Faculty Senate Athletic Committee Minutes, April 6, 2007

Chair Scott Unruh called the meeting was called to order at 10:25 am. Members in attendance were Sam Lopez, Jaime Lundgren, Jon McBride, Ken Messersmith, Janet Steele, Jane Strawnecker, Nita Unruh, and Susan Williams. Kyle Bowers, Claude Louishomme, and Pat Seaton were absent. Scott began the meeting by telling the committee he has the new information for the Coaches Certification Tests. Last year he set up two dates for coaches to take the exams and had 100% compliance from several sports on those dates, but making arrangements for the remaining coaches was very time consuming. He would like to increase the compliance on the scheduled dates as well as try to get all coaches CPR certified prior to the start of the academic year. All athletic training students are required to attend an in-service activity prior to the start of the fall semester for CPR certification, and this year he will invite coaches to attend as well.

Scott next said that a potential conflict was brought to his attention regarding student-athletes on the baseball team and a night class with regard to absences for travel. Since he did not know enough details this specific situation was not discussed, but the committee will suggest that SVCAA Murray send out a reminder to faculty at the start of each term reminding faculty about official policies for all students absent for university-sponsored activities. The committee also suggested that these policies be discussed at new faculty orientation sessions.

The committee next read the mission statement for the Athletic Department as printed in the 2006-2007 Student-Athlete Handbook. The purpose of this was to determine if the satisfaction survey allows us to assess whether the department is meeting its goals. Next the committee examined the results of the satisfaction survey from last spring. Scott pointed out a few “highlights.” First, time spent per week on academics increased from the freshman year to the senior year. It was suggested that the question be reworded to make it more clear that time spent in class should be included in this weekly total. Second, while freshmen generally view themselves (and perceive that their instructors view them) as athletes rather than students, seniors view themselves as students rather than athletes. Third, the value of the academic enhancement was generally regarded as poor, particularly among seniors. Susan said that it is very difficult to force students to study during the required study halls. Some discussion followed as to whether or not all new students (freshmen and transfers) should be required to attend study halls prior to demonstrating any sort of academic difficulty. In addition, a peer-tutoring program was discussed with the idea that this could “count” as service for the student-athletes. Janet pointed out that, based on open comments at the end of the questionnaire, many of the student-athletes do not understand the scholarship structure of Division II athletics. Jon said our conference has selected four “emphasis” sports: football, volleyball, and men’s and women’s basketball. These sports receive proportionately more scholarship dollars. Jaime said she could include an explanation of the scholarship limitations for NCAA Division II during fall orientation meetings so the student-athletes understand. Susan said the surveys for this spring are already available to the student-athletes.

Jaime told the committee that 58 post-graduate scholarships are available (29 for males, 29 for females) and the Faculty Athletic Representative must nominate the student-athlete. Scott said he would consult with others concerning who from UNK should be nominated.

Jon briefly discussed phase II of the strategic planning process and told the committee he is the “lead planner” responsible for developing a plan to implement goals and objectives. To that end he will solicit input from the committee over the next few weeks and months. Initially he will send out some questions via e-mail, and the committee decided to meet in June to discuss these goals and objectives.

The meeting adjourned at 11:28 am.