

Approved Minutes

Approved November 9, 2011

Faculty Senate Meeting

October 26, 2011

Science Annex Building, Room 329

New Mexico Highlands University, 3:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order: 3:09 p.m.**

2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Dutoit, Tatiana (Visual & Performing Arts), Flores, Jayni (School of Education), Greene, Richard (Computer & Mathematical Sciences), Harrington, Julius (School of Social Work), Helvie, Stella (School of Education), Kempner, Brandon (English & Philosophy), Kent, April (Library), LeRoy, Peter (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Linder, Peter (History/Political Science/Language & Culture), Loewen, Kerry (School of Business, Media & Technology), Marrujo, Virginia (*GSA*), Martinez, Edward (Natural Resource Management), Pilotti, Maura (Social & Behavioral Sciences), and Romine, Maureen (Biology & Chemistry).

Also Present: Rivera, Gilbert (VPAA)

Absent:

Arguello, David (School of Social Work),
Braun y Harycki, David (School of Education),
Gonzales, Margaret (*Staff Senate*),
Williams, Susan (Nursing),
Gomez, Jessica (*Student Senate*). Proxy was present.

3. **Approval of Agenda:** 26 October 2011 – Approved as written

4. **Approval of Minutes:** 12 October 2011 – Approved as written (1 nay and 1 abstention)

5. **Communication from the Administration:**

Dr. Rivera mentioned that the policy for approval of Master's Degrees had been revised and that the NMHU software development program was the first program to have reached the New Mexico State Board of Finance and be approved by it. He then cited other programs currently being examined by the New Mexico Higher Education Department (e.g., a Master's Degree in athletic training).

Dr. Rivera offered a detailed illustration of changes in the funding formula, mentioned an increase in credit hours and NMHU's goals of improving graduation

rates. He indicated that changes in the funding formula include measuring enrollment at the end of each semester and degree completion. He also remarked that special consideration might be given to programs that reflect the needs of NM's workforce, offer STEM degrees, and serve underrepresented ethnic minorities, such as Hispanics and Native Americans.

Dr. Rivera mentioned his plan to offer entry-level (100) classes in mathematics and English during the summer with the aim to ensure freshmen readiness for college-level courses. The targeted skills would be mathematics, reading and writing. He also mentioned his plan to develop learning communities linked to such courses.

A discussion ensued regarding the possibility of establishing entrance requirements for freshmen to ameliorate performance in college-level courses. Dr. Rivera replied that NMHU was, and would remain, an open enrollment institution and that the key issues to be addressed involved student performance and persistence. He added that all NMHU constituencies were involved, including Faculty and Support Services. Lastly, he mentioned a grant awarded to NMHU by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities with the goal of increasing retention and graduation rates of Hispanic students. The principal investigator on the grant, which is funded by the Wal-Mart Foundation, is Dr. Trujillo, NMHU Dean of Students. Dr. Rivera stated that Dr. Trujillo and Mrs. Ortiz-Gallegos, Director of Academic Support, had attended an information session regarding retention rates at California State University, Fullerton, which serves as mentoring institution. Dr. Rivera asked that Dr. Trujillo be invited to speak on the issue and to gather suggestions from Faculty on how to improve student performance and persistence. He added that Dr. Trujillo's grant proposal permits flexibility in the selection of interventions to be targeted, thereby allowing the inclusion of summer programs.

6. Communication from the Chair:

The Chair reviewed a list of miscellaneous issues, including NMHU's improved announcements regarding weather delays, possible introduction of WeCar (a car sharing program offered by Enterprise), the impact of student loans on students after graduation, the status of preparations for the upcoming NCATE accreditation visit, the implementation of Desire2Learn, and potential changes to the functions/responsibilities of the Academic Affairs Committee. The Chair also mentioned the upcoming meeting of the Board of Regents and the open house hosted by the NMHU Higher Education Center on November 3rd in Santa Fe. Lastly, she reminded Senators that the schedule for spring semester's classes would be available next week.

7. Communication from Academic Affairs:

Dr. LeRoy, Faculty Senate liaison to the Academic Affairs Committee and the Emergency Action Plan Committee, referred to the report sent to Senators earlier describing the activities/actions recently undertaken by the Academic Affairs Committee. These activities/actions include the formation of undergraduate and graduate sub-committees for appeals, discussion of attendance policy for members of

the Committee, and a request for administrative clerical support. Dr. LeRoy noted that the Emergency Action Plan Committee did not meet.

Dr. Greene attempted to discuss an issue, but was prevented by the Chair to do so on grounds that the issue pertained to the duties and functions of the Faculty Association.

8. Communication from the Student Senate:

A representative of the Student Senate (proxy) mentioned that if the Student Senate and the Graduate Student Association were to merge, separate funds would be available for graduate students' special educational needs (e.g., travel funds for conference attendance and presentation).

9. Communication from the GSA:

The representative of the Graduate Student Association indicated that the association was currently functioning as an ad hoc committee. Ms. Marrujo mentioned that members of the Association were in talks with the President and other Administrators regarding the pros and cons of a merger, use of past funds, and a revision of the current constitution.

10. Communication from the Staff Senate:

None

11. Old Business:

a. Retained-Term Track Voting Rights – Proposed language

'A retained-term faculty member with at least two years of full-time continuous service to NMHU may be granted voting rights on a specific committee for a period of one year with Department, Committee, and Faculty Senate approval. No more than one retained-term faculty member will have voting rights on any given committee. Retained-term faculty members will not be eligible to be given voting rights on the Faculty Affairs and the Academic Affairs committees.'

A discussion arose regarding the content of the proposed language. One of the issues raised was regarding the statement that *'no more than one retained-term faculty member would have voting rights on any given committee'*. Several Senators questioned the rationale behind this statement and asked for the procedural rule governing selection and exclusion. The rationale was indicated to be the need to balance committee membership between Tenured/Tenure-Track Faculty and Retained-Term Faculty. The procedural rule governing selection and exclusion was stated to be *'first come, first served'* by the Chair.

Faculty Senators were asked to share the proposed text with members of their department and report to the Senate any suggestions regarding possible changes.

b. Request for release time for the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee

A discussion arose regarding the request. It was remarked that a distinction should be made between compensated and non-compensated services and that the spirit of service should be encouraged among Faculty. Also mentioned were

proposals regarding changes in responsibilities and functions of the Academic Affairs Committee. The outcome of such changes would determine the Administration's response to the request.

A motion was made to support the request for release time for the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. The motion was seconded and approved (8 yeas, 1 nay, and 1 abstention).

- *Handbook revisions*

A discussion arose regarding whether changes in sections of the Faculty Handbook pertaining to selection and dismissal of Deans and Chairs were to be considered changes in 'working-conditions'. Dr. Linder argued that if the changes are to be conceptualized as alterations of 'working conditions', then the Faculty Association should be involved. The position of Administration on this issue was highlighted by Dr. Rivera who indicated that, although it represents a 'management issue', input from Faculty is welcomed. Dr. Linder remarked that the unresolved matter is whether input from the Faculty or shared government is contemplated. According to Dr. Rivera, language from the Faculty Agreement replaces language in the Faculty Handbook. Regarding language pertaining to removal of a Chair, he stated that Administration does not object to due process, but that the text presently appearing in the Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual is not appropriate for Chairs. He also remarked that Administration had developed language for Deans hired through an external search (as indicated in his e-mail to the Chair of the Faculty Senate).

A motion was made to table further discussion of proposed language and direct the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate to meet with the Executive Committee of the Faculty Association for a discussion of the issue raised by the possible proposed language. The motion was seconded and approved (7 yeas, 0 nay, and 2 abstentions).

- c. *Center for Teaching Excellence*

Tabled

12. **New Business:**

- a. *Election of Senate Committee Members*

Tabled

- b. *NCATE update*

A reminder of the upcoming visit by the NCATE accreditation team was offered.

13. **Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Pilotti

Secretary/Treasurer

