

Strategic Committee Planning Minutes
May 10, 2005

In attendance: Ralph Thayer, Jim Meza, Becky Rutter, Ed Johnson, Edit Bourgeois, Bobby Dupont, Bob Cashner, Joe King and Scott Whittenburg

- I. Update on Urban Agenda Report—Bobby Dupont distributed a copy of Russ Trahan’s urban agenda report and encouraged committee members to extrapolate data that could be utilized for goal setting purposes at the retreat. Committee members commented on the lower levels of faculty members and faculty salaries in comparison to UNO’s peer institutions. They also commented on the lower levels of staff members per student in comparison to other peers. A discussion ensued over the university’s mix of graduate versus undergraduate students and if a higher number of graduate students would assist the university in becoming nationally prominent. Bob Cashner informed committee members that the research council is evaluating the university’s current mix and will complete their report this fall. Other committee members asked for clarification on several data sets included in the report which related to faculty research and other support. Bobby Dupont will get a clarification on this data and report back to the committee.
 - a. Tuition and Fees—Bobby Dupont informed the group of the pending Board of Regents proposal which, if approved, would allow UNO to raise tuition rates to 93% of the SREB average. This increase will generate an additional \$2.5 million per year in revenue. Dupont added the university is seeking to charge professional fees for certain programs. Dupont asked committee members to formally endorse passage of the Board of Regents plan to which committee members unanimously agreed.
 - b. Graduation rate—Bobby Dupont explained the process through which graduation rates are calculated and reminded committee members that transfer student are not included in the calculation. Ralph Thayer commented that he has received student complaints about certain courses that are needed for gradation are not offered in the semester the student needs to graduate. Rick Barton and other committee members affirmed the validity of those comments. Bobby Dupont recommended the committee endorse a goal of raising the gradation rate by 10% to which committee members ominously agreed.
- II. Excellence Planning—There was a general discussion among the academic deans on the committee that more dollars should be directed towards fewer projects for the greatest impact. Dupont asked committee members to read through the proposals from each college prior to the next meeting. King suggested that each Dean submit only their top two proposals for funding consideration. A discussion ensued about the process and the how funding should be distributed. After this discussion, a decision was made to hold a special meeting with the academic deans which will be attended by Chancellor Ryan.