

Approved Minutes

Approved 1/25/12

Faculty Senate Meeting
14 December 2011
Science Annex Building, Room 329
New Mexico Highlands University, 3:00 p.m.

1. **Call to Order: 3:03 p.m.**

2. **Roll Call:**

Present: Todd, Christensen (*Proxy for Dutoit, Tatiana*, Visual & Performing Arts) Flores, Jayni (School of Education), Gonzales, Margaret (*Staff Senate*), 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), Martinez, Edward (Natural Resource Management), Pilotti, Maura (Social & Behavioral Sciences), Romine, Maureen (Biology & Chemistry), and Williams, Susan (Nursing).

Also Present: Rivera, Gilbert (VPAA)

Absent:

Arguello, David (School of Social Work),
Braun y Harycki, David (School of Education – Excused absence),
Gomez, Jessica (*Student Senate*),
Marrujo, Virginia (*GSA*)

3. **Approval of Agenda:** 14 December 2011 – Approved as written

4. **Approval of Minutes:** 9 November 2011 – Approved as written (one abstention)

5. **Communication from the Administration:**

Dr. Rivera postponed discussion of the proposal of instituting ACT/SAT scores as admission requirement since the issue was scheduled to be debated under ‘New Business’. Consequently, he outlined initiatives intended to enhance retention, persistence, and overall performance. Some of the initiatives he mentioned were supplemental instruction (as implemented by Dr. Martinez at ARMAS), summer English and Math courses, and a freshman forum. Included in his list was recognition of the role that Faculty and Staff would be asked to assume in monitoring students’ progress. Dr. Rivera then discussed other initiatives specifically intended to enhance instruction, including technology training and professional development. He

mentioned the possibility of establishing a unified center to support teaching and learning.

Dr. Rivera cited the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee devoted to understanding and facilitating the implementation of distance education. The Chair of the Faculty Senate suggested that the Information Technology Committee be kept apprised of work of the Ad Hoc Distance Learning Committee. Questions arose regarding fees imposed by different States for distance education stemming from out-of-state institutions of higher learning.

6. Communication from the Chair:

The Chair reported that she would be meeting with Administration regarding the proposal of release time for the Chair of the Academic Affairs Committee. She also announced the recipient of the Nina Telsa Ballen award. Dr. Martinez reported the recipient of the Pino Endowment award and indicated that another call for proposals would occur in the spring.

7. Communication from Academic Affairs:

Dr. LeRoy reported on work conducted by the Academic Affairs Committee and by the Emergency Planning Committee. Regarding the last meeting of the Academic Affairs Committee (12/7/2011), Dr. LeRoy mentioned Dr. Rivera's report, which included changes in the funding formula, graduation rates, a proposal to utilize ACT/SAT scores as admission criterion, summer courses for Math and English, and articulation agreements between various community/junior colleges and NMHU. Dr. LeRoy also mentioned proposals presented by the Music Program. In regard to the last meetings (11/17/2011; 12/2/2011) of the Emergency Planning Committee, Dr. LeRoy reported that members of the Committee discussed development and implementation of a timely warning policy.

8. Communication from the Student Senate and GSA:

None

9. Communication from the Staff Senate:

Mrs. Gonzales discussed work accomplished by the Staff Senate, including a newsletter (to be distributed shortly) and a review/analysis of the results of the staff survey.

10. Old Business:

- a. *Student retention* (Tabled)
- b. *Handbook revisions – Sections I-IV* (Tabled)

11. New Business:

- a. *Student Recognition Award – Caitlin Syner*
Ms. Syner discussed development and implementation of a Student Recognition Award. Several questions arose regarding the role of Faculty in selecting candidates for the award and in deciding the winner(s), schedule of implementation, and criteria

to be used to identify students for the award. Mrs. Gonzales asked whether applications for the ‘student of the year’ award could be useful to the selection of a candidate for the Student Recognition Award.

b. ACT/SAT scores as an admission requirement – Gilbert Rivera

A heated discussion surrounded the proposal of treating ACT/SAT scores as an admission requirement, which included both support and calls for caution. The proposal would not require a specific score for admission, but merely the submission of a score. The aim of the requirement would be to enhance students’ performance and graduation rates. Correlational evidence was presented that students who submitted ACT/SAT scores for admission, exhibited higher retention and graduation rates than students who did not submit such scores. It was suggested that students who voluntarily take the ACT/SAT are ‘more motivated’ than students who do not take either test. The assumption upon which this proposal relied is that requiring the latter students to take a standardized test would instill ‘motivation’ in them, thereby improving their scholastic performance and retention rates. Several questions arose regarding not only the existence of research findings (besides those based on correlations) that support the proposal, but also the nature of its implementation. Concern was expressed that Senators were asked to vote on a proposal without having had the opportunity to examine the issue carefully and consult with other Faculty.

A motion was made and seconded, which included the following charge:

[Pending support of the Faculty, the Academic Affair Committee is charged to review the proposed ACT/SAT admission requirement and generate a proposal for its implementation to be sent to the Faculty Senate by February 22nd.](#)

The motion was approved with one abstention.

The Chair of the Senate asked that Senators inform members of their Departments regarding the proposed ACT/SAT admission requirement so that Faculty standing could be gathered.

Dr. Greene suggested that a budget be created to cover costs of testing. One proposal involved waving admission fees or crediting students’ accounts. At the end, Dr. Greene thanked Dr. Rivera repeatedly for proposing an admission requirement that, according to Dr. Greene, would improve NMHU standards.

c. Charge to the Student Affairs Committee to develop policy and procedure concerning advising

A motion was made and seconded [to invite a member of the Student Affairs Committee to the Senate floor to discuss advisement and related issues.](#)

The motion was approved unanimously.

d. Campus environment and safety (Tabled)

Dr. Greene asked that discussion of the criteria of contract renewal and promotion be entertained by the Faculty Senate. The Chair of the Senate rejected his request. **She**

indicated that since these items are contemplated by the CBA, they should be discussed by the Faculty Union. *

A question regarding the budget allocated to the Senate was asked. No specific answer was offered by the Chair. **The latter indicated that copies of the budget would be made available. ***

12. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Pilotti
Secretary/Treasurer

***Changes requested by the Chair of the Senate are marked in red.**