

Faculty Meeting Minutes August 22, 2025

The meeting was called to order at 2:04 pm by Dean Camille Carey once a quorum was reached.

The following people were present for at least some portion of the meeting.

Faculty: **Warigia Bowman**, Nicole Banks (visitor), **Camille Carey**, Bryce Dorato (visitor), **Paul Figueroa**, Allison Freedman, **Sonia Gipson Rankin**, **Laura Gomez**, **Marc-Tizoc Gonzalez**, **Steven K. Homer**, **John Kang**, **Joshua Kastenber**, **Jennifer Laws**, **Nathalie Martin**, **Jennifer Moore**, **Matthew Murrell**, **Nadine Padilla**, **Mary Pareja**, **Sergio Pareja**, **Michelle Rigual**, **Leo Romero**, **Alexandra Siek**, **Paul Spruhan**, **David Stout**, **Sherri Thomas**, **Cliff Villa**, **Sam Winder**, **Peter Winograd**, **Natalie Winters** (17 needed for quorum; names that count toward quorum in bold)

Staff: Beverly Akin, Krista Allen, Nathaniel Joe (announcements and admissions report only), Rodina Cave Parnall, Renee Ferrell, Myka Curtis (announcements and admissions report only), Melanie Fritsche, Alejandra Gallegos, Stephanie Grant, David Kelly (announcements and admissions report only), Ernest Tafoya, Raenetta Tenorio (announcements and admissions report only)

Student Representatives: Andrew Kessel (2L), Nicolas Estrada (3L)

Announcements:

New Faculty, Visitors, and Staff - Dean Camille Carey: Dean Carey introduced new faculty, visiting faculty, and staff.

Faculty

- Matthew Murrell
- Paul Spruhan
- Natalie Winters

Visiting Assistant Professors

- Nicole Banks (present)
- Bryce Dorato (present)
- Felipe Guevara
- Lucrecia Jaramillo

Staff

- Myka Curtis, Associate Director of Admissions & Recruitment and Pathway Initiatives
- Melanie Fritsche, Director of Student and Career Services
- Alejandra Gallegos, Administrative Officer
- Nathaniel Joe, Faculty Services Representative
- David Kelly, Accountant 3

SHAC Resources for Students - SHAC Counselor Catherine Jabar: Cat Jabar presented on the services SHAC counseling provides and how to locate resources.

Voting by Visiting Faculty - Professor Allison Freedman: A motion was made and seconded to allow visiting faculty Bryce Dorato, Nicole Banks, Lucrecia Jaramillo, and Felipe Guevara to vote on allowable matters. There was no discussion. The motion was passed unanimously.

Colloquium Updates - Professor Marc-Tizoc Gonzalez: The Colloquium committee this year is comprised of Marc-Tizoc Gonzalez and Warigia Bowman. A speaker calendar is forthcoming.

Action Item:

Approval of Minutes from April 11, 2025 Faculty Meeting - Dean Carey: A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the April 11, 2025 meeting. There was no discussion. The motion was passed with 20 yes votes, 0 no votes, and 4 abstentions.

Admissions Report - Director of Admissions and Financial Aid Renee Ferrell: There was an increase in applicants to law school for the Fall 2025 entering class – 18.3% nationwide, 17% for applicants from the Mountain West region, and 22.8% from New Mexico (an increase of 51 applicants). There were 275 people from New Mexico who applied to any law school. Two-hundred sixteen of those applied to UNM. UNM received 640 completed applications. Last year we received 510 completed applications, and only 170 were from NM residents. This year, we admitted 264 people, almost exactly the same as last year, when we admitted 265. We admitted 126 New Mexico residents and 138 nonresidents. Our 1L class has 108 students. This is an increase from 99 last year and 92 two years ago. We had significantly higher yield rates from New Mexican admits, and significant lower yield rates from nonresident admits. This year, 81% of the 1Ls are New Mexico residents. This is a significant increase over the last two years, when NM residents represented only about 2/3 of the 1L class. Like last year, we had a very stable class, losing very few students after paying the second seat deposit, but we were able to add one student through PLSI and several more from the waitlist. The median LSAT score was 157, which is the same as last year. The median GPA is 3.56, which is down minimally from 3.57 from last year. Students' ages range from 21 to 58, and their median age is 27.39. (Twelve of those are age 40 or older). This is a significant increase from last year, when only 19 students were age 30 or older. Our nonresident students come from 11 different states and Iran. They bring a wide range of backgrounds and experiences to the law school community. Forty-one of the students earned their bachelor's degree from UNM. Other New Mexico colleges and universities represented include New Mexico Highlands, New Mexico State, and St. John's College. Twenty of the students have master's degrees, and eight have prior military service. Twenty-five of the students are first generation college graduates, and four of those students are also first-generation high school graduates. One faculty member raised concerns about the incoming class not matching certain demographics within the New Mexico state population. The faculty and the Director of Admissions discussed historical and newer challenges, as well as ongoing efforts to address these concerns.

Action Item:

Vote on Primary and Alternate Representative to AALS House of Representatives

- Dean Camille Carey: Dean Carey shared that Professor Carol Suzuki volunteered to serve as the School of Law's primary representative. She asked for a volunteer to serve as the alternate, and Professor Allison Freedman volunteered. A motion was made and seconded to select Professor Carol Suzuki as the primary representative and Professor Allison Freedman as the alternate. The motion passed unanimously with 25 yes votes.

Action Item:

Vote on Emerita Status for Professor Aliza Organick - Dean Camille Carey: A motion was made and seconded to confer emerita status on Professor Aliza Organick. Discussion highlighted the impact Professor Organick had on the law school and on the faculty. The motion passed unanimously with 24 votes to award emerita status to Professor Organick.

Update on Faculty Hiring - Professor Nathalie Martin, Chair of Faculty Appointments Committee:

The committee is engaged in a search to fill positions in Legal Analysis and Communication, Indian Law, Criminal Law, and Clinical Law. The best consideration date for applicants is September 20, 2025. The committee will begin screening applicants and conducting Zoom interviews next week and bring the selected candidates for campus interviews in October and November. We have reserved Friday afternoons in October and November for faculty voting on candidates as needed.

Dean's Updates - Dean Camille Carey:

- Update on House Bill 2 - The sentence that appeared last minute in the bill stating, "All tenured professors at the School of Law shall teach at least one core class per semester" was vetoed by the Governor.
- Fundraising - We ended the fiscal year with \$2.6 million raised.
- Staff Restructuring - Dean Carey worked closely with Human Resources and the Provost's office for much of last year on a staff restructure to provide better staffing and support for faculty. We created a new Grade 13 Administrative Officer position that is funded by Provost's office. The position is held by Alejandra Gallegos. It oversees the front desk, the Dean's assistant, and faculty support and provides administrative support to the Vice Dean, the Associate Deans, and occasionally to the Dean. We hired a new Faculty Services Representative, Nate Joe. He reports to Krista Allen and works with Krista and Natasha Jiron in a new consolidated HR unit. We recreated the Vice Dean position, now held by Steven Homer. Vice Dean Homer already oversaw the Registrar's Office. Now he also oversees Admissions and Financial Aid and Student and Career Services.
- Committees - There have been some changes to committees this year. We have a new Faculty Retention, Promotion, and Tenure Standards Committee and a new Standard 315 Committee. These committees were created in response to feedback from the ABA Council

on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar and the Site Visit Team. The Building, Art, and Safety Committee has been discontinued for now in light of low faculty interest in serving on this committee.

- Lawsuit - The Dean and the Vice Dean were recently respondents in a temporary restraining order (TRO) action. A TRO was not granted by the Court, and the parties have settled the TRO matter. No other lawsuit has been filed related to that matter.
- NM Law Center Building - The Dean continues to advocate for funding to renovate the NM Law Center building. UNM has decided to bifurcate the capital projects priority list between Main Campus and HSC. This project is the highest priority for Main Campus. The Dean is hoping that HED will add the project to its priority list and that the project will appear as a general obligation bond item on the ballot.
- Food Services - The Dean is continuing to work with UNM Food Services to bring options to the law school area. Food services is working on building food truck pads adjacent to the golf course. Food Services is also piloting fresh vending machine food services via refrigerated vending machines in the Venue. We hope to see those soon.
- Accreditation - The ABA Council on Legal Education and Admissions to the Bar had concerns about four standards – Standards 310(a), 315, 402, and 702(b). The Council has now found that we are in compliance with Standards 310(a), 315, and 402. We are still being monitored for compliance with Standard 702(b), specifically related to ADA accessibility in the library's restrooms. We are currently under contract with an architect and UNM Facilities to comply with this standard.
- Graduate and Project Assistants - Newly-hired project assistants can work up to six hours per week, and graduate assistants can work up to 8 hours per week. The only exception to the graduate assistant limit is for ETP. Work study funds cannot be applied to either type of assistantship.
- Alternate Pathways to Licensure - The New Mexico Supreme Court has convened a task force exploring alternatives to legal licensure. The task force is exploring additional avenues for licensure other than the bar exam. Associate Dean Serge Martinez is the official law school representative on the task force; however, the Supreme Court has also invited last year's members of the Curriculum Committee, Professor Sherri Thomas, Vice Dean Steven Homer, and the Dean.
- Faculty Senate - Dean Carey asked for a volunteer to represent the Law School in the Faculty Senate. Professor Sam Winder volunteered. A motion was made and seconded to have Professor Winder serve as the Faculty Senate representative. The motion passed unanimously.

Executive Session, Action Item (Order of the Coif Faculty Only):

Vote on Order of the Coif status for Graduates of the Class of 2025 and Faculty Members -

Dean Camille Carey: Dean Carey read the names of the nine graduates of the Class of 2025 who qualify to be members of the Order of the Coif, as well as three faculty members. A motion was made and seconded to confer status for those graduates and faculty. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned by majority vote at 4:01 PM.