Retention Committee Report

The retention committee met on October 9 to review the latest institutional research data on retention and graduation rates.

Retention Rate: For full time first time freshmen who entered New Mexico Tech in the fall semester of 2013, the fall to fall retention rate was 78.8%. See Table 1. The retention rate has risen every year for the past 7 years, and the retention rates for the last two freshmen classes are the highest on record. We also note that the retention rate for Hispanic students was 82.4%, a significant improvement from previous years. We believe that these statistics represent a significant positive trend.

'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13
70.2	72.2	74.8	70.0	68.5	68.3	74.5	68.9	71.7	73.3	73.9	74.4	76.6	78.8

Table 1: Fall to fall retention rates (%) for full time first time freshmen, by entering cohort.

Graduation Rate: For full time first time freshmen entering NMT in the fall of 2008, the six year graduation rate was 44.0%. This is down from rates of 46% to 48% in recent years. See Table 2. It is not clear year that this drop represents a trend, but it is worrisome.

'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08
53.6	43.2	48.0	46.0	46.0	47.4	46.2	47.3	44.0

Table 2: Six year graduation rates (%) for first time full time freshmen by entering cohort.

Suspensions: At the end of the spring semester of 2014, 2.4% of the undergraduate students were placed on academic suspension. Since the academic warning process was put in place in the fall of 2009, there has been a substantial reduction in the percentage of students placed on academic suspension.

	'07	'08	'09	'10	'11	'12	'13	'14
Warnings	18.0	21.0	19.0	20.0	15.5	17.6	17.0	15.0
Probations	15.2	19.0	15.7	16.8	12.1	13.5	12.3	11.4
Suspensions	5.7	5.7	5.3	4.5	3.5	3.9	3.7	2.4

Table 3: Academic Warnings, Probations, and Suspensions (% of undergraduate enrollment) at end of spring semester, by year.

A plea for more data: The committee has had very limited access to data on retention, persistence, and graduation. The data that is available to the committee is primarily gathered for purposes of reporting to the NM Department of Higher Education and the US Department of Education rather than for internal analysis. This data is broken down by gender, racial, and ethnic categories. However, for the committee's purposes it would be much more useful to consider factors such as whether students were first generation college students or low income students, initial math placements, majors, etc. We hope that with the new Argos reporting software it will be possible for the committee to obtain data at this level of detail.