

Proposition: 06-16/17

Title: Request for approval of Joint PhD in Geography (NMSU-UNM)

Date Submitted: 25 August 2016

Sponsor(s): Rosendorf (A&S), Bawazir (ENG), Blair (HHS), Brown (A&S), Cibeles (ACES), De Boyrie (CoB), Vazquez (CoEd)

Proposed Committee:

Assigned Committee:

Prior Approvals: See attached signature page

Background:

In the last few years, senior staff at Los Alamos and Sandia National Laboratories approached leadership with the UNM Department of Geography & Environmental Studies to inquire as to if a PhD in Geography existed in the State that would provide Laboratory staff with advanced training and professional development opportunities. No such program exists, and this means that Laboratory needs are not met, our brightest and best Masters students with an interest in the PhD leave the State, and key research that would benefit from PhD's trained in the State is not being done. Leadership with the UNM Department of Geography & Environmental Studies approached faculty in the NMSU Department of Geography to explore collaboration on the development of a joint PhD in Geography, and faculty members at both NMSU and UNM have worked to develop a proposal for the development of the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography. NMSU and UNM would be equal partners in the development and implementation of the program, with UNM providing the majority of financial resources that the program requires.

Proposal:

By this bill, the NMSU Department of Geography requests the support of the NMSU Faculty Senate in advancing the NMSU/UNM proposal for the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography towards approval. To date, we have secured all approvals that new programs require (as noted in Senate Bill 07-15/16 and detailed in the attached matrix and signature page), and support by these approving bodies has been unanimous in all cases.

Rationale:

The development and implementation of the New Mexico Joint Doctoral Program in Geography will generate the following positive outcomes:

- Train PhDs that will meet the needs for advanced spatial scientists, prevent the “brain drain” that we currently experience as our brightest and best MS students that wish to pursue PhDs do so in neighboring states, and support important applied research in the areas of complex cultural landscapes, dryland resource management, and environmental change (see graphic below).
- Assist NMSU in meeting numerous Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of NMSU’s Living the Vision Strategic Plan, specifically:
 - 2 KPIs in Academics & Graduation - Graduate Enrollment and STEM-H-B Degrees,
 - All 4 KPIs in Research/Creative Activity related to external funding proposals, and,
 - 5 KPIs in Economic Development and Community Engagement - student innovation & employment, community engagement, career placement & external rankings
- Help meet the needs for advanced spatial scientists that exist in a range of State and Federal agencies, as well as the private sector, as documented in the full proposal. Specifically, these scientists would be leaders in innovation & entrepreneurship, and would conduct applied research to meet challenges New Mexico currently faces.
- All of the above positive outcomes would be achieved with a reasonable investment of resources by NMSU and with no duplication of existing programs at NMSU, UNM or other universities in New Mexico.

