

University Research Council
Approved Minutes
March 19, 2010

Present: Jeffrey Arterburn, Susan Beck, Joseph Berning, Phillip DeLeon, Sam Fernald, John Mexal, Meghan Starbuck, Steven Stochaj, Patricia Wojahn, Karl Wood, Rebecca Palacios.

Absent: David Barney, Shanna Ivey, Jim Kroger, Kevin Melendrez, Rachel Navarro, Michele Nishiguchi, Collin Payne, Igor Sevostianov, Enedina Vazquez

1. Minutes from January 19, 2010 were approved as presented
2. Follow up with President Couture

Discussion commenced on what issues the URC needs to present to President Couture who requested a follow up meeting with URC after meeting with them in February. The URC took her visit and request for a return visit with the faculty research body as a good indication of positive commitment to research. At the meeting the President requested recent and/or current specific examples of NMSU practices that are not working well.

The body of Research Deans also known as the Council of Research Centers (CORC) are working on inviting President Couture to come talk to them as well. CORC's concerns are basically the same concerns as URC but on the management side. They are going to present President Couture with the same issues but from the college administrative level. This has the potential of providing a very cohesive message.

Some suggested areas of concern to be presented are:

1. Human Resource (HR) Concerns
 - a. HR staff turnover (lack of training)
 - b. HR policies
 - c. Difficulties in hiring
2. Grants Administration
 - a. invoicing
 - b. index numbers
3. IDC – Distribution
 - a. Transparency

4. Government Relations Office

A recommendation was made by Karl Wood that the NMSU Government Relations office and the NMSU Federal relations firm Lewis Burke & Associates may need to be reviewed on performance.

The following URC members will work on the action plan for Human Resources, Grants Administration Procedures and IDC Transparency.

Human Resources Policies and Practices

Steve Stochaj
Phillip DeLeon
Patty Wojahn

Grants Administration & Accounting Performance

Jeff Arterburn
Shanna Ivey
Enedina Vasquez

IDC-Transparency Distribution

CORC – recommended by Karl Wood
Bob Czerniak
Chair Starbuck will assist w/CORC

Chair Starbuck told URC that the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) auditors were on campus evaluating NMSU's programs. The LFC is very important in setting policy for the state and making financial determinations such as what funding comes to NMSU. Since they are beginning a new audit process, auditors talked to faculty about shared governments and other issues. A lengthy discussion took place about the funding formula and how it is inadequate. It does not represent teaching, research and service. Chair Starbuck said they worked hard to deliver the same message to the LFC that URC gave to President Couture. HR and grant administration were independently mentioned by numerous individuals. The message regarding administrative delay from Sponsored Projects Accounting (SPA) and HR is overwhelming and appears to be at a critical state.

3. Faculty Senate Memorials and Proposed NMSU Policy Manual Changes

Chris Erickson, Chair of Faculty Senate, told Chair Starbuck that if the URC had recommendations for policy change, they should be submitted by March 24th for this year's senate.

Open Rule/Policy Making - URC decided that if a draft memorial describing the need for open rule/policy making at the University could be completed in time, that it should be the document to take through Faculty Senate.

Tuition Waiver Proposal - Sam Fernald proposed to invite Graduate School Dean Linda Lacey to a future URC meeting so she can provide information about the proposal. Chair Starbuck asked permission of the council to send a document to Dean Lacey for her review and comment. Chair Starbuck recommended that URC compare the proposal with UNM and see what they do, and then forward it to Dean Lacey as a comment for discussion.

Metric Research Proposal - Igor Sevostianov was not present to discuss the Metric Research Proposal, Sam asked to table it, all approved.

The sentiment of the URC is to provide the new President and Provost time to actualize needed changes as identified by numerous stakeholders on campus.

Minutes recorded by Jenny Castillo