

To the Editor, Daily Lobo

We are writing because faculty at UNM are increasingly concerned about many aspects of the current proposal for union representation including the short timeline between announcement of the election and voting day, onerous absentee voting procedures, lack of genuine debate, and the proposed single bargaining unit for all continuing faculty (tenure-track, lecturer and research professor). Most troubling, however, are the tactics employed by the union which threaten to weaken our institution, diminish our research productivity and impose rigid structures that could stifle innovation and creativity. This could have long term impact on student success and faculty morale.

Deception and intimidation

Concerned with the lack of any debate about the current unionization proposal, and lack of critical information, a group of faculty set up a website www.unmexcellence.org last week. Within a few days, UA-UNM bought up domain names www.unmexcellence.com and www.unmexcellence.net which surreptitiously take you to the UA-UNM union site. *Should a legitimate faculty organization engage in such underhand practices?* The Faculty Senate Committee on Governance had to send out a notice informing faculty of this deception.

We have seen a proliferation of signs promoting the union. But when a group of faculty put up signs that said VOTE NO, these posters were being taken down. These incidents were captured by video surveillance and the Provost was compelled to write to the campus community to remind us of the importance of free expression and to encourage people to listen to diverse points of view.

Is this the end of genuine debate on campus, when opposing views will be quashed by over-zealous supporters? We have heard complaints of faculty being intimidated by these tactics. A union that promises transparency should not be engaging in deception and intimidation.

Outside interests are at play

Who is behind this? It is an organized campaign orchestrated by groups external to UNM, such as the AFT and AFL-CIO. Big money is involved (remember they want to collect our union dues). Think of the cost of all the flyers being plastered all over campus and in neighborhoods around UNM. Do you see this as a spontaneous gathering of UNM faculty who want to organize and be represented? Consider how many times union representatives have come to visit your office to solicit your vote. But they did not stop there, they started invading our homes as well. The union asked the administration for personal information on UNM faculty and fought a legal battle, which they rightfully lost. But this did not stop them from visiting our homes and knocking on our doors. Would you like to work on a campus where your UNM colleagues come to your homes to tell you what you should and should not do on campus? The campus is getting polarized due to a systematic onslaught orchestrated by external entities.

Voter suppression

The vote was announced on September 17, but the list of eligible voters was posted on Oct 2. The deadline for absentee ballot requests set for October 1 (It was revised later to Oct 4). Many research-active faculty travel, some are abroad doing research or teaching. They are being denied the opportunity to vote because of the short timeline. Why require justification to request absentee ballots? No national, state or county election imposes such restrictions. Free and fair elections require time for