

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 be obtained from the LFC in Suite 101 of the State Capitol Building North.

FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

SPONSOR McSorley DATE TYPED 03-08-05 HB _____

SHORT TITLE NM Colleges Full & Part-Time Faculty Study SB SJM59

ANALYST Woods

APPROPRIATION

Appropriation Contained		Estimated Additional Impact		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY05	FY06	FY05	FY06		
	NFI				

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Duplicates HJM73

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files
New Mexico Commission on Higher Education (CHE)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Joint Memorial 59 – Resolving to Study the Part- and Full-Time Faculty and Staff Rations at New Mexico Colleges and Universities – notes that:

- the Commission on Higher Education has reported that New Mexico universities and colleges use part-time faculty similarly;
- the Commission on Higher Education reported no evidence that part-time faculty members are any less capable or qualified than full-time faculty members;
- part-time faculty members constitute between thirty and seventy percent of New Mexico post-secondary faculties;
- governing boards of New Mexico post-secondary schools have an obligation to carry out their roles and missions equitably and provide leadership and guidance;

Senate Joint Memorial 59 -- Page 2

- courses should be taught by highly qualified faculty, whether part- or full-time, tenured or non-tenured, who are paid a professional salary and are included in the academic processes;
- studies have shown that the majority of part-time faculty members teach under substandard conditions; and
- national professional organizations representing post-secondary faculty, administrators and trustees have agreed that fair compensation for part-time and non-tenure-track faculty should be based on qualifications commensurate with tenure-track faculty qualifications, with a goal of pro rata rather than per-course-hour rates.

With respect to the above factors, this joint memorial resolves the following:

- that the Commission on Higher Education be requested to convene a "best practices task force" to examine compensation practices and conditions of employment for part-time faculty at post-secondary schools;
- that the task force include both full- and part-time faculty, members of the Commission on Higher Education, staff of the Legislative Finance Committee, representatives of the American Federation of Teachers and the Association of University Professors and members of university, community and technical college administrations; and
- that the best practices task force report be presented to an appropriate interim legislative committee by September 30, 2005 and that the report address the following issues:
 - establishment of minimum acceptable levels of salaries and benefits for part-time faculty;
 - indexing part-time faculty to full-time tenure-track faculty;
 - means of recognizing professional stature of part-time faculty;
 - fiscal implications of increased reliance on part-time faculty; and
 - means of addressing inequities in compensation for part-time faculty at post-secondary schools;
- that the best practices task force develop a set of best practice principles and recommendations for use by all post-secondary schools beginning in the 2007 fiscal year; and
- that the Commission on Higher Education develop a plan and submit recommendations to the second session of the Forty-Seventh Legislature to address compensation and staffing

issues at post-secondary schools and submit to the governor a ten-year implementation plan for improved part-time faculty salaries and benefits.

ADMINISTRATIVE IMPLICATIONS

The memorial further resolves that copies of the memorial be transmitted to members of the Commission on Higher Education and the presidents of each of New Mexico's post-secondary schools.

While this joint memorial does not address the matter of costs, CHE observes that it could impact the commission in two respects:

- The commission would bear the fiscal impact of conducting the requested study, preparing reports, etc. These non-recurring costs would impact the operating budget of the commission; and
- implementation of a multi-year proposal to improve part-time faculty salaries and benefits could have very substantial fiscal impacts on the state general fund appropriations to the institutions. This would occur in the event that the higher education funding formula is revised to provide additional financial resources to the institutions for this purpose.

CHE adds that the commission is charged with the administrative responsibility for the activities outlined in this joint memorial, and that implementation will require a significant commitment of staff time and resources, especially in view of the relatively short time frame defined in the bill for development and presentation of recommendations.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

HJM73 and SJM59 are duplicate measures.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

CHE observes that, historically, compensation practices at the post-secondary institutions have been matters within the full control of institutional governing boards and administrations. The CHE has not played a significant role in the development of common compensation practices. It is also noted that the current higher education funding mechanism generates resources for the institutions primarily based on estimated costs per student credit hour of instruction. The formula does not directly address issues related to full-time versus part-time faculty compensation.

CHE adds that the higher education funding mechanism currently used in New Mexico provides a lump sum appropriation to the institutions for "Instruction and General" purposes. Institutions have broad discretion to allocate the state funding to best address institutional priorities. Institutional practices with respect to faculty compensation and fringe benefits have generally been under the purview of the institutional boards and administrations. Commission involvement in this area has historically been very limited.

BFW/lg