

Senate Chair's Report

March 6, 2014

Activities

In the past month I have met with the Senate Leadership Committee, the Academic Dean's Council and the University Executive Council as well as the Board of Regents, the Student Technology Committee and the Faculty Technology Committee. I also met with the Provost and the President on two occasions. The Board of Regents meets next Monday. They have not met since our last meeting.

Legislative Update

I am still confused about the final outcomes in Santa Fe. Ricardo Rel met with the Senate Government Affairs Committee this afternoon. I will give the highlights in my oral report today, and if the Senate desires I will invite Mr. Rel to make a brief presentation to the Senate next month.

Current Issues

We have final language for what is now Proposition 11-13/14, the proposed changes to admissions standards. I have asked you all to meet with the Department faculty in your Colleges to discuss the matter. Senior Senators, please be sure that this discussion has been held in all Departments *before the bill is heard in Faculty Affairs next Tuesday*.

The University has signed a new home use agreement with Microsoft to make their Office products available to faculty and staff at a nominal price (\$10.00). The previous agreement with Microsoft was a work-at-home agreement. Technically, those of us using Office on those terms were supposed to use it only for work-related items. Right. The new agreement is much more realistic.

The Provost has initiated a hiring freeze for support staff reporting to his office. NMSU currently has about a 3:1 ratio of staff to faculty. Most of our peers have about a 2:1 ratio – in other words, we are staff heavy. The Provost has told me that many of the requests for staff have come from faculty. There is a fixed pool of money that can be used to pay salaries for permanent employees. Hiring staff means *not* hiring faculty. Please communicate this to our colleagues. When we ask for additional staff, is it worth losing the ability to hire a new colleague?

In line with the above, the Provost and the President are committed to continuing the Mercer “equity” adjustment program this year. They have also asked the Regents to approve new money to hire additional faculty members. While I am aware of the initiative, I am not aware of the mechanism for allocating the lines and the money.

Respectfully submitted,

Dennis L. Clason
Faculty Senate Chair 2013-14