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Minutes UNO Strategic Planning Forum Agenda

Strategic Planning Steering Committee
University of Nebraska at Omaha

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Minutes UNO Strategic Planning Forum Agenda

Monday, May 9, 2016 – UNO Milo Bail Ballroom, 210 attendees

- Master of Ceremonies, Michael Perdunn (UNO Staff Advisory Council President for 2015-2016), opened the forum at 8:30 AM. Perdunn offered a welcome and provided a review of the day and handouts on the table.
- Chancellor's Welcome – Chancellor Christensen welcomed the participants to the Strategic Planning Forum, thanked everyone for a stellar year at UNO, and acknowledged the work of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The chancellor began his remarks by saying it is important that everyone understands the mission of a Metropolitan University. A metropolitan university accepts all traditional higher education values and roles, but also takes upon itself additional responsibility by providing leadership to improve the region's quality of life. Regarding community fundraising, the chancellor reported a quarter of a billion dollars came to UNO from over 12,000 donors in this most recent campaign. In addition, public private partnerships are changing UNO. UNO has a special relationship with the Omaha community that extends around the world. UNO is the region's university and we are all working as a team under the Strategic Planning umbrella. The chancellor reviewed the forum's schedule and encouraged input from the participants. Finally, he encouraged attendees to consider a UNO license plate.
- Student Research Panel – Scott Snyder – Moderator. Snyder explained that student research is a great value to the university and its professors. A fund was developed at the request of students through \$1.50 fee to support student research and creative activity. FUSE grants support undergraduates (407 students have received grants for a total of \$1.1 million). GRACA grants support graduate students (200 students have received grants totaling just under \$1 million). All of the students who are presenting today have won UNO grants, presented their data at meetings, and have either published or are in the process of publishing their research.
 - Steven Windisch – Criminology/Criminal Justice. Windisch works on the study of violent extremists. He was attracted to UNO's PhD program by the opportunity to work with Dr. Pete Simi, an expert on this topic, and to do field research. Windisch won one of ten Department of Homeland Security grants that came out of his work with the GRACA grant he received. Windisch explained that the research they are doing is dependent on cross discipline participation and that is a UNO strength.
 - Sam Church – IT Innovation. Church studies extremist groups' communications, including tweets and postings on the Internet. Church was interested in more development experience and Dr. Derrick encouraged him to work on development of a cyber-profile of an extremist group. The UNO researchers work with Special Ops Command, DOD, Homeland Security, congressional committees, and the FBI. It is important to brand the research as UNO-produced. Church explained that his department has an IT innovation cup to encourage students to build projects to engage with technology.
 - Maggie Bartlett – Biotechnology. Bartlett works on a parasite that infects one third of the population (*Toxoplasma gondii*). For those who are immune-compromised, it is a common cause of death and one of the leading causes of spontaneous loss of fetus. Bartlett is working on a vaccine to prevent *Toxoplasma*. She is also preparing manuscripts that describe the outcomes of the research. Bartlett won a two-year fellowship here at UNO (INBRE fellowship) for the study of the brain. She and McFarland work in collaboration with UNMC researchers, and also with DOD and Swiss researchers. Bartlett and McFarland have worked with community STEM programs to introduce young people to research. Bartlett explained that the diversity of research

- ongoing at UNO means that there is a place for every student interest.
- Madalyn McFarland – Biology. McFarland also works on the *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite, specifically on drug treatments. McFarland explained that the public is infected through exposure to feces of cats and rare meat. Their research takes place primarily in the lab and includes genetic research. McFarland came to UNO as a pre-med student and decided to switch to research for a Master's degree at UNO. McFarland explained that the undergraduate researchers are very active in the research community and UNO's faculty do a good job of encouraging the research community.
 - Data Use at UNO – Hank Robinson, overview/moderator. Robinson explained that data use is key to effectiveness at UNO. The presentations will use WORDLE (word maps) to present their data.
 - Emily Poeschl – Perception Study. Poeschl reported that University Communications collaborates with many departments. The perception study is a collaboration with Dr. Sherice Gearhart of the School of Communication. The perception study looked at perceptions about UNO from 690 respondents from Nebraska and Western Iowa. The questions included – (1) what comes to mind when you think of the University of Nebraska? Wordle - Football, Huskers. When the public thinks about the University of Nebraska, they don't always think about UNO. (2) How are you connected to UNO? Wordle - Graduate, Friend, Family. The public learns about UNO from students, faculty, and staff, so we all need to share the good news about UNO and what it means to be a metropolitan university. (3) What type of things do you expect UNO to be doing in order to best serve the Omaha community? Wordle - Communities, Students, Omaha. It is important to share information with the community about events. Only 21 of the people had some awareness about UNO being recognized as a leader in community engagement, so UNO needs to work on communicating about our community involvement.
 - Gail Baker – Chancellor's Survey. Baker reported 375 people on campus responded to this survey. (1) What do you want to see UNO accomplish in the next 10 years? Wordle – Student, Campuses, UNO. People want UNO to attract and retain students, and enhance the infrastructure. Engagement of traditional and non-traditional students in campus life is also a priority. Affordability is also a key component. (2) What do you want UNO to accomplish in the next 10 years? Wordle – Parking, Diversity. Parking is always a concern and we are building a new parking facility currently. Expansion of the campus and modernization is also a priority. Diversity in the student body and among the faculty is also a priority. (3) What do you want UNO to do in the community? Wordle: Community. Increase UNO and community collaboration. The study and application of research in addressing community issues is what distinguishes UNO from a land grant university. Faculty are key to maintaining a high quality university. Adjuncts from the field are also a metropolitan university strength.
 - Cecil Hicks – Best Places to Work in Omaha. The survey measures employee engagement and satisfaction. Overall, engagement of UNO employees was over 80%. Many of the employees had a connection to UNO, as students, or through family or friends. One area that folks identified as needing work is building trust in senior management. Communication, especially two-way communication is a key to addressing this issue. Accessibility of senior leadership to staff is another avenue for improvement. Recognition and praise of employees was a UNO target area to make sure employees feel valued. Next steps include integrating with ongoing initiatives including diversity, what is means to be a Maverick.
 - After the presentations Robinson noted that there is a lot to be proud of here at UNO. It is also important to recognize what needs improvement. At the end of the presentations, Robinson introduced a tabletop activity asking those to note the key takeaway ideas. (1) What are the most common themes you identified in the different survey results presented? (2) List three ways you can impact alumni, community, faculty, staff, and

student perceptions at UNO over the next year. The individual ideas were collated into a table summary and collected.

- Strategic Planning Update – Deborah Smith-Howell. Smith-Howell explained the process the university is taking to update the strategic plan. This is always a continuous process, however, this summer the entire Strategic Plan will be updated. This rewrite will be based on the input received through surveys, individuals, groups, and the Strategic Planning Forums. BJ Reed, Sara Woods, and Deborah Smith-Howell comprise the committee that will incorporate the input into the revised version of the strategic plan. The revision of the strategic plan will move to a comment period in the fall, where the UNO community will again have input. Smith-Howell introduced a Dot Activity where participants used their dots to rate the ideas proposed at the last forum for importance and feasibility.
- Community Panel – BJ Reed – Moderator. Reed reported the strategic planning forums have taken place since 1997, bringing the campus and community together. Reed introduced a panel of community leaders who bring the community perspective to UNO. Reed asked the panelists talk about UNO's role in the community, what UNO offers to the community, how to keep UNO students in Nebraska and working for Omaha companies, and how UNO brands itself in the community. Reed ended the panel by introducing an activity asking attendees to brainstorm on how to collect input and ideas that can be used to tell the UNO story.
 - Rodrigo López – Executive Chairman, NorthMarq Capital Finance & Chairman of Children's Hospital (Executive MBA, UNO). Lopez explained that many of his employees were able to attend UNO because of its flexibility for full time workers. The executive MBA program is excellent. UNO provides value to Omaha employers and employees. UNO needs to continue to concentrate on diversity so it reflects the community. Not enough people in the community know about the Community Engagement Center. Engagement with the community is highly important. Faculty needs to be more engaged with the not-for-profit and the business community to serve as an example to students. UNMC students can now get their executive MBA at UNO and that is a great first step and should be built on with other programs. Not-for-profit groups would also benefit from greater engagement with faculty to understand their needs better. National Associations, such as the Mortgage Bankers Association, are establishing relationships with universities to make sure their needs are met. That is another avenue for UNO to explore.
 - Steve Martin – Chief Executive Officer, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (Masters in Gerontology from UNO). Martin took his first graduate class at UNO in 1983 and has seen a lot of change at UNO. The programs at UNO have engaged the social infrastructure of the community and the business community. The UNO Executive MBA program is a superior product because it focuses on applied issues. The Blue Cross board of directors (a non-profit with 1% margins) endowed a chair in the Public Administration to deal with health care issues. UNO funds the preparation of the workforce and then their students go out into the world. There needs to be more of a tie-back to the university, so alumni never disconnect from their school or program. Technology should be used to accomplish this connection. It is important to train students for the jobs of the future. When faculty engage in business relationships, they better understand business needs. Businesses would welcome academics in to better understand their needs.
 - Kerri Peterson – Grants Manager, Urban Initiatives, Sherwood Foundation. Peterson related that UNO's community engagement center provides a great neutral gathering space to the city, especially to the non-profit sector. As a foundation, Sherwood feels UNO is attractive because it knows best practices and can take academic ideas and bring them to the community. Community health, and life in Omaha, benefits from partnerships with UNO. The Sherwood Foundation wants to support this community. Incorporating

social work into criminal justice is just one example of UNO innovating. There are so many initiatives in Omaha to help the community and it is important for faculty and student to get involved so that research grant money remains in Omaha. Peterson encouraged UNO students to be bold and to be responsive to new ideas and innovation.

- Ron Brasel – President, Control Services. Brasel spoke about the athletic side of UNO, reporting there is a huge percentage of alumni athletes that come back to live in Omaha. There are about 34 former hockey players that have come back to live in Omaha. Being a student athlete is very demanding combining practice and studies. Many construction management students have interned at Control Services and go to work there after graduation; many of them came from out of state, but then remain in Omaha. The Omaha economy is a draw for graduating students. Brasel started a student chapter of the construction organization and was able to explain to faculty what they were looking for and what they would be doing. UNO responded and the quality of students interested in these jobs increased. Student interaction with the community is key to establishing relationships. Every student he has met at UNO has impressed Brasel; they are great ambassadors.
- New News Updates
 - Bill Conley – The Milo Bail Student Center will be completed by the first week of August. The new parking lot (1250 stalls) and new housing will be open in fall 2017. Next summer the Strauss performing arts addition and renovation will break ground. UNO is 10 months into fiscal 2016. Conley reviewed the budget; 80% of UNO expenses are personnel. Budgets are tight and growth is the best solution. Conley encouraged any questions about the budget to be directed to his office.
 - Trev Alberts – Athletics/Arena. Alberts showed a short video about Baxter arena. Baxter Arena is a true community arena and is always in use. The first year was very successful with 60 UNO athletic events. Between 80,000 – 110,000 high school students will be graduating at Baxter (engaging the UNO brand for potential students). Many outside events have been scheduled. Club season ticket holders were surveyed and Baxter will be addressing some issues.
 - Charlotte Evans – Emergency Response. Evans said UNO is working with community and peer institutions to make sure that emergency response is moving in the right direction. There are more students residing at UNO and many commuter students are on campus more often. There is a lot of training of current staff to make sure response at UNO is professional. Partnering with outside community groups brings the best possible training. Emergency preparedness is ongoing to make sure that UNO is prepared for big and small events from personnel to technology questions. Electronic building access is also on the agenda. Evans encouraged attendees to reach out to her with any questions of concerns.
 - Lee Denker – Alumni/Foundation Merger. Denker explained it is important to strengthen UNO alumni engagement. Integration of the alumni and foundation allows UNO to be more sophisticated in communicating with alumni to use the strengths of both organizations to enhance the university agenda of awareness (strengthening the sense of bond/connection), engagement, and financial goals. Integration was approved in December 2015 and in February 2016 UNO alumni staff moved to Foundation headquarters. They have discontinued some business support functions. Next steps include determining the structure for the Thompson Alumni Center and wrapping up the business support functions. They hope to assist more alumni, engage them in recruitment.
 - Jonathan Benjamin-Alvarado – Diversity/Inclusion Committee. Benjamin-Alvarado reported UNO has embarked on a focus group study on diversity and inclusion at UNO with the help of an outside consultant. There were 26 student focus groups, and UNO

will be conducting 28 staff, 26 faculty, and 28 key stakeholder focus groups in the next few weeks. They will be reporting to the Strategic Planning Committee in the fall. Six hundred students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders will be participating. UNO has conducted an evaluation known as an equity scorecard to uncover needs and target policies and procedures to help students. The scorecard to date has indicated the Latino population is outperforming the general population at UNO.

- Closing Remarks – Chancellor Christensen. The discussions that occurred will help UNO think about tomorrow. There are handouts about student engagement and the Strategic Planning Steering Committee working groups for everyone to take home. The chancellor thanked all of the speakers.
- Michael Perdunn encouraged participants to enjoy lunch and continue the discussion. A box lunch buffet was provided.
- The Forum concluded at 1:00 PM.