

# NEW MEXICO INSTITUTE OF MINING AND TECHNOLOGY

## FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Tuesday, February 2, 2021

4:00 p.m.

### Minutes

#### 1. Call to order

Chair Mike Hargather called the meeting to order at 4:00 pm with a call for approval of the December 1, 2020 minutes.

#### 2. Approval of minutes

Dr. Anwar Hossain moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Dr. Brian Borchers. Motion passed unanimously.

#### 3. President Wells Update

President Wells briefly gave an update on this year's legislative session. He noted that they do not have the ability to get into the Capitol building or interact face to face with the legislators this year. In terms of funding, there is a capital project that is roughly \$3.3 million for Kelly Hall. Additional funds need to be raised to get this moving forward. Last year, with the CARES ACT they took out \$20 million for Higher Education and we are hoping that this is restored. We are trying to maintain our funding levels without any redistribution.

President Wells stated that there are two recommendations that have come forward, the Executive from the Department of Finance Administration and the LFC. This year the Council of University Presidents are supporting the LFC because it provides more opportunities. They are proposing to fully restore the CARES ACT swap and there will be a slight redistribution with a 2.5% increase for FY spending levels for NMT. For NMT RPSP's, the LFC is recommending a 3% reduction. One area that we are trying to raise concerns is that they didn't reduce all state related agencies. We are asking that they be treated the same to serve the constituents across the state. HED with the support of the LFC has moved MESA into our university with a 7% reduction in its budget. It does help drive our diverse high school students into STEM programs across the state and is a great program. Lastly, President Wells stated that there is a proposed salary increase for the LFC recommendation of 1.5%.

President Wells noted that we currently have zero active cases of COVID-19 that is on our campus.

#### 4. Reports of Senate Standing Committees

**action**

##### a. ASAC – *Chelsey Hargather*

Dr. Chelsey Hargather stated that ASAC has revised NMT's Dual Credit policy to modernize it as it was out of sync with what was actually occurring. We have

expanded the type of dual credit that NMT will accept, hoping that students particularly at Socorro High School will be able to participate more and take dual credit at NMT instead of UNM-V. They have expanded eligibility options to facilitate dual credit and outline an explicit policy regarding course load that aligns with the NMPED policy.

Dr. Hargather noted that this policy serves as a framework for dual credit that can be broadly applied. The purpose of the dual-credit program has been revised and it clearly outlines the types of dual credit that we hope NMT will be able to accept. One is traditional college offered dual credit which requires that the student attend regularly scheduled NMT courses either on campus or at an off-site location, which may include the high school site after hours. The other is school offered which allows students to receive college credit for courses that they are taking at the high school. All of NMT's policies regarding faculty qualifications and learning outcomes are met.

Dr. Hargather stated that the eligibility process and application process has been stream lined. This includes requiring that students are at least 16 years old (with exceptions), achieve minimum qualifying score on the ACT, PSAT, SAT, or take the appropriate department placement exam, and have a minimum 2.5 GPA. The final main change is regarding continued eligibility. This will allow for students once they have proven themselves successful with one course, they can then take up to two dual-credit courses a semester.

There was some concern regarding our HLC accreditation ensures that courses that are taught at a high school produce equivalent learning outcomes for students. HLC policies need to be checked such as their best practices forms. Dr. Hargather stated that the departments that are involved are working with the Outreach office to ensure that this is being done. Dr. Mozley stated that there is a faculty qualifications policy that could be modified to include dual credit. We could make a requirement that we address accreditors concerns as well.

Dr. Sessions stated that they did do this research and to ensure that they are meeting the qualifications, they envision that faculty teaching these courses would become adjuncts within the department that they would be teaching courses in. she also included an example that there is already a teacher at the local college that teaches dual credit for UNM-V and if they student transfers here, we would accept that credit.

There were additional suggestions that we work on procedures to address these concerns.

Dr. Hargather moved to approve. Motion passed with several no's.

## **5. Council of Chairs Report – *Doug Wells***

### **a. Biology**

Dr. Kaarin Goncz discussed minor changes to the Biology curriculum.

Motion passed unanimously.

**b. Chemistry**

Dr. Sally Pias discussed the changes to the Chemistry curriculum.

There was some concern on the math issue, students don't need calculus for CHEM I and II, but they should be further along in their quantitative skills and need more time to mature there. This raised additional concern that there would be more students with lower grades. It was noted that this is consistent with the quantitative requirements of the course and with what UNM does.

Dr. Pias also noted that Chemistry faculty felt that if it is not mandatory, students will not attend the recitation. TA hours will instead go towards tutoring.

Dr. Pias moved to approve. Motion passed.

**c. CLASS**

Dr. Dotson discussed the changes to the CLASS curriculum.

Friendly amendment was made to put Math 1220 and 1240 in order on the list.

Dr. Dotson moved to approve. Motion passed.

**d. EES**

Dr. Harrison discussed the changes to the Earth and Environmental Sciences curriculum.

There was some concern raised regarding the timing of removing EARTH 427 Carbon Sequestration. However, there is no one who can currently teach it.

Dr. Harrison moved to approve. Motion passed.

**e. BA Degree**

Dr. Simpson discussed the proposed Bachelor of Arts degree. What they hoped to do was create a set of minimum institute requirements with the idea that individual programs putting forth a BA degree may require higher requirements in other areas. The main goal behind the BA degree is that we wanted something different from the BS that would appeal to a slightly different market. However, they still wanted it to focus on breadth of math and science and that it still keeps with the brand of our university.

A lengthy discussion was held where several concerns were addressed. This included how we convince new students that this BA degree is for them with still having higher level math requirements than other institutions. There is a market of students that are interested in this type of training and education.

This proposal is to create the minimum requirements first and then let those departments tailor it to their own programs. A statement was made that they would have liked to see someone propose a BA degree in their department simultaneously with this proposal. There was a concern that CHEM 109 is statistically designed for students that have little math and prepare them to take gen chem. They decided to put a place holder until we have a CHEM XXX that might be a survey of chemistry once things get started. A statement was made that there are greater scientific requirements and this is not a weaker degree. There are more psychology majors than any other fields except here at NMT.

Dr. Clint Jeffery moved to make the number of credits required for areas 2 and 3 the same (10 credits each), seconded by Dr. Brian Borchers. Dr. Jeffery stated that it is good sense for the math and science to be the same. It was argued that the requirements should be about career preparation. Motion did not pass and failed.

Dr. Simpson moved to establish new university institute requirements for the Bachelor of Arts degree. Motion passed with several no's.

Dr. Hargather urged the chemistry and physics departments to meet and discuss what these 109 courses should be.

**f. Curriculum Committee**

Dr. Wells proposed a Faculty Senate charter, University Curriculum Committee. Currently, undergraduate curriculum goes to the council of chairs where a discussion is held and the curriculum is either approved or sent back and then advances to the Faculty Senate. This is similar with the graduate curriculum. However, there is no cross talk between the two until it reaches Faculty Senate. This has led to some problems in the catalog including putting out courses that are not listed in the catalog. Dr. Wells also noted that he signs a large amount (over 100) of exceptions annually for students. This is usually because curriculum has changed and the courses they need to graduate are no longer offered. This committee will be responsible for ensuring the quality and appropriateness of the curricula.

It was noted that this is a significant amount of work for a committee. Dr. Wells envisions that 100% of faculty service or nearly so would go towards this. The frequency and timing would be something similar to once a month in the fall and spring semesters.

A friendly amendment was made to add that the committee meets a minimum of twice each semester and inform the faculty of those dates so that they know when. Another friendly amendment was made to exclude untenured tenure track faculty from the membership.

It was noted that this would be a change to the faculty senate bylaws and would be a faculty senate committee. Representatives would be nominated by the Chairs and that would need to be made clear in the bylaws.

Once approved, this proposal would take effect in the fall to give time for the bylaws to be created and the Faculty Senate Executive Committee will need to meet for the appropriate bylaws description to be voted on later.

Motion was moved and approved with several no's.

**6. Graduate Council Report – Aly El-Osery**

**a. Materials Engineering**

Dr. Majumdar discussed the materials engineering curriculum changes.

Dr. Majumdar moved to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

**b. Chemical Engineering**

Dr. El-Osery discussed the chemical engineering curricular changes. Graduate programs were approved and they want to add the accelerated master's option.

Dr. El-Osery moved to approve. Motion passed unanimously.

**7. Unfinished Business**

**action**

**8. New Business**

**a. Enrollment Report – Doug Wells**

Dr. Wells stated that this data is a day before we closed our enrollment. We are down between this spring and last fall 10% total credit hours. We are down compared to last spring about 7% total credit hours. What this means financially, we are still working out the details. Matriculating undergraduates are down about 5.5% compared to last spring. Matriculating graduates are up 11% and special students which is primarily community education, is down 50%.

Dr. Wells stated that the student survey data being shared only had 150 responses, but we now have more than 400 responses. The data shows that students are happy with faculty and their efforts to give them a quality class, but they are distracted and social interaction is taking a toll on them. Additionally, out of the 400+ students, nearly 10% of them indicate that they are not coming back this spring but they will be back in the fall. The biggest factor that influences their decision on when to return is based on their experience under COVID-19 restrictions.

Dr. Wells discussed what we are currently doing to try and address these issues. This includes increased grade extension opportunities. More intersession courses between the Fall/Spring to get students back on track. There was a pilot Calculus II recitation section during the winterim break for students with grade extensions that had great

success. For example, 16 students entered this with an “F”, which they were able to upgrade to an “A”, “B”, or “C”. We have also doubled the number of OSL student Peer Mentors and relaxed (internal) full-time enrollment criteria for NMT scholarships.

For Fall of 2021, Admissions has eliminated the ACT/SAT requirement because many students are not able to gain access to those exams. Similarly, for Fall 2021, Financial Aid has relaxed their ACT/SAT requirements for NMT scholarships. We are also offering math placement exams for admitted students, and additional mathematics courses in the summer to better support the incoming students and their placement in Fall classes. There are a number of other initiatives that we are working on for the future.

Lastly, if you try to project new students next fall. Admitted students are nearly identical to last fall. Paid students who have accepted NMT admission is down 57% and students who accepted NMT’s financial aid offer is up 30%.

**b. Academic Integrity – *Mike Hargather***

Dr. Hargather stated that there has been some concern regarding academic integrity. He has heard of disturbing new trends in terms of cheating. We are currently seeing an uptick in our academic honesty cases.

Dr. Hargather proposed to create an adhoc committee to study the current trend in academic integrity concerns on campus, seconded by Dr. Brian Borchers. The committee could explore the merits of a simple honor code if this would help, but it was noted that previous honor code discussions failed. Motion passed with several no’s.

**9. Announcements**

**a. Science Olympiad and Science Fair – *Sharon Sessions***

Dr. Sessions announced that they are recruiting Event Supervisors for Science Olympiad (March 20), and Judges for Science Fair (April 17).

**b. Student Research Symposium**

Registration for the SRS is now open and closes on March 3.

**10. Adjournment**

By unanimous decision, the Faculty Senate adjourned at 6:30 pm.