

General Faculty Meeting Minutes
Approved
Wednesday February 28, 2007
3:00pm in Kennedy Lounge

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 3:11. A quorum was present
2. Approval of Agenda: Agenda was approved unanimously.
3. Approval of Minutes: General Faculty Meeting of April 26, 2006 approved unanimously
4. Approval of Minutes of September 27, 2006 – approved unanimously

Agenda – approved unanimously

Minutes from October 2006 – approved unanimously

Minutes from September 2006 – approved unanimously

- The recognition of Peter Linder contribution as Secretary of Faculty Senate.
Special recognition of Peter's dry sense of humor. .
- Dr. Sabutis, Chair of Faculty Senate, introduction the 18th President of NMHU
since 1893 – Dr. Jim Fries

Dr. Fries addressed the faculty of NMHU:

In his address, Dr. Fries indicated that he was delighted to be back in NMHU, adding that the first 5.5 weeks were interesting. He is, he continued, familiar with NMHU's potential, and is pleased with the sense of support, interest, and hope expressed by members, that NMHU will do well and soon. But he also sensed some degree of skepticism.

NMHU has the potential and the opportunity to succeed. In order to do so, there is need for stability at the university. Dr. Fries stressed that stability doesn't mean that nothing should change. There is need more openness, participation, and predictability at NMHU.

NMHU richness is the richness of its people. NMHU will strive to be a premiere institution of higher education. NMHU should also be a driving force of economic development with a pursuit of excellence, equality, and economic development.

Dr. Fries vowed to focus on making NMHU a better place to study; an educational institution with high expectation; a university that provides better support system; a campus that offers better campus life. He is determined to make NMHU a more efficient place; expand research/scholarly activities; better participation of the region we serve. Graduate student with solid legitimate education.

Accreditation

NCATE's 2004 visit required re-visit during Fall '06. NMHU did not meet NCATE's standards. In response, NMHU asked for full accreditation. NCATE will re-visit NMHU in 2008.

NCA – A committee was appointed to address NCA accreditation during January 2007
NCA accreditation visit will take place in Fall 2009.

Dr. Fries established communication lines with AAUP regarding the latter censoring of the administration. Two related faculty issues were resolved and institutional policy issues still need to be addressed.

Collective Bargaining process didn't generate much progress last year. The process will resume soon.

Administrative re-structuring

New Interim VPAA, Dr. Gilbert Rivera, will take effect tomorrow. Dr. Rivera, was NMHU VPAA '85-'95, and is a Professor Emeritus of NMHU's math. A national search for a permanent VPAA will start soon.

The appointment of Interim Dean of Graduate Studies and Research, Dr. Linda LaGrange, will also take effect tomorrow.

The position of VP for Institutional Advancement is on hold. There is need to come up with an interim appointment.

Need to look at retention and development.

Need to look at the administration of the centers, perhaps appoint a dean for external programs to serve the centers. It is also important to simplify academic approval, address marketing issues, and potential new markets.

Need to share information and involve people more in campus affairs.

The Science Building Annex is going to be remodeled. The School of Social Work will move in upon the completion of the remodeling.

Funds are available for the remodeling of Felix Martinez.

NMHU need to Plan for a new heating cooling system for all the building.

Academic

Deans should initiate the process of Sabbaticals, promotion, emeritus faculty nominations, and need to do annual evaluations.

For the time being NMHU will return to paper course evaluations.

There is a need for a meaningful discussion on how to be an open admission university while delivering solid education. Dr. Fries indicated that a large percentage of the student body cannot read – what do we do about that? NMHU need to look at a semester-worth of courses for students who need help without placing these students in regular courses where they are likely to fail. At the same time, the university needs to evaluate the support services and retention programs.

Suggestions

Faculty should take attendance in 100-200 level courses.

Large number of faculty position that are open: the advertising was horrible; the pools are limited in size; the pools lack diversity; \$40,000 starting salary doesn't cut it; and, NMHU is censured by AAUP. Dr. Fries suggested to re-advertise positions with an emphasis on the uniqueness of NMHU – such an approach will attract service oriented individuals. NMHU needs strong scholars who want to make a difference. The university also needs to enhance its bi-lingual competency requirement.

There have been lots of discussions about the composition of the search committee.

Getting the right candidates is more important than composition of committees.

Enrollment for Fall and Spring is good, retention 79% was not as good – Dr. Fries promised to work on it.

Need to discuss enrollment goals. What is the campus capacity, do we have the facility to grow?

Legislature – Dr. Fries spent a lot of time at the legislature. Things are going modestly well. Lots of interest in NMHU and support along with skepticism – ‘show me’ attitude. Higher education did relatively well. Increase in funds for facilities, funds for salaries increase, there is also a problem with the education retirement system.

Research and public service funding. There will be some additional fund for infrastructure for student center, though the exact dollar amount was still unclear.

Dr. Fries concluded his presentation stating that he is committed to NMHU and intends to use his experience to improve the university.

Q&A

Q – Some of us still make the minimum professor salary.

A – the salaries needs to be reviewed. There is too much compression between the ranks.

Q – the centers teach certain subject, the main campus faculty have little control over their own discipline in the centers. There are lots of ways to create diversity other than how we advertise a position.

A - Certain guidelines need to be developed for the centers. The academic responsibility should come from the main campus. We must be pro-active about advertising. Use networking, call universities, etc.

Statement – faculty searches were taken away from faculty by Davidson. Post 1998 the searchers became a disaster because of centralization. Feedback from the chairs will be useful.

Q – How can we do away BOR that tends to micro manage the university?

A – Have BOR development plan. Help the board the distinction between appropriate administrative role and the roles of the regents.

Q – What about the strategic plan?

A – some good ideas, but the plan is short on ‘how’ and ‘when’. The mission statement is well written, but the wording ‘the Hispanic serving institution’ is not clear. Dr. Fries goal is for NMHU to be a premiere higher education institution. NMHU will always serve Hispanics. He wants NMHU to be a rich multi-cultural environment that includes Native Americans and Hispanics from the region.

Q – If faculty do more research, it is difficult with the teaching load we have and with the open unfilled positions.

A – absolutely true. Do we fill position with tenure track positions or visiting.

Q – What will happen in the next 6 months in order to pass NCA?

A – NMHU will submit progress report by July. The university will define shared governance; complete collective bargaining; and address the assessment. We need to do a self study soon. Dr. Fries thinks NMHU will be fine.

Q – Years ago a task force was established to address co-governance. It was very effective until it was dismantled a year and a half ago.

A – Dr. Fries acknowledged that the faculty experienced some difficult times, there are tensions within departments. “I am not an autocratic or a hard ass,” he added. Dr. Fries likes to think that he listens effectively and that he is a rational person, adding: “people are not going to disappear overnight unless there is a good reason – it is a new era.”

Q – retention of faculty, what stops a minority faculty from leaving? Do you have any idea how to keep faculty on campus through tenure track? What about teaching load?

A – make NMHU a better place to work will help keep people around. We need to look at salaries, but raises will not happen overnight. He didn’t know enough about teaching

load to discuss it – but will look into it.

Q – UNM is interested in Rio Rancho – what's the status?

A – UNM is going to build a campus there. UNM charges more for tuition and doesn't have the Social Work program that NMHU has. There is a growth potential at Rio Rancho.