

Faculty Athletic Committee Report AY 2022 – 2023.

Per the NMHU Faculty Handbook (approved in 2000 by the Faculty and Board of Regents and revised in 2017), the Faculty Athletic Committee (approved by the General Faculty, January 27, 2016 and by the Board of Regents, July 29, 2016) reports to the Faculty Senate.

The Faculty Senate assigned the Faculty Athletic Committee to submit a report for AY 2022 – 2023, details:

Motion made and seconded to charge the Athletic Committee to submit a report on their 2022-2023 activities based on the committee's responsibilities as detailed in the Faculty Handbook to the Faculty Senate by October 31, 2023. This report should include any problems encountered while trying to fulfil these responsibilities last year. Motion passed with 15 in favor, 0 to oppose, and 0 to abstain.

1. Membership

During the AY 2022 – 2023, Dr. Zollner was elected Chair of the Faculty Athletic Committee, September 2, 2022. Shortly after, former Athletic Director Andrew Ehling contacted Dr. Zollner and Dr. Bencomo (member of the committee) separately, to discuss the position of Faculty Athletic Representative [FAR]. Dr. Zollner was told, Dr. Hayward, FAR, was taking a leave of absence and the Faculty Athletic Committee needed an interim FAR. Andrew Ehling asked Dr. Bencomo if he would serve as interim FAR. On November 4, 2022, we meet as a committee. Andrew Ehling informed the committee that Dr. Bill Hayward was out of the country and during Dr. Hayward's absence, he had asked Dr. Benjamin Bencomo to take on the role of FAR. This was approved by all members present at that meeting (see minutes, November 4, 2022). Dr. Chadborn, former Faculty Senate Chair, was notified via email on November 22, 2023, of the decision.

With no ill intentions, the Faculty Athletic Committee made a mistake. On an email sent to Dr. Minner on February 14, 2023, Dr. Zollner apologized for the mistake:

Good morning, Dr. Minner.

I hope you are doing well.

I am reaching out to you as Chair of the Faculty Athletic Committee. I would like to apologize for making a mistake and taking to vote the position of FAR during Dr. Hayward's absence (see email below). I was unaware the decision to appoint a FAR came from your office.

I understand Andrew Ehling is leaving the university March 17. In a recent email you sent, you indicated HU Athletics would be led by interim leadership.

Please indicate who you will be appointing as FAR and HU Athletics interim leadership, so I can communicate your decision to the Faculty Athletic Committee. Our next meeting is Friday, March 4 at 1 PM via Zoom. You are welcome to attend the meeting.

Please let me know if you will join us.

Thank you.

Dr. Melanie C. Zollner.

The mistake was rectified. On March 22, 2023, Dr. Minner communicated his decision, Dr. Hayward was to serve as FAR. The issue was resolved.

Andrew Ehling left NMHU on March 2023. Dr. Minner appointed Shanna Halalilo and James Deisler as Co-Athletic Directors. The Faculty Athletic Committee met with the Co-Athletic Directors in April and May, 2023.

Although there was confusion over the position of FAR and change in leadership, the Faculty Athletic Committee was able to meet six times during the fall of 2022 and the spring of 2023.

2. Meetings and 3. Minutes

Dr. Zollner, Chair of the Faculty Athletic Committee AY 2022 – 2023, held six meetings and kept meeting minutes. Dr. Zollner sent copies of meeting minutes to the Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Fath and Faculty Senate Secretary, Dr. Lindline, on September 21, 2023.

Dr. Zollner served as Chair, acted as Secretary and kept minutes for AY 2022 – 2023. Elections were held during the first meeting AY 2023 – 2024, September 21, 2023. Dr. Bencomo was elected Chair and Dr. Zollner was elected Secretary. Motion passed with all members in favor, 0 oppose, and 0 to abstain. Dr. Hayward was absent during the meeting.

4. Reports to Senate

Dr. Zollner sent copies of meeting minutes for AY 2022 – 2023, to the Faculty Senate Chair, Dr. Fath and Faculty Senate Secretary, Dr. Lindline, on September 21, 2023.

5. Duties and Responsibilities

Per Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Athletic Committee has the following duties and responsibilities (see below).

a. Work to support the student-athlete's academic and nonacademic learning and development.

- The Faculty Athletic Committee is committed to support the student-athlete's academic and nonacademic learning and development. The committee meets and communicates with Athletic Director(s) and support staff. See minutes AY 2022 – 2023.

b. Work to promote and support the Highlands Athletic program.

- The Faculty Athletic Committee promotes and supports the Highlands Athletic Program. The faculty attends events when possible.

- c. *Review and monitor all athletic programs of the university to ensure that such programs are of benefit primarily to the student-athletes and that policies reflect local needs and interests of the university community.*
- During the AY 2022 – 2023, the Faculty Athletic Committee did not review or monitored the academic programs.
 - During the AY 2022 – 2023, the faculty Athletic Committee invited Rhett Bellon, Student Athlete Success Coordinator to the meetings, so she could provide a report on support for student Athletes. See minutes.
- d. *Maintain open communication with the Compliance Officer, Athletic Director, and FAR in terms of Highlands compliance with applicable athletic associations and conference rules and regulations.*
- During the AY 2022 – 2023, the Faculty Athletic Committee kept open communication with the Athletic Director (s).
 - There was limited communication with the FAR during AY 2022 – 2023. Refer to explanation under item 1. Membership.
 - No communication with a Compliance Officer. Communication was kept with Rhett Bellon, Student Athlete Success Coordinator.
- e. *Maintain open communication with the Compliance Officer, Athletic Director, and FAR in terms of Highland's conformity to the regulations of Title IX. Bring issues of compliance raised by faculty to the Compliance Officer, Athletic Director and FAR and assist these individuals as requested. Report results back to faculty.*
- No Title IX Issues reported.
 - The Faculty Athletic Committee invited Dr. Henrietta Romero, Registrar, to discuss FERPA and Legitimate Educational Interest on February 3, 2023.
 - Dr. Romero indicated, on Legitimate Educational Interest, a person that has access to student data must establish legitimate reason and if information is needed to perform the basic duties of their role, such as for support services and advising purposes. Follow FERPA requirements.
 - Dr. Romero indicated, on the topic of Legitimate Educational Interest and Athletics, she had met with Andrew Ehling and VPAA Gonzales to discuss FERPA as it relates to student athletes. The group was to send information to the Faculty.
 - Andrew Ehling, indicated the meetings with VPAA regarding Legitimate Educational Interest and Athletes had been productive.
 - The Faculty Athletic Committee did not receive further information on Legitimate Educational Interest prior to Andrew Ehling's departure from the institution.
 - The Faculty Athletic Committee asked the Shanna Halalilo and James Deisler, Co-Athletic Directors to follow up on the topic of Legitimate Educational Interest, during the first meeting for AY 2023 – 2024.
- f. *Review and make recommendations to the Athletic Department and the university administration for any additions or eliminations to the athletic program.*
- No recommendations for AY 2022 – 2023.
- g. *Work with the athletic department and administration to minimize the impact of practice schedules, games, and postseason competition on student-athlete's academic success.*

- *No recommendations were made for AY 2022 – 2023.*
 - *Athletic Practices end before finals week, for sports that are not in their championship season, and as scheduled by the Rocky Mountain Athletic Conference.*
- h. Act as a hearing board for appeals from student-athletes in regard to matters of participation, transfer, or termination in an athletic program and other issues as appropriate. Due process guidelines shall be followed, and a requested hearing should be scheduled in a timely manner. A hearing board shall be composed of at least three (or more) members of the Faculty Athletic Committee. Mediation may be attempted before an actual meeting if both parties agree.*
- *There were no appeals during the AY 2022 – 2023.*