Honors Advisory Council Meeting  
November 12, 2008  
Memorial Student Affairs Building Conference Room  

Present: Mary Beth Ailes, Brittany Brown (HSAB), Jane Christensen, Gary Davis, Beverly Frickel, Victoria Goro-Rapaport, Jane Moore, Dusty Newton, Dennis Potthoff  
Absent: Deborah Bridges, Aaron Dimock, Ron Tuttle, Paul Twigg  
Guest: Vice Chancellor of University Relations Curt Carlson

Minutes from the October 15, 2008 Honors Advisory Council (HAC) were reviewed and approved.

- Guest Vice Chancellor of University Relations Curt Carlson was welcomed to the HAC meeting. He kindly remarked that the UNK Honors Program was one of the important “pillars” of UNK, and “adds immeasurably to UNK’s reputation and all-around value”; he thanked the Council for the opportunity to learn more about the UNK Honors Program and the Honors Council.

- Brittany Brown, Vice President of the Honors Student Advisory Board, reported that the Board was excited to begin its evaluation of the UNK Honors web page. They split into two groups: one group is to review the Honors web page through the eyes of a prospective student, and one group is to review through the eyes of a currently enrolled student. The purpose is to provide valuable input to the Honors directors to improve the Honors web page in appearance to make it as appealing and navigable as possible, as well as to provide the most accurate and important information to students. HSAB, in parallel with HAC, will also compare the Honors Programs of UNO and UNL to that of UNK to seek further improvement, at least in part in anticipation of the fall 2009 APR for the Honors Program. Suggestions from both HSAB and HAC per this comparative analysis will be forthcoming soon.

- Dusty Newton reported that on Monday, November 3, 2008, UNK’s Senior Day was quite successful with over 100 high school seniors in attendance. The visiting seniors were treated to a Departmental and Organization Fair, as well as individual academic appointments and tours. Earlier, on October 29th, UNK and the Office of Multicultural Affairs hosted Multicultural Leaders and Scholars day with approximately 180 students in attendance. Gary Davis reported that there was more interest in the Honors Program than at any previous Multicultural Day.

- Newton also reported on the Noel-Levitz (the contracted consulting firm UNK has engaged to help improve recruitment and retention as well as university identity and visibility) visits and meetings that have been held monthly since August. The main goal of the Noel-Levitz/UNK collaboration is to create a Strategic Enrollment Plan, which of course includes the UNK Honors Program’s recruitment/retention efforts as well as campus-wide recruitment/retention efforts. The goal for to put a UNK Strategic Enrollment Plan in place is June, 2008.

- Fall 2009 Honors Program recruitment began in August and continues. Letters to all Nebraska high school guidance counselors was recently followed by an e-mail from Director
of Undergraduate Enrollment Dusty Newton together with Gary Davis, Director of Honors, to remind these counselors to encourage their top 10%, 28+ ACT seniors to apply for the Omaha World Herald/Kearney Hub (OWHH) four-year full-ride scholarships—deadline, December 1, 2008. As of today, only a handful of applications have been received. However, historically, we receive 160-180 applications for these prestigious and generous scholarships—almost all of them between Thanksgiving and the December 1 deadline. Currently these four-year full-ride scholarships are worth approximately $60,500 for four years. February 1, 2009 is the standard deadline for application to UNK to be considered for any University scholarships, and this is also the deadline for the UNK Honors Program for both scholarship consideration and membership.

• Jane Christensen outlined the selection and interview procedures for the OWHH scholarships. All files are read and categorized by the Scholarship Committee of Gary Davis and Jane Christensen, Directors of the Honors Program, Dusty Newton, Director of Admissions, and Mary Sommers, Director of Financial Aid. From these many applications approximately 30 students will be invited for a formal interview process. This process has evolved from the Directors of Honors as sole interviewers to include the Directors of Admissions and Financial Aid. In the last two years, Michael Pelster, Assistant Director of Admissions, has coordinated the UNK Admissions Counselors to act as hosts for the students as they wait in the reception area to be interviewed, and the Counselors’ impressions of the students is very valuable input to the interview process. While half await their interviews, the other half of the student interviewee group attend a “mini” Honors class, conducted by various Honors faculty, in which the students are given a topic (usually a short reading), asked to discuss, and then to write an impromptu response. The Honors faculty then provides his/her impressions of the students in a more academic setting. Finally the interviewees attend a luncheon hosted by the Chancellor, and are seated near various Vice Chancellors and Deans, who also provide very valuable input and impressions about the students interviewed for the OWHH scholarships. All these levels of input and impression have served very well to help in this very difficult selection process.

• Davis provided an update on the exchanges with Roosevelt Academy in Middelburg, Netherlands. Jerry Fox and Ann Marie Park of the Office of International Education, traveled to Roosevelt Academy recently, and were thrilled to hear James T. Jelkin, a current UNK Honors student on exchange to Roosevelt, who addressed a large convocation on the differences between American collegiate coursework and that required at Roosevelt Academy. According to Fox and Park, James “brought down the house” with his eloquent and witty remarks, using little to no notes. We are certain that exceptional students like James will only serve to make excellent impressions on the faculty and students at the Roosevelt Academy, which in turn will ignite future interest among the very international student population of Roosevelt in UNK. In fact, Chad Wiedner, one of our own UNK Alums, is a coordinator for the Roosevelt exchanges in Middelburg, and he reports that there are already 4 international students eager to come to UNK—2 in fall 2009, and 2 in spring 2010. Our current Roosevelt students here at UNK are Leo de Die from the Netherlands, and Ayonkonchong Agbornmip from West Africa. They are having a wonderful time, and are e-mailing and FaceBooking their friends back at Roosevelt with all sorts of very positive impressions of UNK, the Honors Program, and Kearney.
• Finally, Davis provided some basic information from the Honors web pages of UNO and UNL, as well as the URL addresses for both sites, and encouraged the HAC to peruse the web sites at their leisure, and e-mail any suggestions as to what may be feasible and/or desirable per changes/emendations to the UNK Honors Program, again, in anticipation of the upcoming APR in October 2009.

• By unanimous consensus, the HAC heartily agreed no December meeting was necessary—we would communicate via e-mail.

Meeting was adjourned at 4:59 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jane Christensen, Associate Director, UNK Honors Program, and JoLene Williams, recording secretary