10 November 2003

Minutes of a meeting of the Student Affairs Committee

The meeting was held at Luke and Jake’s starting at 5:30 pm on Thursday, November 6, 2003.

Present: Stan Lightner (chair), Zach Nelson, Davin Jones, Dara Keck, Glen Tracy, Gary Davis, and Trudy de Goede (recorder)

FS assignments
Those present reviewed a set of four issues given to this committee by the Faculty Senate Executive Committee. We agreed that issue no. 4, “service reassignments for academic advising” appears to be a faculty workload issue and therefore beyond the scope of this committee. It would be good to have Lois Flagstad’s input before we proceed. We will probably refer this item back to the Faculty Senate Executive Committee.

Graduation criteria
Jones raised a matter that had come up in the Student Senate regarding changes in criteria for graduation. Lightner thought the change had been suspended rather than being implemented. The change was that all classes had to be completed before a student could graduate. This change would affect many students, especially since no one currently enrolled would be grandfathered in. There are students with extenuating circumstances who should be given some latitude.

Lightner: this is also a faculty governance issue because the change was made without consultation with the faculty.
Jones and Nelson both stated that if this decision was made to shorten the graduation ceremony it is not a satisfactory decision.

FS issue No. 1
With reference to issue no. 1 from the Faculty Senate Executive Committee: “Make a valid effort to be involved in the Student Senate”, the group agreed to postpone discussion until Lois Flagstad could attend. She had to be out of town today.
In discussion of this point the question arose of how many students serve on Faculty Senate committees. Michelle McGeorge, student body president should have this information. Jones observed that there may be a problem getting adequate student representation on committees, the Parking Committee may be unusual in having sufficient student representation.
Lightner observed that the Faculty Senate should interpret issue no. 1. This committee already has good communications with the Student Senate because two of its members are also on the Senate. Also Sharon Pelc and Tim Danube provide communication to the Student Senate from the Faculty Senate so communication should not be an issue. Davis suggested we ask the Faculty Senate for clarification since we seem to be addressing this issue already.
Syllabus content
The discussion turned to class syllabus content. Committee members agree that a grades scale and academic integrity information should be on each syllabus. Nelson observed that at one point in the past he had a problem because this information was not provided and the department chair had to resolve the matter. Davis asked if this was addressed in NCATE.
Lightner suggested that we should request syllabus guidelines from the deans of the colleges. He will email the deans.

Nelson and Jones: the academic integrity policy was adopted and approved last year. It should now appear on syllabi, faculty are aware of it. Everyone agreed that implementation should be handled through Flagstad.

Suspended/expelled students
Lightner: expelled students should not be allowed to earn credit elsewhere and then return to UNK and have that credit apply here. Jones: the expulsion is on their permanent record. Nelson: they lose opportunities for study and advancement at UNK.
Lightner proposed we study peer institutions for their policies, Davis agreed saying that we need the comparative information.
Nelson: how many people does UNK suspend? The registrar should have this information, and might also know how many transfer credits come from students in that position.
Davis: if peer institutions are unanimous in not letting such students back, our task is simplified.

Advising and graduation
Lightner questioned the adequacy of academics to advise regarding post-graduation decisions if they have no non-academic experience.
Jones: students should check intended courses with advisors and look for internships. Non-traditional students are better prepared for the transition to life after college.
Nelson: Political Science is going to start requiring a portfolio that will include a resume. Jones: could Career Services help with this kind of advising?
Keck: in her major there is an advisor for transfer students.
Davis: in his discipline transfer students work with departmental chairs.
Lightner: most IT transfers are from within the university.
Davis: this kind of advising might be a workload issue.
Jones: advising policy was changed because the CD requirement was causing problems for students planning courses.
Davis: should we ask the deans this question?

First Year Experience
Nelson: the intent seems to be that all freshmen will take one FY course. Should there be other transition courses later in the academic career? This would become an advising issue.
Davis: in advising the exceptions are the problem, for instance class availability.
Education blocks are becoming more prevalent and have an impact on other classes.
Tracy: education blocks are not intended to conflict with other class commitments
Nelson: four year plans get in the way of special topics courses, planning has to be flexible.

The next meeting was set for December 4th, same time, same place.

The meeting adjourned at 6:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Trudy de Goede, recorder.