

Faculty Meeting Minutes February 11, 2020

The meeting was called to order at 3:05 p.m. by Dean Sergio Pareja, once a quorum was reached. The following people were present for at least some portion of the meeting:

Faculty: Maryam Ahranjani, George Bach, Camille Carey, Barbara Creel, Elizabeth Elia, Paul Figueroa, Marc-Tizoc González, Veronica Gonzales-Zamora, John Kang, Joshua Kastenberg, April Land, John LaVelle, Jennifer Laws, Ernesto Longa, Nathalie Martin, Serge Martinez, Jennifer Moore, Aliza Organick, Gabe Pacyniak, Mary Leto Pareja, Sergio Pareja, Sonia Gipson Rankin, Michelle Rigual, Leo Romero, Joseph Schremmer, Alexandra Siek, Laura Spitz, David Stout, Carol Suzuki, Sherri Thomas, Cliff Villa, Peter Winograd, Jeanette Wolfley, Christine Zuni Cruz (20 needed for quorum; names that count toward quorum in bold)

Staff: Chad Covey, Bonnie Stepleton, Ernest Tafoya

Students: Victor Hall, Jessica Arreola

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Dean Sergio Pareja stated that he did not have any information as to how Professor Robert Desiderio (“Desi”) is doing and asked if anybody had any information that could be shared. Professor Emeritus Peter Winograd said that he had spoken with Desi, that Desi is back in Arizona, and that he will be undergoing therapy. Dean Pareja noted that former Visiting Professor Jim Butler agreed to fly back and forth from Denver every other week this semester to teach Desi’s State & Local Taxation class with the assistance of Professor Mary Pareja. On the weeks in between trips to Albuquerque, the class will be taught from Denver by skype, with Professor Mary Pareja physically present in the classroom with students.
- Vice Dean Camille Carey stated that Admissions Director David Pallozzi has authorized us to share his medical situation with people. He currently is in Room 6208 in the cancer ward at Presbyterian Rust Hospital, which is located at 2400 Unser Blvd SE in Rio Rancho. David generally has been diagnosed with hodgkins lymphoma and, at this point, the doctors are trying to figure out both the prognosis and related more specific diagnoses. He is having issues with his liver and digestive system. He is not doing well but he is welcoming visitors (although he would prefer to not be visited by large groups of people). We are expecting that he will be in the hospital for at least a few more weeks. Vice Dean Carey thanked Professor Emeritus Peter Winograd for stepping up and taking over as the Acting Director of Admissions in Mr. Pallozzi’s absence during this very busy recruiting time. She also thanked all the members of the admissions team for stepping up to help during this challenging time.

- Professor Maryam Ahranjani announced that Accepted Applicants Day will be on Friday, April 3. She asked the faculty to please mark their calendars. Also, if anyone would like to participate in Accepted Applicants Day, please email Professor Ahranjani or Professor Winograd directly. Professor Ahranjani also announced a coordinated effort to encourage and invite faculty to reach out to accepted applicants. When the Admissions Committee admits someone with a unique connection to a particular faculty member, our Recruiter, Justin Goodman, will reach out to the faculty member to ask the person to contact the applicant. Please be advised that Mr. Goodman will be reaching out to you at the end of the week if the Admissions Team has identified such a connection. If you do not have the time to contact applicants or, alternatively, if you would like to contact applicants, please let Professor Ahranjani or Mr. Goodman know.
- Professor John Lavelle thanked everyone who answered the call to be practice rounds judges for the International NALSA Moot Court competition. They were able to fill four practice rounds with not only faculty from here but also with judges from the Court of Appeals, as well as with colleagues from the Indian Law Section of the New Mexico Bar.
- Professor Sonia Rankin wished the faculty a happy Black History Month. Professor Rankin noted that the Black Law Students Association, African American Student Services, main campus ROTC, and the assistant Vice President of Student Services are jointly hosting a discussion and viewing of the movie Glory. At the viewing, Professor Joshua Kastenberg will lead a discussion regarding the defense of the Constitution and the history of blacks in the military. The event will happen today after the faculty meeting in Room 2401.

ACTION ITEM: Approval of Minutes from January 21, 2020 faculty meeting – Dean Sergio Pareja: A motion was made to approve the minutes and was seconded. The minutes were approved no nay votes and with one abstention.

Update from Curriculum Committee – Vice Dean Camille Carey, Chair of the Curriculum Committee: Vice Dean Carey indicated that the Curriculum Committee has been quite busy, meeting almost every week all year. One of the most recent activities was to host a student forum on the curriculum on January 21 at which students were asked for feedback regarding courses that are being offered now, what classes students would like to see offered, and any issues standing in the way of having an “ideal curriculum” from a student perspective. The committee sought verbal input, handed out questions, and asked students to write down their answers. The committee members were expecting to find trends; however, there generally were no observable trends. Instead, there was more talk about students’ personal preferences for boutique-types of classes. For instance, one student really wants us to teach a class on cannabis law; another student wants a robust elder law curriculum; another student wants a class on animal law. One trend that was noteworthy was that students expressed some frustration with class conflicts and scheduling issues. Overall, it was a successful event with the caveat that there were only 21 students in attendance. The committee was hoping for much broader participation. The committee has now turned its attention to another topic: grading at the law school and, specifically, whether we should have a grading policy. Stay tuned. Professor Carol Suzuki asked what will happen with the data gathered from the student outreach, given that only 21 students were there. Vice Dean Carey responded that the

committee kept a master document with the information compiled; however, given the small number of students, the answers are not statistically significant enough to disburse to the faculty. Professor Suzuki then asked when next year's curriculum would be released, and Vice Dean Carey stated that it would be out in April. Dean Emeritus Leo Romero asked if the law school was doing exit interviews of graduating law student, asking about their law school experience. Dean Pareja said no and noted that the timing of such survey could be difficult, as the students are busy with preparing for final exams before graduation and then studying for the Bar Exam after graduation.

Discussion of proposed change to Student Handbook regarding semester honors for flextime students – 3L Student Representative Victor Hall: Dean Sergio Pareja informed the faculty that he was approached by the 3L Student Representative, Victor Hall, with a proposed change to a policy in the Student Handbook. The policy at issue is that flextime students, while eligible for Latin Honors at graduation, are not available for semester honors. Normally matters are sent to a faculty committee to be considered before coming to the full faculty, but Dean Pareja stated that he could not find the correct committee to send this particular question to so he allowed Mr. Hall to bring it to the full faculty without vetting by a committee first. It will be discussed starting today, but no vote is anticipated until a future faculty meeting. Mr. Hall then introduced himself and informed the faculty that a flextime student approached him concerned that he or she was precluded from receiving semester honors due to flextime status. Mr. Hall handed out copies of the relevant sections of the Student Handbook. Under our policy, to be eligible to be on the Dean's List or Honor Roll for the semester, a student must take eleven or more credit hours with at least nine of them for a letter grade. Mr. Hall proposed amending the policy to perhaps make flextime students who take at least nine graded credits eligible for honors or to perhaps include flextime student who take the same percentage of graded credits as non-flextime students. Mr. Hall also indicated that perhaps we could have a "Flex Dean's List" or a "Flex Honor Roll" to give top flextime students the recognition they deserve. Dean Pareja then asked if anyone knew the history of why flextime students are not eligible for semester honors. He mentioned that, presumably, the thought was that it may appear unfair to full-time students if flextime students who aren't working and who are taking a smaller number of classes are eligible for honors. It was suggested that students gather information for the faculty for a future faculty meeting so that the discussion can continue in a more informed fashion. This should include the following: what do other schools do?; is there an applicable main campus policy on this?; are there any ABA requirements impacting this?; and what does the Commission on Higher Education say about this? After the information is gathered and the faculty has time to deliberate further, the student representative should work on crafting a clear written policy for the faculty to consider adopting.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

ACTION ITEM #1:

Assistant Professor Sarah Steadman promotion to Associate Professor vote – Professor Carol Suzuki, Chair of Faculty Retention, Promotion & Tenure Committee:

As a confidential personnel matter, a separate record was kept that is not included in this public record. The faculty voted in favor of promoting Professor Steadman.

ACTION ITEM #2:

**Assistant Professor Gabriel Pacyniak promotion to Associate Professor vote –
Professor Carol Suzuki, Chair of Faculty Retention, Promotion & Tenure
Committee:**

As a confidential personnel matter, a separate record was kept that is not included in this public record. The faculty voted in favor of promoting Professor Pacyniak.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 4:47 p.m.