Minutes of the April 15 Meeting

I. President DiBiasio called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

II. Jon Smalley offered the invocation.

III. Minutes from March 18th were approved as submitted.

IV. Unfinished Business: None.

V. Approval of Spring Term Graduates: Melanie Hough requested approval of the spring term graduates. The list, along with corrections, was distributed via email prior to the meeting. (See Academic Affairs website under Faculty Agenda for the distributed list). Spring term graduates were approved.

VI. Elections to Faculty Committees and Council
   a. University Council Chair (1): Jeff Allison
   c. Operational Committee – Athletics (1): Brian Hofman
   e. Operational Committee – Undergraduate Promotion & Tenure Appeals (2): Karen Kier, J.D. Yoder
   f. Operational Committee – Grievance (3): Brian Anderson, Mark Cruea, Jed Marquart
   g. Operational Committee – Review Committee on Dismissal of Faculty (5): Rich Miller, Ray Person, Boyd Rorabaugh, Susan Schertzer, Mohammad Zaki
   h. Operational Committee – Hearing Committee on Dismissal of Faculty (5): Laurie Bell, Diana Garlough, Vicki Motz, Jenny Walton, J.D. Yoder
   i. Operational Committee – University Board of Appeals (2): Kathie Fleck, Jenny Walton

VII. Report from University Council: Jeff Allison shared that the last Council meeting of the school year will be Tuesday, April 22nd. Please contact the committee chairs with issues to be brought before Council. The Board of Trustees meeting occurred over this past weekend. The Board members expressed their concern for the faculty and staff during this difficult financial situation.
   a. Questions were raised regarding the future and the likelihood of faculty positions being cut. President DiBiasio responded that meetings are occurring weekly to make plans for addressing the financial situation.

VIII. Reports from Constitutional Committees:
   a. Budget and Appropriations: No report.
   b. Academic Affairs: Firas Hassan announced that the committee has been working on credit hour definitions, uniform content for course syllabi and revising the policy on incomplete grades. In addition, the committee discussed moving the start time for night courses from 6:30 PM to 7 PM.
      i. John Lomax asked for clarification on the incomplete grade policy revision. Firas Hassan responded that the grade will convert to an “F” after 12 months if no extension is granted by the dean. The previous policy kept the grade as incomplete after one year.
   c. Student Affairs: No report.
   d. Personnel: Michele Govekar announced that the committee met on Tuesday April 8th and addressed two issues:
a. Review of faculty handbook Appendix 10 regarding sabbaticals – The committee reviewed the purpose, “to enrich teaching and encourage productive scholarship by securing uninterrupted time for study, research, travel or writing.” After review, the committee decided that leaves for visiting professorships can be requested, but must be reviewed and meet the normal criteria in Appendix 10. No change to paragraph VI.6 was recommended.
b. Review of Quality of Work Life issues, peer institutions and listed programs of this type at ONU.
c. Michele Govekar (Chair of the Personnel Committee) is participating in the Budget Advisory Council.

IX. Reports from Operational Committees:
   a. Athletic Events: No report.
   b. Cultural Events: No report.
   c. International Affairs: No report.
   d. Religious Affairs: No report.
   e. Information Technology: No report.

X. Questions for the President: President DiBiasio first reviewed recent performance reviews.
   a. Provost Crago’s Performance Review: There were 177 respondents. The medians and modes of responses for each question were mostly 4’s (“good”) with the occasional 3 or 5. Items with the highest mean scores included developing and understanding institutional goals, promoting planning, projecting credibility and integrity, conveying a positive image of the University to various constituencies. Lower means included re-evaluating and retracting decisions, accessibility. In addition, there was an 11 page report with many comments from a subset of the faculty. Some comments were positive; others were critical. Provost Crago and President DiBiasio read every comment and will consider those moving forward.
   b. President DiBiasio’s Performance Review: A copy of the President’s review was also distributed to the Vice Chair (Lou Lobenhofer) and Chair of University Council (Jeff Allison). There were 180 respondents. The medians and modes of responses for each question were mostly 4’s (“good”) with the occasional 5. Highest mean scores included developing and understanding institutional goals, promoting planning, understanding the University’s fiscal needs, projecting credibility and integrity, effectively maintaining relationships with alumni and benefactors, conveying a positive image of the University to various constituencies. Items with the lower mean scores included reevaluating and retracting decisions, promoting innovation and advancement of academic programs, giving due recognition to faculty and staff accomplishments. In addition, there was a 24 page report with comments from a subset of faculty members. The President read every comment and will consider what to continue doing and do differently going forward. The President thanked everyone for their time in participating in the review process.
   c. Actions taken at the recent Board Meeting:
      i. There was discussion of underwater endowments and the need to bring those funds “above water.” There has been considerable success over the past year, reducing the number of underwater funds from 120 to 70. The university asked the Board to approve an increased draw on the endowment from $340,000 to
$800,000 to partially address the financial gap. The Board approved the 4.9% increased draw on the endowment as a “last resort” measure.

ii. The preliminary budget was presented to the Board. The budget was approved. A Budget Advisory Council, with broad university representation, has been appointed to address the $3.5 million gap in the budget. The council has finalized a preliminary set of principles to guide the decision-making process with respect to budgetary decision. These principles will be distributed to faculty members.

d. A memo was distributed outlining the gap between financial aid expenses and revenue for the 2013 – 2014 school year. President DiBiasio wanted to provide some background information regarding the memo. The financial aid model projected an aid budget of $61.1 million for the year. This model has worked well in the past. However, this year, net tuition revenue fell short by $2.6 million relative to the budget plan for the year.

Many factors contributed to the difference between the projected aid the university could award and the amount that was actually awarded. These factors included students filing late (after the billing cycle), students owing money on tuition bills, an increase in the amount of aid from the fall to spring semester and a large amount of aid needed. The gap was not fully apparent until mid-March. Overall, a combination of greater need and historic flexibility in filing combined to produce the problem. Another monitoring number, gross tuition, did not suggest a problem. In retrospect, the issue should have been identified earlier. More analysis will be done going forward. Who is responsible? There is a collective responsibility that includes financial aid and enrollment and the President as he accepted responsibility for the final budget forecast.

e. Firas Hassan asked how the reduction of the sticker price will affect us. The President responded that there will be less discount going forward, but the lower sticker price has caused more families to consider ONU.

f. Lisa Robeson requested more reporting from the Budget and Appropriations Committee and the new Budget Advisory Council.

g. Margot Cullen asked how close the University was to budget ruin. President DiBiasio responded that $3.5 million is a lot to cut, and even though the University will preserve as much as possible, personnel reductions will probably be required. Compensation for faculty has not kept pace with inflation, so the University is looking to provide salary increases moving forward. Margot Cullen responded that losses will be traumatic and the University should avoid using corporate language and instead use language that acknowledges the pain (i.e. firing or cutting people off). President DiBiasio acknowledged that losses will be traumatic.

XI. Questions for the Provost: Provost Crago thanked everyone for the cards, emails, thoughts and prayers. There were no questions for the Provost.

XII. Other Reports: None.

XIII. New Business: None.

XIV. Announcements:

a. Dean Albrecht announced the College of Arts and Sciences Undergraduate Research Colloquium on Friday, April 25th in McIntosh.
b. President DiBiasio noted that the Board was impressed by Footloose and the LLM program presentation. Thanks to those that participated.

XV. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 12:05 PM.

Submitted by,

Leslie A. Riley, Secretary
Lou Lobenhofer, Parliamentarian