1.0 Call to Order
Nickerson called the meeting to order at 2:33 p.m.

2.0 Announcements

2.1 Campus Sustainability Commission
President Nickerson reported that the Chancellor is reinstituting the Chancellor’s Commission on Sustainability and there are two faculty openings that need to be filled. He noted that the Commission will work on efforts to make the campus more sustainable. He stated that faculty members interested in serving on the Commission should contact him or Coordinator Griffin.

2.2 Upcoming Executive Committee Elections
President Nickerson reported that two seats on the Executive Committee will need to be filled at the end of April and nominees for President Elect and Secretary also are needed. He stated that these positions can be filled by faculty members from any of the colleges. He stated that anyone interested should contact either him, Coordinator Griffin, or any member of the Executive Committee.

3.0 Athletics Director Shawn Eichorst
Director Eichorst thanked the Senate for the invitation to speak. He stated that it is an honor to be at the University of Nebraska, an institution that is well balanced in its mission of education and serving the communities of the state, the nation, and the world. He pointed out that he has become even more impressed each day with the University as he delves into the academic aspect of the institution. He reported that he is getting to know and work closely with the colleges and the deans, and he views Athletics as a college in itself, and the coaches similar to faculty, as it strives to train our young people to be successful in life. He noted that he has worked at several universities, twice now in the Big Ten, so he has been able to see academics from the Athletic side at many different institutions and he believes Nebraska has a wonderful culture and is doing a great job.

Director Eichorst noted that Athletics is to provide our students with the resources and support to be successful in three areas: academics, life skills, and athletics. He noted that while Athletics can be a point of connection, pride and spirit, it comes with great responsibility in representing the University. He pointed out that it can take a life time to create a good reputation, but only a second to destroy it.

Director Eichorst stated that Athletics can help departments and colleges with recruiting students and faculty and he has communicated with the deans to let them know if there is any way Athletics can help. He noted that Athletics also contributes to the campus economically and does not receive any University or State subsidies. He pointed out that Athletics helps to stimulate the state and Lincoln economy, however it is important that we do not over commercialize college sports. He stated that we want to have a healthy, balanced athletic program. He reported that nearly 6,000 of our student-athletes are graduate letter winners, and 62 Husker letter winners were named Big Ten Distinguished Scholars for earning a 3.7 GPA or better during the 2013-14 academic year.

Director Eichorst reported that Athletics is working with Professor Dennis Molfese and his team at the Brain, Biology, and Behavior research facility in East stadium to study and see how improvements can be made to prevent brain injuries in sports and other aspects of life. The Nebraska Athletics Performance Laboratory is working to take conventional wisdom and match it with science to find ways to make our young people better athletically in a much safer and healthier environment. He pointed out that the welfare of our young people is our top priority and collaboration between athletics and academics is needed to ensure their welfare.

Director Eichorst stated that Athletics has been in collaboration with the College of Business Administration developing a master’s program, the Master of Arts in Business with Specialization in Intercollegiate Athletics which is a two-year program. He noted that the first year of the program is mainly in the classroom followed by a full-year practicum in the Athletics department which will allow the student to understand how an
Athletics department works. He stated that the collaboration between the students and the Athletics staff is important and rewarding.

Director Eichorst pointed out that although we are not perfect academically, we are doing a very good job with graduation rates, GPA’s, and we lead the country in Academic All-Americans with a total of 315, 80 more than the University of Notre Dame which is second in the nation. He noted that approximately 460,000 student-athletes compete in the NCAA each year, yet only ten are picked every year for the NCAA Top Ten Award and last year it was presented to UNL’s women’s tennis student-athlete Mary Weatherhold, increasing our nation-leading total to 17. He pointed out that the administration and coaches understand the importance of academics and this is reflected in the disciplined way that they recruit students.

Director Eichorst reported that there is no question that Nebraska has been a trailblazer with providing student-athletes with life skills training. He stated that there are four professional staff members who help our student-athletes integrate themselves outside of Athletics and we have tremendous facilities and an incredible program that is career-based and community-based to help them with life skills. He noted that when student-athletes are recruited the emphasis is not only on athletics, but on academics. He pointed out that students have four or five years to prepare themselves for what they are going to do with their lives. He stated that, even for the small number of students that become professional athletes, at some point they will no longer play and they need to be prepared for a different career. He reported that much of the life skills deal with common sense things like relationships, finances, skill assessments, and networking. He stated that student-athletes completed a total of 6,000 hours in community service projects, not because they were told to do it, but because they wanted to do it. He noted that the community service brings balance to Athletics and gives back to the community.

Director Eichorst reported that Athletics is performing at a high level. Last year the group of student-athletes that came to UNL had some of the highest grades and test scores in the history of Athletics. He pointed out that we are the first Big Ten program in history to qualify for a bowl game, and NCAA postseason play in each of the major sports (football, volleyball, women’s soccer, men’s basketball, women’s basketball, baseball and softball). He noted that this is a testament to the coaches and support staff that they are bringing in highly qualified young people.

Director Eichorst stated that he wanted to thank the faculty for all that they do to make the campus great. He stated that he hopes that Athletics adds value to the university.

Professor Lee, Communication Studies, noted that the handout provided by Director Eichorst stated that 5% of Athletics’ revenue is going back to the campus. He asked what this means. Director Eichorst reported that Athletics is treated like any other auxiliary on campus and is assessed 5% of its revenue. Professor Lee asked if this money goes into the general operating budget of the campus. Director Eichorst noted that the Chancellor’s office would be able to provide this information.

Professor Babchuck, Anthropology, asked what the criteria are for students to be Academic All-Americans and whether they must be at a certain level on the depth chart of a sport to qualify. Director Eichorst reported that the criteria are fairly rigid per sport. He noted that it is possible that a fourth string student-athlete could qualify, but typically it is someone with significant playing time.

Professor Grange, Johnny Carson School of Theater & Film, noted that there is a new book out about the athletic scandal that occurred at North Carolina and apparently the book states that there was utter corruption at the university. He asked if Director Eichorst was aware of any problems at North Carolina while he worked at the University of Miami. Director Eichorst reported that he did not hear of any misconduct.

Professor Grange stated that some universities now have competitive dance teams, which is an interesting combination of athletics and aesthetics, and they are competing under Athletics. He asked if these teams are being encouraged in the Big Ten and if they qualify as an NCAA sport if they compete against each other. Director Eichorst reported that the Big Ten is not encouraging dance team competition. He noted that gymnastics is a combination of artistry and athleticism as well. Professor Grange asked if UNL has a competitive dance team. Director Eichorst stated that we do not and he does not think there are a large number of universities that have competitive dance teams as sponsored intercollegiate sports.

Professor Kiambi, College of Journalism and Mass Communications, noted that following the firing of former Coach Pelini some football players expressed their disappointment with how they were notified. He asked what has been done to make sure the current players are going to work well with the new coaches and staff.
Director Eichorst reported there was no perfect way to communicate the news to over 120+ student-athletes and that he has an open line of communication with all students and he and the Athletics staff are positive with them. He stated that while the experience was a difficult one for the players, it was a learning opportunity for them to realize that adversity occurs in life. He stated that he is very impressed with how the players have handled the transition. He pointed out that Nebraska has a great vibe and culture and students decide to come here because they know that this is where they are going to get an education, which is very important because so few student-athletes get the chance to become professional athletes.

Professor Lee stated that he was interested to hear Director Eichorst say that he views coaches similar to faculty members. He pointed out that former Coach Pelini’s speech at Northstar High School was very misogynistic and used language that would not be used by professors when speaking with students. Director Eichorst stated that this refers back to how adversity is managed. He noted that situations like this can be used as a teaching opportunity in what is the correct way to conduct ourselves in public. Professor Lee stated that he has concerns that some of the coaches speak to their student-athletes privately using derogatory language. Director Eichorst reported that the Chancellor, Professor Potuto, the Faculty Athletics Representative for UNL, and himself meet with coaches at least twice a year to discuss what is appropriate. He pointed out that he and his staff also pay close attention to see if anything is going on that needs to be addressed. He stated that the coaches know what is appropriate in practice and at games.

Professor Vakilzadian, Electrical Engineering, asked what kind of protection student-athletes have if they are injured. Director Eichorst stated that if a student-athlete is injured, either within or outside of the sport, Athletics takes care of them. Their scholarship is honored, and we try to assist them as best we can within the set parameters. He noted that the State of Nebraska has some measures that need to be followed as well. He pointed out that all student-athletes are treated the same, whether they are first string or last, and regardless of what sport they play. Professor Vakilzadian asked if the student-athletes have disability insurance. Director Eichorst reported that the university is mainly self-insured. He noted that the NCAA has catastrophic insurance as well.

Professor Rudy, Nutrition and Health Sciences, noted that the Executive Committee met with Sr. Associate Athletics Director Dennis Leblanc and Professor Potuto and discussed what happened at North Carolina, where there was a no-show class but students were receiving credit. He pointed out that the problem started as an academic problem, but morphed into an athletics problem because a number of student-athletes were taking the course. He asked what was being done to prevent this from happening here. Director Eichorst stated that student-athletes are to be treated just like any other student, and in fact, they want to be treated the same. He stated that he believes that we have robust systems in place and that we have good people to prevent a similar incident from occurring. He pointed out that Professor Potuto is one of the best Faculty Athletics Representative in the business and is engaged with Athletics to make sure that the academic component of student-athlete is adhered to. He noted that there are 14 professional academic support staff members working with the student-athletes to help them be as successful as they can be. He reported that audits have been conducted, the Big Ten has standards that we must follow, and outside consultants have come in to check to make sure we are in compliance. He stated that the campus needs to be vigilant about violations, but having a good culture and good people and processes in place help, as well as working closely with the faculty. He pointed out that Athletics wants to make sure we provide each of the student-athletes with a positive educational experience and we want them to be successful.

Professor Rudy asked if there have been changes in practices in Athletics here at UNL to safeguard against the criminal acts that occurred at Penn State. Director Eichorst noted that he was at another institution when the Penn State incident occurred and heavy reviews of the Athletics program were conducted there. He believes that the reviews were also conducted here and the camp programs were recently revamped to ensure that young people coming to campus are safe. He noted that we need to stay integrated with all of the systems that are on campus that might alert us if any wrong doing is occurring. If an incident should arise campus authorities will be alerted.

President Nickerson thanked Director Eichorst for speaking to the Senate and pointed out that that he thinks it was a wise decision to hire an Athletics Director with a law degree given the complexities of the position.

4.0 Approval of January 13, 2015 and February 3, 2015 Minutes

Professor Peterson, Agricultural Economics, moved for approval of the January 13 minutes. The motion was seconded by Professor Grange. The motion was approved with one abstention.
Professor Vakilzadian moved for approval of the February 3 minutes. The motion was seconded by Professor Anaya, University Libraries. The motion was approved with one abstention.

5.0 Committee Reports

5.1 Convocation Committee Report (Professor Lu)
Professor Lu reported that last year a new numerical system to grade the proposals for funding was introduced. He noted that the system allows the Convocations Committee to quantify each of the proposals in a relatively objective and fair manner. He stated that the Committee meets twice each year, once in the spring and once in the fall to review the proposals. He pointed out that during the spring there are fewer proposals for funding guest speakers than during the fall semester when there can be many applications. As a result, the fall applications are viewed more strictly because there is more competition for funding. He suggested that if someone wants to have a guest speaker funded they might have a better chance of receiving funding if they apply in the spring. He pointed out that some departments send several applications while others don’t send any. He noted that departments that send numerous applications will be limited to funding if the total number of applications received is large.

5.2 Graduate Council
President Nickerson noted that Assistant VC Perez and Assistant Dean Bellows could not attend the Senate meeting, but that the report was included in the Senate packet and if anyone has questions they should contact either of them directly.

5.3 Parking Advisory Committee
Professor McCoy stated that after serving on the Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) for the past four years it is insightful every year to see how parking impacts everyone on campus each day, with the inability to find parking and the difficulty in getting around campus. He noted that the responsibilities of the Committee are to review and make recommendations on parking and transit services to Vice Chancellor Jackson. The Committee bases its recommendations on annual reviews of the parking and operations of Parking and Transit Services as well as considers parking fees. He reported that the Committee is composed of faculty, staff, and student members which provides a good representation of the campus community. He stated that no parking appeals were heard this year.

Professor McCoy stated that the single biggest issue that the PAC dealt with this year is the request that was made from the administration to develop bus routes for Nebraska Innovation Campus. He reported that the Committee was asked how Parking & Transit Services could support $319,000 to cover the cost for two Star Tran buses to run the route to NIC and the administration suggested raising the student transit fees. He stated that the Committee did not want to raise student transit fees because they had a substantial increase in this fee several years ago and a promise was given that the transit fee would not be raised in the near future. He stated that the question became how all parties could be accommodated in this matter.

Professor McCoy reported that, with the help of Director of Parking and Transit Services Dan Carpenter, the PAC looked at all options and found that eliminating fall and spring semester duplicate on-call perimeter van service and using the new City Campus-NIC route to service all perimeter parking lots would save $157,000. He noted that eliminating summer perimeter bus service, by moving perimeter permit holders to a closer parking lot would save $60,000. He stated that the Chancellor has committed an additional $46,000. This leaves $56,000 and the proposal is to fund this amount by lowering the percentage of parking citation warnings and voided tickets. Director Carpenter noted that 36% of the citations given were warnings. Professor McCoy pointed out that only 5.2% of our Parking & Transit Services operating funds come from citations, whereas at the University of Illinois funds from citations amount to 10% of the operating budget and the same is true for the University of Missouri, whiles the University of Kansas funds 15% of its operating budget through citations. Professor Lee asked how many warning tickets are given during the first couple of days when the parking tags expire and new ones need to be used. Professor McCoy stated that the warning citations are a combination of the beginning of the new fiscal year and throughout the regular semester. Director Carpenter pointed out that warning citations will still be issued at the beginning of the semesters and the fiscal year. However, after two or three weeks people will need to follow the parking rules or they will be ticketed. Professor McCoy pointed out that some institutions do not have any grace period at all.

Professor McCoy noted that even with the suggested changes Parking & Transit Services is facing a $158,000 deficit which is in part due to the increase in minimum wages. Director Carpenter reported that two new staff positions are needed, one is a Parking and Revenue Control Technician to fix parking gates more quickly and the other is a Communication Position. Professor McCoy pointed out that consideration needs to be given to a potential decline in parking revenue as students are going to more offsite parking and student housing provides
parking. As a result, this is a first time in several years that the PAC is looking to increase parking fees by $1 per month.

Professor McCoy reported that the PAC investigated allowing graduate students receiving a monthly stipend to pay for their parking permits through payroll deduction.

Professor Hays, Southeast Research & Extension Center, asked if we are better now at planning where people are going to park, particularly since new buildings are constructed on existing parking lots. Professor McCoy stated that he believes Parking & Transit Services is much better at coordinating where people can park, for instance consideration is already being given to parking for the new Business College building. He pointed out that funding for the construction does not go towards replacing parking spots, and thus other areas need to be found where we can accommodate parking.

Professor Subbiah, Food Services & Technology, asked if more information could be provided on the bus service to NIC. Professor McCoy reported that there will be two routes. Director Carpenter stated that there will be a 7 minute headway from City Campus to NIC and from East Campus to NIC there will be a 20 minute headway, but the Star Tran schedule has not been looked at yet to confirm it.

Professor Subbiah noted that putting sensors in each parking lot would let people know where parking is available on campus. He asked if the technology is there yet for this kind of system. Professor McCoy stated that the PAC has been actively engaged with consultants who are encouraging the campus to move in this direction. He noted that there would be gated lots which will allow only the exact number of permit holders for that lot to park there. He stated that the campus is moving towards a residual inventory and will probably experiment with this kind of idea over the next couple of years. Professor Archer asked what someone would do if they have classes on both campuses. Director Carpenter stated that this is one of the challenges that needs to be addressed. He stated that the system is called Park Once and noted that 80% of the staff do not move their car during the time that they are working, but 20% do which creates a challenge in how to accommodate these people. The other problem is the state vehicles. He pointed out that it will be easier to move students to a specific lot because they can be prioritized and assigned a spot, but it is more challenging for faculty and staff that have to use their cars for conducting business.

Professor McCoy wanted to invite anyone with concerns or questions to contact the Parking Advisory Committee. He pointed out that visitors are welcome to attend the PAC meetings.

6.0 Unfinished Business
6.1 Motion to Approved the Ballot for Elections to the Academic Planning Committee, Academic Rights & Responsibilities Committee, and the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Panel
President Nickerson noted that the ballot was presented at the February meeting and did not need a second because it was being presented by a Faculty Senate committee (the Committee on Committees). He reported that no comments were received on the ballot since the February meeting and he asked for approval of the ballot. The ballot was approved.

7.0 New Business
7.1 Employee Assistance Program – Floyd Sylvester, Director
President Nickerson introduced a brief presentation about the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). He noted that it is good to have a program like that at such a large institution.

Director Sylvester stated that the EAP, located in the 501 Building on City Campus, is designed to help a person and family members to be more effective in dealing with their everyday life. He reported that the EAP employs mental health professionals to work with individuals who come in seeking help. He noted that relationship issues are the number one reason why people come to the EAP. He stated that the EAP has a number of support groups that address topics ranging from financial, legal, smoking cessation, parenting, and caregiving. He stated that there is a women empower yourselves support group where women can help facilitate each other on various issues that they must deal with. He stated that the EAP is a confidential and free service that can also be used by family members of an employee. The only time anyone outside of the EAP would know if someone was seeing them would be in cases of child or elder abuse. Such cases must be reported.

Director Sylvester pointed out that 45% of the UNL employee population is 50 or older, but they are seeing more people that are stressed because they say their kids are driving them crazy. However, a considerable amount of work is being done on grief as the older employees experience the passing of their partner or their
parents. He reported that depression and stress are other key issues that people come in seeking help with. He noted that many tenure track professors are very stressed out, and then there are those who don’t get tenure who are often dealing with depression.

Director Sylvester reported that the EAP does a lot of consultation with supervisors who might have an employee whose function has declined over time or they have difficulty understanding what they need to do for their jobs. He noted that mechanisms for dealing with these kinds of employees are suggested. He stated that the EAP also conducts a lot of educational workshops on topics such as time management, email etiquette, and phone etiquette to name a few.

Professor Adams noted that at the last institution he worked at there were a number of post-doctoral employees who are under extreme stress because of having difficulty in finding a permanent job. He asked if these people can go to the EAP. Director Sylvester pointed out that as long as someone receives a paycheck from the university, they are eligible to use the EAP services.

Professor Reisbig, Child, Youth, and Family Studies, asked if the EAP offers couples counseling and family counseling sessions. Director Sylvester stated that they counsel many couples and families.

### 7.2 Open Mic – Academic Freedom and How to Defend It

President Nickerson introduced Professor Moshman, Educational Psychology, who has written numerous articles on academic freedom. Professor Moshman pointed out that it is a good thing to periodically discuss academic freedom because there are always issues concerning academic freedom and faculty members need to pay attention to them. He noted that many people are not entirely clear about what it is and what academic freedom protects. He stated that many people believe that academic freedom is protected by the first amendment, but for the most part it isn’t. He stated that as academics we need to determine what academic freedom is. He noted that the AAUP has been defining academic freedom for the past 100 years.

Professor Moshman pointed out that the more broadly academic freedom is defined, the more difficult it is to defend it. He stated that it is impossible to defend that professors can say and do whatever they want. He stated that faculty and students need to pursue the truth as they see it without being constricted for political, financial, or other reasons. He noted that academic freedom is not really a special right for faculty, it is the freedom to do academic work and anyone involved in academia should be covered by academic freedom.

Professor Fech stated that he enjoyed reading the President’s newsletter on academic freedom. He wondered about academic freedom at a public university versus a private university or a religious-based university. He asked if there is a difference in academic freedom between the different types of universities. Professor Moshman stated that, in general, academic freedom should be the same at any institution. He noted that the AAUP used to provide certain allowances for private institutions, but these institutions had to clearly state why they should be given an allowance.

Professor Purcell, Southeast Research & Extension Center, asked if UNL is associated with AFCON or the AAUP. Professor Moshman noted that he is one of the founders of AFCON and the Faculty Senate has been an organizational member. He stated that AFCON is a coalition of organizations in Nebraska that are concerned with academic freedom. He reported that several AAUP chapters are members of AFCON as well along with other associations that are involved with K-12 education.

Professor Rudy noted that in the 1999 book *The Shadow University: The Betrayal of Liberty on America’s Campuses* Professor Moshman was quoted as saying that academic freedom was stifled on campuses and some faculty members at UNL had to pull back on their lectures for fear of being denied tenure or promotion. He asked if the situation has improved both at UNL and nationally in the past fifteen years. Professor Moshman stated that he believes that the situation has remained the same. He noted that the book helped start FIRE, the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. He stated that FIRE has discovered that there are speech codes in many universities that are blatantly against the first amendment.

Professor Adams stated that there is a new kind of violation of academic freedom, where politicians can have influence on the funding of a college and the voice of every faculty member has to follow the party line of the politicians. He pointed out that this puts very heavy social pressures on faculty members. Professor Moshman stated that these are very important issues. He noted that academic freedom applies to the university as a whole and should not be subject to political or religious pressures. He stated that ideally a university would push back from these political or religious pressures. He reported that the Board of Regents has authority over the University of Nebraska and in the 1970’s there was a legal case that stated that the Governor could not
intervene and try to manage the finances of the University. However, the Board can be politicized. He stated that academic freedom is not just about personal rights, but the rights of the entire university.

Professor Shea, School of Natural Resources, asked what Professor Moshman thinks is the largest single threat to academic freedom nationally. Professor Moshman noted that there are always many threats, but the unhiring of Professor Steven Salaita from the University of Illinois is a real threat to academic freedom, both for Professor Salaita and his department. He reported that what makes the case particularly troubling is that personal email messages of Professor Salaita were used by the Chancellor of his university as a reason for revoking Professor Salaita’s position. The Chancellor had said that the language in the personal messages was uncivil, which he believes is a lame reason because Professor Salaita has taught for many years without being uncivil. He pointed out that the danger is that the University of Illinois is setting a standard for how people should speak, even in their own personal email messages. He noted that civility cannot be made a standard. He stated that the first amendment protects free speech but this does not apply within most universities. He noted that high schools enforce certain civility standards, but if universities try to do this it will be a major threat to academic freedom. He pointed out that the case needs to be made that faculty and students need the freedom to speak on controversial issues.

President Nickerson noted that lateness of the hour and suggested that the topic may be discussed further at the April 7 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m. The next meeting of the Faculty Senate will be held on Tuesday, April 7, 2015, at 2:30 p.m. in the East Campus Union, Arbor Suite. The minutes are respectfully submitted by Karen Griffin, Coordinator, and Tad Wysocki, Secretary.