

Approved Minutes

Faculty Senate Meeting

8-25-2010

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

1. Call to Order: 3:12 pm

Roll Call: Present: Maureen Romine (Chair), Stella Helvie (Vice Chair), Kent April, Ken Bentson, Tom Corbin, Jane Gorman, Julius Harrington, Kathy Jenkins, David Lobdell, and Maura Pilotti

Also Present: Gilbert Rivera (VPAA)

Absent: Jayni Flores (excused absence), Daniel Martinez, Representative of Staff Senate (excused absence)

Unfilled Seats: Representative of School of Business, Representative of Math and Computer Science, Representative of Student Senate, & Representative of GSA

2. Approval of Agenda 8-25-2010: Approved with limited modifications.

3. Approval of Minutes 4-28-2010: Approved with limited modifications.

4. Communication from the Administration:

Dr. Rivera deferred his remarks regarding enrollment/retention to the President who would make a report on this subject matter during the general faculty meeting. He briefly mentioned increments in enrollment pertaining to statewide centers and returning students. He then added that the enrollment numbers appeared to be similar to those of last year. Lastly, Dr. Rivera thanked the faculty for their participation in the new students' welcoming event.

5. Communication from the Chair:

Dr. Romine commented on the need to fill seats on the senate. She also mentioned that the proper number of representatives for the School of Education was an unresolved issue (2 vs. 5).

Dr. Romine then mentioned her senate-related activities during the summer, including Board of Regents' meetings and meetings of the executive committee. She cited her faculty senate report to the Board of Regents during the 7/26 meeting, which included revisions to the faculty handbook.

Dr. Romine reminded the audience that during the last Board of Regents' meeting, the campus master plan, parking plans, and parking permits had been approved. Dr. Romine mentioned that the Board of Regents had asked for

community suggestions on the naming of the new residence hall and the new student center. She also mentioned that the President's contract had been extended. Then she noted that a list of 15 peer institutions and related selection criteria had been sent to the Board of Regents. Of the 15, 11 were chosen as suitable. A discussion ensued regarding the subset of institutions selected and whether the subset could adequately represent NMHU. It was noted that the current selection was not to be regarded as final and that the Administration would be amenable to consider additional selections. Dr. Romine then discussed course completion rates, which she described as relatively high, and plans by other educational institutions (e.g., University of New Mexico) to expand their online course offerings. A lively discussion arose regarding the technical problems experienced by Blackboard users during the summer. The assembled senate recognized that a more stable online system should be adopted by NMHU.

Dr. Romine then mentioned the work the executive committee conducted during the summer. She indicated that revisions to the faculty handbook, which represented the heart of this work, included changes regarding procedures (e.g., chair selection process), reorganization of senate committees (e.g., abolition of the grievance committee and formation of new committees), and alterations specifically demanded by the collective bargaining agreement. Dr. Romine indicated that the executive committee planned to present the changes to the senate and to the full faculty for review during the fall semester.

6. Communication from Academic Affairs:

Dr. Bentson reported that the academic affairs committee would hold its first meeting on September 1st.

7. Communication from the Student Senate: None

8. Communication from the GSA: None

9. Communication from the Staff Senate: None

10. Old Business:

• **Election of One At-Large Member of the Executive Committee:**

A motion to table the election of one at-large member of the executive committee was presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

11. New Business:

• **Senate Activities for the 2010-2011 Academic Year:**

Dr. Romine mentioned that several important tasks would be accomplished in the fall to address a number of unresolved issues. Among those cited were the chair selection process, the re-organization of senate committees, the identification of traits of an effective senate, reviews of flagged programs,

catalogue revisions, and governance issues. Dr. Romine discussed the need to revise the survey to eliminate subjective interpretations regarding the content of its questions (e.g., distinction between desirable features and actual features of the Senate). She then spoke of two ad hoc committees, learning platform (chaired by Dr. Peters) and web site (chaired by Dr. Petronis), and their functions. Mention of the web site committee triggered comments regarding Blackboard's instability within the Ideal New Mexico platform and possible solutions (e.g., Desire2Learn). Discussion ensued regarding the culprit of Blackboard's instability and the competition faced by NMHU for online course offerings. The assembled senate recognized that a functioning online platform would be essential for accreditation. Other topics of discussion included the longstanding difficulty of obtaining a quorum at general faculty meetings and the review of flagged programs. The latter stimulated a vigorous discussion, which included Dr. Rivera's request that the senate respond to the recommendations of the academic affairs committee and Dr. Bentson's assurance that he would send the senate a complete documentation of his committee's analyses and recommendations pertaining to flagged programs. Discussion then shifted again to the need to focus on retention, advising, and on-line course offerings. The re-organization of committees was mentioned as a tool to increase efficiency.

12. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Pilotti

Secretary/Treasurer