

NEW MEXICO INSTITUTE OF MINING AND TECHNOLOGY

FACULTY SENATE MEETING

Tuesday, November 3, 2015

Workman 101 - 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to order and approval of minutes

Chair Dave Raymond called the meeting to order at 4:05 pm with a call for approval of the October 6, 2015 minutes.

Dr. Brian Borchers moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Dr. Fred Philips. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Short announcements

1. Graduate Dishonesty Report – Lorie Liebrock

Dr. Lorie Liebrock reported that for graduate studies, there was one case of academic dishonesty in an independent study report for the 2014 – 2015 academic year. The draft had not been officially sent to the committee and it needs to correct the issues. No further action was taken.

Also, some thesis were sent in that had more overlap than they should have. Committees and advisors are going over the issues. Policies will get updated and drafted soon. Dr. Liebrock noted that we are moving towards faculty having access to iThenticate.

2. Tech Scholars – Sara Grijalva

Sara Grijalva announced that Academic Affairs is gearing up to accept nominations for Tech Scholar status. Lyndsey Lewis will send out a report of candidates available to department chairs for nominations. Nominations will be due by November 13th.

3. Senate Committee Reports

None.

4. Report of Council of Chairs – Warren Ostergren

a. Minutes

Dr. Ostergren announced that he would like to highlight a few things from the Council of Chairs minutes and then discuss the action items.

One item is the Academic Advising Committee work. Dr. Ostergren encouraged participation in that. Those who are experienced can give support and add contributions. Those who are new may gain some insight from those sessions.

We provided feedback on our session that we had with faculty and student success. Those sessions were very well attended. There was a strong faculty interest in this with good ideas that might help promote student success.

This leads to our one piece of business that was voted on and passed at the last Council of Chairs meeting. This is changing our Institute minimum credit requirement from 130 to 120 hours. The point is that we have an Institute requirement currently that is forcing some programs to have students just take courses to meet that requirement. A number of these show up in free electives. Changing to 120 credit hours is consistent with what is going on with the State today but allowing the programs to decide themselves what the requirements would be. If this is approved, we have to determine exactly how to enter it into the catalog. Dr. Mary DeZemmer has some ideas and offered support on how to enter this into the catalog. Dr. Ostergren noted that our approach would be to work on this and have it included in the next catalog update.

A lengthy conversation was held discussing concerns including accurately wording this change in the catalog and pressure that NMT will be forced to lower credits for all programs.

President Lopez stated that we are trying to explain to others that one of the reasons NMT is what it is, is because of the types of programs that we have and the requirements. This is our belief and this is what we are trying to defend. However, the reality is that we have a Board that is very much in lockstep with what the State is trying to do. That is to reduce and force everyone to be at 120 hours. President Lopez expressed to the Board that this is a slippery slope and a long headed approach to a quality education. If we don't put in any effort that even appears that we are trying to meet them, then we are inviting them to come down and institute a law. We stand to lose quality students and faculty. Dr. Warren Ostergren has shown data that shows the other factors that are driving graduation rates. It is a mistake to just say no. We can give a little and show data that shows other ways that impacts the graduation rate.

Dr. Ostergren stated that we can defend our credits based on the success of our programs. We are getting input from our alumni and our employers. If we show that we are taking a step in the direction of lowering our credits, indicates our willingness to work with those that have this interest. Our commitment is not to force any program to do anything that they do not want to do.

Dr. Brian Borchers noted that students receive Federal financial aid up to 190 credits. If this changed, then the number would be lowered to 180 credits. This would greatly affect our transfer students. Sara Grijalva noted that federal financial aid is 150% max for a student's program. Their financial aid maximum would be adjusted accordingly.

Dr. Warren Ostergren motioned on behalf of the committee to change the Institute minimum requirement from 130 to 120 credit hours. Dr. Steve Simpson made a friendly amendment for clarity to add "We support the move to lower the minimum credits needed for graduation to 120, as we do believe that this is a critical step toward satisfying concerns about students' time to graduation. We

wish to emphasize, however, that individual departments should only drop their own degree credit requirements if there is a way to do so without sacrificing the overall quality and breadth of their degree. We wish to emphasize our support for retaining the current General Education requirements, as these are essential to providing our graduates with a foundational well-rounded education.” Several nays. Motion passed.

b. Psychology Department Changes

Dr. Mark Samuel reported on the changes for the Psychology department.

Dr. Samuels motioned to accept the Psychology changes. Motion passed.

5. Report of Graduate Council – Lorie Liebrock

a. Minutes

Dr. Lorie Liebrock announced there are several items of business from the Graduate Council.

b. Biotech PhD

Dr. Tom Kieft briefly discussed the Biotech PhD which has applied aspects of Biology. It is very interdisciplinary with eleven departments involved. There are four Biotechnogy core courses that are new and will be offered on a regular basis. There is some recruiting going on that will help cover those courses. Externally the need is there.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to approve the Biotech PhD proposal. Motioned passed.

c. MENG-IES PhD

Dr. Jaime Kimberly noted that the proposal is for a PhD program in Mechanical Engineering with dissertation in Intelligent Energetic Systems. This will be a synergy of our strengths in explosives engineering and control systems. We are merging them together to make a unique program that is not duplicated in the state. This will address the needs that ties to the national labs and air force labs here in NM. Dr.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to approve the MENG-IES PhD proposal. Motion passed. Lorie Liebrock noted an editorial error that should state “dissertation” not “specialization”.

d. Mineral Engineering Graduate Changes

Dr. Lorie Liebrock noted that are some minor wording changes and removal of specific deficiencies.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to approve the graduate mineral engineering catalog changes. Motion passed.

e. Math Graduate Catalog Changes

Dr. Lorie Liebrock noted that are specific changes in program descriptions and prerequisites.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to approve the graduate math catalog changes. Motion passed.

f. Graduate Deadline Updates

Dr. Lorie Liebrock announced there are two parts which are graduate degree completion changes in deadlines. We had 13 students finish in the last 3 days before registration closed. They cannot process these in that amount of time. To go along with that, we have talked to Lonnie Marquez and Dr. Warren Ostergren and gotten approval for a change that makes a huge difference to the students and faculty. Students who have successfully defended their thesis, but still have thesis dissertation or independent study and have changes they need to make in the document; can register for one credit of independent study. This does not affect the 3 credit registration full time. Graduate council has not yet voted on this because there was an issue of pushing student deadlines without them having a way to complete in an effective manner. This has since been worked on and is time sensitive.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to accept the approval of the graduate deadline and the ability of students to register for a single credit for one semester after they have a defense, seconded by Dr. Brian Borchers. Motion passed.

g. IThenticate Certificate Draft

Dr. Liebrock announced that a draft has been posted of a revised certificate for checking thesis, dissertations, and MST independent studies. The final version of a thesis or dissertation is posted publically through ProQuest with NMT's name on these, and we cannot have plagiarism. The Graduate Office has been checking for plagiarism and this is not appropriate. It should be in the hands of the faculty as they are the academic experts in their field. The point is that we are going to have to do something differently. We are currently working on getting the account set up. Faculty will use the same password as work flow. Instructions with the form will be posted online.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to look into having plagiarism checker software for all faculty to look into, seconded by Dr. Penny Boston. Motion passed.

h. Biology MS in Biochemistry

Dr. Lorie Liebrock noted that this was accidentally removed from the catalog. When we went to put it back, the requirements weren't fully laid out. The Biology department has now done that.

Dr. Lorie Liebrock motioned to approve the Biology MS and noted an editorial error that should state "specialization in Biochemistry". Motion passed.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

a. Safety Issue on Campus – Navid Mojtabai

Dr. Mojtabai noted a safety issue with the trees on campus. He stated there are dead branches that are hanging and with any snow or wind it will fall down. President Lopez stated that he will take care of it.

8. Discussion

9. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 5:11 pm by unanimous decision.