



The University of New Mexico

School of Law
Office of the Dean
1117 Stanford NE
Albuquerque, NM 87131-1431
Telephone (505) 277-4700
FAX (505) 277-1597

MEMORANDUM

TO: LAW FACULTY

FROM: ROBERT J. DESIDERIO, DEAN

DATE: OCTOBER 5, 2000

SUBJECT: FACULTY MEETING

**Faculty Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, October 10, 2000
Room 2406
4:00 p.m.**

1. Approval of Minutes of September 19, 2000 Faculty Meeting
2. Dean's Report
3. Self-Study Committee Report – Professors Chris Fritz and Antoinette Sedillo Lopez
4. Curriculum Committee Report – Professor Michael Browde
5. Teaching Effectiveness Committee Report – Professor Ted Occhialino
6. New Business

RJD:mb

October 10, 2000

Faculty Meeting Minutes
School of Law
Room 2406, 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Baum, Bobroff, Browde, Burr, Canova, Cruz, Desiderio, Fort, Gill, Gonzales, Hart, Hughes, Kelly, Land, Lopez, Martin, Mathewson, Moore, Norwood, Occhialino, Pokorak, Rapaport, Romero

Student Representatives: Charles Lakins, Bryan Davis, Samantha Adams

ABSENT: Blumenfeld, Ellis, Fritz, Hall, MacPherson, Martinez, Montoya-Lewis, Organick, Valencia-Weber, Winograd, Wolf

Dean Robert Desiderio called the meeting to order at 4:12 p.m.

A motion was made by Professor Leo Romero and seconded by Professor Mike Norwood to approve the minutes of the September 19, 2000 faculty meeting as distributed. When voted on, the motion carried.

Dean's Report:

Dean Desiderio announced that at 2:00 p.m. today at the Regents' Meeting the law school addition and renovation project was approved in its entirety. The project will now go to the Commission on Higher Education and the State Board of Finance for approval.

Dean Desiderio reported that the architect will deliver the final drawings today after 5:00 p.m. Request for bids will go out November 3 and bids will be opened December 5. Dean Desiderio is very pleased that we are staying on schedule, and estimates a "move-in" date of January, 2002. We are still a bit over \$3 million short of our fundraising goal.

Dean Desiderio thanked Professors Scott Hughes, Dick Gonzales, Ted Occhialino, Suedeen Kelly and Fred Hart for their participation in the CLE presentations at the State Bar Convention in Ruidoso last week.

Dean Desiderio reminded the faculty of the Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award Dinner on Friday, October 13 honoring alumni/ae William E. Snead ('61), Sarah M. Bradley ('72), and Arturo L. Jaramillo, and urged the faculty to attend.

Dean Desiderio announced that the University is embarking on a strategic planning process. He will chair the Graduate and Professional Education, Mentorship and Recruitment Committee.

Dean Desiderio reported to the faculty that the law school's computer paper use has reached 4 million sheets per year. To help reduce the amount of paper we use, the Dean has asked faculty, students and staff to be cognizant of the problem and to duplex print whenever possible, to use e-mail and the "hot board" for announcements whenever possible to eliminate stuffing flyers into the mailboxes. There has been a 500-page limit on paper for the students, now under review—it will be increased to 600 pages per student, and those students who need to print pages for law review, the clinic, faculty research, etc., will be able to print with faculty approval.

Self-Study Committee Report:

Professor Antoinette Sedillo Lopez, Co-Chair of the Self-Study Committee, asked for discussion on the October 9 e-mail memo (attached). She stated that the memo built on the discussion at the retreat, and asked the faculty to give her suggestions in order to make the recommendations as specific as possible before they go to the Curriculum Committee for implementation.

Discussion followed. The question of whether the first-year curriculum was broken was raised, and also the question of the advisability of focusing on skills and values instead of Contracts, Property, Civil Procedure, Torts, etc. Some of the workgroups had only wanted to "tweak" the first-year curriculum instead of completely revamping it. Professor Michael Browde, Chair of the Curriculum Committee, stated that the details will be difficult, that the Curriculum Committee will need to know there is consensus, and that they want to do something this year.

A motion was made by Professor Ted Occhialino to authorize the Curriculum Committee to design a first-year curriculum which would have no responsibility for coverage of particular subject matter, but would, instead, focus on discrete legal skills, analysis, and professionalism. The motion was seconded by Professor Scott Hughes. Professor April Land proposed a friendly amendment to add "problem-solving" to the list of legal skills.

Professor Denise Fort proposed a substitute motion: that the Curriculum Committee be instructed to examine the first-year curriculum with the objective of establishing a more solid foundation of legal skills, analysis, professionalism and problem-solving to be assessed and evaluated (in addition to grades) before students proceed further in their legal education.

First-year student representative Samantha Adams asked if the students would be polled regarding revising the first-year curriculum. Professor Sedillo Lopez answered that the students had been polled last year regarding this issue.

Because of the lateness of the hour and the number of faculty who had already left the meeting, Dean Desiderio asked for a straw vote. Professor Occhialino's motion was voted on and passed.

Dean Desiderio stated he would put out an e-mail informing the faculty of the two motions and the result of the straw vote as a charge to the Curriculum Committee and also to define the parameters.

Teaching Effectiveness Committee:

Professor Ted Occhialino reported that his committee has met and is designing a class visitation program with members of the committee. They are also in the process of designing a series of lunches (or teas) to discuss teaching effectiveness issues.

The meeting adjourned at 5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Margaret A. Banek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping "M" and "B".

Margaret A. Banek

:mb

Attachment

To: The Faculty
From: Self-Study Committee
Re: Suggested Charge to the Curriculum Committee
Date: October 9, 2000

As you know, one hopeful expectation of the Retreat lay in making some broad, but concrete suggestions to guide the work of the Curriculum Committee that reflected considerable support from the faculty. Complete unanimity is, of course, not to be expected, but we think there were a couple of areas of relatively widespread agreement stemming from some common concerns.

Before the Curriculum Committee confronts the task of converting the general to the specific, it seems appropriate to insure that the Self-Study Committee has reasonably captured some of the broad themes emerging from the Retreat. In that effort, this memo—subject to suggested modifications--will represent direction from the faculty about re-designing the curriculum along certain lines. **The key question is how far the faculty wishes the Curriculum Committee to go.** The committee's work will be an on-going and collaborative process of sharing ideas and suggested changes with the faculty, but we still must give them a basic direction and charge for their work.

In our view, a number of underlying and interconnected ideas clearly emerged from the Retreat that seemed to stem from a belief that more of our students than we are comfortable with are graduating without a sufficient level of basic competence in analytical and communication skills, knowledge, and professionalism and that we are missing the opportunity of challenging the remainder as well as we might. A change in the "culture" of the law school seemed implied in these concerns.

First, considerable agreement was expressed about re-structuring the first year curriculum to establish **a more solid foundation of legal skills, analysis, and professionalism** to be assessed and evaluated (in addition to grades) before students proceed further in their legal education. There was no clear agreement on means, methodology, or even what was embraced by "legal analysis," but a clear preference emerged for teaching in smaller groups.

Second, even wider support seemed to exist over the related idea of re-structuring the curriculum to reflect "progressive" or "developmental" education over the three years, with the notion that **after students acquire basic skills and knowledge, they would then be introduced to and have opportunities for more complex and sophisticated legal issues, problems, experiences, and challenges.** If this additive approach presents a greater challenge to students, it may also produce a more integrated and relevant legal education.

Third, there seemed a fair amount of support for recognizing in our curriculum that **certain "cores" of information (though not denominated in terms of specific courses) and skills do exist** and that all students ought to acquire them before moving on and eventually out of the law school.

In the course of implementing a re-design of the curriculum consistent with the principles just stated, the **Curriculum Committee should pay special attention to the following educational values and approaches** that emerged as additional themes during the Retreat: **1st, a broader perspective on law and legal education** including comparative, cultural, tribal, international, global, and interdisciplinary dimensions; **2nd, communication skills**—oral and written—throughout the curriculum and over the three years; **3rd, the integration and incorporation of “technology”** in a wide-ranging sense; **4th, more “clinical” experiences and methodology**; and **5th, more team teaching and rethinking the patterns of scheduling** classes to potentially break free of the two 14 week semester and possibly take advantage of other alternatives, especially the intercession.

Inevitably, this effort to summarize “themes” emerging from the Retreat reports will pale in comparison to the wide variety of distinct, exciting, dynamic, and even radical curricular ideas that emerged in the small groups. The **Curriculum Committee will shortly receive the written reports of the ideas generated by each of the small groups and is urged to draw upon those ideas in developing curricular proposals.** Nonetheless, a start must be made somewhere.

Therefore, it is proposed that the Curriculum Committee be charged with the task of developing new curricular design consistent with the broad description of curricular ideas and themes of the Retreat as described in this memo.