PERSONAL STATEMENTS FOR
2023 ELECTIONS

ACADEMIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:

Joan Latta Konecky, Associate Professor, Libraries:

My 30+ years of experience as a faculty member at UNL have given me a broad perspective and valuable experience with how the university functions. I have had the opportunity to serve on a wide range of campus Senate committees, including the Faculty Senate, Faculty Senate Executive Committee, Secretary of the Faculty Senate, Committee on Committees (Chair), Parking Advisory Committee (Chair), Academic Standards Committee, Intercollegiate Athletics Committee, University Student Judicial Board, Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panels and the Academic Planning Committee.

I am actively committed to the principles and values of shared governance. I firmly believe in the importance of faculty voice and active involvement of the faculty, working with the administration, in the decision-making of the University. I have learned to look for productive means to effect change from within the system. I also value the opportunity to work collaboratively with colleagues from different areas across campus, benefiting from their varied perspectives. I endeavor to provide a broad institution-wide outlook, with an openness to diverse opinions and creative problem-solving.

I would be honored to serve a second term on the Academic Planning Committee and bring my experience and enthusiasm to this position.

ACADEMIC RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES PANEL:

Rebecca Buller, Associate Professor of Practice, School of Global Integrated Studies

I wish to serve on the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Panel (ARRP) in order to promote and enforce a strong, healthy academic faculty community. A necessity for growth, innovation, and success for all, a healthy academic community is one in which all students, staff, faculty, and administrators feel included, respected, safe, equipped, encouraged, and empowered. Countless research has demonstrated the importance of healthy academic communities (e.g. Andersson et al. 2007, Grant et al. 2007, Algoe and Haidt 2009, Spence and Gino 2010, Algoe and Stanton 2012, Froh et al. 2014, Spence et al. 2014).

Throughout my teaching, service, and research activities, one of my main goals and achievements has been to foster and grow strong, healthy communities. Such practices include, but are not limited to, affirming and celebrating teammates; cultivating a culture of transparency and gratitude; and promoting civility, collegiality, and professionalism. Healthy collegial environments require positive communication, like active listening; having clear expectations and delegations of duties; following policy; and regular, objective, constructive reflection. These
practices, in part, help to build rapport and trust, leading to enthusiastic and collaborative work for the benefit of all. Indeed, it would be my great privilege to serve fellow UNL faculty in this capacity.

**Lorna Dawes, Associate Professor, University Libraries:**

I’m an Associate Professor and Social Science Librarian at UNL and have previously served on the Faculty Senate and Senate Executive Committee, the Academic Standards Committee, and the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Panel. I am always willing to work on senate committees because I believe that faculty involvement in university governance is vital for the preservation of academic freedom and a healthy environment for research and learning. I’m constantly reminded that to be involved in faculty governance is a privilege that is not guaranteed in every university. I am passionate about equal opportunities, diversity and equity and inclusion, and serving on university wide committees, specifically the Academic Rights & Responsibilities Panel will give me the opportunity to participate in decision making that supports this passion.

**Maria Marron, Professor, College of Journalism and Mass Communications:**

As a candidate nominated to serve on the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee, I believe it is important that the ARRC concur with Clause 1.1.1. of Article 1.1. Responsibilities of the Academic Rights and Responsibilities Committee, i.e., “ensure that faculty members and administrators are appropriately apprised of rights, responsibilities, principles, and procedures pertaining to matters of professional relationships.” The ARRC should be part of every new faculty member and new administrator’s orientation to the university to fulfill its obligation.

I, for one, both as an incoming dean and as a faculty member have never been apprised of my rights, responsibilities, etc., by the ARRC. I am not trying to undermine my candidacy in writing this, but rather to point out the necessity for the ARRC to have a more visible, more consequential role on campus. Academic rights and responsibilities invariably have been aligned with tenure, but in an age of declining tenure-track or tenured positions, and in a society increasingly polarized by political and cultural conflict, academic rights are more spurious than ever.

I believe it was a matter of academic rights and responsibilities, paralleled with academic “freedom” and bad judgment that conveyed AAUP censure to UNL. It was a staunch defense of academic rights and academic “freedom” by President Ted Carter and Chancellor Ronnie Green that ensured ongoing instruction about the history of the United States in light of a regent’s attack on Critical Race Theory. Both examples represent different cases, different people in key academic decision-making roles, different outcomes.

As someone who has served in a variety of institutions, unionized and non-unionized, and in a variety of roles, I look forward to serving on the ARRC and contributing, through my
experience, reasoning, and profound respect for academic rights, to the discourse and the decisions of the committee. Thank you for your consideration.

**Deb Minter, Associate Professor, English:**

Faculty Senate plays a critical role in maintaining a productive climate for teaching, learning, research & creative activity and extension on this campus. I am especially interested in ensuring due process for faculty including the opportunity to have one’s case heard by one’s peers. For me, the work of ARRC is central the protections we can offer faculty in terms of ensuring due process.

**Martha Morton, Research Associate Professor, Chemistry:**

Dr. Morton is the Director of Research Instrumentation and oversees the core facility, the Molecular Analysis and Characterization Facility (MAC). She trains undergraduate, graduate, postdocs on instrument use and participates in the research of faculty from many departments. She uses analytical instruments in the MAC to help solve research problems. She is active on the Chemistry Safety Committee (Co-Chair), the Associate Chair of the Chancellors Safety Committee, serves as the Chair of the Chemistry Instrumentation Committee and has served as a marshal for the December 2022 commencement. Dr. Morton arrived at UNL in December 2011.

**Scott Swenseth, Associate Professor, Supply Chain Management and Analytics**

The Academic Rights and Responsibilities of faculty is crucial to the mission of any university. As a long-term faculty member at UNL, I have served on, and chaired, multiple committees at the department, college and campus level, including as a member of the Faculty Senate. As a faculty member, and especially in serving on various committee, my awareness of academic rights and responsibilities and the need to protect them has continued to grow. If elected to serve on this panel, I will work diligently to serve in a fair and impartial manner.