

University Research Council
Approved Minutes
March 3, 2006

Present: Don Bix, Wanda Borges, Dana Christman, Shaun Cooper, Sam Fernald, David Finston, Steve Helmreich (J. Cowie), James Herndon, Nirmala Khandan, Marc Pruyn, Rudi Schoenmackers, Elizabeth Titus, Allen Torell, David Voelz, Karl Wood

Absent: Janice Black, Everett Egginton, Wynn Egginton, Chris Fields, Anne Gallegos, Inigo Garcia-Bryce, Jennifer Kreie, Linda Lacey, Pam Schultz

Guests: Agustin Diaz, Bruce Kite, Donna Alden, Tracy Sterling

1. Chair Marc Pruyn called the meeting to order.
2. Minutes from URC Meeting held on February 10, 2006 were approved as presented.
3. NMSU Employment Background Review Policy – Human Resources’ Agustin Diaz, and NMSU General Council Bruce Kite gave members a copy of the policy and provided answers to questions raised. Mr. Kite has worked with this policy since its inception and noted that it would address sensitive jobs. The policy will not exclude individuals from being hired but will be used as an element that Human Resources can use for screening if they choose to. The background checks will include what can be looked at electronically and will be conducted by an outside vendor with a 24-hour turn-around period. Individual departments will pick up the cost which is estimated at \$35.00 per background check. Mr. Diaz told members that this policy will affect new hires and promotions, not existing staff. Graduate assistants, teaching assistants, post doctoral appointments, and temporary employees, to name a few, will be included in this policy if they fall within the criteria of “sensitive duties checklist” at the back of the policy. Mr. Kite asked members to contact him or Diana Quintana within 10 days of this meeting with comments or concerns.
4. URC Subcommittees

Promotion and Tenure – Donna Alden and Tracy Sterling who are on the Faculty Senate’s P & T policy taskforce were invited to share with URC their knowledge of the direction this policy is taking. They said the policy will be transparent so there will be no question about promotion and tenure on campus. Dr. Alden asked that anyone who sees a university website that has good information regarding promotion and tenure should forward that website to her at dalden@nmsu.edu or to Dr. Sterling at tsterlin@nmsu.edu. The taskforce is looking at the policy as a living document and this revision period as a good opportunity for change.

Awards – Nirmala Khandan told members that this subcommittee has representation from the College of Ag and Engineering only. He felt that the other colleges should have a member on the subcommittee.

this subcommittee. The criterion was distributed via abcd-distribution on February 13, 2006 with a follow-up to the college deans and research deans on February 23, 2006.

Election – James Herndon requested URC guidelines on elections be forwarded to him and it was noted that there were two members on this committee. Chair Marc Pruyn asked Dr. Herndon to contact him after the meeting to follow-up on the guidelines.

Incentives/Disincentives – No report at this time.

Research Infrastructure – No report at this time.

5. State and Federal Initiatives and Funding – Interim Vice President Don Birx told members that the Federal Initiatives were broken into two components – Strategic Initiatives and Ongoing Programs. The books contain cross-disciplinary initiatives and will be used with both Federal and State agencies. Dr. Birx asked for feedback as the goal is to have as much participation as possible.
6. Vice President for Research Search Update – Rudi Schoenmackers told URC that 2 candidates returned to campus for interviews. Dr. Schoenmackers encouraged members to make their comments by Monday following this meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 4:40 p.m.

Minutes by Frances Schumacher