



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

September 24, 2025

Location: SUB 321

ZOOM <https://nmhu.zoom.us/j/92457318161>

Approved October 8, 2025

1. Call meeting to order.

2. Roll Call.

	ATTENDANCE Present Absent Excused
Art & Music; Edward Harrington	x
Biology; Maureen Romine	x
Business Administration; Stephen Owusu-Ansah	x
Chemistry; Steven Karpowicz	x
Computer and Mathematical Sciences; Gil Gallegos, At-Large	x
Education - Counseling; Diane Lacen	x
Education - Curriculum & Instruction; Daniel Olufemi	x
Education - Educational Leadership; Sheree Jederberg	x
Education - Special Education; PJ Sedillo	x
Education - Teacher Education; Angela Redondo [proxy E. Valenzuela]	x
English and Philosophy; Lauren Fath [may be late]	x
Exercise and Sport Sciences; Kathy Jenkins	x
Forestry; Michael Remke (he/him/his)	x
History and Political Science; Bilgesu Sümer	x
Languages and Culture; Norma Valenzuela	x
Library; Katie Gray, Secretary (she/her)	x
Media Arts and Technology; Miriam Langer	x
Natural Resources Management; Jennifer Lindline, Chair (she/her)	x
Nursing; Siri Khalsa (she/her)	x
Psychology; David Pan	x
Social Work; John Tourangeau	x
Sociology, Anthropology, and CJ; Gloria Gadsden	x
President; Neil Woolf	x
Provost/VPAA; Dann Brown	x
Staff Senate; Carlos Nevarez	x
Student Senate; Lydia Okojie	x

Also Present: Daniel Chadborn (Psychology), Geri Glover (Interim Dean, Education), Doajo Hicks (General Counsel), April Kent (Interim Library Director), Jonathan Lee (Media Arts), Rebecca Moore (Social Work), Seonsook Park (Curriculum & Instruction), Megan

Shudde (Instructional Design), Todd Lekan (Dean, CAS), Ian Williamson (AVPAA/Graduate Dean)

3. Approval of Agenda.

Senator noted that date of the minutes on the current agenda is wrong.

MOTION to accept with change. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes from September 10, 2025 (attachment).

Senators noted corrections to minutes.

MOTION to approve minutes with changes. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

5. Communication from the President (N. Woolf).

Not present.

6. Communication from the Vice President of Academic Affairs (D. Brown).

Dr. Brown reported the following:

- Introduced Doajo Hicks, NMHU's new general counsel.
- Clinton Weckerly will start remotely as CTE Coordinator then change to in-person.
- The search for Dean of Education is launching.
- The search for Registrar is launching.
- Dr. Brown is taking nominations for Interim Dean of Social Work, with a goal of having the position filled by 5:00 p.m. on Monday.
- Reminder that there will be calendar invites for HLC visit events on 11/3-11/4.

Question from a Senator about the mandated logo on computers. Senator noted that this was not brought to the Senate for vote. Dr. Brown stated that Highlands Elevated is the theme for the capital campaign which was announced at the Governor's mansion 2 weeks ago and that it is about elevating expectations and outcomes. Dr. Brown stated that administration wants to develop a consistent theme.

Senator stated that since the email about the computer logo went out, their phone and email are going crazy. Senator noted that the university should not be associated with drug use. Dr. Brown stated that the logo is inadvertently associated with drug use. Dr. Brown asked the Senator to share some of that communication with identifying information stripped out.

Comment from a Senator that they are excited to hear about the administrative searches and would like to know when departments will hear back about faculty searches. Dr. Brown noted that he met with the Academic Affairs department about searches to replace vacant faculty lines and that he asked Deans if they are ready to set meetings to discuss positions. Dr. Brown stated that he does not want to lose a faculty member.

Comment from a Senator that they will be doing a faculty search and have heard that the university is not going to continue with People Admin for searches. Senator asked for clarification. Senator also noted that in the lead up to homecoming some of the local restaurants were confused about how to decorate around the theme. Dr. Brown noted that he does not have perfect information about the transfer to Paycom for the hiring process but that he will find out and will bring that back to Senate.

Senator noted that the Provost previously stated that an Interim Registrar had been chosen and would start on September 8 and asked for an update. Dr. Brown stated that the search for Interim Registrar failed and that he is serving as interim registrar at the moment. Dr. Brown noted that the Associate Registrar has left. Dr. Brown also stated that he is looking to add a transfer evaluation specialist.

Comment from a faculty member that they are concerned with the forced branding. Faculty member asked if that also means that the university laptops used by faculty will be forced-changed and that that is taking away the freedom to personalize. Faculty member noted that they have no problem with changes in the classrooms. Dr. Brown stated that he will look into it and report back to the Chair.

7. Communication from the Faculty Senate Chair (J. Lindline).

Dr. Lindline reported the following:

- Dr. Lindline thanked G. Gallegos and K. Gray for holding the previous meeting in her stead.
- The next Faculty Senate meeting will be followed by a General Faculty meeting.
- Dr. Lindline reported on her part in the university's trip to Mexico to sign an MOU with Anahuac University.

Comment from a Senator that it sounds like a great opportunity and asked, in light of what happened at Western with their President and with the HU trip to American Samoa if the Chair felt the right people were on the trip and the right number. Senator also asked when the university expects to see enrollment bumps.

Chair stated that it is an exchange, so not there will not necessarily be an enrollment bump. Chair noted that this is about adding new learning opportunities and that there is a possibility for undergraduates to come back for graduate work. Chair noted that the party who went to Mexico kept prices as low as possible with economy flights and Holiday Inn rooms. Concerning whether the right people went, Chair noted that she was very humbled and spent her time talking about all HU's programs and people.

Comment from a Senator that Puebla is one of the best places in Mexico to visit and that they have done research there. Senator noted that they have made contacts in the past to initiate exchanges in Mexico City and asked how they can get these contacts to our counterparts at Highlands.

Chair noted that the administration is developing paperwork and that the President will talk about next steps. Chair noted that the Natural Resources Management

Department already has an MOU with a university in France and that there is a failure in Academic Affairs to keep those partnerships known.

Comment from a Senator that they have worked with universities and participated in MOUs out of Arizona and that what was crucial is that the programs are faculty-led. Senator also noted that private institutions in Mexico are very different than public institutions,

Chair noted that if a faculty member sets up a course, they would accompany their students there.

Chair also reported the following:

- HLC visit will take place on 11/3 and 11/4 and will include a forum on outcomes assessment.
- The Chair is making progress with Grievance and Conciliation Committee.
- Concerning the issue of branding on computers, Chair noted that in Mexico, on all the public screens, there was public branding. Chair also stated that at the expanded cabinet meeting, they mentioned that they are developing a standard signature line for administration.
- Chair met with the President and asked about defunct interim legislative committees that faculty were asked to serve on over the summer. Chair noted that she was not invited to any meetings. Chair reported that the President pledges to reach out to all the faculty. Chair thanked faculty for volunteering. Chair reported that the President said that it was decided that the only thing they were going to prioritize were things affected by the changes in grant funding.
- Chair pointed out that faculty were not included in the planning of the branding and the pillars, and that was decided years ago.

Comment from a Senator that they appreciate the Chair. Senator stated that they are concerned that there is no governance anymore at HU. Senator stated that AAUP puts out guidance on governance which talks about what good policy is. Senator noted that representatives are selected by the groups they represent. Senator noted that HU faculty were being told there were no monies for new projects, but that no one else around the state heard that from the legislature. Senator asked if that information is from our president instead. Chair noted that she had also heard a handful of times about monies only going to for projects impacted by funding cuts.

Senator stated that they would like to echo what their colleague said about AAUP. Senator stated that faculty should have a voice in the university budget and that HU would not exist if not for the academics. Senator noted that faculty are being denied funds in favor of independent organizations and that administration is doing this without faculty input.

8. Communication from Academic Affairs Committee (G. Gadsden).

Dr. Gadsden reported the following:

- There was a great meeting last week and there are a lot of administrative things to do.
- 11 program reviews are in progress.
- D. Chadborn was elected as Secretary.
- There were 2 new proposals, both were discussion items.

9. Communication from the Student Senate (L. Okojie).

Ms. Okojie reported the following:

- The Student Senate held the first meeting 2 Fridays ago and filled some executive positions.
- The Student Senate is working with cafeteria managers and giving feedback on meals and how to improve them.
- The Student Senate is working with housing concerning emergency lights and poles.
- Students participated in homecoming.

Question from a Senator about whether the Student Senate had a chance to weigh in on the branding issue. Ms. Okojie replied that they did not.

10. Communication from the Staff Senate (C. Nevarez).

Not present.

11. Old Business

a. 7000-Level Course Proposal (attachment) (S. Park/D. Olufemi).

Chair opened the floor to discussion.

Comment from a Senator that they think that the graduate handbook needs to be updated, as well as the catalog. Senator noted that there is a minimum of 32 credits for a program of study and that the student and advisor agree on.

Comment from a Senator that they faculty did a graduate program check at UNM and other regional institutions and found that some have 7000 level and some do not. Senator wanted to know why HU needs to make this change and would like to see that included in proposal.

D. Olufemi stated that the proposal has sections with explanations, and it is specifically because of the concentrations. Dr. Olufemi also noted that someone has to blaze the trail and that they have to think of something creative.

Comment from a Senator agreeing with previous Senator that they do not see a reason for why HU needs to do this and what it does for the university.

Comment from a Senator that the proposal mentions “specialized or advanced doctoral-level coursework” and that they do not what that this means and why it is included. Senator noted that it could be confusing about who can take that.

Comment from a Senator about the statement that “The 5000-level course taken by an undergraduate with advanced standing will only apply to the graduate degree and not to the undergraduate degree” is not true any longer.

Senator noted that the proposal states “A minimum of 30 credits from the total coursework must be at the 6000 or 7000 level” but that the Graduate Handbook says 6000 AND 7000.

Dr. Olufemi stated that specialized courses are basically concentrations and that there are 4 concentrations.

S. Khalsa noted that UNM's nursing program is all 6000 and that their DNP is all 7000. Dr. Khalsa noted that it is a developing national standard for DNP.

Chair noted that there is some of that information in the proposal, but it could use some clarity.

Senator noted that their department has no objection but that they do rebut the 4 justifications as noted: 1. Some do; 2. This is irrelevant, because departments should have degree plans; 3. Curricular flexibility; 4. Accreditation requirements may be reasonable but accrediting bodies should understand that they should be able to accept the plan without the 7000 courses.

Comment from a Senator that this proposal needs work, that it needs to be more unique to HU, and that the points are general. Senator also stated that it is not required for accreditation. Senator noted that the language needs to be cleaned up.

Dr. Olufemi stated that they are trying to investigate why universities use 7000-level courses and that it is justified because it is designated as advanced courses.

Comment from a Senator that their department asked about the differentiation of 6000 from 7000 level courses. Senator asked how that would look logistically; would there be 6/7000 levels like there are 4/5000 level where there would be overlap between the curricula at masters/doc levels.

S. Jederberg noted that the School of Education is in the process of developing an EdD, and that the superintendent license will be embedded in EdD. Dr. Jederberg stated that programs at UNM and NMSU have courses listed at 7000. Dr. Jederberg stated that her department supports it to make a distinction between master's and doctoral level.

Dr. Khalsa noted that nursing has the DNP which is a specialized area.

Comment from a Senator that they second what others have said and that faculty are not against the proposal but want more information. Senator noted that they

are hearing that 6000 and 7000 are completely different and require a higher depth of knowledge. Senator stated that the way this proposal is written a doctorate could apply to Academic Affairs Committee without any 7000 level courses, so the need does not stand up.

Comment from a Senator that it is not unusual for universities to have 7000 level courses and that in their discipline there are sometimes 8000 level, and that they support the proposal.

Comment from a Senator that their department did not have problems with the concept. Senator stated that their department wants programs to be able to mold themselves to their industry standards. Senator noted that this proposal might impact other programs' decisions to stay at 5000 level or advance to doctoral degrees.

G. Glover stated that she understands the need for specificity and why HU itself would support the proposal. Dr. Glover noted that she does not want to rush through this process but also does not want to stop the progress of looking at the EdD for Curriculum and Instruction. Dr. Glover stated that maintaining the 6000 level is not the worst solution to allow the EdD to be considered and that HU could spend more time looking at the 7000 level for specificity.

Comment from a Senator that they made that recommendation last year that faculty need to separate these two processes, and that C&I can move forward with 6000 level courses and then change later.

Comment from a Senator that they like that idea, as well. Senator noted that they are not against the proposal but want more definition. Senator asked if C&I would be able to meet with the registrar and renumber courses or would it need to go back to AAC.

Dr. Gadsden stated that if there is no other change than number, she does not think it would have to go back to the AAC.

Comment from a Senator reiterating that there needs to be corrections to the graduate handbook and catalog.

MOTION to have the Graduate Council work on this proposal [7000-level course proposal] so that it is inclusive of all programs at NMHU. Seconded. 21 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion passed.

b. Graduate Council Proposals (attachments) (D. Pan).

i. GPA-Provisional Status Policy Change

MOTION to approve the GPA-Provisional Status Policy Change. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

ii. Transcript Policy Change

MOTION to approve the Transcript Policy Change. Seconded.

Comment from a Senator that when looking at the official transcripts, departments should look at an applicant's more advanced degree if they have one. D. Pan noted that that can be covered by the second part and that departments have the right to ask for other things. Comment from a Senator that it is left up to the program.

20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried

12. New Business

a. 2035 NMHU Mission, Vision, and Strategic Plan Governance Draft (attachment) (I. Williamson)

I. Williamson presented an overview of the draft and noted the following:

- A committee was set up last spring and reached out to the Senate at that time. There were 4 faculty members on the committee.
- The plan was drafted by going over plans from state and region.
- The committee revised HU's plan, mission, and vision.
- Committee sent out a survey and received 200+ responses.
- Committee removed diversity specifically and diffused it throughout the whole plan.
- Committee added strategic goal for operational efficiency.

Chair asked that Senators share the plan with their units and stated that it will be discussed at General Faculty meeting.

Senator asked if there is side-by-side available. Dr. Williamson stated that the new plan is not based on the old one.

Comment from a Senator that there is typically evidence of how units will measure and evaluate success. Dr. Williamson noted that there are a number of ideas as it applies to unit planning and that they are going to work with IRDM [Institutional Research and Data Management] director to go over ways to measure at the university level. Dr. Williamson stated he wants to come up with ways to think about university-level projects to address goals and objects. Dr. Williamson stated that the way we are doing unit-level planning is something we want to look at because it is cumbersome.

Chair noted that Dr. Williamson would like a vote from faculty by mid-to-late October.

Senator asked Dr. Williamson if he will be returning to the Senate after the plan is approved. Dr. Williamson stated that he would and that the Senate should talk about KPIs.

Request from a Senator that the punctuation in the document be fixed.

Dr. Williamson stated that he can provide a side by side for mission and vision statement.

Comment from a Senator that Dr. Williamson should anticipate objection to the elimination of a free-standing diversity section, as some may see it as caving toward the political climate. Dr. Williamson stated that that is not why the committee wanted to make the change and noted that members of the President's Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion were on the committee. Dr. Williamson noted that it was more of a desire to have it embedded in the entire plan; that it would not be something separate, but a part of everything we do.

b. Faculty Senate Committee Nominations/Elections

i. Academic Affairs Liaison

Gloria Gadsden nominated to serve as Academic Affairs Committee liaison. Seconded. 19 ayes, 1 nay, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

ii. Financial Planning

Gerardo Moreira nominated to serve on the Financial Planning Committee. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iii. Student Affairs

Rodney Sanchez nominated to serve on the Student Affairs Committee. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iv. Faculty Senate Executive Committee

a. Vice Chair

Kathy Jenkins nominated to serve as Vice Chair. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

b. At-Large

No nominations.

MOTION to table remaining items and adjourn. Seconded.

c. Academic Affairs Committee Items (attachment) (M. Langer)

i. Software Systems Design; Undergraduate

ii. Software Systems Design; Graduate

d. Pino Endowment

13. Executive Session.

14. Action and Statements as Necessary on Executive Session Discussion.

15. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 5:00.

The New Mexico Highlands University faculty recognizes collegiality as a cornerstone of our academic community, characterized by a commitment to work together to support the academic enterprise. We value the diversity of people and perspectives; support open communication and constructive disagreement; and uphold the principles of academic freedom and shared governance. We expect all faculty members to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct, including mutual regard, collaborative engagement, and respectful debate.