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


Absent: Albrecht, Bridges, Brown, Jackowiak, Moore, Nelson, Strawhecker, Taylor, Unruh, Wozniak.

Guests: Dusty Newton, Lesley Crutcher

II. Oversight Committee nominated Beverly Merrick, whose seat was vacated due to absences, to retake her seat for the current Senate session, which ends April 26, 2006. Approved by unanimous vote.

III. Kelley/Darveau moved approval of the minutes for the Faculty Senate meeting of March 2, 2006. Minutes were approved with emendations.

IV. Dusty Newton was invited to give the Senate an overview of recruitment. He handed out new brochures and marketing materials. Senators commented that these were a great improvement and looked very professional. Dusty emphasized his interest in keeping communication open between the recruitment office and faculty/deans/departments. He believes we face three challenges in recruiting: 1- demographic changes: the region from which we traditionally recruit is losing population; the shift is towards the east in regions where we are still thought of as KSC. 2- need for a marketing director who will provide us with the support and leadership needed in that area. 3- scholarship monies: these need to be increased by $500,000 to $1,000,000 in order to make us competitive and especially to attract the best students; the loss of scholarship money due to budget cuts has hurt us. Dusty also reported that the purchase of recruiting software and reorganization in the recruiting office will be a great help in the coming year.

In response to questions, Dusty stated:
- his goal is to recruit about 1200 freshmen a year (we currently recruit around 1060) and 275 transfer students a year (currently 200-220).
- he is pushing to recruit beyond the region but lack of resources hurt this effort.
- changes in the WI requirements will not have an impact on transfer students; a greater problem is the lack of scholarship money.
- efforts are still being made to change the timeline for handing out scholarship information; he realized that delaying the announcement of scholarships has hurt us in the past

IV. Reports from Academic Councils:
A. Graduate Council: no report submitted.
C. Council on Undergraduate Education: no report submitted.

V. Reports of Faculty Senate Standing Committees:

A. Oversight Committee: no report was submitted.
B. Executive Committee:

Following a question about what is or is not being accessed, the Executive committee agreed to ask the administration for a list of everything that is being accessed on campus. Executive Committee also agreed to find out who is UNK’s representative to the UN Benefits committee.

Senator Davis informed the Senate that Alan Jenkins would be representing UNKEA on Vice-Chancellor Murray’s committee on Rank and Tenure.

Questions regarding the statement that Deans were unhappy with the changes to WI raised a discussion of those changes and their impact on departments. The Deans question the WI committee’s assumption that UNK has a climate that values writing across the curriculum. They have heard complaints from some department chairs who are concerned about the shift of responsibility for WI and the development of a writing plan to the departments. This is seen as an additional burden for departments and faculty. This seems to be true, but it was pointed out that the changes were made in order to meet NCATE requirements for assessment, which we cannot avoid. It was also pointed out that not every department needs to develop a writing plan. There were also complaints regarding the requirement that WI courses be approved by the WI committee. In response, it was stated that making WI courses go through a university-wide committee was done in order to ensure that the university administration maintains the 25-student cap on WI classes. Because of this, the Senate had voted not to have WI programs controlled on the department level. Also, the current set of WI recommendations have made no change to the process by which WI courses will be approved. It was also noted that the recent statement on General Studies developed in the first Roundtable Discussions affirmed writing as a vital part of education at UNK.

There were recommendations that the WAC workshops be revitalized, that members of the Executive Committee and/or the WI committee attend college meetings with chairs to ensure the dissemination of accurate information, that the WI committee create a model of a writing plan, and that the Writing Center director offer mentoring to junior faculty on WI courses.

C. President’s Report:

A question was raised regarding merit pay, which was removed from UNK’s contract because there was no money to pay for it. Are the regents going to come up with money? The response is that they are going to create metrics.

Questions were raised regarding AP exams and their cost. It costs about $82 to take an AP exam and this is prohibitive for some students. The advantage for UNK in accepting credit through AP exams over that from dual credit (HS/UNK) courses and transfer credits is that the students must pass a national test to earn the UNK credit.

Question about P-16 movement. Senator Hartmann expressed concern about the scope of the program and the general lack of understanding of this. Senator Davis explained that Nebraska currently has about $270,000 to $300,000 for national programs designated for “rigorous curriculum” programs, which are tied to receiving federal monies. These are also part of efforts
at standardization. It was noted that the regents are promoting an effort to use standardized tests on all UN campuses. One test under consideration looks at writing skills and a second tests interdisciplinary skills. The regents are interested in this as part of their metrics movement. Standardization is coming into universities, pushed by people who argue that “curriculum is too important to be left to the faculty.” Senators Kruse and Snider explained that this effort some from the federal government, as an outgrowth of assessment, and that there is federal pressure on regional accreditation agencies to meet standards or be replaced by federal agencies. The federal government is also interested in computer generated and graded standardized tests for use on colleges and universities.

D. Academic Affairs: report was accepted without discussion.
E. Academic Freedom and Tenure Committee: no report was submitted.
F. Academic Information and Technology Committee: no report was submitted
G. Artists and Lecturers Committee: no report was submitted
H. Athletic Committee: no report was submitted
I. Continuing Education Committee: report was accepted without discussion
J. Faculty Welfare Committee: no report was submitted
K. Grievance Committee: no report was submitted
L. Library Committee: no report was submitted
M. Professional Conduct Committee: no report was submitted
N. Student Affairs Committee: no report was submitted

VI. Reports of Senate Representatives to Non-Senate Committees:
A. Assessment Committee:
Regents will be discussing assessment April 21 and this may be a time to express our concerns about assessment and standardized testing.
   It was suggested that FS and departments be offered the opportunity to see the report on e-portfolios presented by Jeremy Schnieder.
   1. Student Assessment Committee: no report submitted
   B. Affirmative Action Commission: no report submitted
   C. Center for Teaching Excellence Advisory Committee: no report submitted
   D. Council of Chairs: no report submitted
   E. Ethnic Studies Advisory Committee: no report submitted
   F. Fees Committee: no report submitted
   G. First Year Experience Committee: no report was submitted
   H. Gender Equity Committee: no report submitted
   I. Honors Council: no report submitted
   J. International Education: no report submitted
   K. Parking: no report submitted
   L. Student Retention Committee: no report submitted
   M. Safety Committee: no report was submitted
   N. Strategic Planning:
      It was pointed out that the effort to make university faculty provide service to the community is adding another layer of expectation to faculty already over-burdened by teaching, scholarship/publication, and multiple assessment duties. There was also concern that this extra work/expectation would not be considered “valued” work.
Senator Kruse expressed the Chancellor’s interest in having feedback on the Strategic Plan by May 1. She asked if the Senate preferred to include this in April 27 meeting or have a special meeting. Senators felt both options were unworkable, especially since new senators, unfamiliar with the issue, will be at April 27 meeting and, if they are the ones to implement this plan, they will need more time to consider it. If the Chancellor wants real feedback, senators felt we needed more time and May 1 did not enough to consider this document seriously. It was also asked what would happen to our response and why it was needed so quickly. Senators noted that it is our responsibility to work with the administration and we should move on it as quickly as possible. It was also noted that the administration should appreciate that the Faculty Senate is a necessary element in moving the university forward and that we should not feel stampeded into acting too quickly on this important document. President Kruse said she would take senate preference to the Chancellor and asked for direction.

Elder/Frederickson made a motion to respond to the SP at the April 27 meeting, that outgoing senators be urged to attend the meeting, and that new senators be notified that this is happening. Passed.

O. Student Support Services Advisory Committee: no report submitted
P. Technology Advisory Committee: no report was submitted
Q. Women’s Studies Advisory Committee: report was accepted without comment.
R. Writing Center Advisory Committee: no report submitted

VII. Reports of Faculty Senate Special (Ad Hoc) Committees
A. WI/CD Committee: no report was submitted
B. Encouragement of Study of Modern Languages: no report was submitted

VIII. Unfinished Business:
A. Credit for international experience.
   History of the approval of international experience was described. It began in Academic Affairs, was approved at Senate, went to General Studies council who passed it to WI/CD. That committee stated that they could not make the idea of international experience work according to the current understanding of CD. Senator Miller explained that international experience was never intended to be a substitute for CD credit and was not a CD course for WI/CD to approve or disapprove. Recommend that the Vice-Chancellor decide, since he has now received two recommendations regarding this, one in favor and one against.

B. Climate Survey.
   President Kruse noted that we have given ourselves a month to consider this important issue and doubtless have much to say, but urged senators to keep conversation moving. A lengthy discussion followed in which the following points were made:
   - agreement with the concerns expressed in the WSAC report.
   - concern that the survey does not give us a good sense of who has what problem.
   - appreciation for the fact that the survey was done and the Chancellor should be commended for having done this.
   - disagreement with the statement in the summary that the “climate on campus is positive” when that is not what the survey data reveals; the Chancellor should not be commended for approving and issuing this misleading summary.
- explanation that the Gender Equity committee had pushed for a climate survey to be done for a long time; when the survey was actually created it was done “on the cheap and on the fly.”
- a statement was submitted by Tina Chasek, who works with GLBT students at the Counseling Center, in which she echoed many of the concerns expressed in the report from WSAC and expressed her concerns that issues of sexual orientation were buried in the survey/analysis and that future surveys will make that problem worse by erasing the category of partnered and replacing GLBT with “nonheterosexual.”
- analysis of the survey was couched in “double-speak” and does not actually communicate
- two distinct issues were delineated; 1- the survey instrument needs to be improved dramatically if we’re going to use it again; this must be done by a group who are experts. 2- the summary glosses over information, includes and excludes material in a problematic manner; this is not what we would hope.
- one individual should not be interpreting the data; this is an improper way to create a report; a group should examine data, discuss it, and then create a report.
- survey leaves out the students who are perhaps the most important group on campus
- it was noted that the Gender Equity committee has not seen or discussed the report and that a chair has not been appointed to fill the slot vacated by Carol Lomicky. The question was raised several times about the failure to appoint a new Gender Equity chair. Executive Committee will ask the administration why this has not been done.
- observation was made that no one could create a survey that would meet everyone’s approval, and that UNL out-sourced their survey in order to avoid this issue. But it was also noted that UNL was not satisfied with the results of their out-sourcing.
- survey had been brought to IRB for feedback and the creators had been told that some of the language could be offensive and were advised to either change the language or make it clear in a cover letter that this was being done in order to protect the identity of respondents. Neither suggestion was followed. A more sophisticated survey and analysis would allow confidentiality and still collect data.
- there was sympathy with the need to protect identity, but it was also noted that the way this was done marginalized people and resulted in an instrument that does not help us identify problems in a way that will enable us to address them.

President Kruse informed the Senate that FAH will be meeting in April to discuss college problems indicated in the survey.

Fricke/Davis made a motion that the Senate go on record as skeptical of the interpretation of the survey data. Motion failed. 7 for and 9 against with 5 abstentions.

Miller/Kelley made a motion that President Kruse collect the comments made at the meeting expressing concerns with the survey/analysis and bring them to Senate for approval with the intent that they then be sent to the administration. Passed.

IX. New Business:
Hamster Wheel. Nomination sheets for the David Stevenson Hamster Wheel Award were passed out and senators were asked to consider current and past senators for nomination at or before the April 27 meeting.
President Kruse expressed her appreciation to those going off the Senate for their hard work.

Bill Wozniak will write a resolution commending Ken Nikels to be considered at the April 27 meeting.

UNK does not want to allow concealed weapons on campus even though this is now legal in Nebraska. It was noted that Kearney does not allow concealed weapons.

Senator Darveau requested input for Faculty Senate plans for FY 2006-2007.

Executive Committee was asked to investigate how honorary degrees are awarded and the role of the Senate in that process.

Snider/Fronczak moved adjournment at 9:15 pm. Motion carried.

Paula Rieder,
Faculty Senate Secretary