated that the phrase in the proposal – “In order to promote a culture of teaching excellence…”—implies that we do not have teaching excellence here. We do have teaching excellence here. This statement reminded her of the “Profiles of Excellence,” many of those profiled are no longer here.

Senator Davis stated that it perhaps would be a better idea to remove the Profiles of Excellence and replace them with profiles of our recent successful students. The profiles could be placed all over campus. The Faculty Senate should hold workshops to accomplish the stated goals of this proposal—it is the perfect place.

Senators were asked to email further suggestions on the proposal to Jeanne Butler.

Senator Seshadri asked that the info on the awards be sent to the Council of Chairs. Senator Miller said the information was sent there, but many chairs were not in attendance.

Senator Brown suggested that there could be competitions between colleges to nominate departments, etc.

Senator Miller said that anything that would increase the number of applications would be useful. Senator Elder stated that the increases in recent faculty workload (due to assessment, student recruiting and other recent additions to the workload) have hampered applications.

IX. New Business:

A. Safety Committee:

President Bridges announced a call for an academic member to sit on the Safety Committee. The Senate established the need for “Lady-Faculty-Folks” on the committee.

Davis/Lightner moved adjournment at 8:55 pm. Motion carried.

Scott Darveau,
Faculty Senate Secretary