

CAHE OPEN FORUM  
Dean Lowell Catlett  
December 18, 2006  
2:00p.m. – Auditorium - CENTRA

**Members Present:**

125 participants in auditorium and 6 attendees signed in on CENTRA.

**Dean Catlett Opening:**

He thanked everyone for coming. When he became Dean, he knew he wanted to do something where he could have open communication with the college and address their concerns. He chose Rich Phillips to head up the project because he had the most experience with this type of thing and had challenged Dr. Catlett to really think over the years. They spent a lot of time discussing the best way to approach this. The idea was to get a core (visioning team) together that would be committed to the idea that it is important to have a participatory open process for seeking input in what we do as a college. This team has been very eager to work on this and he thanked them for their dedication and hard work as well as Rich Phillips who kept them on cue and designed the process. The visioning team includes Dennis Hallford, Jim Libbin, John Mexal, Greg Blanch, Roberta Rios, Jeanne Gleason, and Ann Bock. They have graciously given many hours. The first task was to determine how to get concerns addressed, determine what are we doing right or wrong and what can we do better as a college. And we need to learn from the process. Some ideas for how to accomplish this were surveys & emails but most feel emails are cumbersome. It was determined to hold focus groups as an informal way of making everyone comfortable in expressing their concerns. There were 19 groups with a total participation of 78 people. Online comments were also taken. Terry Canup, Daniel Kim, and Kim Hand were all thanked for their help in these meetings. This is only the start and hopefully in the next round we can address more strategic, tactical issues. This will be an ongoing, dynamic process & it's important we participate together & engage in dialog.

The Visioning team had a group develop a list of the top issues expressed at the focus groups and the online commentary. One was changing the name of the college. We are a very diverse college & our name is not really indicative to this. It's not that our current name is disliked but it doesn't reflect groups like FCS & HRTM and perception is reality. We have a team looking across the country to see what other colleges have done that works. We want to set a goal of 66% of college in agreement for a decision. The Committee will make recommendations next quarter.

In the Focus group comments, the most responses were in 3 areas. The first was decision making – Dr. Catlett agrees this is an issue and he doesn't like black holes or all decision making based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. He wants the decisions determined by those out in the college. The Dean's office is charged with making the decisions but the best decisions come from getting a lot of input from the people involved. The first step is to put in place a process where everyone feels they can provide input. He believes strongly in those with the authority & responsibility to do something, taking action & actually doing it. The cabinet & department head meetings are open to anyone who wishes to come. Paul, LeRoy, Tim, & Wes agree and the only thing prohibited from open discussion by statute & protocol is personnel issues.

The second most commonly discussed issue was communication. Dr. Catlett was on the

committee that recommended to Dean Schickedanz to drop the all-college conference which had negative connotation to some and the consensus was that we weren't getting much out of it. It has been expressed that we are a diverse college, we are spread out everywhere with lots of interest groups, we have people involved in teaching, extension, research, and they need to see each other's faces & get to know each other. We have a team that will begin meeting in January to look for ways to network. We have a lot of technology we can use to help accomplish this. Email notifications are used now but we are all guilty of deleting due to the numbers. You tell us how best to communicate. Do you want forums quarterly, more often, less often? We want communication to be as open as possible. Dr. Catlett does a lot of corporate work & he discovered that often they do only a small amount of true 'business' in some meetings and the rest is totally social where they get together & just learn about each other and make contacts. If that's what you think will work here that's fine. The idea is to get together and build a culture where we can actually know each other. This is not just about faculty but should be totally inclusive & participatory and include classified staff & constituents. The NMSU CAHE website still has a forum/blog for comments that is available 24/7. These comments will be gleaned on a regular basis. Dr. Greg Blanch came to the Dean to express the need for an Ombudsman and volunteered to fill that need himself. Email notifications but we are all guilty of deleting due to the numbers.

The third issue was business practice. One focus was the length of time it takes to get reimbursement checks. We have already initiated a new procedure to streamline this. You now only need one signature from your immediate supervisor. We want you to get your money back as fast as possible and Tim is in total agreement. Dr. Catlett believes in a culture of trust first & deal with aberrations as they occur rather than slapping an onerous rule on everyone because of a few problem people. He believes in treating people with respect & dignity. We have put together a group to be advisory team to help identify other processes that need to be streamlined like getting grants with fewer signatures.

We are trying to listen to you & make this a participatory process. We want to know what are our weaknesses & strengths. Where should we be going as a college? One area to look at is what are our legislative initiatives? What are we asking money for? We took a \$199,000 energy hit and this money has to come from somewhere. Should we go to the legislature? Dr. Martin said a couple of critical things recently.

#1 – We are driven by formula funding. The money that comes from the state for instruction & general depends on the number of students. We must understand we are performance & metric based which means growth. But if we are growing, that means we are providing what people think has value and they want to be part of it. If we are doing that, our programs will grow and we can live to fight another day for instruction & general. We just took in our 3<sup>rd</sup> largest freshman class this fall.

#2 – Dr. Catlett believes very strongly that we have no problem for lack of growth. There are phenomenal opportunities available to us.

- One example is our Ag Econ dept. has been joint with the Business college's Econ dept.

on the graduate level since 1971 and it has been a great success. The opportunity here is should they be joined as a school? Could we create a critical mass of the largest group of economists between here & Berkely to do economic development. Jim Libbin from Ag Econ & Jim Peach from Economics are working on a Doctorate program in Economic Development. There is a phenomenal opportunity for executives to come to Las Cruces in January for training in economic development. He would never have believed that he would be attending the ribbon cutting ceremony for the worlds largest cheese factory in Clovis, NM. This was a joint effort between NM dairy producers and a coop of dairy producers from Ireland.

- The Higgins ranch that Dr. Catlett grew up near now produces the world's largest concentration of swine in the country – that is growth. There are many new studies that show people are more in love with horses than ever. This presents a growth opportunity for ANSC. Years ago the number one factor in determining ranch value was how productive it was as a ranch, and now an important factor is how close the ranch is in proximity to Santa Fe. That's not wrong, it's just the changing way of looking at traditional ranches. It means that other avenues are opening up to them. There is no question that every day Americans have more leisure money. This opens the opportunity for providing hunting licenses or hunting wildlife with a camera.
- There are eco & agritourism opportunities.
- The Mayor of Albuquerque called and said he wants a biofuel facility in his city. He wants to use biofuel in all the city vehicles and he wants the farmers around Albuquerque to provide that fuel. We have world-class, molecular geneticists that can help in that process.
- Every day as we eat a little too much and as we age, we deal with issues like nutrition, diabetes, dietetics, & family values. 20 years ago Marion Diamond at Berkely proved that when we live in a caring, loving environment, we live longer and have a more productive & enhanced brain. FCS has addressed these issues for years and they are not going away, they are being enhanced.
- As we get more crazy about our entertainment, HRTM has unlimited opportunity for growth. We had a joint meeting with the UNM Board of Regents and that was the one program they said they wanted to be involved with. UNM now has the authority to open a Rio Rancho branch campus that they aim to make world-class and they will be concentrating their health science there. Dr. Catlett told them we have world-class scientists here that they should team up with.

The point is we are going to be performance & metric driven and the growth opportunities are astounding. We have no where to go but up.

### **Question & Answer Session**

Q. John Mexal – What is the next step for all the other comments that have been accumulated?

A. Dean Catlett – The visioning committee is charged with keeping this dynamic and the comments don't go away and will be reviewed on a regular basis. We are trying to address the broadest array of comments first but they will all be addressed.

Q. Ann Bock – She had a suggestion. She took a sabbatical at Purdue, which is also somewhat formula driven, and their food & nutrition dept. got industry sponsors. For instance, Eli Lilly contributes to various programs in the food & nutrition dept. who in turn does various in-services for Eli Lilly. Perhaps we could look at the industry partner concept with the help of college extension. And out in the counties, they could possibly develop the same concept with city or local partners.

A. Dean Catlett – He agrees this could be a possibility. When he came here in 1978, a significant portion of funding was federal. That later changed to a lot of state funding and now the state is telling us to start looking elsewhere. So private partners is certainly a possibility. Dr. Catlett was at Illinois State University recently and they have summer classes called e-classes which stands for entrepreneurial classes where they are paid per student. He doesn't know if this is a good model or not but he is certainly willing to explore other options for funding. If you have been here very long you know it is tough to even fight inflation with what we get here in terms of wages. So anything we can do to enhance that in any way, he is more than willing to look into it.

Q. Sergio Soto – 2 questions: #1- Where does the college stand on quantity vs. quality in formula funding. #2 - If the departments are going to grow, that growth needs money and where is that money going to come from?

A. Dean Catlett – #1 – You are right that we constantly have to battle the trade-off of quality vs. quantity. Some have set parameters like determining to have 200 students and then be selective of those 200 students. That's just one example of a departmental model and it does go a little against my grain. #2 – Concerning growth money, that is one reason the President pulled back 2% of I&G this year to target growth areas and we have submitted applications to get funds back to our faculty for these growth areas. But keep in mind that 2% originally had to come from everybody's hide across campus to create that pool to reward growth. These are tough questions and there are no easy answers. These are the kind of things we really need to work on. The issue of quality/quantity is very real and those of you who have involved in outcomes assessment know that there was a time when we could say about graduates that we added value to their life just by way of them graduating with a degree. Now we have to prove we added some value. These are very pertinent questions and we are going to have to deal with them. A lot of this comes back by way of people coming and getting our graduates for job positions. That, in itself, says that we have added value to their lives. That is what we are all about. Adding value, whether it be through the research we do, contacts we make, or adding value to a students life.

Q. Cindy Waddell – The Oasis program was one of the best things that came out of our college. She would hate to see it go away completely. She understands that, for whatever reason, they did not get the land they were hoping for. Can the college still support that program and are there any plans to expand on it? She would like to see the college go in the direction of sustainable agriculture.

A. Dean Catlett – He is fully in support of anything a group of you can get traction for. When we had 12,000 farms in NM, 351 produced ½ the output. So it is important to help those 351,

but it is also important to help all the others as well. He thinks small farms are critical in this state including organic. He is 100% in support of any program that fulfills a need of our constituents & stakeholders. The bottom line here is – are we serving the constituents? Everyone here has phenomenal ideas for coming up with ways to help our constituents & stakeholders and that’s why we are here. It adds value not only to the people but also to us. Those of you who are teachers know that the greatest feeling in the world is when you are lecturing and you see their eyes flitter, and you know you got them. And that’s not just in the classroom but it applies when you have a constituent that has a problem and you are able to help them.

Q. Dennis Hallford – He understands the need for the university-wide extension process but doesn’t understand the pecking order.

A. Paul Gutierrez – Dr. Catlett is the Director of CES. Dr. Gutierrez is the Associate Dean & Associate Director of CES. Dr. Gutierrez’s additional title is Vice Provost of Outreach Services which is an evolving responsibility and they are working on defining the roles & responsibilities of Dr. Gutierrez and other Assoc. Deans across campus.

A. Dean Catlett – One of the things that have come out of the university-wide extension initiative is working with UNM Med School to help communities with their health care needs. There are also great opportunities in engineering & economic development and other areas.

Q. Martha Archuleta – She thanked everyone involved in this visioning process and said it was greatly appreciated. She asked if Dr. Catlett could share any comments and/or suggestions that came out of the morning session that involved many county offices via Centra.

A. Dean Catlett –

- One concern was the integration of offices. Dr. Catlett and the central administration have no interest in combining departments just for the sake of combining. But there is a strong need to integrate extension, teaching, & research in areas where there are opportunities to do so. We are moving to universal P&T at the university level. Dr. Catlett has been 25% extension during his time here and there has been the idea of ‘separate but equal’, that has not been the case. And the perception that extension is second class is also not true. We need a process that clearly defines what a job is. If we develop a culture of trust, he believes in everyone’s ability to fairly look at what a job description is and proportionately put together a recommendation body and then we can do universal P&T. This will be crucial if we are to have university-wide extension. This will not be done, however, without getting input from everyone involved. If necessary, for those already hire, we can grandfather into using the old system until you are happy. The intent is not to penalize but to move toward a university-wide system that can include extension.
- Another concern was pay. Dr. Catlett has been concerned about this ever since he went to President Halligan about the fact that there were secretaries here that qualified for foodstamps. Some classified staff are so poorly paid that they can officially fall below the poverty line and that is intolerable. Dr. Catlett believes that staff from all arenas are critical to who we are as a college because we are all involved in this business of providing adding value to people. He doesn’t know what he can do but he will make sure to be a voice in getting this changed as much as he can.

- Sabbaticals was also discussed. Dr. Catlett is all for faculty and all staff taking sabbaticals including classified staff.

A. Ann Bock – Wanted to remind everyone that comments & concerns are still being taken regarding university-wide P&T. The link to this site will be sent out via email. She encouraged everyone to send in their comments to make our voice heard. The last day is January 12.

A. Tracy Sterling – She was the co-chair of the committee looking at university-wide P&T and our purpose this past year was to formulate a plan that would make P&T more transparent, flexible, and account for the allocation of effort of each individual. Comments go to Larry Crieder on the Faculty Senate website.

A. Paul Gutierrez – Regarding Dennis Hallford’s question earlier, as Assoc. Dean he reports to Dr. Catlett, and as Vice Provost of University Outreach he reports to Dr. Flores. For those who may be wondering what is happening with university-wide extension, there is a lot happening that we have not gone public with yet. We are currently working on building relationships. For instance, Dr. Catlett mentioned the possible collaboration with UNM Med School and we are also working with Holoman AFB to put classes on IPOD to allow servicemen who are deployed to continue their education out in the field. We have taken on NM Works in central NM which is the largest TANFF project in the state. We are also working on educating other colleges on just what extension is. Gerald Chacon and Extension Department Heads have been helping a lot with this. Our goal is to have something to show for it when we actually launch University-wide Extension.

Dr. Catlett’s closing remarks – This is a participatory, continuous process. He believes all of those privileged to have in an administrative role exist to serve you and not the other way around. You are on the line working with our stakeholders every day and we are here to listen to you, get you as many resources as we can, make you as visible as we can, and congratulate you on your achievements.