

# **Approved Minutes**

## **Faculty Senate Meeting**

### **24 February 2010**

**Kennedy Lounge - New Mexico Highlands University 3:00 pm**

**1. Call to Order: 3:07pm.**

**Roll Call: Present:** Maureen Romine, April Kent, Daniel Martínez, Maura Pilotti, David Lobdell, Julius Harrington, Ken Bentson, Jim Peters, Jayni Flores, Merritt Helvenston, Stella Helvie, Brad Radeke (Student Senate), Maxine Salas (Staff Senate).

**Also Present:** Mary Jane Valdez, Margaret Gonzales, Jim Burns.

**Absent:** Sheri Nsamenang (GSA), Kathy Jenkins, David Argüello.

**2. Approval of Agenda: 24 February 2010: Approved unanimously.**

**3. Approval of Minutes: 10 February 2010: Approved with one change, with 2 abstentions.**

**4. Communication from the Administration:** Dr. Rivera reported on the failure of the state legislature to achieve a budget compromise as yet, necessitating a special session, now scheduled to begin on 1 March. Dr. Rivera announced that the university is close to breaking enrollment band again, which could mean additional revenue from the state. He encouraged employees to register for classes. He also raised the question of whether it might make sense to require that classes missed due to weather-related class cancellation/university closure be made up.

**5. Communication from the Chair:** Dr. Romine gave Ms. Kent the floor to report on a recent meeting of the President's Cabinet/Advisory Council. She produced the packet from the meeting, and invited those interested to examine it. Several people then commented on the upcoming production of the musical *Rent* being jointly produced by NMHU, the UWC, and RHS. Dr. Romine then reported on the informal poll she conducted seeking approaches to deal with the problems faced in getting a quorum for meetings of the General Faculty. She reported that several individual faculty members and one academic department had recommended setting aside a time each month for such meetings. No classes could be scheduled at the designated time, and it was further recommended that all such General Faculty meetings be made mandatory, perhaps as a contractual obligation. Dr. Linder noted that his department had expressed a near-unanimous disagreement with the two options previously circulated, and Dr. Pilotti reported that her department had voted formally to propose the alternative of a scheduled time. A discussion ensued about the prospect of considering the 3<sup>rd</sup> suggestion; Dr. Romine reported on a conversation she had with Registrar John Coca, in which Mr. Coca had indicated that Monday and Wednesday afternoons were the period having the fewest scheduled classes. Dr. Rivera then reported on his perspective, and a lively discussion ensued about the merits of

establishing a specific time when no classes could be scheduled. A motion was made and seconded to present all three options discussed in the next general faculty meeting for discussion and a possible vote. The motion was then amended to include a provision to include a discussion of e-mail voting. After additional discussion, the question was called and seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The Executive Committee will draft and circulate the proposal prior to its dissemination. Dr. Romine then reported on a recent meeting with the Association & Dr. LaGrange to discuss necessary changes in Faculty Handbook language, and also reported on Dr. Jenkins's investigation of committee service certificates. Various samples were displayed. She further reported that all those nominated for Faculty Marshal for the May commencement exercises have accepted, six in all.

6. **Communication from Academic Affairs:** Dr. Bentson reported on the last meeting of the committee. He reported that the Southwest Studies program had been recommended for continuation with enhancement, and noted that a proposed software design program had been tabled. He further informed the Faculty Senate of the committee's discussion—as per the Senate's charge—of its duties and responsibilities. He noted that the opinion of a majority of the committee identified subcommittee review of appeals as a major burden. He then noted a proposal coming from the VPAA's office for creating a Directed Study course (XXX 493) to substitute for required courses not being taught in a timely fashion. The committee has also decided not to review the core curriculum at present. He then responded to questions, including several on the proposed Directed Study course and the oft-scheduled, oft-postponed demonstration of the DegreeWorks program.
7. **Communication from the Student Senate:** Brad Radeke reported on a number of issues having been raised by international students, and the creation of an ad hoc committee to explore the problems identified; the Student Senate is also exploring food service problems. A question was asked about the participation of students from the centers in Student Senate, and Dr. Harrington reported that he was unaware of any such interaction taking place. Dr. Peters asked about representation for students who take classes only online. Another senator inquired as to whether the meetings of the Student Senate were being televised, and indications are that this is not yet happening.
8. **Communication from the GSA:** no representative was present.
9. **Communication from the Staff Senate:** Maxine Salas reported on the results of the Staff Satisfaction Survey; there were 189 responses, electronically and via hard copy. The results will be made public in a few weeks. Also, the body is still at work on proposed policies and procedures; they are now waiting on action from Human Resources. She reported further that the Facilities Services time clock issue is continuing to be a problem. A proposed solution has been advanced—no requirement that employees clock out and in at lunch. She indicated that the university is currently contemplating a requirement that all non-exempt employees clock in, in order to end inequities. Such a policy would require the installation of time clocks

throughout campus. The Staff Senate is also planning to place suggestion boxes across campus; the purpose would be to seek feedback on enhancing customer service. One senator asked whether the forms used to register suggestions would indicate whether the maker of a recommendation was a member of the faculty; no objection was raised. Then Ms. Salas answered additional questions from faculty, particularly about vacancies and schedules for administrative staff.

#### 10. Old Business

- a) **Discussion of Selection of Potential Peer Institutions:** Dr. Romine reported on communication with President Fries, based on the recent Senate discussion. Dr. Fries wants something to take to the regular meeting of the Board of Regents on 28 April. The list will be used for comparisons between NMHU and peer institutions. Dr. Hill has generated a list of 193 potential peer schools; the Senate needs to decide the type and level of its involvement. Dr. Bentson suggested the creation of an *ad hoc* committee to come up with a priority list. He embodied this in a motion to call for the formation of an external ad hoc committee of five members to identify criteria and generate a list of fifteen peer institutions, and report back to the Senate with explanation for the choice of criteria. The motion was seconded by Dr. Peters, the motion was given unanimous approval.
- b) **Catalog Format and Content:** Dr. Bentson had prepared a proposed outline for both the undergraduate and graduate catalog. This was distributed, and Dr. Bentson explained his approach and how each section was numbered, to facilitate keeping track. He is planning to write a preface of how to use the catalog. He envisions a tripartite structure; A: University Policy. B: Major & Minor Programs. C. Academic programs. This issue will be on the agenda for the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

#### 11. New Business

- a) **Committee update and reports:** Dr. Peters reported on the need to wait for definitive action on the learning platform issue until the state budget is clarified; Dr. Bentson opined about the need to look at financial viability of such programs, in addition to academic merit. Dr. Peters also reported briefly on the work of the *ad hoc* committee examining academic software platforms. He noted that there remains a good deal of uncertainty about what is feasible.
- b) **Grievance vs. Faculty Senate:** Dr. Romine asked non-faculty senators to leave, then provided background to a grievance filed naming the Senate as a body, along with the Executive Committee, and an individual member, as respondents. A lively discussion ensued. There was a motion to concur with the action of the Executive Committee, and to affirm the Executive Committee's representation of the Senate in the grievance filed. The motion was seconded, and passed unanimously.

#### 12. Adjournment: 5:15pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter S. Linder  
Secretary/Treasurer, Faculty Senate