NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes

April 08, 2026

Location: RAB 120 & Zoom

Approved April 22, 2026

1. Called meeting to order.

2. Called roll.

	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 [Jonathn Lee, proxy]	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: Veronica Becerra (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Susan Cardenas (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Daniel Chadborn (Psychology), Debbie Deneen (Curriculum & Instruction), Lauren Fath (Associate Dean, CAS), Roxanne Gonzales-Walker (Educational Leadership), Todd Lekan (Dean, CAS), Javier Arturo Hall Lopez (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Paulina Ochoa Martinez (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Veena Parboteeah (Dean, Business & Media Arts), Melecio Perea (Chemistry), Michael Petronis (Natural Resources Management), Megan Shudde (Instructional Design), Cin

Ulibarri (ICLRLT), Jesse Weaver (Exercise & Sport Sciences), Barbara Wharton (Institutional Research /Interim Registrar), Ian Williamson (AVPAA)

3. Approval of Agenda.
MOTION to approve. Seconded. 17 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

4. Approval of Minutes of March 25, 2026 (attachment).
MOTION to approve. Seconded. 17 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

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

- There is a Board of Regents meeting next week at which the President will present the legislative report; written reports are available.
- President Woolf mentioned the Board resolution of March 8, which covered expectations for members of the university community.
- The President and Board attended the Association of Governing Board.
- Dr. Woolf noted that there is an upcoming spring football game on 4/18 at which legislators will be present and there will be a Polynesian pig roast free to faculty, staff, and students.
- Highlands Business Department dedication and renaming of Quintana Hall is upcoming.
- There will be a groundbreaking for the New Mexico Reforestation Center.
- There will be a commencement luncheon on 5/9. Senator Ben Ray Lujan will be the commencement speaker.
- Dr. Woolf offered thanks to Dr. Edward Harrington for his music performance at the Presidential residence at which the City Council was in attendance.
- This Thursday, the ACLU will provide a “Know Your Rights” ACLU program.
- Dr. Woolf reported that listening sessions for Centers have begun.
- 4/16 HLC will visit Rio Rancho and Santa Fe centers on 4/16 as the year 8 multi-site visit.
- At the Higher Ed department visit, HU was successful in getting capital projects approved, including Hilton Science Building, +$4M to fix HVAC; Connor C wing will be rehabbed and opened in Fall with an additional 70 beds.

Comment from a Senator that Pride at Highlands will be 4/20-4/24 and that schedules will be going up around campus.

Question from a Senator about what developments there have been concerning the repurposing of the golf course for housing.

Dr. Woolf reported that the Board of Regents created the Highlands Land Development Corporation and have signed a partnership with Titan Development of Albuquerque for a plan and that they hope to break ground this year, with homes for sale, homes for rent, apartments for rent, and commercial spaces.

Chair asked Dr. Woolf to comment on the expansion of administrative offices, including the Legislative and General Counsel offices.

Dr. Woolf responded that administration hired another lobbyist because the university was getting outgunned at the legislature. Another lobbyist was desperately needed. Dr. Woolf stated that he has denied some position requests from the General Counsel and that he makes those decisions carefully in the best interests of the university. Dr. Woolf stated that he is the person who decides and that they are so busy in the office and that is why he approved the additional positions.

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

D. Brown reported the following:

- Commencement at Rio Rancho will be 5/7, 7:00 p.m. and the color guard will be from Cleveland High School in Rio Rancho. The Sandia Matadors band will perform.
- Dr. Brown reminded faculty that commencement will be a clear bag event and that there will be increased number of entry points.
- Dr. Brown noted that the luncheon was requested by Dr. Woolf.
- Dr. Brown noted that there will be an additional call for volunteers.
- Dr. Brown stated that he received a reply from the HLC consultant evaluator stressing that this is a traditional visit. Dr. Brown reported that 4/15 is no longer on the schedule. Dr. Brown stated that emails will go out to people being requested by the evaluator, who has not replied yet.
- Dr. Brown reported on the New Mexico Hub that there will be more opportunities. Dr. Brown noted that the project was initiated to provide a central resource to market online programming and that there is no cost to HU for services. HU will launch one program in fall 2026: BSW online; Dr. Brown noted that there are weekly meetings with faculty and biweekly meetings with others. Dr. Brown stated that no website for the HU part of the website is available yet. Dr. Brown reported that the Hub people have been collaborative and that NMSU, NMHU, and Northern NM are the only ones involved right now.
- Dr. Brown reported on the Centers listening sessions and that expectations for communication with the Las Vegas campus was mentioned. Dr. Brown will be scheduling monthly zoom conversations with anyone who work the Centers or online faculty on the 1st Thursday of every month starting 5/7.
- Dr. Brown has set a tentative schedule for visits to the Centers in the Fall and wants to make it to the Centers once a semester and to take others with him. Dr. Brown will sit for an office hour.

Question from a Senator about meeting times for strategic enrollment council.

Dr. Brown apologized for the delay and will have those out.

Question from a Senator about the Tenure and Promotion panel.

Dr. Brown stated that a meeting is being set up as we speak by I. Williamson.

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

Chair reported the following:

- Chair held open hours on Monday in the faculty lounge to talk to faculty.
- The survey of administrators is complete with n=60+ participants and will be rolled out at next meeting.
- There will be a General Faculty meeting after the Senate meeting on 4/22.
- The Executive Committee is seeking nominations for CTE advisory board, ideally 2 faculty from CAS (1 from humanities and 1 from sciences) and 1 from each of the Schools.
- Chair reported on the Centers listening sessions and that there were a lot of people disappointed that the March sessions did not happen. Chair was happy to see that the April meetings occurred. Chair noted that things are getting lost in the global emails but that there were 48 participants at second session. Chair noted that there were many vocal students, faculty, and staff in attendance and that they are looking to make more connections. Chair noted that much of the listening session included support of the staff and the importance of their work.
- Chair reported that she had lunch with the Provost and has invited him to the Executive Committee meetings but that has not been realized.

Comment from a Senator reminding faculty of the Research and Creative Day on 4/17. Senator thanked the Chair for mentioning the part of the Centers listening session that highlighted the importance of the staff at the Centers and noted that staff work with all the students.

Question from a Senator about whether there are any plans for future listening sessions.

Dr. Brown stated that this is largely why the first Thursday conversations have been set up.

Comment from a Senator about Human Resources benefits enrollment and offered thanks to G. Medina for walking their department faculty through what they are supposed to be doing. Senator noted that this was another email message that was lost in the global announcements.

Chair noted that there will be two benefits sessions on campus and on Zoom.

V. Parboteeah clarified that the business building is changing names, but the school's name is still the same.

8. Communication from Academic Affairs Committee (R. Gonzales-Walker).

R. Gonzales Walker presented her report (see attached).

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

Not present

10. Communication from the Staff Senate (G. Medina).

Ms. Medina reported the following:

- Staff Senate has been busy and now has full executive leadership.
- Staff Senate is working on staff appreciation day and looking at 5/29.
- Staff Senate climate survey went out in last Tuesday's global.
- Staff members are looking forward to participating in the President's committees.

Dr. Brown stated that he and Ms. Medina were navigating a difficulty approval process and reminded faculty to reach out to him if there is something they are perceiving that he has not gotten to.

11. Old Business

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

Chair stated that the listening sessions were productive and enlightening. Chair encouraged faculty to keep going to the Provost's sessions and that if they cannot attend to send their issues to her.

Chair asked the Provost about the Albuquerque move being scheduled for early April.

Dr. Brown stated that they got the keys in April and that they will have an announcement out. Dr. Brown stated that administration is trying not to interfere with faculty requirements though the submission of grades. Dr. Brown stated he is working with A. Flure to move faculty after that date and that they will provide supplies like boxes. Dr. Brown noted that staff will be available to move boxes from one location to the other.

Chair asked about the placement of people with support roles and about the Social Work Center for Excellence and the Native American students in Social Work.

Dr. Brown stated that standalone Centers are funded through RPSPs and that tenure/tenure-track faculty will move first, then contingent faculty, and administrative assistants. Dr. Brown stated that the Centers will be relocated to Rio Rancho.

12. New Business

a. **Student Affairs Committee Report; Response to 02/11 Charge:** ***To compare the Academic Integrity Policy in the required syllabus statement versus the catalog language. Check for consistencies and/or discrepancies. Include (1) language about plagiarism and Artificial Intelligence (AI) and (2) language that AI usage is at the discretion of the course Instructor. Provide a report of the Committee's findings and recommendations to the Senate in April.***

D. Deneen presented an overview of the report and recommendations (see attached).

Comment from a Senator that the committee did a very good job of addressing Artificial Intelligence and that they would like to take this back to faculty for discussion.

Senator seconded that the committee did a great job.

MOTION for Senators to take the Student Affairs Committee report back to departments for discussion. Seconded.

Comment from a Senator thanking the committee for the recommendations to involve CTE. Senator noted that this came up two years ago in the Senate asking for that training. Senator stated that the School of Social Work as a professional school requires a lot of writing and that their faculty created their own AI policy with a lot of discussion.

D. Chadborn stated that the Psychology Department also has its own statements that it developed and are happy to share for sample language. Dr. Chadborn also noted that the Scottish government released guidelines on AI in schools and there is some good language in that and information about using AI to make decisions.

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

b. Academic Affairs Committee Recommendations

i. Response to Senate Charges from Jan 2026 regarding Credit vs. Non-Credit Bearing Certificates (attachment)

Chair opened the floor for discussion.

ii. Department of ESS - M.S. of Anesthesiologist Assistant (attachments)

K. Jenkins presented an overview of the proposal.

- Dr. Jenkins stated that a year ago, Dr. Woolf came to the Faculty Senate and Association talking about the opportunity for collaboration with AHI.
- Dr. Jenkins noted that she met with faculty from Academic Affairs Committee, Chemistry, Biology, and Nursing departments with Dr. Williamson and Dean T. Lekan over the summer.
- Dr. Jenkins stated that Exercise and Sport Sciences is the only department interested in housing the program and that the department voted unanimously.
- Dr. Jenkins stated that faculty developed the curriculum, which includes 96 credits that are offered one at a time and scaffolded.
- Dr. Jenkins stated that they looked at programs all over the country and that this proposal is consistent with other programs of this type.

- Dr. Jenkins stated that it includes over 2300 hours of clinical practice and that students have to work in hospitals and simulation labs.
- Dr. Jenkins noted that this proposal meets accreditation standards.

Comment from a Senator that this has to be affiliated with a school of medicine and mentioned the osteopathic school in Florida. Senator noted that at this past legislative session, Tara Lujan presented a bill for $40M to fund this and that it was pulled out due to anti-donation clause because the institution is private.

Chair noted that this concerns budget and financial sustainability.

Dr. Jenkins noted that this is a partnership with AHI, which is a private group ad that the legwork has been done and the pro-forma is provided. Dr. Jenkins noted that AHI is putting forward a lot of money for the program but that HU retains control over curriculum.

Comment from a Senator that ESS did an excellent job in writing this proposal but that issues brought up by Chemistry and Biology were not fully addressed. Senator asked if there are enough positions at the local hospitals for all the internships needed and where the students would be doing the work.

Dr. Jenkins noted that they would have to hire a program director and a clinical director and that their job is to create partnerships with anesthesiology partnerships focused in the Santa Fe area. Dr. Jenkins noted that St. Vincent would be working with HU in the initial phases. Dr. Jenkins stated that the faculty positions are 0.5 FTE because they have to be working anesthesiologists. Dr. Jenkins reported that they are trying to get 2/3 of every cohort coming from New Mexico. Dr. Jenkins noted that Dr. Woolf is working on a relationship with Santa Fe Community College.

Question from a Senator about whether a Bachelor’s degree is a prerequisite.

Dr. Jenkins stated it is not required.

Comment from a Senator concerning the 0.5 FTE faculty and that by creating vocational training programming, the university is creating two tiers of faculty and that the outside faculty are paid at a higher rate than those working under the CBA, instead of being paid the adjunct rate.

Dr. Jenkins stated that anesthesiologist assistants average $500k a year and that she is aware of salary discrepancies. Dr. Jenkins stated that the positions are not intended to be tenure track. Dr. Jenkins noted that HU has other programs that make more money than faculty at standard rate and that HU pays more for computers science and marketing. Dr. Jenkins stated that this program must be taught by people certified in the field and that when students graduate, they want them to know people working in the field.

Comment from G. Gadsden to assure faculty that if they have not read the proposal, to please do so and that the Academic Affairs Committee vetted it carefully. Dr. Gadsden noted that faculty will maintain academic control over the program and that the private entity is optimistic that there are enough spots. Dr. Gadsden noted that the program has to have elevated salaries.

Comment from a Senator that they understand why salaries have to be higher. Senator noted that it is not a vocational program; it is a professional program that is a high need in this area.

Dr. Woolf stated that the rotations and clinical work is primarily Santa Fe and Albuquerque, but the students have the option of going national. Dr. Woolf noted that the Florida business has been pursuing a separate opportunity in building their own medical school in New Mexico which is not associated with the work HU is doing.

Comment from a Senator that it looks like St. Francis Xavier used to have one in New Mexico and it recently closed. Senator noted that when programs like this close and HU is trying to develop one, their question is why and what was going on in the marketplace to cause the closure.

Chair noted that projections and trends are in the proposal.

MOTION to approve Department of ESS - M.S. of Anesthesiologist Assistant. Seconded. 19 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iii. Department of Chemistry – New Course: Medicinal Chemistry (attachments)

M. Perea provided an overview of the course, which is a 4/5000 level course.

Chair noted that there used to be a course on pharmacology.

Dr. Gadsden stated that when N. Saikia presented the proposal to the Academic Affairs Committee, she made it clear the differences in 4/5000.

MOTION to approve New Course: Medicinal Chemistry with the caveat that the department embeds the student traits into the objectives, as required. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

iv. Department of Nursing – 3 Course Revisions [NURS 3420, NURS 4470, & NURS 4940] (attachments)

S. Khalsa reported that this proposal came out of the accreditation that there needed to be at the RN to BSN some actual time with community members. Dr. Khalsa stated that department has been working having those courses line up so that they build on one another and that there is a need for the courses to follow a progression.

MOTION to approve Course Revisions [NURS 3420, NURS 4470, & NURS 4940]. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

c. **Graduate Council Recommendation To Remove the Time Limitation Policy from the Graduate Catalog (attachment)**

D. Pan provided an overview of the recommendation.

- Graduate Handbook and Graduate Catalog are out of alignment concerning whether or not courses expire after 10 years.
- Graduate Council changed this years ago.
- Dr. Pan stated that there is no support for the old language.

MOTION to approve Graduate Council recommendation to remove the time limitation policy from the Graduate Catalog. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

Comment from a Senator that it is important to have the most up to date documents available whenever one document references another.

Comment from a Senator that administration should make sure the catalogs work on multiple browsers.

Dr. Gadsden stated that Dean Williamson is working on a site that will have all the documents in one place and that the Graduate Council is a little behind in updating the Graduate Handbook.

MOTION to move into Executive Session. Seconded. 18 ayes, 0 nays, 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

Dr. Woolf expressed gratitude to Dr. Jenkins and Dr. Gonzales-Walker.

13. Executive Session

MOTION to end Executive Session. Seconded. Motion carried.

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

No actions were taken in Executive Session.

15. Adjournment.

MOTION to adjourn.

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

AAC Meeting Date: April 1, 2026
Subject: Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) Summary Report
To: Faculty Senate
Submitted by: Dr. Roxanne M. Gonzales, AAC Liaison to the Faculty Senate

Agenda Items that had discussion/action:

5. Undergraduate Petition Subcommittee – Dr. Petronis reported that one petition was submitted and is now complete.

7. Program Reviews Update
    1. Biology [Todd Christensen, Chair] – revisions are almost complete
    2. History [Andrés Sabogal, Chair] – waiting for revisions
    3. Public Affairs/Political Science& History [Todd Christensen, Chair] – nothing to report
    4. Nursing [Kevin Cocoran, Chair] – need to set meeting with dean and faculty
    5. Gender and Women's Studies Minor [Blanca Cespedes, Chair] – waiting on revisions
    6. English MA, BA, Minor [Gloria Gadsden, Chair] – working on revisions
    7. Forestry BS, Minor, Certificate [John Jeffries, Chair] – responded to recommendations, need to set meeting with dean and faculty
    8. Southwest Studies/Anthropology only [Blanca Cespedes, Chair] – recommendations from committee given to department
    9. Fine Arts [Committee: Mike Petronis, Chair] – pending submission
    10. First Year Experience [Daniel Chadborn, Chair] – in the works
    11. Education - Counseling [Gloria Gadsden, Chair] – final report given and will be sent to VPAA Brown

9. Communication from the Registrar
    - Office is caught up with degree verifications
    - Summer enrollment is down a bit
    - Fall registration opens April 6th at 7am
    - Fall to spring retention is about the same as last year, 73% for freshman as an average
    - HLC to conduct an on-site of centers in April, this is a requirement by HLC to review centers of schools every five years.
    - Candidates for graduation were presented to AAC for approval
        - motion to approve passed

12. Communication from the Administration
    - Provided feedback on the first meeting related to the centers; said it was very helpful and provided good insights.
    - April 9th, ACLU will be on campus, no Zoom however for those at a distance

13. Old Business

- Dept. of Chemistry – new course Medicinal Chemistry
    - Motion to approve - passed
- Dept. of Nursing – BSN course changes
    - Motion to approve - passed
- Dept. of ESS – M.S. of AA proposal
    - Motion to approve – passed

14. New Business
- Dept. of SPED – discussion item
    - Presented the changes and need for the changes
    - Driven by industry and accreditation need and PED

15. Adjourned