

Faculty Senate Vice-Chair Report
December 2018

In November, I attended two ADAC meetings and provided updates on Faculty Senate activity. In the last ADAC meeting on November 26th, discussion continued about the new NMSU-Online program for offering degrees that can be earned completely online. The discussions continue regarding the cost of tuition and how to designate programs, e.g. should there be a portal or some mention of degree programs that are almost all online but have some requirement for students to come to campus?

A new minor with five concentrations in Civic Engineering was proposed and approved to move forward

Work continues on getting the process ready for the new recertification of the General Education courses based on the new state mandates. Currently the General Education committee is working on a pilot with 10 classes to get the recertification paperwork ready for the February New Mexico Higher Education Department meeting.

The new access to Turnitin was mentioned again. It will be available for the spring 2019 semester. The focus on its use should be on non-punitive feedback to students that allows for students to be educated on what plagiarism is.

In the November 11th ADAC meeting, the portal for students to build their class schedules was discussed. It should be ready for students enrolling in Fall 2019. Updates were also provided about progress on NMSU-O, on Turnitin, and on general education recertification.

In addition to attending ADAC meetings, I filled in for Becky, our chair, on a panel hosted by UTEP's Faculty Senate. Their outgoing president has served for 30 years and they are not familiar with onboarding new presidents. NMSU was invited on the panel as was UT-Arlington, who hired a new president five years ago. The panel was focused on how to proceed in the first days and months after a new president comes to campus to create a positive relationship with Faculty Senate. The panel lasted a hour and a half, and Chris Brown attended with me to represent Faculty Senate's involvement in previous years.

Finally, I filled in for Becky as the Faculty Senate speaker at the November 15th inauguration of the President and the Chancellor. It was an honor to represent Faculty Senate at this event. The transcript of my four minute speech is included at the end of this report. A shout out goes to Gary Rayson for agreeing to be my emergency back-up mace-holder if the wooden mace holder broke. I was informed that it had broken during the last usage and no one was sure if it had been fixed. I gave Gary a spare pair of white gloves and hoped for the best. Luckily, the mace holder stayed whole for the ceremony. Crossed fingers for graduation!

Inaugural Speech November 15, 2018

As Faculty Senate Vice-Chair, on behalf of NMSU's multi-campus system, it is my honor and delight to recognize and welcome Dr. Dan Arvizu as our new chancellor and on behalf of the NMSU Las Cruces campus, it is my honor and delight to recognize and welcome Dr. John Floros as our new President.

Universities are purveyors of strong roots to grow and powerful wings to fly. We shape the lives of students and they, in turn, shape ours. The core of a university is the creation and dissemination of knowledge. Faculty see research and education as integral to the NMSU identity and we are hopeful that with the leadership of Dr. Arvizu system-wide and Dr. Floros campus-wide, NMSU will stay true to this core.

My academic discipline is higher education leadership. There is probably not enough time left in the existence of our universe to present all the thoughts and theories about leadership, but within the leadership discourse, there is a core of fundamental truths that explain great leaders.

Leadership is not about a title or designation. It's about impact, influence, and inspiration. Impact involves getting results, influence is about spreading the passion you have for your work, and inspiration is about sharing that passion with those who work with and for you. Essentially, leaders are dealers in hope. Good leaders take a little more than their share of the blame, a little less than their share of the credit. Good leaders do what is right, even if that isn't the best thing for the current project or even the bottom line. Outstanding leaders boost the self-esteem of the people around them. They just can't help it. It is what they do. And when we believe in ourselves, it is amazing what each of us, working together, can accomplish. Whether you empower one person or the entire world, that is leadership. At their best, leaders encourage their organizations to dance to forms of music not yet heard.

As faculty, we realize that you both, as leaders, are facing numerous challenges. The contemporary university is a complex organization in which a variety of interests converge: faculty, staff, students, parents, regents, alumni, donors, and, for public universities, state and federal government. Balancing these constituents requires extraordinary skill and a range of talents. In the face of financial constraints and shrinking student demographics, faculty realize that collaboration among intelligent, creative, thoughtful people working together is the only way solutions will arise.

Dr. Floros and Dr. Arvizu, the problems of higher education may feel insurmountable, but you both have been assigned this mountain to show others that it can be moved. Education is messy. But that is good, because life is messy, and we prepare people for life. I believe that everything you need in order to accomplish the goals of this university already lies within you, and I would add, around you. For you are not alone. Others whose best desire is the success of NMSU surround you. As faculty, we join you in the work of world improvement and local empowerment. We stand ready to work with you to continue to make NMSU great through our common values of excellence in research, teaching, extension, and service.

As Vince Lombardi would suggest, it is now time for us to turn to you both and “cheer for the doers, the achievers—the ones who recognize the challenges and do something about them.” To quote Alfred Lord Tennyson, “Come friends, it’s not too late to seek a newer world.” Please join me in welcoming John Floros and Dan Arvizu as our partners in seeking this newer world. May learning flourish under your watch.