

New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology
Faculty Senate Meeting
Tuesday, March 4, 2014
Workman Center 101, 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

- 1. Call to order.** Having determined there to be a quorum, Faculty Senate Chair Richard Sonnenfeld called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.
- 2. Approval of the minutes of February 4, 2014.** Mike Hargather moved to approve the minutes. Brian Borchers seconded the motion. Mary Dezemermade four detailed corrections to wording, all of which were incorporated. The revised minutes were unanimously approved.
- 3. Brief Announcements**
 - a. Critical Reading Workshop – Dr. Simpson.** This year’s Graduate Reading Workshop will be offered over two days, April 11 – 12. Steve Simpson said the workshop will cover “everything from survival skills to how to evaluate how well the science is done.” Students can attend either day, or both.
 - b. Distinguished Research Award – Dr. Ostergren.** Warren Ostergren announced that the Office of Research and Economic Development has issued a call for nominations for the 2014 Distinguished Research Award. Deadline for nominations is April 18. Individual departments may be contacted for suggestions.
 - c. Sick students and medical excuses – Dr. Sonnenfeld (for Susan Lewark).** Dr. Sonnenfeld reported that Ms. Lewark will be responsible for issuing notices for students who miss classes due to illness, rather than having students request that faculty be notified through Student and University Relations, as has been done. “It will make life easier,” said V.P. Melissa Jaramillo-Fleming, adding that her office also gets absence-notification requests from students attending conferences or those with family emergencies. “All we do is notify faculty, and also encourage students to contact you directly” she said. “It’s up to you to accept (the absence) or not.”
 - d. Other.** Tom Engler noted that space in Macey Center is available, next week only, for faculty who need a larger space for testing. To reserve a time and place, notify Sara Grijalva by 10 a.m. this Thursday. Dr. Hargather invited interested faculty to stop by the Research Coffee Hour from noon to 1 p.m. in the CITL for informal discussions and complementary coffee. Email Dale Henneke to add your name to the list. Gary Axen suggested adding it to Tech This Week.

4. **President's Report – Dr. López.** In his first report to the Faculty Senate this year, the President summarized the recently adjourned legislative session, identifying the new funding formula as the most important, long-term issue, adding that the Council of University Presidents (CUP) was able to get the legislature to not use the formula proposed by the Higher Education Department (HED). He said the distribution of funds developed by the Higher Education Department was “ludicrous,” . The formula developed by the CUP and used by the Legislature for this year’s funding addresses STEM, research, closing the achievement gap, course completion and graduation rates. It still is not perfect because it utilizes one formula for three separate missions. This formula works rather well provided that each element in the formula is assigned an appropriate value. The Legislative Finance Committee at the eleventh hour, unfortunately, reduced the value credited for research from 1 percent to .70 percent, resulting in a loss to Tech of almost \$300,000; UNM and NMSU also lost funding. The President said he hoped the formula is stabilized, adding that he will work on the issue over the next term.

The University was given the green light for a \$15 million General Obligation bond issue for a new Chemistry building. A statewide committee is being mobilized to push for bond passage in November. The Legislature appropriated an additional \$100,000 for the Geophysical Research Center over last year's budget, which should cover the amount the University subsidized over the past several years; and \$500,000 in I&G funding, which the President said would be used for a minimum of three faculty positions, hopefully four or five. “I can’t commit to anything yet,” Dr. López said. “We’ll wait until the Governor signs the bill on the 12th.” The University also received minor capital outlay funding: \$90,000 for the MRO, \$75,000 to develop additional parking on the south side of campus, and \$25,000 for parking on the north side; \$100,000 for EMRTC, which is mostly pass-through; \$60,000 for the Supercomputing Challenge. The University failed to secure endowment funding.

The Lottery Scholarship was funded for the current semester, with several technical issues to kick in next year, including reducing the number of scholarship semesters from eight to seven; requiring students to take a minimum of 15 credit hours; giving the HED Secretary authority to reduce the per-student allotment as needed. The President will meet with students tomorrow to discuss a tuition increase earmarked for salaries, particularly for low-paid employees. He cited escalating Library costs as an albatross, particularly the monopoly on electronic journals; and the challenge of institutionalizing positions currently funded through federal grants. Dr. López said that interim VPAA Dezember is working with the Budget office to identify potential costs and develop a plan. He also hopes to fill the VPAA position by July 1.

The Legislature approved 3 percent raises for all state employees, except for those in higher education. However, there is funding for a 1.5 percent increase, which the President hopes to double to at least 3 percent, whether across the board or merit raises. In response to a question from Dr. Borchers, Dr. López said there currently is no document that describes the funding formula, but that at some point, there will be a description with values and a matrix. “There is no way to make it simple when you’re dealing with so many variables,” he said. The President said he would find out if audits

would continue to count as course completions. During discussion on financial issues, Dr. López said the University's I&G budget includes only 20 to 22 percent unrestricted funds, and that restricted funds, which have dropped significantly, cannot be used to support faculty. In response to a question as to whether or not Playas was a "drain," the President said that while volume is lower, the return is higher. Dr. Sonnenfeld thanked Dr. López for the very valuable information he shared.

5. **Committee Reports**

- a. **Computing on Campus – Dr. Zheng, Dr. Topliff.** Mike Topliff first addressed an audit finding regarding lack of disaster recovery sites, and stated that there is now a backup plan in place for the business and payroll offices. Academic departments are encouraged to evaluate their backup plans. He then moved on to recent security breaches. Several computers owned by departments were compromised, forcing the University to take down the entire network and attracting government attention. This prompted V.P. Lonnie Marquez to have Max Planck, Alan Roes, Lorie Liebrock and Topliff review computer security on campus. The committee is seeking input for a straw man proposal on potential solutions. Mr. Planck said the problem will be addressed not with equipment, but with people and training, using people whose job it is to find system vulnerabilities "before the bad guys do," which is why costs are so high (up to \$200,000 a year). The President said he hopes efforts to consolidate campus computing needs will result in some savings which can be applied to solving these problems.
- b. **Benefits Committee – Dr. Harrison.** Postponed.

5. **Substantive Announcements**

- c. **Academic Affairs – Dr. Dezember.** Dr. Dezember brought forward for Senate consideration items from the Feb. 18 Council of Chairs meeting. [Those minutes are attached to these] Dr. Engler moved to approve three proposed changes for Engineering Science, and to table proposed changes to program requirements for ES 302, 303, 347. The motion passed unanimously. Corey LeClerc moved to approve two changes to course descriptions for Petroleum Engineering, and to add a new course. The motion passed unanimously. Frank Reinow moved to approve course changes for Management, and that motion also passed unanimously. Ivan Avramidi moved to approve changes to degree requirements for Mathematics and changes to course descriptions. The final item prompted some discussion on students being able to "double-dip." The motion passed unanimously.
- d. **Graduate Council -- Dr. Liebrock.** The Graduate Dean asked for feedback on how to sustain STEM community fellows, monies which cannot come from TA budgets, to fund a TA for 20 hours a week, half devoted to science and the other half to engineering. The TA was previously funded by soft money grants obtained by Dr. Gerity and Christy McNeil, which are now expired.
- e. **Strategic Plan Update – Dr. Liebrock.** The process to develop a new Strategic Plan has been under way for several months, reported Dr. Liebrock, adding that the school motto remains the same, with draft versions of revised Mission and Vision statements. A link on the University's main webpage includes updates, meeting summaries and SWOT analyses, and a place to provide feedback. "It's great to see so many people working together," Dr. Dezember said. She described the discovery process as

fascinating, giving credit to Ms. Grijalva and Stephany Moore from the Office of the Registrar for providing statistical data, adding that some of the data contradicted expectations. During discussion, Dr. Dezember said the data is revealing “a piece of the whole picture we’ve never had before.” Several faculty (including Dr. Kieft and Dr. Hargather) rose and stated that the data handed out contained several inaccuracies as it applied to their departments, and expressed their concern that it would be used to make important decisions. Dr. Dezember emphasized that no decisions would be based on just one set of data.

6. Old Business. None

7. New Business. None

8. Adjournment. The meeting was adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Valerie Kimble, interim recording secretary