

Faculty Senate Memorial

Proposition: 20-07/08

Sponsor(s): Holtzman (A&S), Prentice (CoED), Brown (A&S)

Proposed Committee:

Assigned Committee: Faculty Affairs 3/11/08

Title: Establishment of an Open Faculty Listserver

Memorial: The faculty of NMSU request the establishment of an open faculty email listserv, and permission to use the existing closed faculty email list for the sole purpose of informing faculty about the open list and for populating the initial list membership.

Details:

The Faculty Senates requests that:

1. ICT establish an open faculty email listserv, to which any NMSU faculty could freely post. The listserv should allow faculty to unsubscribe or subscribe to the list, and furthermore, should provide an archive of all postings that are web accessible. At initiation of the list, all current NMSU faculty should be automatically subscribed.
2. The Faculty Senate chair appoint, subject to approval by the Faculty Senate, a representative who will have the responsibility to:
 - a. Serve as the official contact person for the list (required by ICT)
 - b. Notify the faculty once per semester about the existence of the listserv, with instructions on how to unsubscribe or subscribe, and with information about how the list archive can be accessed

Optionally, this representative could make suggestions to the open listserv, or to individual posters, about ways to maintain a productive listserv environment, but under no circumstances would this representative, or anyone else, be empowered to limit postings.

3. The administration allow postings to the full closed email list (allfaculty@nmsu.edu) by the Faculty Senate representative for the sole purpose of allowing this representative to remind faculty, no more than once per semester, about the existence of the open list, and to provide instructions on how to subscribe and unsubscribe, and how to access the list archives.

Rationale:

It is in the best interests of the faculty of NMSU if they are able to communicate with each other about issues of interest and importance. Email currently provides an efficient method of doing so, but since the faculty is large, and the membership of the faculty is fluid, it is difficult for individuals to construct complete email distribution lists. A full faculty email list exists (allfaculty@nmsu.edu) but individual faculty members cannot post to this list without obtaining permission. Since some of the issues that faculty might wish to discuss could create potential conflict of interest with those who can grant such permission, we request that the University construct an open email listserver to which any faculty member can post without restriction.

Since there will possibly be faculty members who do not wish to receive communications from other faculty members, it should be possible for individual faculty members to remove themselves from this list. However, we propose that, initially, all faculty be automatically subscribed to the list.

It is clearly in the best interests of the faculty to keep the list membership as broad as possible, so the faculty will need to self-police itself to keep postings civil and not so frequent as to cause large numbers of faculty to remove themselves. However, under no circumstances will postings to the list require any approval or be subject to any censorship. Only list members should be allowed to post to the list.

To maintain the listserver, the Faculty Senate chair will need to appoint, subject to the approval of the Faculty Senate, a representative each year to serve as the responsible party for the list. Such a contact is required by ICT before a list can be established. In addition, this representative would be responsible for advertising the existence of the open listserver, along with instructions for how to subscribe or unsubscribe, to the entire faculty once per semester. In order to allow all faculty to be aware of the existence of the list, we request that the Faculty Senate representative be allowed to use the closed allfaculty list for the sole purpose of posting this informational email.

The Faculty Senate representative would be available to provide advice to potential posters to the list about appropriate uses of the list, although no person would in any way be required to vet any messages through the representative.

Such an open email distribution list has been requested by various faculty members.