

Approved Minutes

Approved February 8, 2012

Faculty Senate Meeting
25 January 2012
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: Braun y Harycki, David (School of Education); 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); *Sigdel, Raul* (Proxy for Gomez, Jessica; *Student Senate*); and Williams, Susan (Nursing).

Also Present:

Trujillo, Fidel (Dean of Students)
Rosalie Martinez (Campus Suicide Prevention)

Absent:

Arguello, David (School of Social Work)
Marrujo, Virginia (*Student Senate*)
Rivera, Gilbert (VPAA)

3. **Approval of Agenda:** 25 January 2012 – Unanimously approved with one addition.

4. **Approval of Minutes:** 14 December 2011 – The Chair asked for two changes. Unanimously approved with the changes requested by the Chair.

5. **Communication from the Administration:**
None

6. **Communication from the Chair:**
The chair discussed the recent drop in enrollment relative to spring 2011, speculating that its causes might be mainly financial. She spoke of the improvements at the cafeteria and coffee shop. She then mentioned that the new website for NMHU was under development and that *Desire2Learn* training would be offered in April. Other matters she illustrated included current budgetary proposals, the upcoming BOR

meeting, and the possibility of a retreat involving Regents, Faculty and students to discuss the academic character of NMHU.

The chair then explained the President's two-year goals, including increased enrollment, improved retention and graduation rates, and enriched learning environment. She concluded her presentation by mentioning committee changes in the Faculty Handbook.

7. Communication from Academic Affairs:

Dr. LeRoy briefly reported on work conducted by the Academic Affairs Committee and by the Emergency Planning Committee. He referred to the minutes of the last meeting of each committee, which he had distributed to Senators. A discussion of the proposed ACT/SAT requirement was postponed to the time when 'Old Business' would be addressed.

8. Communication from the Student Senate:

Mr. Sigdel and Dr. Trujillo (Dean of Students) explained changes in the Student Senate to incorporate the Graduate Student Association. Dr. Trujillo told his audience that one student body with proportional representation had been developed. Faculty Senators were informed that student representatives met with the President of the University during the fall semester. Meetings generated an agreement by which past representatives of the Graduate Student Association would be recognized and paid for their services. A Graduate Student Committee was created whose main aim would be to promote graduate students' educational and professional activities (e.g., conference attendance). Questions arose regarding the availability of different funds and allocation criteria. The need for advertising student activities and available resources was mentioned.

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 results from the staff survey.

Mrs. Martinez illustrated an online training opportunity for campus suicide prevention. The training would help Faculty to recognize students' psychological distress and related suicide risks. Mrs. Martinez distributed a brochure describing the program and its benefits.

10. Old Business:

a. ACT/SAT admission requirement.

A lively discussion arose regarding content and implementation of the proposed ACT/SAT requirement. Dr. LeRoy described the content of interchanges between/among members of the Academic Affairs Committee.

The issue was described as controversial and raising concerns regarding enrollment figures. Additional concerns involved (1) the notion of requiring students to take the ACT/SAT test without considering their scores, (2) the nature of data upon which the proposal was based, and (3) interpretation(s) of correlational data as incorrectly

describing cause and effect relationships. It was suggested that implementation of the ACT/SAT requirement be selective, including some programs and exonerating others. This proposal was judged as unfeasible since it would lead to substantial enrollment increases in exonerated programs. Several additional questions arose regarding data, including absence of actual scores obtained by test takers.

Dr. Greene suggested a referendum. The following motion was proposed, seconded and unanimously approved:

A nonbinding referendum should be issued to the full NMHU Faculty, entailing a vote on the proposed ACT/SAT admission requirement within two weeks. The proposal consists of establishing a prerequisite for admission at NMHU whereby freshmen would be required to take the ACT/SAT for admission, albeit their actual scores would not be considered.

b. Handbook revisions – Sections I-IV

Changes to Sections I-IV of the Faculty Handbook were unanimously approved to be sent to the full Faculty.

c. Campus environment and safety

A few comments were made regarding campus safety toward the end of the meeting. One of the issues raised pertained to the building that houses the music program. Mrs. Gonzales mentioned that there would be a ‘campus walk’ whose aim is to identify safety problems in different areas on campus.

d. Bookstore concerns

Several comments were made that addressed the functioning of the bookstore and its ability to serve students and their educational needs. It was decided that a bookstore representative be invited to attend a senate meeting.

11. New Business:

- a. Ms. Baskerville was elected to the Athletic Committee, replacing Dr. Williamson for the spring semester (4 yeas, 2 nays, and 4 abstentions).

12. Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at 4:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maura Pilotti

Secretary/Treasurer