

April 2, 2009

NMSU Faculty Senate
Vice Chair's Report
April 2009
Chris Erickson

Things were going full tilt this month as all committees met to consider legislation. Unfortunately, two of the committees did not make quorum. It is critical that we make quorum for all committees this month as any bill not moved forward will die.

Demonstration of Online Science Labs: I attended a demonstration of online labs given by our colleagues from Alamogordo CC. Representatives from Chemistry, Biology, etc. also attended. Demonstrations were given for chemistry, biology, and physics. The chemistry lab had the most sophisticated software and was also the only lab that was completely virtual. Biology and physics labs generally involved some need for students to undertake procedures remotely, providing documentation as to the outcome. Based on audience discussion, there was considerable skepticism regarding the fully virtual chemistry lab, but several commented on the progress that had been made compared to only a few years ago. Maybe another five years and virtual labs might be a viable substitute for the real thing. Another point made was that for remote students who are not going to go on for a science degree, virtual labs were better than nothing. In this regard, virtual labs may be inadequate for teaching lab technique but useful in teaching about different chemical reactions and equipment.

ADAC: ADAC met only once. The Latin America and Border Studies Program was approved. Shelly Stovall made an impassioned plea for faculty cooperation in implementing Assessment.

Respectfully,
Chris Erickson
Faculty Senate Vice-Chair
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