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Faculty Senate Minutes September 2002

UNO Faculty Senate

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Faculty Senate of the University of Nebraska at Omaha
2001-2002 Senate Minutes
Wednesday, September 11, 2002
2 pm, MBSC Dodge Rooms

Attendees: Akers, Allen, N. Bacon, W. Bacon, Benjamin-Alvarado, Bennett, Bishop, Bennett, Blair, Bragg, Carlson, J. Carroll, M. Carroll, D'Souza, Dickson, Garver, Johnson, Krause, Latchaw, Leavitt, Lewis, Lin, Littrell, Metal-Corbin, Nazem, O'Connell, Pedersen, Ritter, Sadlek, Schulte, Simpson, Smallwood, Tixier y Vigil, Valle, Williams, Wolcott

Excused: Dufner, Neathery-Castro, Helm

Absent: Mei

At 2 p.m., and before the meeting was officially called to order, Jay Noren, Executive Vice President, Provost, and Dean of Graduate Studies, was introduced by President Sadlek. He gave some personal background information and discussed, very briefly, the budget crisis. After his brief presentation he took questions.

President Sadlek officially called the meeting to order at 2:20 pm.

President Sadlek introduced the following guests to the meeting:

Steve Kuss, President, Staff Advisory Council

Sharon Ulmar, Assistant to the Chancellor for Diversity & Equal Opportunity

Deborah Smith-Howell, Chair, Dept. of Communications

Rod Oberle, Director, Human Relations

Presentation and Approval of Minutes: Senator Sadlek asked for approval of the August 21, 2002, minutes. The minutes were approved as amended. Section IX.C, should now read, "Senator Carlson asked to informally discuss further Senate action on the China project. Informal discussion followed."

Officers Reports

President's Report: Senator Sadlek

Chancellor's Council Meeting: August 22, 2002

The major item of business was, again, the budget cuts. Chancellor Belck informed the Council that the final figure for UNO's share is \$2.286 million, of which \$1.852 million will be allocated to Academic Affairs. Other university divisions, such as the Chancellor's Office, Student Affairs, Business and Finance, and University Affairs/Athletics will be receiving proportional shares of the cuts. The final list of cuts will be sent to Lincoln on September 4. If this list is approved by President Smith, affected employees will begin to be notified on September 6th. The lists will be made public on September 10th on each of the four NU campuses. Chancellor Belck will share her list of cuts with the UNO community by means of a Chancellor's Bulletin. The Chancellor

plans to hold several open fora with members of the UNO community after September 10th to discuss the cuts.

Among other items that were treated briefly was the expansion of dorms on the South Campus. Ground has been broken for the new Scott Village, which will add 480 new beds to UNO residential housing next fall. UNO's increased enrollment and the projected record-breaking SCH production for fall 2002 (161,000 SCH) were also discussed. Finally, the Council heard a report on UNO/UNMC/Metro Articulation Task Force, which is a long-established group of administrators and faculty who work through various problems with course articulation among the three campuses.

Executive Committee and Administration Meeting: August 29, 2002

The Executive Committee and members of the Administration reviewed feedback from the Senate's retreat on the current round of budget cuts. The feedback was summarized in Greg Sadlek's memo to the Chancellor Belck of 8/29/02 (agenda attachment - pages 7-11) as well as Boyd Littrell's separate report from the Rules Committee (Rules Committee report: V.F.). The Chancellor listened, asked questions, and responded as we went through the reports of each of the standing committees. The meeting was productive, but I felt that the Chancellor was looking for more concrete suggestions on how to consolidate streamline UNO programs and offerings. She seemed particularly interested, for example, in the kinds of suggestions coming from the Goals & Directions Committee - - offering few graduate-student only courses and creating an M.A. in the Liberal Arts. Her concern is not so much for the current round of cuts but for the probable cuts coming in the budget for the next biennium. She made it clear that she would like the Senate to continue to work on these issues. Regarding part-time faculty, the Chancellor suggested that the severe cuts in part-time faculty were for this budget year primarily. Readjustments in the budget for part-time faculty could be made in future years. However, returning monies to the budget for part-time faculty would necessitate corresponding cuts in other parts of the university budget.

The Chancellor reiterated her position that the mission of UNO did not include offering remedial courses. She is working closely with representatives of Metro College to make sure that the needs of ill-prepared students continue to be met. The Chancellor believes that UNO needs to move more strongly into distance education and that we must draw some lessons from the failure of the Shanghai Program so that we can be successful when the next opportunity arises. The report of the Educational Resources & Services Committee supported increased DE but pointed out that it is not necessarily the most efficient way to deliver courses.

We discussed the redirection of faculty workloads and the concerns raised in the report of the Professional Development Committee. Since the primary mission of UNO is teaching, the Chancellor would like to see a greater overall percentage of UNO faculty workload in the classroom. The Executive Committee members cautioned that a major redirection of faculty workload could significantly change the institutional culture. We did not arrive at any specific conclusions, but I think that reaching common ground on this issue is possible.

Board of Regents Meeting: August 30, 2002

The Board of Regents met on Friday, August 30, 2002, at Varner Hall. Before the official meeting, the regents heard reports from the Academic Affairs Committee and the Information Technology Committee. In the first, Executive Vice President and Provost Jay Noren reported on the current state of Regents' Scholarships. In 2001, a total of \$4,175,000 worth of scholarships were awarded system-wide. Of that total, \$683,000 came to UNO students. The two major policy questions that came up during the presentation were: (1) Should renewal criteria be standardized across the system? And (2) When students lose Regents' Scholarships, should they have the opportunity to reacquire them by raising their GPAs? Currently, the loss of a Regents' Scholarship is final. No decisions were made on these questions.

The second presentation was on Blackboard. The idea of a "portal" was introduced, and the Blackboard portal was described and demonstrated. As of spring 2002, UNO had the lowest percentage of instructors using Blackboard. Only 17% of our total course sections were posted on Blackboard, as opposed to 19% at UNL, 36% at UNK, and 39% at UNMC. 57% of our students were enrolled in a Blackboard course compared with 69% at UNL, 61% at UNK, and 100% at UNMC. During the meeting proper, three UNO employees were given special honors for outstanding service to the university. These were Joe Kaminski, Robert Harris, and Tom Wawrzynkiewicz.

The major presentation during the BOR meeting concerned diversity. With minorities accounting for 10.82% of its student body, 17% of its faculty, and 16% of its staff, UNO looked very strong in this regard when compared with other NU campuses.

A new Retirement Incentive Program was approved for faculty aged 59 ½ and older who have served the university for at least 10 years. There are two options. The enrollment for this program will run from January 6, 2003, to April 30, 2003. In Option One, eligible faculty elect to retire fully by July 1, 2003, and have the university pay their full health and dental coverage to age 65. In addition, they receive the employer portion of the premium for health and dental coverage from ages 65-68. A faculty member who is 65 or older will simply be given the employer portion of the premiums for a period of three years. Eligible faculty can also choose Option Two, partial retirement, not less than .3 FTE nor more.

Committee on Educational Resources and Services: Senator Dickson

A report on the committee's deliberation at the Retreat: The committee's first response was that distance education in its truest sense is simply a way to offer classes to students who are unable to attend classes on campus. It is not a way to save money or indeed to increase revenues especially in the short term.

We did feel that distance education students who are not residents should be charged out of state tuition. We also felt that distance education students should pay a distance education fee that would cover a variety of services, etc., that need to be provided for them. While quality of education is the primary issue, it is possible that some of the DE technology could be utilized to offer classes to larger numbers of students and students from several campuses simultaneously. While this might save some money, I don't think the savings would be high because the need for

teaching/graduate assistants for the professor would increase as well as the cost of the technology and the staff needed to run and service. It. (i.e. Horticulture classes) are offered in Lincoln and Omaha by a Lincoln professor. The spring class on Plant propagation had students attending the same class in Lincoln and Omaha. Each week, the professor would teach one class from Lincoln and one from Omaha. The classrooms were connected by television technology and each classroom could see and hear what was going on at the other. This required the professor, at least one teaching assistant, and two technologists on each end.) In addition, some classes do not lend themselves to DE and the amount of time spent by faculty in creating and teaching these classes is often much higher than that of an in-person class.

Committee on Faculty Personnel and Welfare: Senator Johnson

From the Faculty Senate Retreat: Part-time faculty are a critical resource to the University of Nebraska at Omaha, and provide direct linkage to the broader Omaha community, thereby fulfilling the university's metropolitan mission. Part-time faculty often teach introductory and specialized upper division courses that improve the quality and productivity of academic programs. Some academic departments rely more heavily on part-time faculty than others to provide core courses which increase student credit hour production. Permanent cuts in part-time faculty will result in a decrease of course offerings at the upper division level, an increased workload for full time faculty, and will hurt efforts to recruit and retain new faculty, as well as produce higher faculty turnover. Although it is acknowledged that current budgetary constraints necessitates some reduction in part-time faculty, we recommend that any depletion in part-time faculty be a temporary measure towards reconciling budgetary constraints, taking effect in and lasting no longer than one (1) semester.

Committee on Goals and Directions: Senator Garver

Summary of the discussion held by the Goals and Directions Committee on August 21, at Mahoney State Park. The Committee decided not to recommend any ways to consolidate colleges or programs. Here are the Committee's suggestions that I reported orally to the full Senate on that day:

(1) Greater efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of needed courses should be encouraged by allowing each campus to keep any increases in tuition revenue that it is able to achieve through good management and fine teaching.

(2) In order to diminish the adverse effects of the rapidly rising costs of scholarly monographs and of subscriptions to scholarly periodicals, we should encourage the improved coordination of purchasing between the libraries of the four U. of NE campuses. Simultaneous improvements in our already well-managed interlibrary loan service should facilitate a greater division of responsibility in the purchase of new scholarly monographs so that each library will purchase such monographs only in selected fields. Such a division of responsibility should occur only after discussion by faculty committees as well as by librarians on the four campuses. Moreover, the purchases of periodicals and serials might similarly be coordinated. Perhaps the campus holding the hard copies of a particular periodical could make that periodical available to the other campuses on-line.

(3) The variety and quality of course offerings could perhaps better be maintained, particularly at the upper-division and graduate levels, by instituting the following measures on all campuses of the Univ. of Nebraska System:

(3.a.) We should encourage the greater cross-listing of advanced undergraduate and of graduate courses between departments on every campus. More graduate courses might also be cross-listed between campuses.

(3.b.) We should consider requiring every graduate student to complete only one-third, as opposed to one-half, of all graduate credit hours in courses, or independent study projects, open exclusively to graduate students. Combined with (3.a.) above, such a policy would enlarge at no cost not only the variety of graduate courses available but also the number of departments able to offer courses for graduate credit.

(3.c.) UNO should continue to consider the possibility of creating a Liberal Arts (or similarly named) M.A. degree which would involve those departments with very small graduate programs and perhaps also those departments with much larger programs that would continue to offer M.A. degrees in their own disciplines, for example English, history, mathematics, and psychology.

(4) We should continue to encourage the exchange of professors between campuses for the teaching of important topics that might otherwise only be available on one campus. It is easier and less expensive to transport a professor from one campus to another than it is to ask large numbers of students to travel to another campus in order to take a particular course.

Committee on Professional Development: Senator Blair

A report on the committee discussion at the Retreat. Committee Members attending: Robert Blair, Chair; Harvey Leavitt, Vice Chair; Beth Ritter; Josie Metal- Corbin; Keith Pedersen, and Sufi Nazem.

In view of upcoming UNOmaha budget reductions, the committee was asked to address the following question:

"How do we bring about a re-direction of some of our faculty workload, so that we are able to provide more student credit hours by regular, tenure and tenure-track faculty and reduce our dependence on part-time and temporary faculty?"

The committee discussed this question for about 45 minutes in an open and free-flowing discussion format. The following report attempts to outline the concerns, issues, and recommendations discussed by the committee. No formal action or vote was taken by the committee, rather that goal of the discussion was to raise and further elaborate on issues and concerns, some of which were discussed earlier by the Faculty Senate in general session.

The committee interpreted the concept of "re-direction of workload" to essentially mean that faculty would be given the responsibility of teaching additional classes, or larger classes.

Committee members predicted a number of possible implications from this added teaching load, including, but not limited to:

- A significant reduction in the time available for faculty to conduct research.
- A reduction of faculty service activities, especially those on the community level.
- Additional stress to tenure-track faculty who would continue to have expectations to conduct research and publish findings in order to be awarded tenure. The result could be non-tenured faculty looking for appointments elsewhere, where research support exists.
- Less time for tenured faculty to conduct research and engage in other activities needed to meet promotion standards.

As a result of this re-direction of faculty resources, the committee strongly felt that the institutional culture of UNOmaha would significantly change. UNO would be less like a comprehensive, masters-granting institution, and more like a lower level institution of higher learning. The significant improvements made by UNOmaha in recent years in terms of local, state, regional, national, and international recognition and prestige could be threatened by this apparent shift in institutional culture. In addition, UNOmaha faculty would have less time to continue strengthening ties to the Omaha metropolitan community.

This shift in institutional culture would put additional stress on professional development support structures at UNOmaha, like the Faculty Development Center, to help in this workload redirection effort. The Faculty Development Center currently engages in a number of activities, including Teaching Circles, workshops and seminars, Service Learning Academy, and UCAT, which help improve the effectiveness of UNOmaha faculty.

A few alternatives to help with the additional teaching load were discussed by the committee and the Faculty Senate, including the return of university administrators to the classroom on a part time basis, and asking tenured faculty teaching more classes to give non-tenured faculty time for research. Both of these suggestions, of course, would require decisions on the academic department level.

Committee on Rules: Senator Littrell

At the Retreat the Rules Committee began with a distinction between long and short-range issues. We discussed and agreed upon the following general ideas.

To be discussed immediately with AAUP: consider a three month (or more) delay in implementing the new AAUP salary increases.

Rationale:

Savings:

A three-month delay, would shift the implementation of the contract into the next annual budget. Most faculty salaries are based on 9-month contracts. If they are delayed by three months the savings should be about .33 of the total AAUP salary agreement, during the 2002 (?) Academic year (through June 1, 03). Many details are ignored here, but this suggests the magnitude short run savings.

Advantages to the University:

The advantage to the university is a short-term, but crucial advantage: It has the effect of spreading the immediate budget shortage over parts of two fiscal years. Such an action would ease the immediate cash-flow problem, and, in turn, permits longer range planning for other reductions, including vacancies from future lines. It provides some relief for part time or temporary faculty positions. This would have a positive revenue benefit in the form of low cost tuition revenues. It provides some flexibility in financing courses, thus increasing course availability to students, especially, but not only undergraduates.

Advantages to the Faculty:

This does not alter the terms of the AAUP contract, in any way except, those provisions pertaining to the time of implementation of the contract. The full raises would be implemented according to the contract. Faculty members would receive the raises agreed to in the contract. Faculty members would have the benefit of limited, but increased part time faculty positions that would boost enrollments and permit students to have wider flexibility in course offerings. Some public relations benefits would accrue from faculty cooperation. I wouldn't want to exaggerate these: people who have quarrels with University types aren't going to be easily mollified - - still.

Options:

Implementation of payment of the raises could be extended in diverse ways, through negotiations between the AAUP and the University.

Moving Faculty Members to Full Year Instructional Assignment:

If reductions in summer course offerings result from this financial difficulty, the university might permit some fraction of the faculty to serve 2 or 3 semesters, including summer sessions, for their regular annual salaries. Administration of such a policy would have to be worked out. For example, each department might allocate 20 percent of its faculty to such appointments.

The advantages are these:

- This permits rationalization of course offerings throughout the calendar year, without increasing summer session salaries. The fraction of faculty members allowed such appointments would be based on past experience in summer sessions. At UNO this is worth considering in any event.

- All faculty members would have the opportunity to participate, but not necessarily at the same time. If 20% were the number, it would take five years to offer all faculty members an opportunity to participate. No repeats would be permitted until everyone had such an opportunity.
- The advantage to the faculty is shortened academic year. Fall/Summer or Spring/Summer appointments would provide a slightly shorter calendar year.
- Cut the Value of Summer Stipends:

One could ease summer budget difficulties by limiting stipends to \$4,000 or 5% of the faculty members' salary, whichever is less. Discussion of the problems of this proposal included the incentive to younger faculty to teach summer sessions, the real loss of income by faculty members who rely on summer teaching to improve their salaries.

- Creative Phased Retirement Arrangements/with earmarked funds.

This would be a longer-term possibility. Faculty members who are 55 (pick an age) or over might consider a variety of delayed compensation arrangements. For example: such persons might consider forgoing immediate payment of salary increases or even a fraction of salary payments, if these sacrifices were paid into an interest bearing account or instrument, that would provide a lump sum payment or phased payment options at a given term.

The disadvantage to the faculty member is obvious: forgone income.

The advantage is less obvious but attractive: with a lump sum payment, for example, the faculty member would retire a year or two earlier. It is a kind of self-funded "sabbatical" program.

The advantage to the university: Senior faculty members' salaries would then be flat for the period of the agreement, thus limiting the labor price for faculty services.

Such a program would have to be financed by earmarked funds from some specific source. The agreement would have to be negotiated with AAUP. We have provided an example in the form of earmarked tuition increases. This should not be interpreted as the only revenue source; it is an illustration.

As tuition increases come on line, some fraction of them might be earmarked to fund or contribute to a phased retirement program. Part of the revenue would go to general expenditures. This would be a means of helping to rationalize salary increases over a defined term: 3 years, 5 years or 7 years whatever. Other sources of earmarked funds, might be a fraction of the state aided budget, a fraction of salary increases negotiated by AAUP, a fraction of overhead from the research/contract budget.

Such a program would have only long range, four to six year, advantages. It could help to level faculty salaries by "averaging" them over time. The university would commit funds early on,

with faculty cooperation. It would reap a substantial revenue benefit at the time of full retirement.

While more immediate faculty savings can be realized by simply cutting programs and faculty members, a mechanism developed along these lines, including phased reductions in faculty loads might contribute to a more gradual flattening of salary costs over a five or six year period of time.

Finally, several members of the committee thought requiring personnel with administrative appointments to teach one course per year would help to rationalize course offerings.

- On behalf of the Committee on Rules, Senator Littrell moved the following:

Resolution 2641, 09/11/02: University Committee on Technology Resources & Services

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following name go forward as three-year appointment from 08/01/02 through 07/31/05, to the University Committee on Technology Resources & Services:

Leah Pietron (reappointed)

AND BE IT RESOLVED, that the following name go forward to replace Marchel Cuppett Austin, who has left the university and whose term runs 08/01/01 through 07/31/004, to the University Committee on Technology Resources & Services:

Kathy Henebry

Resolution 2642, 09/11/02: University Committee for the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT):

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following name go forward to complete Amy Rodie's three-year term (July 1, 2000 through June 30, 2003) to the University Committee on the Advancement of Teaching (UCAT):

Lynn Harland, BA

The motions passed.

Non-Senate Committee Reports

Alumni Association, Board of Directors: Senator Blair

The Board met in regular session August 20, 2002. Jerry Cederblom reported to the Board on the Goodrich Program, a program designed to recruit, retain and graduate students with financial needs. The state funded program founded in 1972 provides scholarships to about 70 students per year. In 2002, 340 are currently enrolled in the program, which also provides academic and personal support services to the students.

Jim Leslie, Association Director, reported on the use of the Alumni facility for non-University events. Rental of the facility is a significant source of income that dropped last year. The Association is reviewing its promotional program.

As an ex-officio Association Board Member, I also attended the August 7 Alumni Association Roundtable with Senator Hagel. Sen. Hagel discussed foreign affairs issues. He praised the education he received at UNO and in particular cited retired Political Science Prof. Orville Menard as having a significant impact on his career. Prof. Menard was in attendance.

American Association of University Professors (AAUP): Senator O'Connell

The AAUP will meet again Friday, September 13, 2002. There are plans for a monthly newsletter to be sent out. A Retirement Planning Workshop is being planned for October 28-29, 2002. A Wine & Cheese reception will be held for all faculty, especially the new faculty, on October 3, 2002.

Graduate Council:

The minutes of the April 8, 2002 and July 8, 2002 meetings were submitted.

Old Business

Resolution 2644, 09/11/2002: Community Service Project (Senator Schulte)

WHEREAS UNO is a metropolitan university with one of its missions to be involved in the community;

WHEREAS the Faculty Senate and Student Senate are two of the leader groups at UNO;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Faculty Senate along with the Student Senate complete a community service project this academic year after gathering information about possible sites and projects.

Motion was seconded and passed. Senator Schulte was charged with taking responsibility for researching projects.

Resolution 2645, 09/11/2002: Memorials, etc., for Faculty Members (Senator Metal-Corbin)

If a faculty member dies while teaching during the academic year, he/she shall be honored with a brief remembrance ceremony at the beginning of a designated, regularly scheduled Faculty Senate meeting to which faculty, students, administration and staff have been invited. This remembrance shall include the pealing of the campanile bells for at least 10 minutes.

Motion was seconded and passed. Senator Metal-Corbin was charged with working with Senator Sadlek to send this to a committee for a more specific plan.

New Business

The Senate agreed to take up new business until the Chancellor arrived.

Resolution 2643, 09/11/02: Graduate Council Representative

BE IT RESOLVED, that the senate president appoints the following senator, who is also a graduate faculty member, as the senate representative for a one year appointment from 09/11/02, through 05/14/03, to the Graduate Council:

Darryll Lewis (to replace Senator Tom Bragg)

The motion was seconded and passed

Senator Carlson moved to rescind Senate Resolution 2598. The motion was seconded. The vote on a motion by Senator Carlson to refer the motion to the Executive Committee for the agenda of the October 2002 Senate meeting was 8 for and 21 against; the motion failed. The motion to lay the issue on the table, made when Chancellor Belck arrived to the meeting, passed.

Discussion of Announced and Enacted Budget Cuts

The Chancellor addressed the Senate on the position eliminations that had taken place two days earlier. Accompanying her were the four Vice Chancellors, Buck, Carrico, Hodgson, and Mudd. There was informal consultation on the announced budget cuts. Senator Littrell's motion to limit discussion to 30 minutes passed. Near the end of this period Senator Blair moved to extend the discussion by another 20 minutes and the motion passed.

Some members of the Senate agreed that sacrifices must be made, but that word that was getting back to them that these eliminations were done in a very disrespectful and demeaning manner.

The Chancellor reiterated that all had been done as well as possible under the circumstances. The HR Director, Rod Oberle, also responded that there was a transition plan. They had received advice from a consultant on how to go about the terminations. No one was escorted off campus, and the employees were only asked for their keys and parking cards at their supervisors' discretion. No uniformed campus security personnel were involved. Everyone was given 90 days notice, and some personnel were still on campus finishing projects. The Chancellor stated that there are going to be additional cuts. Conceptual models of future cuts are due to President Smith on September 30. Priority Programs will be protected. Tenured positions, so far, will be eliminated through attrition. Most cuts will be vertical cuts. The elimination of the Learning Center was such a vertical cut. One of the Senators noted, looking down the list of cuts, most will affect minority students, and asked what sort of commitment will we retain for most of those students? The Chancellor answered that all students are still important. Metropolitan Community College will help. That's one reason why UNO and Metro have articulation agreements. The Chancellor suggested we talk with our state senators and the governor's staff, and she, and any or all of her Vice Chancellors, will return at the Senate's invitation, for more discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.