

Draft Resolution for Faculty Senate Consideration:  
Regarding Shared Governance at the University of New Mexico

**Whereas** the Faculty represent the historic and actual locus of teaching, research, clinical, and creative expertise within universities; and

**Whereas** the Faculty also represented the original locus of administrative decision making authority within universities, until the rising complexity of university organizations led the Faculty to share that authority with officials specializing in administration and governance; and

**Whereas** the State of New Mexico vests ultimate authority over the University of New Mexico in a governing board called the UNM Board of Regents; and

**Whereas** the resulting tripartite structure of Faculty, Central Administration, and Regents emphasizes specialization within each of those three sectors, all within the ultimate authority of the Board of Regents; and

**Whereas** the resulting long-established practice of governance via three-way dialogue and deliberation regarding major strategic decisions is generally referred to as “shared governance”; and

**Whereas** the academic mission of universities thrives best when the governing board exercises its ultimate authority within such a “shared governance” model; and

**Whereas** the role of Faculty within shared governance is distinct from the “stakeholder” role of other important sectors such as Staff, ASUNM, GPSA, Alumni, and Parents of UNM students; and

**Whereas** continued accreditation of the University of New Mexico under the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is essential and cannot be compromised; and

**Whereas** such accreditation depends upon adherence to shared governance standards in its major decisions as reflected by Core Component 5.B of the Higher Learning Commission Resource Guide, which requires that “The institution’s governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission (available at [http://download.hlcommission.org/ResourceGuide\\_2016-04\\_INF.pdf](http://download.hlcommission.org/ResourceGuide_2016-04_INF.pdf)); and

**Whereas** the last HLC accreditation Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit dated April, 2009 quoted the Board President as having “...expressed his understanding for the need to communicate with the faculty and all constituencies to rebuild a harmonious working relationship. The Board President also expressed his desire to work collaboratively and in an environment of transparency and trust.” and

**Whereas** decisions adopted by the UNM Board of Regents over the past 4 years unequivocally violated the UNM commitment to the HLC for achieving best practices of shared governance by a series of actions, to wit:

- (i) Ignoring recommendations from the Faculty Senate Faculty and Staff Benefits committee on how to mitigate an unfunded liability in health care costs for retired faculty younger than age 65,

(ii) Using \$3M from the reserves of the self-funded health insurance plan in order to resolve a university budget shortfall without consultation with faculty,

(iii) Subsequently amending Regents' Policy Manual - Section 7.14: Risk Management and Insurance to allow for the transfer of funds from the self-insurance General Reserve Fund at any time and for any purpose at the sole discretion of the Board,

(iv) Eliminating retiree health care coverage for faculty hired after June 30, 2015 without consideration of recommendations from the Faculty Senate Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee,

(v) Increasing health care insurance premiums by 4.5% with large increases in deductible costs without any discussion or consultation with the Faculty Senate Faculty and Staff Benefits Committee,

(vi) Adopting changes to the Regent's policy manual at the March 14, 2016 meeting of the Board of Regents without consulting with any Faculty Senate governing body, despite strong objections from more than 50 faculty members, Faculty Senate leaders, students, staff, community members, state and county legislators, and Native American leadership calling for, at a minimum, a delay in the action until additional input from stakeholders could be obtained; and

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the Faculty Senate of the University of New Mexico calls upon the UNM Board of Regents to state publicly, via a formal resolution, its affirmation of shared governance as a process of dialogue and collaboration with Faculty Leadership and other stakeholders prior to taking actions that profoundly affect University activities; and

**Be it further resolved** that the Faculty Senate of the University of New Mexico calls upon the Board of Regents' review and adhere to, whenever possible, the concepts formulated in the "Statement on Government of Colleges and Universities" as adopted by the American Association of University Professors (available at <http://www.aaup.org/report/statement-government-colleges-and-universities>); and

**Be it further resolved** that the Faculty Senate of the University of New Mexico calls upon the Board of Regents review and adhere to, whenever possible, the recommendations stated in the document "Faculty, Governing Boards, and Institutional Governance," published by the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges (available at: [http://agb.org/sites/default/files/legacy/u16/FacultyGoverning%20BoardsandInstitutionalGovernance\\_final.pdf](http://agb.org/sites/default/files/legacy/u16/FacultyGoverning%20BoardsandInstitutionalGovernance_final.pdf)); and

**Be it further resolved** that the Faculty Senate of the University of New Mexico calls upon the Board of Regents to formally request that Governor Susana Martinez fill the current vacancy in the Board with an individual possessing a deep understanding of higher education, preferably a current or retired faculty member of UNM or a faculty member currently employed by, or having retired from, a major university in another state.

Adopted this 26<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2016 by the Faculty Senate of the University of New Mexico