University of Nebraska at Kearney Faculty Senate
Academic Affairs Committee MINUTES
Meeting of Thursday, September 16, 2004
3:30 PM Ockinga

Present: Powell, Schipporeit, Wozniak, Bridges, Lawson, Nelson, Rowling, and Blauwkamp
Absent: Nikels, Emrys, Walden; Guests: Allan Jenkins

I. Review of minutes of May 12, 2004 – Minutes were approved via e-mail and have been
distributed to the Faculty Senate and campus.

II. OLD BUSINESS

Status of proposal concerning BS science-related course requirements – Proposal was forwarded
to Faculty Senate for action (see May 12 minutes). It is currently tabled in Faculty Senate.

Status of proposal to move Writing Intensive and Cultural Diversity course approvals to the
Academic Affairs Committee – The Executive Committee of Faculty Senate is considering
where to locate governance of WI and CD courses.

Wozniak distributed the new, expedited form that has been created for changes to catalog
course descriptions (see May 12 minutes). It is to be used only for changes to the course
description as it appears in the catalog, in which term/s the course is offered, or statement in
catalog that special permission is required to enroll. The standard course modification form must
still be used for content changes such as course number, title of course, number of credit hours,
and prerequisites. Major changes to the content of the course, as opposed to the description of the
course as it appears in the catalog, must still be done by proposing a new course or modification
of an existing course. Copies of the Catalog Course Description Change form are being sent to
department chairs but will also be available from the Academic Affairs office. The Academic
Affairs Committee will no longer review catalog copy changes.

III. New Business

Motion to accept proposals #1-2 was made by Bridges (Lawson). The vote was unanimous.
The motion carried.

NUMBER, REQUEST, COURSE/DEGREE, COURSE/PROGRAM, TITLE, DEPT, COL, REASON

#1, Alter, Course, Course Description, PE 450, Curriculum and Assessment for Physical
Education, HPERLS, COE, Request is to change course prerequisites from PE 221 to PE 221 or
PE 100.

#2, Alter, Course, Course Description, TE 206, Instructional Technology and the Preservice
Teacher, TE, COE, Request is to change course description
Other New Business – Allan Jenkins brought to the Committee a matter of concern. As he described it, the Dean of B&T decided that it would be beneficial to offer a freshman orientation to business course for one credit hour. For whatever reasons, the college ran out of time to create and get approved a new course, so it was decided to use BSED 399, Business Apprenticeship Program, for this purpose, as it may be offered for 1 to 3 credit hours. Subsequently, six sections of BSED 399 for one credit hour were added to the fall schedule and through fall advising and new student orientation, freshman were instructed to take this course as an orientation to business. The concern is that the course being offered as BSED 399 does not fit the 300-level or the course title or description, and that in effect, a new course is being offered that did not go through approvals from the B&T educational policy committee or Academic Affairs.

Considerable discussion followed. There was some disagreement as to whether catalog descriptions are (or should be) a guide to the content of a course or delimit the content of a course. It seems undeniable that many departments and individual faculty depart to some degree from the exact course description that appears in the catalog, and some flexibility is undoubtedly appropriate to academic freedom and departmental prerogatives to determine course content. However, there are processes in place to approve new courses and modifications of existing courses that require acceptance by faculty representatives at the college level (educational policy committees) and the university level (Academic Affairs Committee). A trust exists that departments are, in fact, offering the courses that were proposed to these committees and which are described in the catalog. Whether this instance stretched the flexibility of course descriptions, titles, and levels too far is not clear, nor did it seem to be the prerogative of the Academic Affairs Committee to make that determination at this point and hearing only one perspective on the situation.

A motion was made by Powell (Lawson): We recommend that the College of Business & Technology’s educational policy committee review the decision to use BSED 399 as an orientation to business course for freshman to determine if the correct procedures for course approval were followed. Until the committee makes its determination, the Fall 2004 courses will constitute a one-time offering of a freshman orientation to business course as BSED 399. The vote was unanimous. The motion carried. The Academic Affairs Committee will take no further action on this matter unless and until the B&T educational policy committee refers the matter back to us.

Review of General Studies Council Minutes – GS Director Wozniak distributed draft minutes from the September 2, 2004 meeting. The highlights included comments from SVCAA Murray. Minutes from the May meeting will be distributed next time. No discussion followed.

IV. Adjournment

Next Subcommittee Meeting: Wednesday, October 13, 2004 at TBD in 2122 Founders Hall
Next Committee Meeting: Thursday, October 21, 2004 at 3:30 pm in Ockinga Center.

Respectfully submitted by
Joan M. Blauwkamp, Secretary