



May 20, 2010

TO: Board of Regents, University of New Mexico

FROM: Faculty Senate Operations Committee

SUBJECT: Suggestions regarding the May 25, 2010 meeting for the evaluation of the President of the University

In order to facilitate the most effective and best-informed annual evaluation of the President of the University of New Mexico, and in keeping with the role of the faculty in the shared governance of the institution, we write with suggestions for your upcoming evaluation meeting. We hope that these suggestions can inform the present evaluation and, perhaps more importantly, inform the criteria to be used in the evaluation a year from now.

Obviously, the evaluation of the President's work over the last year is an important part of the upcoming meeting. For that evaluation to be well-informed and publicly legitimate, it is crucial that it draw on credible data. Fortunately, the survey that the University recently commissioned as part of UNM's response to the Higher Learning Commission accreditation report provides precisely that kind of credible data. Although results are not yet available, they should be available relatively soon, and we trust the professionalism of the firm contracted to produce that study. We would thus strongly suggest that the Regents rely substantially on the results of that survey and the associated focus groups in your assessment of the President. Note that, although for HLC purposes the survey is intended to provide a "baseline" measurement, for purposes of presidential evaluation the survey comes three years into the President's tenure at UNM and more than a year after the February 2009 faculty votes of no-confidence. The commissioned study thus offers credible data with which to assess presidential performance over that period.

We want to primarily focus our input, however, on the criteria being developed for the contractually-mandated presidential assessment to occur a year from now. We think this is the most important dimension of your upcoming meeting. Furthermore, in keeping with our emphasis on forward-looking efforts to address the key strategic issues facing the University, we think this is the most valuable input we can offer at this time. It also seems the fairest and most transparent way to proceed, in that publicly defining criteria that reflect the *current* challenges facing the University allows all concerned to focus on the challenges ahead. Here are a few questions, the answers to which (in a year) would provide important insight into the success or failure of governance in the coming year (for each, we also offer a little interpretive background):

1. During 2010-2011, did the President successfully institute a *strategic budget process rooted in shared governance*?

Such a process would entail elected faculty representatives being present and substantially involved throughout *all stages* of: a) budget design for the overall FY2012 budget to be ultimately voted on by the Board of Regents in Spring 2011; b) meeting any budget rescissions that UNM might face during FY2011; and c) developing a budgetary approach for the 60 day

legislative session in early 2011. Such a strategic budget process might build upon the effort in early 2010 to shape the I&G budget in consultation with elected faculty representatives, which led to a final I&G budget proposal that was accepted by the faculty leadership. But I&G represents about 16% of overall UNM expenditures; a strategic budget process must address the entire UNM budget. This will require substantial and consistent engagement with the Budget Committee of the Faculty Senate.

2. During 2010-2011, did the President *protect and strengthen the actual budget dedicated to the core academic mission at UNM*, even within difficult fiscal constraints?

Here, the “actual budget dedicated to the core academic mission” includes spending on professional staff located within teaching departments and research institutes; tenure-track faculty not primarily engaged in administrative duties; travel expenditures in academic departments and research institutes; spending on classroom teaching, international programs, and service-learning efforts directly linked to teaching; etc. In other words, do actual budget expenditures and allocation of any fiscal cuts follow academic priorities, or are academic priorities forced to play catch-up to budgetary decisions made on other grounds?

3. During 2010-2011, did the President assure that sufficient numbers of *tenure-track faculty hires* were successfully completed to both replace recent faculty departures *and* begin building up tenure-track faculty to reverse the erosion of student:faculty ratios that have occurred in recent years?

Note that the FY2011 budget approved by the Regents included \$1.5 million for “new faculty hires.” Assurances were made that more than half of this money in the first year would go toward *new* tenure-track hires; that more than two-thirds of it would go toward tenure-track faculty salaries the first year (including merit increases and counter-offers); and that *all or nearly all* of it would go toward new tenure track faculty lines by the second year. Key metric: Are there more main campus tenure-track faculty members by Fall 2011 than there were in Fall 2009 and Fall 2010? (this assures that the “new” money for the “new” tenure track hires voted upon by the Regents does not simply replace faculty lines lost due to retirements or resignations). Appropriate here may be an assessment of whether mechanisms were put in place to assure that all such faculty hiring is designed to maximize UNM’s chances of taking advantage of the current academic job market to diversify the faculty.

4. Did the President assure that there were developed during 2010-2011 *the criteria and process through which decisions will be made regarding how to confront any programmatic cuts forced upon UNM by possible severe cuts for the FY2012 budget?* And were those criteria and that process developed through a process rooted in *substantial shared governance* of the institution?

Given the large “fiscal hole” that exists within the UNM budget as a result of recent state rescissions, which has been temporarily filled with one-time fixes that will expire by the end of FY2011, UNM faces the potential of severe budget shortfalls for FY2012 unless the state economy and/or energy revenues improve. As recognized repeatedly and publicly by President

Schmidly, unless UNM begins planning soon for how it will address such a budget scenario, it may lead to chaos within the University. Especially important will be assuring that *criteria for budget-cutting* are developed that are driven by shared commitment to our academic mission; and that a *process for allocating resources* is developed that is accepted as legitimate within the University and in the wider New Mexico society.

5. Are all of the above done in *substantial collaboration* with the elected faculty leadership, particularly the Faculty Senate and its official committees (and, where appropriate, the Committee on Governance and the Academic Freedom & Tenure Committee)? Does the second-wave survey and focus group study of faculty and staff experiences of governance – requested by the HLC and planned for Spring 2011 – show significant improvement in the climate of shared governance at UNM?

These questions, and the evaluation criteria they provide, focus the presidential evaluation on matters at the heart of the mission of the University of New Mexico. Given that the President's contract essentially mandates for 2011 an in-depth assessment of his full tenure, we urge you in the strongest possible terms to incorporate these questions and criteria in your expectations of him for the coming year. Doing so would be fully in keeping with your constitutional authority and responsibility to guide the University of New Mexico in pursuit of its academic mission of research, teaching, and service to benefit the State of New Mexico.

Faculty Senate Operations Committee:

Howard Snell

Past Faculty Senate President

Professor, Biology

Biology Faculty

Phone: 277-3524

snell@unm.edu

Richard L Wood

Faculty Senate President-Elect

Associate Professor

Sociology Department

Phone: 277-1117

rlwood@unm.edu

Nikki Katalanos

Assistant Professor

Family Community Medicine Dept

Phone: 272-9830

NKatalanos@salud.unm.edu

Mary Lipscomb

Professor

SOM Pathology

MLipscomb@salud.unm.edu

Timothy J Ross

Professor

Civil Engineering Civil Engr

Phone: 277-3459

ross@unm.edu

Pamela Viktoria Pyle

Associate Professor

Music

MSC04 2570

Phone: 277-5145

pvpyle@unm.edu