

A Preliminary Report of the Faculty Subcommittee of the Roles and Rewards Taskforce

Executive Summary

On October 23, 2002, Provost William V. Flores asked the Faculty Subcommittee of the larger Roles and Rewards Taskforce to examine the expanding roles of faculty and the reward systems in place at New Mexico State University as well as our peer institutions. This report is Part One of a larger endeavor -- a comprehensive analysis of faculty roles and various methods of recognition that could be implemented at NMSU to recruit and maintain quality faculty at NMSU. The creation of this taskforce helps to meet the President's target:

Attract, develop, reward and retain a high-quality faculty and staff

A list of faculty who participated in this effort is included in the appendix.

No or Low Cost Recommendations

The Committee identified eight no or low-cost types of actions that could be undertaken to improve the work environment at NMSU. In this section, we present a total of 16 specific actions related to streamlining bureaucratic processes, developing mechanisms for recognizing faculty effort, and analyzing and reporting existing institutional data. An improved work environment would reward all of us as a community. Indeed, implementation of some of these recommendations are likely to produce SAVINGS to the institution, as the costs associated with administration could be reduced.

1. Streamline Bureaucratic Processes

- Streamline hiring processes for all personnel.
- Review and Revise CASS and accounting procedures by a group of people from various campus offices (e.g., budget office, SPA, faculty who have received external funds, Associate Deans for Research from the Colleges, etc.).
- Train faculty to work with the accounting system and CASS.

2. Faculty Merit Evaluations

We recommend that the University work to dramatically simplify our evaluation systems.

- Evaluation systems that focus on minor distinctions in performance should be eliminated and a system that promotes Departmental cohesiveness and a mutually supportive environment should be adopted.
- Departments should be given substantial leeway to develop evaluation systems that implement the goals of cohesiveness and creating an environment of mutual support.

3. New Faculty Orientation

Comprehensive, effective new faculty orientation and promotion and tenure workshops like those offered this year are essential in retaining a high quality faculty. This programming needs to be continued, with appropriate institutional funding to insure their success.

4. Departmental and Program Awards

The administration should develop awards to recognize the outstanding work of programs or departments in achieving the goals specified in the NMSU Strategic Directions.

5. Publication of Data

- The Office of Institutional Research and Planning should evaluate and publicize the turnover rate in each college for the last three years and should perform this analysis on an on-going basis, with special attention to race/ethnicity and gender so that colleges can develop improvement plans if necessary.
- Refusal rates for promotion and tenure also need to be publicly available. The Office of Institutional Research and Planning should work with the colleges to compile these data.

6. NMSU Service Awards

The administration should re-evaluate the types of gifts awarded and fund gifts that are indicative of the amount of service that the employee has provided.

7. Types of Recognition

Each college should develop criteria for recognizing the achievements of faculty within that college, including development of an award to recognize teaching by adjunct faculty.

8. NMSU Calendar

- Close campus offices for ALL employees on the following days:
 - The day before Thanksgiving.
 - The full weeks around Christmas and New Year's.
- Extend personal leave by three days per year.

9. Rule Change Regarding Supplemental Pay

Eliminate Section 4.70 of the NMSU Policy Manual

Cost-Incurring Recommendations

A number of actions to improve rewards for faculty members in general and for those who go above and beyond the routine role of a faculty member would require additional funds. The members of the faculty subcommittee realize that given the shortage of state funds, these initiatives will require a longer period of time to implement.

1. Streamline Bureaucratic Processes

- Develop new policies to enable recruitment and retention of a diverse and effective faculty at NMSU, including:
 - Procedures for enabling potential faculty to identify meaningful occupational opportunities for their partner (partner assistance services or dual career couple programs).
 - Effective family leave procedures.
 - Cafeteria-style benefits plans.
 - Faculty ombudsprogram.
 - Benefits available to domestic partners.

- A regular mechanism for compiling information about new developments in policies and procedures in higher education administration needs to be implemented at NMSU.
- Develop appropriate methods of encouraging and rewarding team teaching.

2. Improved Benefits Package

- Reduce outgoing expenses (dental, health, parking fees): continue looking for cheaper coverage without sacrificing quality.
- The upper administration should include this topic when talking with other New Mexico Universities about mutually beneficial legislation to improve the benefits package at NMSU.
- The administration should support efforts to increase the retirement multiplier.

3. Summer Teaching

NMSU should maintain the current formula for calculating summer salary pay (i.e., as based upon an individual's salary), with the following exceptions:

- The University administration is allowed to make reasonable adjustments in minimum class size to justify summer salaries.
- The current penalty for teaching a second course in the same summer session should be removed.

4. Professorships

- The University administration should continue the emphasis in fundraising efforts to increase the number of endowed professorships at the full professor level.
- Direct fundraising efforts to endow named chairs at the associate professor level with supplements of 20-30 percent stipends.
- To enhance the prestige of teaching, we recommend that Regent's Professorships awarded based upon a faculty member's teaching expertise be so designated with the title "Regent's Teaching Professorship."

5. Mini-Grants for Course Development

The University should provide mini-grants for course development and/or design.

6. Teaching Award for Regularized College Faculty

The University should develop an award to recognize the accomplishments of regularized college faculty. Funding for these awards should be determined at the administrative level.

7. Support for a New Distance Education Compensation Model

We recommend that the Provost work closely with the Vice Provost for the Office of Distance Education to develop a compensation model that takes into account course/program development, delivery mode, numbers of students, travel, and so on.

8. Special Funds

We recommend that a special fund be established to enhance salaries for faculty and staff that perform in an extraordinary way.