

Senate Chair's Report

September 5, 2013

Welcome back. This is an exciting time to be a member of the Senate. We have a new Administration. While that is nothing new, what is new is that the new Administration understands New Mexico State University in a way that few previous administrations have. I have seen our President and Provost together. They work well together and they genuinely like each other. We have an opportunity to move our school forward. This is a time when small changes can make large changes in the future. I am honored to be your Chair for the coming year, and I look forward to working with each and all of you.

Activities

Since assuming the Chair in May, I have been reasonably busy tending to various issues of interest to the Faculty. I have appointed two interim members to the Faculty Grievance Review Board (FGRB) pending nominations and elections this month. I have met with University Counsel, Vice President Pena and FGRB Chair Bosman on the structure and definitions in our appeals system. We need to consider the language in the Policy Manual with an eye to more carefully defining "faculty". Last year's proposition that would have extended grievance rights to some temporary faculty was vetoed by President Pacheco. I do not know President Carruthers' position on this issue.

My other summer project was to assist President Carruthers in hiring Provost Howard. Just as a point of clarification, the original idea to hire then-Dean Howard came from Faculty Talk. The question then was how to accomplish the goal. For reasons not relevant to this report, a conventional search was not an option. Direct hiring required the Regents to suspend existing policies. Our preference (the Leadership Committee and myself) was to bring the matter to the full Senate. I did call a special meeting of the Senate in June. We failed to reach quorum, but did hold a frank and full discussion of the matter.

I believed at the time that we would do well with Professor Howard as our Provost. I believe now that we have done better than we knew.

I am representing the faculty on two executive search committees. One is to hire a new Vice President for University Advancement, the other is the search for a new Associate Vice President and Chief Information Officer.

Meetings

Over the course of the summer break I met with the Academic Dean's Council, the University Naming Committee, the University Budget Committee, the University Administrative Council and both search committees. I also met with ADAC substituting for Vice Chair Munson-McGee.

I have met with the Presidents, Provosts, and several Deans about issues of concern to them. I have touched on some these issues already in this report and I will touch on others below.

Issues for Academic Year 2013-14

We voted to dissolve the College of Extended Learning last year. At their May meeting the Regents approved this. I expect that some transition issues will come before us this year. We are discovering some items that fell through the gaps during the chaos of last fall's administrative churning. The Senate Leadership Committee will bring these to the Administration as they are discovered. One known issue we are working on is Proposition 9-12/13, which asked for a change in policy to make 12 hours a full load for graduate students.

The President would like for us to revisit the Promotion and Tenure Policy *briefly* to re-examine:

- Do the guidelines credit leadership skills properly;
- Do the guidelines give adequate credit for intellectual property development and commercialization?

I would like the Faculty Affairs Committee to consider these matters.

Some of our legislation last year was vetoed by President Pacheco. The vetoed items included:

- An extension of our Grievance policy to allow exploited adjuncts the right to file grievances;
- The salary increment proposition was vetoed;
- The extension of sabbatical eligibility to include our College faculty colleagues was vetoed.

We need to consider if we wish to revisit these issues this year. In his veto of the increment proposition President Pacheco said that the money is simply not available. He recommended as an interim goal raising faculty salaries to 90% of their discipline median among our peer institutions. He also recommended that we keep the fires burning on the salary issue. I intend to do this. I would like the Long Range Planning Committee to examine these matters.

The shortfall in the Lottery Scholarship Trust Fund is well known. The Legislature's unwillingness to deal with the matter has brought us to a crisis point. Something *will* change about the Lottery Scholarships. We must be ready to speak for the University faculty as a Senate as well as speaking as individuals to our legislators. The University's Administration is working on this. The Governmental Affairs Committee must expect to work on this as well. I would like for them to do this in conjunction with the University Affairs Committee.

On the subject of the Government Affairs Committee, the Senate Leadership Committee has decided to view this as a Senate Standing Committee assignment. Those members elected today to serve on the GAC will be removed from their Standing Committee assignment. Depending on the outcome of the election, we may need to reassign some Senators to a different Standing Committee. Our Constitution and By-Laws require at least 13 voting members for each of the Standing Committees. We can accommodate this. With the addition of the new Standing Committee I would like the Leadership Committee to draft an amendment to clarify the GAC as an additional Standing Committee *and* reduce the membership requirements for the remaining Standing Committees.

There are some snags in our Grievance policies (§4.05.50). These lie mostly in the realm of cleaning up some procedural problems that have led to disparate treatment of

grievances. I will be approaching the Faculty Affairs standing committee to draft legislation to correct these problems.

We have transitioned to the fractional grading scheme as of Summer 2013. Like all actions, this one has had unintended consequences (beyond disgruntled students). Specifically, does a grade of C- meet the catalog criterion of "C or better required"? I would like Scholastic Affairs to work with Vice-Chair Munson-McGee to have the discussion and return legislation to clarify the matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis L. Clason
Faculty Senate Chair 2013-14