



Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2025

Location: RAB 120

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

Approved November 12, 2025

1. Call meeting to order.

2. Roll Call.

	ATTENDANCE Present Absent Excused
Art & Music; Edward Harrington, Dr. Merril-Steskal, proxy	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 Rebecca Moore, proxy	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: David Donley (Biology), Sara Duran (Registrar), Geri Glover (Interim Dean, Education), Deborah Gonzales (Registrar), Roxanne Gonzales (Educational Leadership), Todd Lekan (Dean, CAS), Amanda May (English), Gina Medina (Staff Senate), Veena Parboteeah (Dean, Business & Media Arts), Mike Petronis (NRM), Erik Rolstad (Social Work), Megan Shudde (Instructional Design), John Tourangeau (Interim

Dean, Social Work), Cheryl Trujillo (Registrar), Ben Villarreal (English), Barbara Wharton (Director, Institutional Research and Data Management), Ian Williamson (AVPAA/Graduate Dean)

3. Approval of Agenda.

MOTION to approve agenda. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes from October 08, 2025 (attachment).

MOTION to approve minutes. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

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

N. Woolf reported the following:

- Thanked those people who attended the meeting at UNM Taos. Dr. Woolf reported that the university is getting along in offering upper division courses at Taos and that all modalities are possible.
- Dr. Woolf reported on the flying of the flags of the Pueblos and that they will be installed in the student union building with a display in the works.
- Dr. Woolf reported on administration reorganization:
 - Moving Human Resources, Compliance and Title IX under general counsel and that this change is already in place.
 - Marketing and University Relations will move under university advancement and P. Grindstaff.
- Dr. Woolf reported that the university is in the public phase of the comprehensive campaign and identified the 4 pillars. Dr. Woolf stated that the university has exceeded their goal and that they will be keeping the 2027 goal and will announce what the total accumulation is.
- Dr. Woolf noted that the university owns all roads on campus and reported that the university has received \$750K from the transportation state office and that they are looking to update roads, including: University Avenue; parking lot behind Viles & Cimmins; road at Melody Park. Dr. Woolf stated that HU is eligible for \$60k in grant funds from TPF (Transportation Project Fund). Dr. Woolf noted that the city of Las Vegas is eligible for millions of dollars and only gets one project per year. Dr. Woolf stated that they are pursuing an MOU with the city that may be 2 million dollars every year for the next 5 years.
- Dr. Woolf noted that he is Vice Chair of the city's economic development committee. Dr. Woolf reported on the housing project at golf course, that the RFP was successful and that they chose Titan development and are currently in negotiations.
- Dr. Woolf met with Secretary Black from the Economic Development department concerning funding for forest economy hub.
- 11/1: Matanza, almost 800 tickets given out already.
- Spring admissions are ahead by 19%

- Concerning RPSPs from the state, all 11 of the existing ones are included; Dr. Woolf reported that they are limited to new funding to programs that lost federal funding.
- Dr. Woolf sent out a message about political activities and asked that faculty follow that procedure. Dr. Woolf stated that the university is not able to waive fees.
- Dr. Woolf stated that safety will always be at the forefront and asked to please let Lee Martinez know of any issues on campus.
- Dr. Woolf requested that events be sent to B. Kempner so that they can be included in the biweekly email, which is also sent to alumni and donors.
- Dr. Woolf mentioned the recent turnover with Registrar and ITS and will have a meeting concerning long-term plans.
- About once a week the President hosts student groups at the presidential residence, and it is fun to get to know students on a personal level; they share the good experiences they have at HU.

Request from a Senator that they would like to see a speed bump in front of Wilson Complex. Dr. Woolf stated that that road is one of the first that will be updated with more pedestrian friendly updates and that it is managed by HU police.

Question from a Senator about the MOU with UNM Taos and what the criteria is to participate in visits. Dr. Woolf stated that Taos Pueblo is also involved and that the initial group was based on the interests of those parties.

Chair asked in reference to HU owning the roads on campus, whether political candidates can advertise on their vehicles. Dr. Woolf stated that if it is on their personal vehicle, they can have it, but materials cannot be on the road or the land; President said he will check with counsel.

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

D. Brown reported the following:

- Dr. Brown stated that there was a conflict with Indian School on the day of the flags raising, so there were people unable to attend; The flags will also be at Matanza.
- Dr. Brown reported that they are having more specific discussions with programs about UNM Taos and that next they will be asking Taos representatives to visit HU.
- Dr. Brown reported in regard to the campus bookstore that the first call for books will be 11/1 with a deadline of 11/15.
- Dr. Brown stated that the HLC will be on campus 11/3 & 11/4 and thanked A. Kent and B. Wharton for their work on the visit. Dr. Brown stated that there will be open forums for faculty and staff.
- Dr. Brown announced a call for members of Phi Kappa Phi.
- Dr. Brown stated that, per Athletic Director Noble, 11/8 is faculty and staff appreciation day at the football game and that there are specific ticket packages.

Chair asked for a follow-up on the definition of an event. Dr. Brown stated that an event is something that occurs outside the classroom and that an event is when we have off-campus guests. Dr. Brown asked for notification to be given to D. Lepre if there is someone from a political group on campus as a courtesy.

Question from a Senator about the university's relationship with Sandbox. Dr. Brown responded that Sandbox was originally developed at a religious institution but no longer has that affiliation and that they are working with other public entities.

Question from a Senator concerning Sandbox and the University Studies program. Dr. Brown stated that there may be students who would like to complete a bachelors before moving on to Sandbox.

Chair noted that she initially could only find Sandbox information that was associated with BYU. Dr. Brown said he understands.

Question from a Senator about the Search for the Dean of the School of Education. Dr. Brown stated that it is the third major search underway and that there will be an announcement concerning next steps. Senator asked about the timeline, and Dr. Brown stated that he would love it to be spring, but that may be a challenge.

Comment from a Senator that the FAQs on the Sandbox website states that they are with HU and will be using our accreditation. Senator also did not like Highlands being described as "scrappy." Dr. Brown stated that he likes the term "scrappy," and that they will have a conversation with Sandbox and will look to have a better description.

Question from a Senator about the events policy and what the university considers a politician. Senator also noted that BYU has an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in regard to discrimination against people with transgender identity and expressed concern about affiliation. Dr. Brown stated that Chris Crittenden [Sandbox] has left BYU and is not affiliated with a faith-based institution. In regard to politicians, Dr. Woolf stated that the institution has limited free speech policies and that the general counsel is working to clarify definitions, which will be provided for review and comment.

Question from a Senator about the free speech policy timeline. Dr. Woolf stated that they are working with haste and that it is one of the university's significant areas of liability.

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

Chair reported the following.

- Concerning the Grievance and Conciliation committee, Linda Lagrange is in discussion with them and a date is imminent for training.
- The Executive Committee charged the Academic Affairs Committee with looking into Sandbox issues.
- Chair reported that there continues to be emails about the desktop rollout and suggested including faculty going forward so it does not happen again.

- Concerning the Highlands Elevated campaign, Chair reported that some of the issues are having no baseline; faculty being left out of the process and being left out of the pillars; and feeling that the campaign does not include the full complement of the academics. Chair shared a letter written by a faculty member to the Provost outlining concerns.

Comment from a Senator that it is an excellent letter and says it better than we have previously. Senator stated that faculty understand fundraising campaigns and that this should be a description of Highlands and our values. Senator stated that that one pillar should be academics and that the Foundation could certainly pick different programs to highlight. Senator stated that faculty want to make sure the campaign is more inclusive.

MOTION to endorse the letter of Dr. Michael Petronis pertaining to the Highlands Elevated and send it back to the administration. Seconded.

Comment from a Senator that it feels like the university is an athletic company that does academics on the side. Senator would like academics to be more front and center.

18 ayes, 1 nay, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

MOTION to send the endorsed letter to the Board of Regents. Seconded. 18 ayes, 1 nay, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

Chair also reported that the Executive Committee has been talking with Clint Weckerly [Center for Teaching Excellence] and is trying to set up a meeting.

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

G. Gadsden reported the following:

- The Academic Affairs Committee is making progress on program reviews. Some departments are not ready to submit.
- The committee is discussing dual degree programs and a Masters in supply chain management.

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

Not present.

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

G. Medina noted that red ribbon week is coming up.

C. Nevarez reported that the Staff Senate is working on getting membership up. Mr. Nevarez stated that there have been some concerns among police that they cannot talk to legislators to lobby for the police department. Mr. Nevarez stated that the police are not getting proper funding. Mr. Nevarez stated that people need to be more appreciative of police and not call them security.

Question from a Senator about how faculty can move forward with encouraging our admin assistants to join staff senate. Chair noted that faculty came do this by making them aware of the senate, sharing the link, and talking about the importance of governance.

Comment from a Senator that faculty and staff should try to figure out how to be more pro-active and positive and consider how they can share these messages as a way to move forward as a community.

Comment from a Senator that the last time they were at the campus police station, they saw many political symbols and wondered if admin looked at that.

Comment from a Senator that they do not see advertisements for Staff Senate and that there used to be a global email. Chair stated that the Executive Committee can help with that. Ms. Medina stated that the Staff Senate has been putting up posters and trying to get word out but it is only 3 people, which is not enough to have a quorum for a meeting.

11. Old Business

a. Faculty Senate Committee Nominations/Elections

Chair asked for nominations for the following committees.

i. Athletic Committee

No nominations.

ii. Faculty Grievance and Conciliation

No nominations.

iii. Student Affairs Committee

Rachell Tenorio nominated to serve on the Student Affairs Committee.

Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iv. Faculty Senate Executive Committee At-Large

Sheree Jederberg nominated to serve on the Faculty Senate Executive Committee as an at-large member. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

b. Faculty Concerns

i. Registrar

Chair noted that administration has been working on issues pertaining to the Registrar.

Question from a Senator that there have been 3 positions vacated within the last couple of years and whether some of that salary could be part of a stipend for remaining staff. Dr. Brown stated that that has been offered, that they are in negotiation, and that he is comfortable providing supplemental pay. Dr. Brown noted that 2 senior members have left since August and that the other position has been vacant for at least 2 years with failed searches and that he is looking at the compensation as a factor.

Comment from a Senator that this is also an issue of loss of institutional memory. Senator stated that the university will sometimes buy a program and hack it and make it HU oriented, which a lot of institutions do. The fear is that HU is losing a lot of people that understand how the system was reprogrammed and changed. Senator noted that with midterm grades, a script was not run. Senator noted that the Registrar and ITS work hand in hand and that developing a plan is important because faculty do not know what questions to ask.

Comment from a Senator that they are happy that B. Wharton is stepping into the Registrar's role, as Dr. Brown is very busy. Senator stated that they are still concerned about people serving in multiple roles.

Question from a Senator about FERPA training. Dr. Brown stated that they are looking at a new program with new training including FERPA.

Chair noted that the posting of midterms and the spring schedule are upcoming.

Chair discussed the block H campaign and that the campus community called itself a family and that when so many people leave, we need to ask why that happens.

ii. Highlands Elevated/Email Signatures

Chair reiterated faculty issues with the desktop rollout.

Comment from a Senator concerning the desktops and thanking the administration for restoring the regular desktops. Senator noted that in classrooms, everything is uncentered and pixelated and wondered if this signals a need for replacement.

Comment from a Senator that the purple color is not conducive for a background and a more disability-friendly policy is needed.

Comment from a Senator that a colleague had migraines triggered by the color.

Chair asked about an update on the email signature template. Dr. Woolf stated there is no update.

12. New Business

a. Academic Affairs Committee Items

i. Bachelor of Social Work – Online (attachment)

J. Tourangeau provided an overview of the proposal and noted that it has the full support from the school and national accreditation from Council on

Social Work Education. Dr. Tourangeau stated that it is a blend of synchronous and asynchronous classes and that they are hoping to implement it in the Fall of 2023.

Comment from K. Gray that the library checklist was not completed, which includes a library consultation.

Comment from a Senator that they are thinking forward about reaching out and asked if the department had thought about practical experience and people in remote areas. Dr. Tourangeau noted that that is a dialog with the practicum team.

MOTION to approve the program revision provided a library consultation is completed. Seconded. 21 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

ii. Bachelor of Arts University Studies Revisions (attachment)

N. Valenzuela provided an overview of the proposal and stated that the department is looking to remove the changes that were made last year, which negatively impact students when working.

Comment from Ms. Gray that the library checklist was not completed, which includes a library consultation.

Question from a Senator about what went wrong with the changes. Dr. Valenzuela stated that the faculty behind the changes is no longer with the university.

Comment from a Senator clarifying that they are deleting the upper division requirement for the tracks, but students would still need to meet the 45 upper division requirements. Dr. Valenzuela stated that is correct and that the track requirement is redundant.

Comment from a Senator that the new language was a burden. Dr. Valenzuela stated that is correct.

MOTION to approve the program revision provided a library consultation is completed. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iii. C&I EdD New Program Proposal (attachment)

Chair noted that the program proposal package is the same one passed last spring by the Academic Affairs Committee, but that last spring the courses were listed as 7000-level. Chair reminded Senators that it was agreed at a previous Senate meeting that the Senate would substitute 6000 for 70000 without the proposal going to the AAC again. Chair also

noted that all the signatures were on the electronic document but that the document cannot be downloaded with the signatures in place.

MOTION to approve the program proposal package. Seconded.

Comment from a Senator giving kudos to the program.

Comment from Ms. Gray that the new program form used is an out-of-date version that does not include the library checklist. Ms. Gray noted that the program needs complete the checklist, which includes identifying the librarian they consulted. Ms. Gray also noted that the proposal incorrectly states that the department pays for the yearly subscriptions to library resources but that those funds come from the library's budget. Ms. Gray also stated that the program includes the creation of dissertations, which constitutes an additional burden on the library, as the library processes and houses all theses and professional papers.

Moving Senator amended motion to provide a stipulation that a library consultation must be completed. Seconding Senator agreed.

Comment from a Senator that given that there needs to be a revision, they would recommend that the Senate not vote until the revision takes place.

Comment from a Senator that the Senate would not say that the budget would stop a program from going forward but that it needs to be clear that the library will need additional resources; that is the point of these additions.

Question from a Senator about whether a new cover sheet is needed. Dr. Gadsden noted that just the checklist should be added.

G. Glover stated that Dr. Olufemi did consult with the library. D. Olufemi stated that the department has been working on this proposal for some time, which may be why the form is out of date.

19 ayes, 0 nays, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

b. Outcomes Assessment Committee Report; Outcomes Assessment Handbook Modifications

E. Rolstad provided an overview of the proposed modifications. Dr. Rolstad stated that the Outcomes Assessment Committee would like to implement the template for the programs to utilize for reporting purposes and to update the handbook accordingly. Dr. Rolstad stated that the committee has great data to share with the HLC. Dr. Rolstad reported that they are proposing a change to the template that will provide a brief explanation of what the results show about the outcome and close the loop. Dr. Rolstad stated this is the same information from

the cover sheet. Dr. Rolstad noted that many programs, especially those with outside accreditation, have their own processes.

Comment from a Senator that faculty do not do this for HLC, they do this for themselves and are just documenting it in a more efficient way. Dr. Rolstad agreed.

Comment from a Senator that they do not believe the retention strategies should be included.

MOTION to approve the handbook modifications without the retention strategies. No second. Motion failed.

Comment from a Senator that they also feel that retention strategies are different from outcomes assessment.

Comment from a Senator that faculty should always be concerned about retention and that they feel it should be listed in the report.

Comment from a Senator that they looked at old reports and retention was listed.

MOTION to approve handbook modifications. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

c. Center for Teaching Excellence Ad hoc Review Committee Report

D. Donley provided an overview of the report. Dr. Donley stated that the committee is working on the issue of what the CTE is and what its job is, and they plan to finish by the end of the semester. Dr. Donley reported that the committee gathered data during Professional Development Days (PDD) which showed that most faculty believe a strong, well-supported CTE would be beneficial to NMHU. Findings also showed that faculty believe the CTE needs to be a place where faculty can come together and engage with a community of like-minded educators.

B. Villarreal noted that the committee discussed location with faculty at Professional Development Days, but that it is the lowest priority of all the discussion points.

A. May provided an overview of data from Professional Development Days session.

Chair thanked the committee members for their work and input.

Comment from a Senator that they were hoping for more feedback from faculty and suggested a survey. Dr. Donley noted that they can but that survey results are usually low and that those at PDD are the highest invested group.

Comment from a Senator that the committee should not go to the administration for their input, as the CTE was developed by the faculty for the faculty. Senator agreed that a survey would be good.

Question from a Senator about whether the committee has considered how many people have been utilizing the CTE.

Dr. Villarreal stated that advisory board was supposed to oversee the reporting model.

1. Executive Session.

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

3. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05.

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.