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PAYDIRT

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Social Engineering
November 16th, 2020



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Sudoku

	8		6	9				5
1		2						4
						7	1	
	7				9	2		
				5		9		
			3			5		8
4					3			
9			8			1		3
		5	2	1				



Squirrel Photo Gallery: Samuel Baca



SGA Meeting Rundown: 11/03/20

1. **NOTE: With the virus currently on campus, please make sure to use best practices when reading and sharing Paydirt to minimize the spread of COVID. Please keep in mind that articles are written many days before publishing.**
2. **The decision to remove Spring Break and end school a week early was heavily discussed. Read further for more information.**
3. **Issues regarding lab equipment and procedures during COVID were brought up and discussed, with the amount of time needed to complete the lab with limited resources and space being a major problem.**
4. **The NMT Minecraft Server is up and running. Look for notifications on how to access it in the future as everything is polished up.**
5. **The Vice President is working to allow larger numbers of people to meet for clubs.**
6. **There is another SGA election coming up in the near future. Check your school email for notifications.**
7. **The current SGA budget is slightly over, but much less than anticipated this semester due to COVID. Only small amounts will be used from the SGA Carry Forward, which is a reserve of funding used in emergency scenarios, like COVID.**

Survey to Win: Cards Againts NMT

As we prepare for another COVID-ridden spring semester, we want to take the time to ask you guys how we are doing during this pandemic. Below is both a link and QR code to our last survey of Fall 2020. It should take less than 5 minutes, and asks about COVID-related content, and the spring semester.

We will be giving away 2 more Cards Against NMT decks, a Cards Against Humanity expansion pack created by Paydirt several years ago. To enter for your chance to win, include your email at the end of the survey. We will be giving them out next semester as Thanksgiving Break is right around the corner, so please keep that in mind.

The survey will be active for about 2 weeks, and if you won, you will receive an email from paydirt@npe.nmt.edu.

Notice: Cards Against Humanity and by extension Cards Against NMT are satirical games and do not mean to defame any person, place, or entity in the card deck.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SQZJJZF>



Campus Life

"I don't love studying. I hate studying. I like learning. Learning is beautiful." - Natalie Portman

The Spring Break Controversy

Students were surprised, to say the least, when it was announced via email that Spring Break during the Spring 2021 semester would be cancelled, ending the semester a week early instead. The decision came after a poll was sent out to faculty and staff across campus, but the outcome was unpopular, judging by the vocal responses heard throughout the student body. During the SGA meeting on November 3rd, this issue was discussed, with the Vice President and Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs present to give their side of the story.

Many students joined the Zoom call as well, much more than the normal 1 or 2 students that attend SGA meetings, including Matthew Dougherty, Robin Gomez, Brisa Garcia, Carlha Baretto, and Morelia Cuevas. These students expressed various concerns over the removal of Spring Break, as written in subsequent paragraphs.

The mental strain brought on by schoolwork was a chief point. Breaks within the semester usually give students a chance to 'catch-up,' giving them time to do late homework or projects or other activities. Without such breaks, these times do not exist. In addition, Spring Break offered up time to engage in recreational activities to refresh the mind, or

spend time with friends (with COVID these processes may have changed, but the overall idea remains).

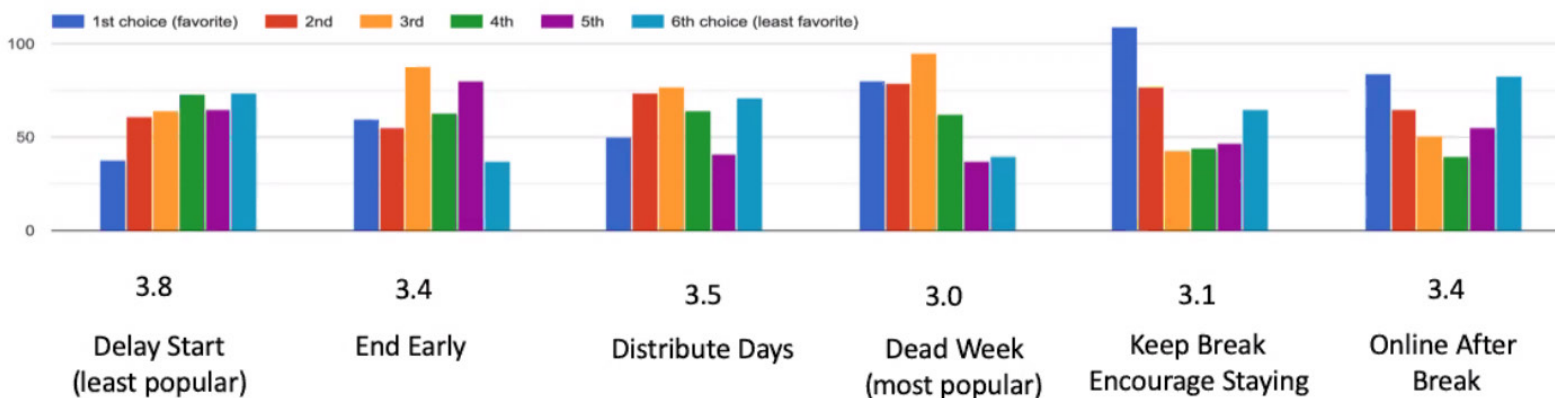
Socorro Public Schools had worked with NMT in the past two years to sync up their Spring Breaks, allowing those with children to spend time with them without worrying about schooling. With those no longer being synced, some student-parents might be forced to choose between spending time with their children or their textbook. It was also mentioned that several NMT students were planning on taking their own 'Spring Break' next semester without the traditional week off, resulting in random absent students.

Alternate ideas such as keeping the break but requiring all students get tested before returning on-campus, 3-day breaks, and spattered days-off throughout the semester were brought up. It was also stated the UNM was doing a 'random holliday' system to give students days off, but I could not find any confirmation of this online.

After the students and SGA members gave their concerns, Dr. Doug Wells, the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Peter Mozley, the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and Geology Professor, responded.

Student Survey Results (n = 413)

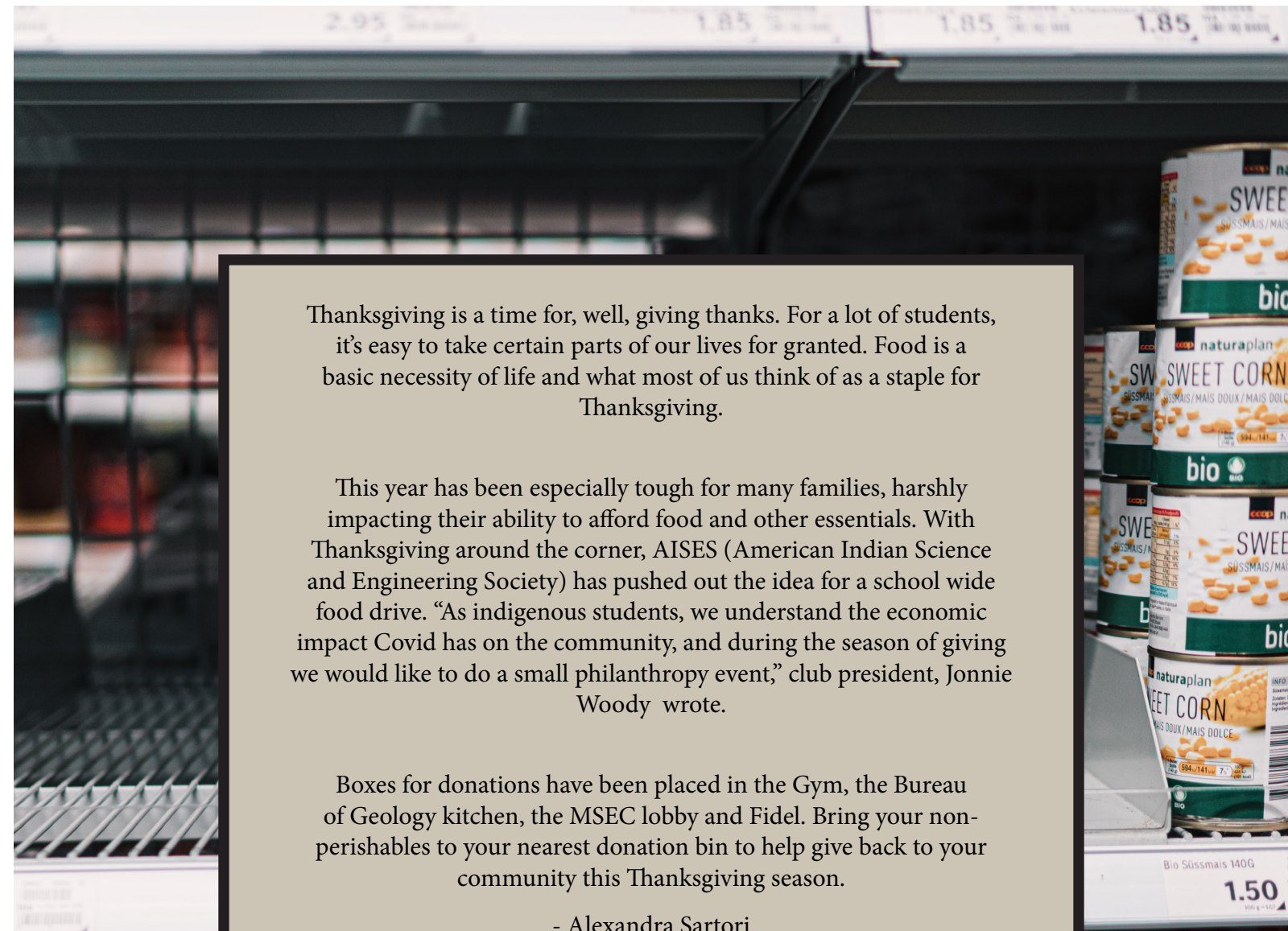
Taking the pros and cons noted in the email into account, please rank the following options to deal with the "Spring Break problem."



Relax and Unwind

"The only way you can get to know each other is by hanging out." - Jessica White

Food Drive



Thanksgiving is a time for, well, giving thanks. For a lot of students, it's easy to take certain parts of our lives for granted. Food is a basic necessity of life and what most of us think of as a staple for Thanksgiving.

This year has been especially tough for many families, harshly impacting their ability to afford food and other essentials. With Thanksgiving around the corner, AISES (American Indian Science and Engineering Society) has pushed out the idea for a school wide food drive. "As indigenous students, we understand the economic impact Covid has on the community, and during the season of giving we would like to do a small philanthropy event," club president, Jonnie Woody wrote.

Boxes for donations have been placed in the Gym, the Bureau of Geology kitchen, the MSEC lobby and Fidel. Bring your non-perishables to your nearest donation bin to help give back to your community this Thanksgiving season.

- Alexandra Sartori

Dr. Arvin Ebrahimkhanlou

Dr. Arvin Ebrahimkhanlou, formerly at University of Texas Austin, recently came to NMT bringing along with him a passion for teaching and making the world a safer place.

Before coming to NMT, Dr. Arvin was working as a postdoctoral researcher in his discipline of structural engineering. He worked to develop new technology that would allow the detection of defects within aircraft structures. He wanted to create something that would be able to notice changes that could compromise the structure, putting people in harm's way.

Dr. Arvin is currently working with several undergraduate teams in researching similar areas to his structural engineering. One being a group of undergraduate students that are working on how to build pipelines on the Moon. The research team's goal is to find a way to safely implement pipelines that would be able to extract and carry water. The water, in turn, can be used for lunar agriculture or other necessities. While this may seem simple, they must also account for the numerous hazards on the Moon that could compromise the structure of the pipelines, such as temperature changes.

Another team Dr. Arvin is currently working with, is a group of undergraduate students that are looking to develop a way to detect corrosion within bridges. The steel within a bridge can be compromised without obvious markers of the issue, leaving the structure open to failure. The team is looking for a way to pick up on changes within the construction that would allow for repairs before the bridge reaches a point where collapse is imminent.

Dr. Arvin wasn't always interested primarily in structural engineering. He first found his passion in earthquake engineering. He explored ways to create structures that were more well adapted to earthquakes and began research into technology that would allow for sensing the disaster before it occurred. This led to his more general interest on how to create technology that could sense any danger to a widespread form of structures. Dr. Arvin's passion for making the world safer is the main goal in all

his research, looking to prevent catastrophes before they even have the chance of happening. He states:

"I want to give infrastructures the same capability that the human body has. I want to mimic the body's ability to sense issues and alert that something needs to be fixed to continue safely."

He plans on implementing this and even teaching it next semester through a class on Artificial Intelligence. He believes, for good reason, that artificial intelligence is the key to creating structures that can detect hazardous changes. He looks to create artificial intelligence that can even delineate the difference between perilous changes and non-threatening changes, such as rain.

Beyond his research, Dr. Arvin is excited to be here at NMT. It's no secret that NMT is an underdog school, we're constantly going under the radar especially compared to bigger name schools despite our academics being just as good, if not better. Dr. Arvin immediately saw this during his interview at the school and wanted to explore just how much we have to offer. "I saw so much potential here, even the students are eager to learn. They are hands-on and always motivated." Between the collaborative nature of NMT's departments, a student body with ambition and the chance to share his passion for teaching, Dr. Arvin is "very happy to be here at New Mexico Tech, I'm beyond glad I came."

Dr. Arvin is a new professor within the engineering department, teaching classes such as Numerical Analysis. He looks to bring the knowledge of his research to the department and his teaching. With a firm passion for making the world a safer place, Dr. Arvin is pioneering in structural engineering with blending his knowledge on mechanical, civil, electrical engineering and computer science. Be sure to be looking for classes with him in the semesters to come!

- Alexandra Sartori

As you can see from the graphs within this article, where lower numbers were more popular, the option to have a true 'dead week' before finals instead of Spring Break was the most popular among students, but not by much, as every option was fairly popular according to the point scheme. But as for faculty members, the option to end one week early was the most popular, alongside starting one week late. The dead week option was only in the middle in terms of popularity for faculty, and everything else was abhorred.

Dr. Mozley described the polling process: after polling both faculty and students, a secondary vote was sent to faculty members between ending a week early, and dead week, the two most popular options respectively. The vote was 57%/43% in favor of ending a week early. The decision was not called then, however. It was brought before the COVID Task Force, composed of multiple faculty and administration members throughout campus and Socorro, before President Wells made the final decision to end a week early.

Discussion followed, and points were raised countering the polling process itself. Some students felt that the survey was confusing in nature, or that choices such as keeping Spring Break, which was the second most popular for students, was

never a 'real' option. It was also asked why students did not get a secondary vote, similar to that of the faculty.

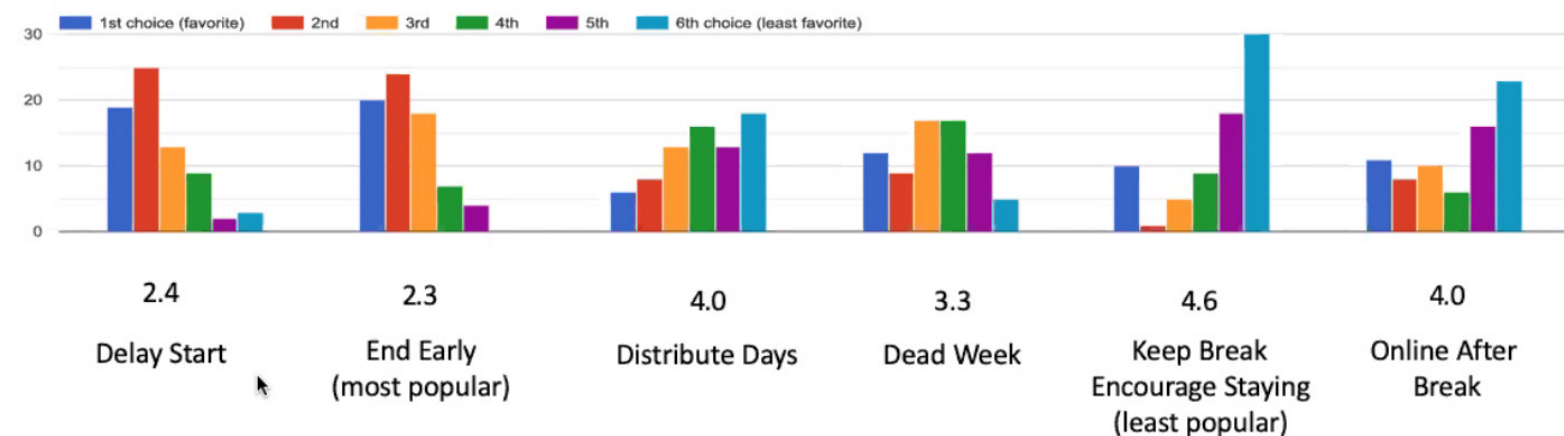
At the end of the discussion, Dr. Doug Wells ensured that the opinions of the students present at the meeting and the SGA as a whole would be brought to President Wells himself. The SGA voted to write up a resolution to send to administration, detailing concerns and solutions regarding the issue. The final draft of this cited mental health for students as the biggest factor against ending a week early, and recommended either spreading out the days-off throughout the semester, or having a dead week.

Almost ironically, President Wells just sent out an email adding two academic holidays throughout the spring semester, at the time of editing this print issue. If you are concerned about any decision made by the SGA or administration, send complaints to the SGA at: <https://www.nmt.edu/sga/forms/index.php>.

-Skyler Matteson

Faculty Survey Results (n = 77)

Taking the pros and cons noted in the email into account, please rank the following options to deal with the "Spring Break problem."



Ending the 2020 Fall Semester: A Student's Survival Guide



Let's face it: 2020 is a pond being constantly stirred up by all the changes which are constantly made to the spring semester catalog, registration times and availability, and the housing options for the upcoming breaks. So, it might be helpful to give students a clear, direct, and consolidated explanation of what's going on currently and what options are with regards to moving into the next semester.

Starting with the nearest events, students are allowed to remain on campus during the upcoming Thanksgiving Break (November 23rd-27th). This is obviously not mandatory but still remains an option for those students who live out-of-state or wish to stay here. Both Fire and Ice and Chartwells, will remain open until the end of the semester on December 11th to serve meals for those students who wish to stay. If students are staying for the duration of both Thanksgiving Break and Winter Break, they should email mitchell.tappen@nmt.edu for permission. As long as these students do not engage in any risky traveling, obtaining permission shouldn't be an issue.

For the students who would like to leave for Thanksgiving Break, they have two options. The first option is to move out and stay home until the beginning of the spring semester on January 19th. If students chose to do this, they must leave campus by noon on Saturday November 21st. Students once again have several options here: If they are moving back with the intention of staying there for

the rest of the 2020-2021 school year, they must inform Residential Life of the cancellation in writing or by email by December 1st. The email should contain your name, student ID, and reason for cancellation. Failure to do so will result in a \$200 penalty. These students should also be sure to inform the appropriate RAs of their decisions.

If students are returning to the same dorm or apartment with the same roommate, suitemate, or neither, then the deadline to leave campus still applies, with the caveat that students may take what belongings they wish, and leave nonessentials behind, so long as all electrical appliances/devices are left unplugged, the lights are turned off, the thermostat is set to 65 degrees (only for Baca and South Hall students), the room is cleaned, all perishable food items are removed, refrigerators are defrosted and left with the door open, all doors, windows, and blinds are closed and locked. All valuables must likewise be removed and nonmotorized bikes may be left in students' rooms. Should students choose to leave their car on campus, they should park it as close to the Students Activities Center as possible and notify Campus Police. If a student wishes to change rooms or their housing arrangements (ex. Students would like to room with another student), they should have already informed Residential Life and received confirmation of the change as of November 7th. Both roommates should have listed one another on their intent forms. If not, students can contact Housing directly

Moving from Vice President last year to President this year, Jessica has been enjoying, "being able to help people and, right now, that means running these [ASCE] meetings and helping new [civil engineers] find their way through the program." Jessica's passion to help people doesn't stop there. Jessica found her calling to Civil Engineering in high school during a research project, "I noticed that a lot of the infrastructures I was looking at could be significantly improved in design and could be just that much more safe for people." After college, Jessica is looking to channel this interest into transportation and city planning.

"I think that Civil Engineering is the most philanthropic engineering discipline, our entire job is dedicated to serving the community and making sure people can feel safe in their everyday lives."

ASCE is always welcoming new Civil Engineering students and offering new opportunities to learn and grow within the discipline. Jessica Misla, the club's president, will work with you to make sure you can succeed. Get involved!

- Alexandra Sartori



Club Spotlight

"We build too many walls and not enough bridges." -Isaac Newton

American Society of Civil Engineers



Do you live in a building? Have you ever walked on a road? Ever seen a bridge? Some of our most basic facets of life are thanks to civil engineers.

Jessica Misla, a senior Civil Engineering student and President of the NMT chapter of American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), is eager about helping her fellow civil engineering peers and helping the world. She got involved in her local chapter of ASCE early in her college career. Societies such as ASCE work to help students within their disciplines to network and meet peers that are pursuing the same interests. "We work to help students in Civil Engineering to get involved with projects that they are likely to see later in their careers."

Civil Engineering students, like many other engineers, have a design project their senior or final year of undergraduate. Jessica especially aims to help these seniors through these design projects. Civil Engineers typically choose between the concrete canoe and the steel bridge but also have the option of an independent choice. Taking on either choice for the design project can be daunting and intimidating, no matter how passionate you are. ASCE aims to provide as much help as possible by helping with fundraising and even construction of the end product.



or by email at residential_life@npe.nmt.edu or mitchell.tappen@nmt.edu. Students returning to campus for the spring semester can move back in starting on January 16th, and must at some point have the Res Life Office encode their key card (the Office will be open on the 16th and 17th from 9 AM until 5 PM). Classes start on January 19th, 2021.

The third option students have is to leave campus for the duration of Thanksgiving Break (again, November 23rd-27th) and only return for the remaining two weeks of classes, in order to return home for winter break. In this case, students are required to remain within the state of New Mexico and avoid contact with any individuals who have been tested positive or are showing symptoms of COVID-19. If contact is made or students travel out of state, they will not be allowed to return to campus for the final two weeks of classes. At this time the forms allowing students to change their break plans specifically pertaining to returning for the final two weeks or through Thanksgiving Break are closed and those students should have already filled the forms out.

For all students living in campus housing who do will not return to campus following Thanksgiving Break, the remainder of the housing charge will be credited to the student's account as well as any unused meals from the chosen meal plan.

For any further questions or information, the NMT Residential Office can be reached at (575-835-5900 or residential_life@nmt.edu).

Moving on, class registration information has been a little mixed lately. However, officially it has been confirmed that registration starts November 16th. However, this only applies to graduate students, since the administration usually opens up registration by what year students are in. This means that freshmen will unfortunately be last in terms of class registration. Regardless, before then, several steps should be taken in order to ensure students get the class they want as soon as possible. Firstly, students should once again make out a course plan as they did for the fall semester and send it to their advisor in order to get it approved. Once approved, advisors will once again provide students with an APIN which can be used to start registering for classes once the registration opens up. In addition, students should check on Banweb for any holds, as it won't be possible to register if a student has holds on their account. For any further information, please contact the Registrar at registrar@nmt.edu or Student Affairs at studentaffairs@nmt.edu.

- Isaiah Padilla

Faculty Senate Acts as Tech's Academic Backbone

New Mexico Tech is known for many attributes; its' high academic reputation and standards, its' remote and secluded location, and its' hands-on and inclusive projects which students up for future success. However, what goes largely unnoticed and unappreciated are some of the driving forces behind those attributes. The Faculty Senate is one such power, and is largely responsible for upholding the high academic standards at NMT.

In an interview with Dr. Michael Hargather, the Faculty Senate's Chair, Paydirt was able to dig deeper into the minds behind Tech's academic standards. To start, the Faculty Senate is akin to the Student Government Association in that it allows professors and other faculty and staff members to come together in one group to discuss their concerns with Tech's administrators, albeit with more weight when it comes to making decisions which affect campus life in any way, shape, or form. And Tech is not alone when it comes to having a Faculty Senate; most colleges and universities have a Faculty Senate, or similar organization in the case of some

universities, an Institute Senate. The idea behind this kind of collaboration comes from the concept of shared governance, where accountability, equity, ownership, and partnership are the name of the game. This means that the Faculty Senate, while not having the ultimate authority or say in decisions, carries a greater responsibility to internally come up with and discuss potential changes or solutions to campus life, especially where academics are concerned, and, should the decision be made, to present that to the powers that be within NMT's greater administration.

It must be understood that, while oftentimes these decisions affect smaller aspects of campus life, such as minute changes to the course plans, many of the larger-scale events which impact Tech students' lives are influenced by our Faculty Senate. Events such as graduation, the course catalog, and even degree requirement lists must be approved by the Faculty Senate in order to be implemented. "Any student who wants to graduate has to be approved by the Faculty Senate,"

says Hargather. "We approve the list of graduates... who are then awarded a diploma on behalf of the school's Regents... [another one of the groups of NMT's higher administration]."

The Senate includes seventeen standing committees, eighteen if you count the Chair. These committees include Academic Freedom and Tenure, Academic Standards and Admissions, Americans with Disabilities, Benefits, Budget & Research, Computing on Campus, Education & Research Efficiency, Faculty Development, Honorary Degrees & Awards, Nominating, Ombudspersons, Regents-Faculty Conference, Retention, Sabbatical, Space Utilization, Student Discipline, and Undergraduate Academic Advising Committee. Each of these committees is responsible for not only internally discussing and, if necessary, calling for decisions upon topics pertaining to their respective purposes, but any other problems or subjects which they feel should be addressed appropriately.

Hargather noted that although it may seem as if the Faculty Senate is exists only for the sake of professors and staff members, it is also there for the students as well. "We are here if students have questions... we're open to [their] input," he says. "At the end of the day, faculty care just as much about students' success as the students themselves." As a matter of fact, six of the seventeen committees, all of which directly affect student life, have at least one, if not two representatives, typically an undergraduate and a graduate. Like the Student Government Association, the Faculty Senate exists partially on behalf of the student body. If anything students should be more than willing to address any concerns or issues they may have with Senate, since they only have access to more resources and information but they also are composed of our professors, teaching assistants, and instructors, who are able to give us specific and appropriate information pertaining to students looking into specific career path choices.

- Isaiah Padilla

