



The Faculty Assembly Meeting

MINUTES

April 18, 2025 12:30 PM ZOOM

MEETING CALLED BY:	Dr. Carolyn Kuchera, Faculty Assembly President
MINUTES ASSEMBLED BY:	Andrew McFeaters, Faculty Assembly Secretary
FACULTY ATTENDEES:	Karla Baldonado, John Burke, Chris Dyer, Vanessa Ferguson, Yi-Wen Huang, Hasani Jayasinghe, Joe Kee, Thomas Kraus, Carolyn Kuchera, Jacob Lacroix, Tracy Lassiter, LD Lovett, Aretha Matt, Andrew McFeaters, Arun Muthaiyan, Sangam Pageni, Shynal Robinson, Chathuri Sandamali, Chad Smith, Keri Stevenson, Ernesto Watchman, Kristi Wilson, Yuquing Zou
GUESTS:	Alok Dhital, Sabrina Ezzell, Julia So, John Zimmerman

ACTION

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

DR. CAROLYN KUCHERA

DISCUSSION	
Move to modify the agenda to add Professor Chad Smith for action item on elections.	
Motion: Dr. Andrew McFeaters	
Seconded: Yes	
Discussion: None	
Vote: Unanimous	
Motion Carried: Yes	

ACTION

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

DR. CAROLYN KUCHERA

DISCUSSION	
Move to approve the minutes from the March 14, 2025 UNMG Faculty Assembly meeting.	
Motion: Dr. Keri Stevenson	
Seconded: Yes	
Discussion: None	
Vote: Unanimous	
Motion Carried: Yes	

INFORMATION

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

DR. CAROLYN KUCHERA

Dr. Carolyn Kuchera begins her last report during her tenure as president by thanking everyone. She thanks her Operations Committee--Hassani, Arun, Roseanna, John, Kristian, and Andrew. She also thanks Kristi Wilson, her personal cheerleader, who always told her she was doing well, even when she	

didn't think so. She states that everyone needs a Kristi. She thanks everyone who came regularly to the meetings, stating that shared governance is important, and it only works when everyone is present. Dr. Kuchera encourages other people who might be thinking about the presidency in the future. It is a great avenue toward leadership. With that, she then states that she is going to announce the new officers and turn it over to them. The new officers are President Dr. Arun Muthaiyan and Vice President Dr. Keri Stevenson--and continuing as Secretary is Dr. Andrew McFeaters. Dr. Kuchera adds that the Faculty Assembly will be choosing more Operations members today with an online poll, but currently the candidates are Professor Chad Smith and Dr. Aretha Matt. She points out that, at present, she is the only person running for the Nominations Committee, but write-ins for nominations will be accepted. Finally, the Senator for UNM Faculty Senate is Dr. Tracy Lassiter. Dr. Kuchera congratulates everyone.

ACTION ITEM ON VOTE FOR COMMITTEE WRITE-INS/ PROFESSOR CHAD SMITH

Professor Chad Smith greets everyone. He informs the Faculty Assembly that there are only two write-in candidates. Therefore it isn't necessary to vote to fill those positions for the Operations Committee. He states that he, Dr. Aretha Matt, and Professor Sangam Pageni are the elected members for the committee. Professor Smith adds that there were two more write-in candidates for the open spots on the Nominations Committee. It is necessary to launch a poll to elect two members out of the three candidates. The three nominees for the two remaining spots are Dr. Yi-Wen Huang, Dr. Hasani Jayasinghe, and Professor Roseanna McGinn. He informs everyone that the poll is open for voting. He tallies the votes. The results are that Dr. Yi-Wen Huang and Dr. Hasani Jayasinghe will be on the Nominations Committee. The data are then shared for verification.

Dr. Kuchera states that Dr. Arun Muthaiyan is now taking over as President of the Faculty Assembly.

Dr. Muthaiyan expresses his thanks. He welcomes Chancellor Sabrina Ezzell for her presentation.

INFORMATION ITEM ON CONDITIONS AT UNM-GALLUP, DR. SABRINA EZZELL

Dr. Sabrina Ezzell thanks Dr. Muthaiyan. She says that it is really nice to be here with everyone. She thanks Dr. McFeaters for the invitation. Dr. Ezzell states that she will speaking about the business side of the college today. There are a lot of good things to share. She acknowledges that the institution is operating in a very challenging environment. Every day is a new day and this is a whole new world for everyone. She hopes that everyone is thinking about how to take care of themselves. Dr. Ezzell adds that yesterday's rally was a form of self-care, expressing what so many feel strongly about and what needs support. She wants everyone to know that she appreciates those who supported yesterday's efforts.

The first item she is going to speak about is the legislative session. UNM-Gallup had a really good year this year. As most know, a 4% employee raise was secured. Even with those raises, House Bill 2 appears to ensure a nicely balanced budget. So, that's really good news. There's also several other things that came through from the legislative session. Dr. Ezzell states that we have the continued RPS fee for the tribal education support, have our ongoing nursing expansion funding, and--something new this year--have a special appropriation for \$400,000 for two years that will restart our law enforcement academy. She adds that we have \$300,00 for new equipment in the renovated auto-tech and welding spaces, and \$175,000 for broad capital purchases for construction technology, auto-tech, and welding. Representative Johnson and Speaker Martinez were responsible for the \$175,000 for that capital project. Representative Lundstrom helped considerably with the funding for the law enforcement academy, and Senator Munoz is always in the background helping us financially. UNM-Gallup also received \$1 million to level and pave the parking lot in front of the facilities management building.

There are several construction project updates, too. The renovation of the welding area is about halfway complete. The next step will be construction tech renovation. In addition, there are a couple of GeoBond projects in the works for the summer hearings. One of those involves the north wing of Calvin Hall. She states that she is glad to say that project is moving forward.

There will be a renovation to the gymnasium if that funding comes through. UNM-Gallup cannot use state funds to renovate gymnasiums. That is probably related to the removal of the PE requirement from most of our degree plans. The gyms got pulled from capital projects. As a response, UNM-Gallup will pursue a local bond to get that taken care of. The end of the planning phase for the GeoBond that is funding our student experience here in Gurley Hall is nearing. So all the spaces that are student-focused will be in the first phase of this renovation. That will also include the parking lot.

Dr. Ezzell states that she wanted to let everyone know that recently the McKinley Academy new building project was finally approved. They will probably break ground in late May to early June in the space next to SSTC. Finally, Dr. Ezzell points out that she has not received any notifications from the Department of Education on any impact to the NASNTI grant, the TRIO grant, or the Upward Bound grant. Should any changes develop, she will let everyone know. Dr. Ezzell thanks everyone.

Dr. Muthaiyan asks for questions.

Dr. Chris Dyer asks whether the renovations to the labs in Calvin Hall will include updates for equipment for chemistry, physics, biology, and so on--spectrometers, for example.

Dr. Ezzell answers that if faculty want more equipment--more contemporary equipment for their spaces--it is important to put that language in the legislation so that it mentions equipment in the GeoBond. The language has to be specific. She states that she will make sure that faculty are getting what they need.

Dean Zimmerman mentions that the welding auto-tech construction-tech project may be even a little ahead of schedule. The plan is hopefully that the welding faculty and students will be able to move into the new spaces in August. Then the project will shift to auto tech. So there's a middle space that is being used as the flexible space. That's where the auto tech folks will move until their new space is complete. As everyone knows, when the money is deposited in our account, we don't just start spending it. Months of planning are necessary. So, as we roll into the fine arts project and then into the labs and auditorium projects, faculty who are impacted by this will have plenty of opportunity for feedback, very specifically about what they need in their labs--tools, equipment, materials, furniture, all that kind of stuff. These are very long projects that take a lot of time to get organized.

Dr. Muthaiyan mentions that Professor Thomas Kraus posted a question in the chat: he asks if there are any start and end dates for these projects--for the lab renovations, for example.

Chancellor Ezzell answers that these renovations will be part of the GeoBond 2026. That would be voted on in November 2026. The funds would be available in July 2027.

Professor Kristi Wilson asks if the dates for the Fine Arts renovation are known.

Dr. Ezzell answers that there is usually six months for planning. If this gets started soon, construction could potentially start in early spring 2026. In response to another question in the chat, she mentions that the planning phase has ended for the student experience project. The goal is to break ground this summer. The goal is for Middle College to move into their new building by August.

Dr. Muthaiyan thanks Dr. Ezzell for her report. He then introduces Dr. Julia So.

INFORMATION ITEM ON DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION/ DR. JULIA SO

Dr. Julia So thanks everyone for the invitation. She states that she is going to be presenting on two topics: 1) the National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, and 3) the deep course at UNM-Central required of all undergraduate students. Dr. So then shares her PowerPoint with the Faculty Assembly. Faculty thank her for the presentation.

INFORMATION ITEM ON THE GOAL PROGRAM/ DR. CHRIS DYER

Dr. Dyer begins by pointing out that adult learner enrollment has steadily decreased as the enrollment of McKinley Academy students has increased. He mentions that part of UNM-Gallup's strategic plan involves community development and outreach. The GOAL (Great Opportunities for Adult Learners) program was designed specifically to court people who don't have the time during a regular nine-to-five day but can go to a class off-schedule and earn their degree that way. The program in North Carolina had five sites which covered over half the state. It had 750 students at those five sites. The graduation rate was around 82%, and the curriculum was developed to be able to start and stop on a dime, with six-to-eight-week courses that were both in-person and online. Those can be varied and modified depending upon the interest and the strengths of faculty. The nice thing about this is that temporary part-time people can be a very integral part of a program like this and a faculty member can start a cohort of individuals once they have enough at any point during a semester or during an academic year. So, the whole point of the GOAL program is to develop and utilize our space. A lot of the people who were enrolled in the courses, their tuition was being paid by their businesses. So, for example, a target for this would be the over 400 businesses that we have who are part of the Chamber of Commerce, of which we are also a member. So these are the areas where we can possibly expand and reach out in terms of course design. Dr. Dyer says that he will send his PowerPoint to everyone. This is something that would probably take a year and a half to develop. He states that we could run it as a single individual cohort and as a test case, a pilot sometime in the next year and a half and see how that works. If it's successful, then we can add to that. The program in North Carolina had a retention rate of 82%. Because once adult learners get started and if they're being supported, for example, by their families, their businesses, etc., they keep going and they continue. The two-year program, which it is supposed to be designed around, can be added on to a four-year program if that made sense for us and for them.

Dr. Muthaiyan thanks Dr. Dyer for his presentation.

INFORMATION

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Dr. Muthaiyan asks for the committee reports.

UNMG Senator to ABQ: Dr. John Burke begins by mentioning this is his last report as a faculty senator. It has been three years in this most recent term. Dr. Burke adds that it has been a pleasure to serve on the Faculty Senate. He points out that the position gives faculty great exposure to a lot of different things that happen across the campus and in Albuquerque as well. He reports that at the last Faculty Senate meeting, a lot of information was shared, one of which had to do with the executive orders from the president's office. If the information is not real clear, our administration is just sort of watching and waiting. The Provost did share there have been some grants that have been hit with stop-

work orders and a few other things at the Albuquerque campus--a lot of the stuff for the Department of Education. Many of the people that UNM folks are working with were laid off in that first round. So there are no contacts for UNM to reach out to. The HSC leader, Mike Richards, reported that they want to double the number of health grads at UNM over the next five years. We all know that getting healthcare in New Mexico is a chronic challenge. The turnover in the UNM Health System is about 8% annually versus nationally, which is 12%. So even though we seem like we have a lack of care, we're not experiencing the same turnover. Dr. Burke states that he wants to follow up on Julia So's presentation about branch campuses. The way that the grant is written is that a faculty member would have startup funds or other funds at their disposal to offset the rest of the tuition. It's about \$2,500. Beyond that, it's still a work in progress, but that'll be something for the other senator, Dr. Tracy Lasser. It's a whole branch campus issue. Dr. Burke concludes by thanking everyone for allowing him to serve.

Budget Review Committee: Dr. McFeaters greets everyone. He mentions that the committee has been talking through email in lieu of meeting. He mentions that he was reelected as chair for next year. He thanks Professor Vanessa Ferguson and Dr. Keri Stevenson for their service. One issue the committee has been discussing pertains to slow tech issues in SSTC 128. Dr. McFeaters says that he has raised the issue with Division Chair Matt Mingus. He concludes his report.

Committee on Teaching Excellence: No report.

Constitution and By-Laws Committee: Professor Joe Kee says hello to everyone. He points out that he will meet with the committee hopefully on Monday or Tuesday just so that they can discuss the next academic year. As per procedures, he then reads off the proposed amended language to the constitution and by-laws. This fulfills the second required reading.

College Assessment and Review Committee: No report.

Curricula Committee: No report.

Library Committee: Professor Kristi Wilson reports that the Library Committee is planning an Art Prowl for April 30th. People will be invited to tour the public art on campus. One tour is at 11AM. The other is at 2PM. Everyone is invited.

Strategic Planning Committee: Professor Ernesto Watchman greets everyone. He says that he is pleased to share that the committee has agreed to having him continue serving as chair for another term. He reports that he had the opportunity to sit in on a recent sustainability meeting with Chancellor Ezzell, Dean Zimmerman, Director of Business Operations Robert Griego, and Director of Student Affairs Jamie McMahon. It was productive and a thoughtful discussion. The team is eager to hear feedback from faculty and encourages any input in any form, whether it be through email or in-person conversation. He states that, as the chair, he invites everyone's input, recommendations, and suggestions. He emphasizes the importance of collaboration between administration, faculty, staff, and students.

Distance Learning Committee: Dr. Tracy Lassiter says that they were working on deploying the surveys. There have also been conversations about how much required training is necessary to teach online. RASI is required for all faculty through the UNM Learning Central component, but the committee doesn't believe that EPTO training is required anymore. The committee has been talking with the division chairs about what sort of standards we might want to have for faculty before they launch an online class. Dr. Lassiter also points out that there are a bunch of new regulations coming

down from the Department of Justice that have to do with accessibility compliance. At some point those regulations will have to be addressed.

Adjunct Faculty Affairs Committee: No report.

UA-UNM, Faculty Union: Dr. Keri Stevenson reports that the bargaining process is continuing. The administration and the union bargaining representatives met on Wednesday at the Valencia Branch. There is some hope that we can get them to come to the other branch campuses for future bargaining sessions. The administration passed back a couple of counters for our articles. We have submitted all the articles to the administration, but they only gave us back four. So, at the moment, the next bargaining session is planned for April 23rd, and hopefully we'll get some more counters then. So far they have not been giving an inch. They have been crossing out provisions for academic freedom and faculty protections in some of these articles. So we've been pushing back against that. We did hold a rally yesterday on the campus against ICE and for protection of academic freedom. Students, staff, and faculty joined in that. We also had several speakers for topics like protecting DEI, protecting immigrants, and protecting the arts, sciences, and humanities. Dr. Stevenson thanks everybody who participated in that.

INFORMATION	ANNOUNCEMENTS	VARIOUS
Professor Kristi Wilson shares the calendar of upcoming art and Pride events.		
Professor L.D. Lovett announces the upcoming Diversity Summit.		
MLT Program Director Lucia Guerrero announces the upcoming blood drive.		
Dr. Muthaiyan reminds everyone to elect their committee chairs in preparation for the fall semester.		

ACTION ITEM	ADJOURNMENT
Motion to adjourn.	
Motion: Dr. Tracy Lassiter	
Seconded: Yes	
Vote: Unanimous	
Motion Carried: Yes	
Meeting adjourned at 1:59PM by Faculty Assembly President Dr Carolyn Kuchera.	
Recorded by: Dr. Andrew McFeaters, Faculty Assembly Secretary, on April 18, 2025.	