Report from the April 20, 2007 Board of Regents Meeting

The full agenda packet is available online at http://www.nebraska.edu/board/board_agendas.shtml or hardcopies of the agenda and presentations are available by request in my office. The official BOR minutes and report have not yet been posted, but can be found on the Regent’s website upon their posting.

Morning Working Committee Sessions:

Business Affairs Committee

Budget/Legislative Update: The current proposal that has emerged from the appropriations committee includes a 4.0% and 4.1% increase over the next two years. To just cover the university’s mandatory expense increases due to utilities, salaries, and benefits will require 4.8% each of the next two years. (The legislature lowered the mandatory depreciation charge from 2% to 1% which decreased the needed increase from 5.7% to 4.8%.) The legislature also reclaimed all “unused or open” positions (salary savings) as part of the proposal.

There will be no new funded capital projects this year. There is a proposal to shunt $14 million dollars from cigarette monies to fund biomedical research.

RIAA Requests: The Recording Industry Association of America has made several informal requests for information from UNL at this time. Until the information has been subpoenaed, UNL will not release student name information with respect to possible illegal downloading of music. RIAA has offered pre-trial settlements to several batch of UNL students.

Strategic Framework Taskforce

The BOR have changed the research targets for UNO and UNK from a 15% annual increase in federal funding to a doubling of all external funding over the next 10 years. This target is still very aggressive and will require scholars from all fields to engage in grant seeking to some degree.

Academic Affairs Committee

Due to a commitment at the Nebraska Academy of Sciences, I was not able to hear the full report on Washington Perspectives. The three areas that were reported upon were Budget, Appropriation Requests and Policy issues. Some of the issued mentioned were need-based aid, earmark requests, and federal legislative issues including the Higher Education Act reauthorization and accountability. The NU higher education priorities are to increase investments in basic research, student financial aid especially Pell Grants, and in NIH for health research. They will also be for providing public accountability while pushing for institutional autonomy.

BOR Meeting

Those BOR items affecting UNK:

• Wes Hird, retiring Coordinator of Piano Maintenance was given the KUDOS award.
• Items approved by the Regents at the meeting:
  o Plan B (mandatory student fee) expenses
  o Course and lab fees (Chemistry labs, teacher education assessment exam fees, and an increased handicap parking fine, now $100)
• Other items of note:
The BOR heard a report on entrepreneurship from four companies with ties to the university in which those ties directly allow for the development of the company, provide for interns and students and otherwise support those companies. Intellicom from Kearney (outsourced IT support), UNeMed (medical software), 21CSI (military contractor), and Ely farms (gourmet foods, current UNL student) all gave presentations.