



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
October 08, 2025
Location: RAB 120
ZOOM <https://nmhu.zoom.us/j/92457318161>
Approved October 22, 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	X
English and Philosophy; Lauren Fath	X
Exercise and Sport Sciences; Kathy Jenkins, Vice-Chair	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; VACANT	
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), Mariah Hausman (Media Arts), Jess Goldberg (English), April Kent (Interim Library Director), Rebecca Moore (Social Work), Todd Lekan (Dean, CAS), Gina Medina (Staff Senate), Veena Parboteeah (Dean, Business & Media Arts), Mike Petronis (NRM), Luke Romero (NRM), John Touranjeau (Interim Dean, Social Work), Cin Ulibarri (Institute for Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Learning and Teaching), Barbara Wharton

(Director, Institutional Research and Data Management), Ian Williamson
(AVPAA/Graduate Dean)

3. Approval of Agenda.

M. Langer noted that the Chair stated the SSD items would be moved to Old Business at the previous meeting. Requested moving item higher in agenda.

MOTION to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded. 16 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes from September 24, 2025 (attachment).

MOTION to approve the minutes. Seconded. 16 ayes, 0 nays, 2 abstentions. Motion carried.

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

Not present.

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

D. Brown reported the following:

- There will be a flag raising outside Rodgers Administrative Building on Monday of Indigenous nations flags.
- Matanza will be on 11/1 from 1-3 pm and there are volunteer opportunities.
- In regard to events on campus, Dr. Brown shared a definition of “event” which stated that an event is a planned gathering or activity held on campus that is not part of the regular curriculum.
- Dr. Brown discussed the state’s anti-donation clause.
- Dr. Brown stated that when a figure from a political organization is invited or is present on campus, D. Lepre should be informed. Dr. Brown stated that this is to keep the President’s Office informed and is not a process of approval.
- In regard to Highlands Elevated, Dr. Brown read the definition from Paul Grindstaff and stated that there will be a fundraising call for campus.

Comment from a Senator in regard to Highlands Elevated that the brand should be defined by HU’s core mission, not its fundraising efforts. Senator asked since when does this drive the brand. Dr. Brown stated that we can define for ourselves and promote our achievements.

Comment from a Senator that calling it elevated seems to imply that we were at the bottom and now we are trying to elevate ourselves and that they are not fond of the implication. Dr. Brown stated that he does not believe that it infers that and that HU has achieved good results. Dr. Brown stated what they can do in Academic Affairs to elevate the excellence HU already has and promote that to outside entities.

Comment from a Senator that they agree with the previous Senator’s statement. Senator noted that it is important to understand that words have meaning. Senator stated that they like what Dr. Brown just said, but that they do not see that from Dr.

Grindstaff or on the website. Senator commented that HU has many great programs, and we only see information about Forestry.

Question from a Senator about the definition of Highlands Elevated and a statement that what has been given is a set of goals. Dr. Brown stated that it is shepherding us to a better place. Dr. Brown would like to own that phrase and inspire everyone to grow and develop. Dr. Brown noted that excellence is here and that there is no perception that we are starting from ground zero. Dr. Brown stated that none of our accomplishments are explained on our website.

Comment from a Senator that fundraising is awesome, but they do not see where the results are. Senator gave an example of unequal distribution of scholarships to some athletes but not others.

Comment from a Senator that D. Lepre, being the head of University Relations, approved this statement. Senator asked how Mr. Lepre is describing this or defining this to legislators.

Question from a Senator regarding events and whether staff who are candidates for city offices are violating any law by parking their vehicle on HU space with the decal. Dr. Brown stated that he has seen that on public streets, but not on campus and will check.

Comment from a Senator that they are also concerned about the candidates on campus.

Question from a Senator about what is happening with the Registrar. Dr. Brown stated that he has been serving as Interim Registrar since the Registrar resigned and that anyone with questions can reach out to him directly.

Question from a Senator about the definition of “event” that the Provost used earlier and whether that is available anywhere. Dr. Brown stated that policy is being developed and that that was his definition of an event.

Comment from the Chair that the fundraising campaign references Forestry but could apply to many programs on campus. Chair noted that there was no shared governance in the process.

Dr. Brown stated he will take those comments back and commit that all departments know he appreciates them.

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

Chair reported the following:

- Matanza will take place on 11/1
- Indigenous Peoples Day, 10/13
- Chair attended the President's extended cabinet session and reports the following information:

- President is considering reorganization within Human Resources and other departments.
- President has said that D. Hicks is working on free speech, anti-doxing, and international faculty right to work and will form committees to address the issues.
- HR task force has concluded. Work is still being done on a policy for leave without pay.
- Most of the Senate committees are meeting.

Question from the Senator about whether the HR task force discussed the change of using Paycom for recruitment and hiring.

Chair stated that it has been mentioned that that was the way the university is going, but it was not part of the task force agenda.

Comment from a Senator that there is a meeting scheduled this week is for the hiring authorities.

Comment from a Senator that the email also stated it is for approvers.

Comment from a Senator that that would only apply to faculty hiring on a grant or hiring student workers.

B. Wharton stated that she was told it would go live on 10/20.

Chair noted that the articulation agreement with Anahuac University is on the administration side now and that they are working on how that is going to play out.

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

G. Gadsden reported the following:

- There are no petitions before the committee.
- There are 11 program reviews which are moving forward.
- Thanked colleagues on AAC who stepped up.
- Voted on items sent forward to the Faculty Senate.
- MS computer science change in degree will be voted on at next meeting.

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

Not present.

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

C. Nevarez reported the following:

- They are having problems recruiting members for Staff Senate.
- Some staff are being discouraged from participating.
- Mr. Nevarez asked for faculty to encourage engagement.
- Mr. Nevarez noted that there is a lot of potential at HU, but the university is losing people.

Chair asked if there is anything faculty can do to help. Mr. Nevarez stated that they could encourage staff to participate.

Chair noted that the Senate has also had difficulty populating committees.

Faculty member asked for clarification about staff members being discouraged from participation. Mr. Nevarez stated that he has heard that from some individuals.

Chair stated that faculty will try to offer support and squash discouragement when they can.

11. Old Business

a. Academic Affairs Committee Items

i. Software Systems Design; Undergraduate (attachment)

MOTION to approve Software Systems Design; Undergraduate. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

ii. Software Systems Design; Graduate (attachment)

MOTION to approve Software Systems Design; Graduate. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

a. Faculty Senate Committee Nominations/Elections

Chair provided an overview of Faculty Senate Committee vacancies.

i. Athletic Committee

No nominees.

Senator asked about faculty who were previously nominated.

ii. Student Affairs Committee

No nominees.

iii. Faculty Senate Executive Committee At-Large

No nominees.

Senator reminded other Senators that the Senate charged the Executive Committee with making updates to the Faculty Handbook, which will be difficult without a full committee.

b. Pino Endowment (informational).

Chair reported the following:

- The Pino Endowment has been available for several years.
- The Pino Endowment is for faculty development in the areas of teaching, research, scholarly and creative activity.
- There is a healthy budget.

- Chair stated she would like to have a call for applicants, but that we need to develop a committee.
- Chair noted that there is a link under faculty resources on the website.

Question from a Senator about whether the committee counts toward the 2-committee limit for Senate committees. Chair stated her interpretation of committees are the ones listed in the handbook and that the Pino Endowment is not one of those.

I. Williamson stated that the budget is \$54,000 this year and that the Senate could put it in a standing committee. Chair stated that the Senate could consider that for Faculty Handbook changes.

Dr. Williamson suggested that the CTE advisory committee may be a good place for it.

Senator asked if the Pino used to be housed in one of the other Senate committees. Clarification from Dr. Gadsden that the Senator is thinking about the Ballen committee, which is housed under AAC

Comment from a Senator that the Pino has never been housed under the Senate and was never meant to be a Senate committee.

Comment from a Senator that they were a member of the committee and that it functioned up until E. Derkas went on sabbatical.

12. Executive Session.

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

14. Adjournment.

MOTION to adjourn. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 3:54.

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.