Minutes of the September 20, 2006 meeting were reviewed and approved. Dusty Newton presented an overview of Scholars Recognition Day. This event is a collaboration of the UNK Honors Program, the Office of Admissions, the Chancellor’s Office, and the Omaha World Herald. Top 10% of statewide high school seniors and juniors are invited with their parents. A morning program consisting of a student Honors panel, a Directors Panel of Admissions/Financial Aid/Honors, and College Sessions are presented, followed by a luncheon hosted by the Omaha World Herald and the Chancellor. Over 150 students and parents attended this year’s event held on October 2.

Newton also outlined the procedure for Early Scholarship offers. Originally begun by UNK in 2001 (and the only UN campus to do so at that time), early scholarship offers were suspended in 2002 due to budget cuts. Early scholarship offers were still made in ’03-’04-’05—Regents, or full tuition, only. Dusty emphasized the need to take the risk in offering scholarships as early as possible—by “risk”, all offers may indeed be taken, which could mean being fiscally stretched—but it is a risk that may be necessary to further ensure a continued upward trend in enrollment, especially of the top students.

Kurt Carlson, the new Vice Chancellor for University Relations, agrees fully, as does VCAA/SL Finnie Murray, under whose office the Office of Admissions now resides. Both VCs assert we must market UNK as a “scholarly institution,” as a positive aspect to draw scholarly students. A new motto: “Scholarship—Achievement—Community” is now the credo of the institutional marketing plan (rather than “You’ll never forget Kearney”).

Prospective students can now access a scholarship index, off the UNK home page, which enables them to insert their ACT/SAT, and class rank, which will calculate what sort of UNK scholarship they could expect. This, too, will help in very early recruitment.

It is evident that the Honors Program (and virtually every department and program at UNK) is integrally a part of the recruitment/retention teams of the University—indeed, with the new visions for the marketing of UNK to come from the VCUR and VCAA/SL, potential for Honors and UNK recruitment (and retention) has a brighter future.

Christensen outlined Honors Advising which took place between Oct. 3 and Nov. 2. Also, graduating this December are 27 seniors; 63 graduated in May, and
2 in summer of ‘06. This may mean as many as ten Honors Senior Studies per college to assess in the upcoming spring semester to accommodate the larger number of submissions. Davis supplied some further data about advising. Honors students are expected to procure a signature after their primary departmental advising session and turn this in to the Honors Office in order to register right after the seniors. Of the 453 students currently in good standing in the Program, the following percentiles turned-in their departmental advising forms on time: 98% freshmen; 88% sophomores; 82% juniors; and 30% seniors. Recruitment from within is a topic the Council should consider before the next meeting. Ideally, if any faculty member, especially in general studies sections with predominately freshmen enrollment, sees an especially talented student(s), generally recommendations can be made to said students to come and confer with one of the administrators of the Honors Program to learn more about participation. Generally there are 0-5 currently enrolled students (in any given semester) who may inquire and enter the Honors Program past the incoming freshman semester (or transfer from a different school to UNK and then enter Honors). Certainly recruitment of scores of students is neither feasible nor desirable given the current resources of the Program—but faculty should be made aware that they can make such recommendations to their students if they deem it appropriate.

The Council was asked to provide a brief memo of suggestions to the administrators of the Honors Program for further topics of discussion in upcoming Honors Advisory Council meetings. The council will not meet December 13, as that is finals week. The next meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2007, at 4 pm in the MSAB conference room.

Adjournment at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: JoLene Williams, recording secretary
Revised and Edited: Jane Christensen, Associate Director, UNK Honors Program