MINUTES OF THE FACULTY SENATE
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING WITH ADMINISTRATION
March 29, 2006

Present:
Administration: Lois Flagstad, Kathy Smith, Doug Kristensen, Randy Haack, John Oseth, Finnie Murray
Faculty Senators: Martha Kruse, Debbie Bridges, Scott Darveau, Bob Young, Paula Rieder, Ruth Brown

1. Assessment of Office of Sponsored Programs: SVC Murray was unsure of the assessment status of the OSP and will determine whether it is currently being assessed. He indicated that if not, it should and will be assessed.

2. Domestic Partner Benefits: Chancellor Kristensen indicated that a discussion about domestic partner benefits occurred at the last University President’s meeting. Being able to offer domestic partner benefits would be an aid in faculty recruitment and retention, but that the timing granting these benefits is politically charged. Currently few of our peers offer those benefits. This idea has had poor previous support from the Board of Regents. The university-wide benefits committee may need to be pushed to consider this program.

3. Research Support Center: An inquiry was made earlier in the year concerning creating a center on campus like the UNL NEAR center that would aid researchers in both qualitative and quantitative research. SVC Murray has held discussions with Dean Nikels and reached the conclusion that UNK does not have sufficient demand for these services to justify the cost of a dedicated center. Work toward offering these services may be included in the strategic plan. (The services of the UNL NEAR center may be obtained for a fee.)

4. Campus Severe Weather Response:
   - The unusually wet and heavy snow made removal difficult around campus. Contractors were hired to aid in the snow removal.
   - All students that requested early entry into the residence halls were allowed to enter prior to the storm. Chartwell’s did offer additional meal services that weekend for students on campus.
   - In addition to the automated messages left of voice mail, an email notification of the closing of campus would be useful.

5. Status of Approval of FS Constitution and Bylaws: Central Administration has not yet approved the election changes made to the Constitution and Bylaws. Inquiries will be made into why the process has not been completed by Central Administration.
Reports from Administrators:

Chancellor Kristensen:
- A special Board of Regents meeting was held at which they approved the “construction manager at risk” method for the new residence hall construction following the unexpectedly high bids. To make the process more appealing and possible for the contractors, the following changes have been made:
  - The timeline for completion has been extended with the largest hall still needing completion for Fall 2007.
  - The penalty for late completion has been removed.
  - The design of the halls has been simplified and some less expensive materials chosen to reduce costs.
- The legislature is likely to pass special requests from the University for utility costs and for funds for the Mead site cleanup.
- The campus strategic planning process is proceeding. A final draft of the strategic plan, goals, and objectives will go out to campus soon for comment.

SVC Murray:
- The hiring short-list for the Dean of Graduate Studies and Research has been submitted. An offer will be out shortly.
- The Rank and Tenure Guideline Clarification committee has begun meeting. The members were announced in a campus-wide email last week.
- The recommendations for the changes to the campus Writing Intensive program have been sent to the colleges and Deans. There has been some misunderstanding and rancor about the changes. President Kruse will attend the Dean’s Council to answer questions about the proposed changes.

VCUR Smith:
- The last day of this session of the legislature is April 12. This session has been a successful one for university interests.
  - LB605 has gone to the floor after passing from the committee resoundingly. Passage of the bill looks good, but nothing is guaranteed. This bill would fund Bruner renovation and utility improvement projects at UNK.
- Pete Peterson is giving the Keynote address at the World Affairs conference on April 12th, 10:00 a.m. He will receive an honorary degree from UNK at that time.

VCBF Haack:
- The declining balance option on the UNK ID cards is now available for use. People should signup at the ID card office in the union and can refill the cards with value at the union and library. More sites will be available in the future. Eventually these cards can be used for vending machines, laundry, copying, and bookstore purchases. Members of the Student Senate are already testing the system.

Dean Flagstad:
- Information about University and Department emergency plans (and planning) will be sent out to campus prior to the semester’s end.

Respectfully submitted,
Scott Darveau, President-Elect