NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

January 28, 2026

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

Approved February 11, 2026

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, At-Large**	x		
Education - Special Education; PJ Sedillo	x		
Education - Teacher Education; Angela Redondo	x		
English and Philosophy; Jess Goldberg (they/them) [Spring 2026]	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; Gina Marie Medina	x		
Student Senate; Lydia Okojie	x		

Also present: Annie Allen (Social Work), Daniel Chadborn (Psychology), Lauren Fath (Associate Dean, CAS), Roxanne Gonzales-Walker (Educational Leadership), Doajo Hicks (University Counsel), Rob Karaba (Interim Dean, Education), Nicole Kirby (Library), Todd Lekan (Dean, CAS), David Lepre (VP, Marketing & Communications), Alycia Nabours (Social Work), Frances Ortega (Social Work), Veena Parboteeah (Dean, Business & Media Arts), Michael Petronis (Natural Resources Management), Megan Shudde (Instructional Design), Cin Ulibarri (ICLRLT), Elizabeth Valenzuela (Teacher

Education), Clint Weckerly (Center for Teaching Excellence), Barbara Wharton (Institutional Research /Interim Registrar), Ian Williamson (AVPAA)

3. Approval of Agenda.
MOTION to approve the agenda. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes from January 14, 2026 (attachment).
MOTION to approve the minutes. Seconded. 19 ayes, 1 nay, 1 abstention. Motion carried.

5. Communication from the President (N. Woolf).
N. Woolf reported the following:

- Met with M. Petronis, A. Crespin, and B. Kempner about creating a veterans' center with plans to start by July 1; group will meet biweekly.
- Enrollment report: spring enrollment ahead 3% undergraduate up 6%, graduate down 2%.
- Dr. Woolf reported that two minutes before winter break, 4 employees were notified of a Reduction in Force affecting their jobs. Dr. Woolf stated that he found out Saturday and immediately rescinded the notices. Dr. Woolf stated that there is an internal investigation ongoing and that discipline has occurred. The President will invite campus wide participation for conversations on the Centers.
- Dr. Woolf discussed shared legislative priorities. Dr. Woolf reported that last night, the budget for higher education was recommended that included 4.5% increase in I&G. Legislature is still discussing compensation increase, which is expected to be 1-2%. Dr. Woolf reported that there is good support for the need to improve athletics facilities, that there is support for funds to improve Connor C wing (70 more beds if HVAC is fixed). Dr. Woolf stated that the library renovation is expected at $9-10M with more coming. Dr. Woolf reported there will be $6M for campus security, including access controls. Dr. Woolf reported they are also asking for indirect funding lost from Federal grants.
- Dr. Woolf reported that he will be hosting a dinner for Senate leadership on 2/9.

Question from a Senator about enrollment reports. Senator is concerned about how enrollment is encoded and noted that, for a number of years, HU counted all online students as at the main campus. Senator asked about the accounting of students who take classes at several places.

Dr. Woolf stated that, in terms of number of students, he is confident of the enrollment report. In terms of where students are, Dr. Woolf stated that he has not seen the coding to say where students are but that there should be a mechanism for how they are counted. Dr. Woolf stated that that will be part of the charge for B. Wharton to update.

Question from a Senator about whether there has ever been an assessment of security issues at the Centers.

Dr. Woolf stated that that is included in the security measures for the legislative priorities.

Comment from a Senator that if the new security measures include changing locks, then faculty should be given keys and cards. Senator also noted that reporting about students' locations should be taken with a grain of salt.

Dr. Woolf agreed and stated that the Centers enrollment is at the level of concern. Comment from a Senator regarding reporting that in degree audit, University Studies students are being listed as "not reported" under college. Senator also stated that when students declare a second major in Spanish, Deans have reported that they are not seeing that acknowledged on reports.

Dr. Woolf stated that that is a second layer of reporting.

Comment from a Senator that they are glad to hear of the acknowledged need for better reporting. Senator stated that they are hearing about data-driven decisions about hiring faculty, concerning which departments get lines filled and which do not. Senator asked for clarification about Indigenous student enrollment and stated that it is confusing to hear that as an open-enrollment university in a state with robust Indigenous population, that there is a budgeted, powerful recruitment effort for out of state students, rather than our in-state tribal nations.

Dr. Woolf reported the enrollment for Indigenous students: undergraduate is up 12% at 102, graduate is 62; last year there were 91 undergraduate and 83 graduate. Dr. Woolf stated that the work that the university has engaged in with the Pueblos is work that will never end because it is a priority for the university. Dr. Woolf stated that HU will be teaching classes at UNM Taos and on the Pueblo and also on Acoma. Dr. Woolf stated it is not about whether the university spends money here or there but that the university should be doing it all. Dr. Woolf stated that the university's largest contingent of students is New Mexicans but that the university needs to explore opportunities to grow the institution. In regard to data, Dr. Woolf stated that good data should not be the full way the university makes decisions but that it should be factored in.

Request from a Senator that the School of Education be kept in mind with the conversation with Taos, particularly in regard to leadership.

Dr. Woolf stated that UNM Taos is interested in education and specifically the EdD.

L. Okojie stated that concerning the data on students, there is more that can be done with this. Ms. Okojie stated that students have been trying to meet up with a Dean about starting up clubs and that they need numbers from individual departments that the Dean cannot supply. Ms. Okojie stated that students are being referred to student centers, but that the student center says it is not easy to get numbers. Ms. Okojie stated that students need to be aware of number of students in departments and that it would improve student connections. Ms. Okojie noted that in degree audit, when students have two majors, it shows just the first one and that banner does not reflect the other major. Ms. Okojie expressed a need for orientation for the portal.

Chair Lindline noted that the faculty has been working with the Registrar to recognize and improve the degree audit and Ellucian experience.

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

D. Brown reported the following:

- Dr. Brown noted that data defining student location is top of the list his office is working on and that they want to look at the total impact of online students and want reports disaggregated down to department level.
- Dr. Brown stated that semester credit hours must be a factor in making decisions.
- In regard to Indigenous enrollment, Dr. Brown reported that the university has increased undergraduate enrollment 2 semesters in a row and that we are struggling with graduate level. Dr. Brown stated that he would have that conversation with the Deans.
- Dr. Brown reported that the early alert email went out on Monday and that when the update to Ellucian was done, functionality was lost. Dr. Brown stated that the report was tailored to Banner 8. Dr. Brown thanked Dr. Wharton and ITS. Dr. Brown stated that his office will continue to have a conversation about Banner.
- Dr. Brown stated that the university will be having a Phi Kappa Phi initiation this spring and that there is no strict cutoff for GPA.
- Dr. Brown reported that Highlands Day at the Legislature is 2/10 beginning at 8 am and that this is the university's day to promote the entirety of NMHU today; more emails will be coming about that.

Question from a Senator asking for an update on the Registrar search.

Dr. Brown stated that the committee met and is checking references.

Question from a Senator about the tenure and promotion committee.

Dr. Brown stated that he will work on that.

Comment from a Senator that they are not able to post their office hours in Banner.

Dr. Brown stated that this is the first he is hearing of this issue.

Comment from K. Jenkins that faculty do not put office hours in Banner, because no one can access them, so it was taken out of the CBA [Collective Bargaining Agreement].

Comment from a Senator that faculty understand there will be issues when migrating system but that the university does not seem to think ahead about what will happen.

Senator expressed sympathy for the university's ITS people who have to program everything. Senator asked if it would be possible to anticipate what changes would be needed.

Dr. Brown stated that Ellucian is one of the least predictable systems and that the university should know there would be issues and how to report those. Dr. Brown stated that the parts that are programmed are things they should look for first.

Comment from a Senator that there was a Human Resources task force that was formed but that there are work authorization issues with international faculty. Senator stated that the tried to contact the VPAA and that the process has not been starting on time. Senator requested an update on how the VPAA's office will treat these.

Dr. Brown noted that Texas has announced no H1B visas. Dr. Brown stated that he will find out and report back.

Comment from a R. Moore regarding Indigenous student enrollment that the university has been trying to increase it for 10 years. Dr. Moore asked how the Registrar is tracking those students that self-identify as Indigenous. Dr. Moore noted that there seems to be kink in the Registrar's office where it does not read as Dine or Apache and that tribal leaders want to know about their representation on campus. Dr. Moore stated that she is glad the university representatives are going out into the communities and stated that numbers will increase once firmer relationships are established with communities. Dr. Moore noted that in fall 2024, a committee was convened to examine what the university is and is not doing for Indigenous students in regard to recruitment, retainment. Dr. Moore reported that the committee developed a SWAT analysis in April 2025 and that it went nowhere. Dr. Moore noted that the President's Council on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion does not know about the SWAT and has never been asked to come back and discuss findings.

Dr. Brown stated that he will find out more about the SWAT analysis. Dr. Brown stated that he believes that the official HSI [Hispanic Serving Institution] and NASNTI [Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution] status will come back to the world around us. Dr. Brown agreed about the coding and stated that these are IPEDs coding and that = it does not represent diversity within diversity. Brown stated there are two areas of report we should keep on eye on: two or more races AND unknown. Dr. Brown stated that, because of the current political climate, some students are wary of self-reporting. Dr. Brown stated that he will see what he can find out and that he is making some starts and looking forward to meeting with PCDEI. Dr. Brown stated that affinity group celebrations need to be advertised better.

Comment from a Senator that several years ago, R. Moore helped create Melody Hall as a designated hall for Indigenous students and that Dr. Moore worked hard and that the report went nowhere. Senator stated that Dr. Brown said there was a position posted for transfer evaluator and asked about the status of the position. Senator also asked where the class roster is located in Ellucian.

Dr. Brown stated that he would ask K. Blea about Melody Hall. Dr. Brown stated that he discussed the transfer specialist Dr. Wharton and that they are waiting until new the Registrar is here. Dr. Brown stated that they are considering a software program to do that.

Comment from G. Gallegos offering the services of the Computer Sciences department. Dr. Gallegos stated that this is about software and the life cycle of Banner and that the university should maybe be proactive rather than reactive.

Dr. Brown stated that he appreciates the offer. Dr. Brown noted that they eliminate support for previous versions and that there needs to be a conversation about how we can prepare and that the test environment is key.

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

Chair reported the following:

- Chair met with the School of Social Work and it was great to connect with them.
- Executive Committee has set a tentative schedule for General Faculty meetings: 2/25, 3/25, 4/2
- Chair reported on the status of faculty replacement hires and stated that Dr. Brown was positive to ones that are in the queue (e.g., Media Arts, Political Science)
- Chair noted that early alert is an important retention measure.
- Chair reported on Ellucian updates and noted that these are necessary, and that faculty is just asking for forecasting and prior training. Chair stated that leadership reached out to Dr. Wharton, who shared concerns about mini tutorials.
- Chair reported on the HLC conference that E. Rolstad (Chair of Outcomes Assessment Committee) will attend and that the Chair may be able to go as well
- Chair noted that there are concerns from faculty about certificate programs and that the title of the Major/Minor Declaration form does not include Certificates and the form does not describe a process for declaring a Certificate.

MOTION to charge the Academic Affairs Committee with reviewing the academic Certificate declaration process, including changing the title of the Major/Minor Declaration form and developing a Certificate declaration process for the Undergraduate Catalog. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

- Chair stated that she saw in the portal that there were offerings of certificates for participating in lecture series which sparked concerns about “non-academic” programs using certificates. Chair noted that the university should be specific about the difference between academic and experiential certificates.

MOTION to charge the Academic Affairs Committee with researching the issue of non-academic “Certificates” and developing a way to distinguish academic versus non-academic certificates. Seconded. 20 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

- Chair reported on the Department Chair selection process, that she is working with office of Academic Affairs for a list of chairs and terms and asked faculty to look out for email.
- Chair noted that the Executive Committee has resurrected administrator evaluation forms and is considering modifications.
- Chair stated that C. Weckerly has shared recordings from Professional Development Days and that they were in this week's global announcements.

8. Communication from Academic Affairs Committee (R. Gonzales-Walker).
R. Gonzales-Walker reported on action of the Academic Affairs committee (see attached report).

9. Communication from the Student Senate (L. Okojie).
L. Okojie reported the following:

- Student Senate is about helping students attend conferences and asked faculty to encourage students to participate.
- Student Senate will be having Highlands Week and would like to make students more aware of Senate.
- Student Senate wants students to be more involved in events going on campus, such as with the updates to the portal system and that doing so could give them practical experience.
- Certification programs should have a follow up about where it went.
- Ms. Okojie noted that on the Social Work interface, graphics do not reflect the departments and what they are about.

Chair stated that faculty have been talking to administration about making advertising more student forward.

Question from a Senator about past issues with delays in the distribution of monies for student attendance at conferences and if there has been a resolution.

Ms. Okojie stated that there is a process about how to get reimbursed.

10. Communication from the Staff Senate (G. Medina).
G. Medina reported the following:

- Staff Senate is moving along wonderfully and has seen increased participation.
- 2/4 will be the next meeting.
- Staff Senate will be installing a Vice President and Secretary.
- Ms. Medina thanked Dr. Lindline for her support.

Chair thanked Dr. Brown for sending an email advertising the Staff Senate.

11. Executive Session.
Faculty Senate moved into Executive Session.

12. Old Business

- **a. Faculty Senate Committee Nominations/Elections**
  - **i. Athletic Committee**
  - **ii. Student Affairs Committee**
  - **iii. International Education Committee**

- **b. Academic Affairs Committee Program Addition/Deletion/Modification Proposals**
  - **i. MA/MS of Computer Science Program Revision (G. Gallegos and M. Langer)**

- **c. Issues with Human Resources, ITS, and Facilities Ticketing**

13. New Business

- **a. Graduate Handbook Changes; Graduate Committee Chair Eligibility Language (attachments)**

- **b. Elucian Experience Updates**

- **c. Reorganization of Student Support Services Workforce at the NMHU Centers**

- **d. New Mexico Highlands University Focused Visit Action Letter (attachment)**

14. Action and Statements as Necessary on Executive Session Discussion.
No actions were taken during Executive Session.

MOTION to table remaining items and adjourn. Seconded. Motion carried by unanimous consent.

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.

Academic Affairs Committee

January 28, 2026

Subject: Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) Summary Report

To: Faculty Senate

Submitted by: Dr. Roxanne M. Gonzales, AAC Liaison to the Faculty Senate

1. Program Review updates were provided by the chairs:
    a. Chairs are needed for History, Nursing, and English
    b. New Program Reviews: Southwest Studies, Fine Arts, First Year Experience, Educational Leadership (committee needed), Counseling & Guidance (committee needed), and Computer Science (committee needed).
2. No old business
3. New Business: MSW program revisions to Advanced Standing was presented by Dr. Barnstone. Changes reflect and align with CSWE standards. Discussion only, not vote.
4. Communications from the AAC Chair, Faculty Senate, and Graduate Council
5. Adjourned