

Fiscal impact reports (FIRs) are prepared by the Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) for standing finance committees of the NM Legislature. The LFC does not assume responsibility for the accuracy of these reports if they are used for other purposes.

Current FIRs (in HTML & Adobe PDF formats) are available on the NM Legislative Website (legis.state.nm.us). Adobe PDF versions include all attachments, whereas HTML versions may not. Previously issued FIRs and attachments may also be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR Miera DATE TYPED 2/14/04 HB HJM 44/aHEC

SHORT TITLE Staff Ratio Guidelines at State Colleges SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Dunbar

### APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY04	FY05	FY04	FY05		
			See Narrative		

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of HEC Amendment

The House Education Committee Amendment amends the bill by requesting the Commission on Higher Education review the employment practices related to part-time and non-tenure track faculty, and develop recommendations on the establishment of minimum salary and benefit provisions similar to tenure-track faculty. The amendment notes this could ensure fair employment practices and provide for consistent emphasis on quality instruction. The cost of implementation of the provision will be relevant to the study.

Question: Will the implementation of this provision lower the high turnover rate for part-time and non-tenure track faculty?

#### Synopsis of Original Bill

HJM 44 requests that the Commission on Higher Education (CHE) establish and implement guidelines regarding the ratio of full-time to part-time faculty and staff at state institutions of higher education. It further requests that these guidelines not exceed those ratios that currently reflect best practices and that they enhance and maintain the delivery of quality higher education services; that the CHE systematically and annually monitor and analyze information regarding the impact of these guidelines on the quality of education at state institutions of higher education; that the CHE implement formal and continued annual monitoring of ratios of full-time to part-time faculty and staff and determine the impact on the delivery of these services; that the findings and recommendations resulting from the implementation of the guidelines and the monitoring be provided to the Legislative Education Study Committee (LESC) by November 1, 2004. This request appears to be a follow-up request to HJM 73 of 2001 and SJM36 of 2003.

### Significant Issues

The quality of education in a college or university requires the use of full-time, permanent tenured faculty and that courses be taught by highly qualified people, whether they are full-time or part-time employees. Various national studies have shown a trend toward the hiring of part-time, non-tenured faculty who often teach in substandard conditions. These highly qualified individuals should be rewarded in a manner consistent with their qualifications and commensurate with tenure track faculty.

This request appears to be a follow-up request to HJM 73 of 2001 and SJM 36 of 2003. HJM73 of 2001 requested that the CHE study staffing patterns for full- and part-time faculty and classified staff at New Mexico institutions of higher education and make recommendations for ratios of full-time to part-time faculty and classified staff. SJM36 of 2003 requested that the New Mexico Legislative Council appoint an appropriate interim legislative committee to review the use of part-time and non-tenure track faculty in New Mexico's postsecondary educational institutions. Additionally, SJM36 requested that CHE study the effect of the use of such faculty in place of tenured or tenure track, full-time professional faculty on educational standards and report to the interim legislative committee.

### **ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES**

The CHE reported in 2003 that implementing the memorial would have a major impact on CHE staff time.

### **OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

Quoted below, as cited in the CHE analysis, are the conclusions of "House Joint Memorial 73, 2001 Regular Session, which requested that the CHE study staffing patterns for full- and part-time faculty and classified staff at New Mexico institutions of higher education and make recommendations for ratios of full-time to part-time faculty and classified staff. The quality of education and services delivered to clients of the higher education institutions was the concern of the memorial.

In 2002, the CHE published the Report of Full-time/Part-time Faculty and Staff Ratios, which reached the following conclusions:

- ❑ Outside of public research universities, the data from New Mexico institutions for the use of part-time faculty does not appear to be far out-of-line with the data gathered nationally for similar institutions. Relative to the New Mexico public research institutions, the four-year trend through 2001 shows a 4.3% decline in the use of part-time faculty.
- ❑ For part-time staff employees, the New Mexico institutions are below or in line with the national data, except for public medical schools.
- ❑ There is little in the literature to suggest that the utilization of part-time faculty is a detriment to quality, and the advantages and disadvantages of using part-time faculty and staffs are about evenly weighted.
- ❑ In a time of some economic uncertainty, where institutions may be required to display some flexibility, and since there are no strong negative indicators in the use of part-time faculty and staff, the conclusion drawn is that no recommendations should be provided to the institutions relative to the use of part-time employees.

**House Joint Memorial Bill 44/aHEC -- Page 3**

The language in this bill (HJM 44) states that the above named report does not yield definitive conclusions regarding the impact of the various ratios; that literature reviewed in the report suggests that the use of part-time faculty and staff creates disadvantages noted in the bill.

This bill further states that the CHE study does not address the relationship of these ratios to the high turnover rates of faculty and staff and the adverse impact on the quality of educational services, that guidelines for optimal ratios are not established and trends are not monitored and that after continued systematic monitoring and analysis of information about current staffing practices in public higher education institutions, a determination should be made whether there is a need for setting up a more structured and organized system for hiring and retaining part-time faculty and staff in those institutions

**BD/dm:lg**