

1-D Constitution of the Faculty Senate

CONSTITUTION OF THE FACULTY SENATE OF NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY Revisions Passed by Faculty Senate May 7, 2026

(As ratified by the general faculty and reported to the Faculty Senate on July 18, 1961; amended by the general faculty and reported to the Faculty Senate on November 16, 1984 and January 14, 1988; amended by the general faculty and reported to the Faculty Senate on January 14, 1993 [bylaws] and April 4, 1993 [Constitution]; amended by votes of the general faculty October 1995, October 2004, December 2004, December 2005, October 30, 2008, and May 5, 2011; amended by the general faculty and reported to the Faculty Senate on September 6, 2012. amended by the general faculty and reported to the Faculty Senate on April 02, 2015; Passed by the Faculty Senate April 2, 2020 and ratified by vote of the Faculty reported September 3, 2020; amended and passed by the Faculty Senate on February 4, 2021 and ratified by vote of the Faculty; amended and passed by the Faculty Senate on October 7, 2021 and ratified by vote of the Faculty; amended and passed by the Faculty Senate on May 5, 2022 and ratified by vote of the Faculty); amended and passed by the Faculty Senate on May 7, 2026 and ratified by vote of the Faculty

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Faculty Senate of the New Mexico State University. For the purpose of this Constitution, the term “faculty” shall refer to those individuals who are not retired and who meet one of the following conditions:

1. A tenured faculty member or in a tenure track position.
2. A faculty member in a regular, non-tenure track faculty position.
3. A faculty member in a temporary, non-tenure track position who has been employed at NMSU for at least four semesters in the last 36 months.

ARTICLE II – FUNCTIONS AND POWERS

Section. 1.

The Faculty Senate shall have legislative jurisdiction over policies affecting the university’s academic mission in regard to teaching, research, service, outreach, and extension.

Section. 2.

Legislation that is passed by the Faculty Senate that affects the Regents Policy Manual and the Administrative Rules and Procedures or other policy documents shall be sent to the University Chancellor/President who must act on it in accordance with Section 1.10 of the University’s Administrative Rules and Procedures (ARP) and Section 1.70 of the Regents Policy Manual. Legislation which is passed by the Faculty Senate that does not affect these two documents or other policy documents shall be sent by the Faculty Senate Chair to the appropriate party(ies) at the discretion of the Faculty Senate Chair.

Section. 3.

The Faculty Senate shall have authority to determine its procedures and the procedures of its committees.

ARTICLE III – COMPOSITION AND PERSONNEL

Section. 1.

The Senate shall be composed of three categories of members: (1) the elected Chair of the Faculty Senate; (2) 68 elected senators; and ex officio nonvoting members as specified in a Bylaws of the Faculty Senate. Of the 68 elected senators, 58 shall be tenured or tenure-track faculty allocated as given below:

- 5 from Dona Ana Community College,
- 2 from NMSU-Alamogordo,
- 1 from NMSU-Grants
- 3 from the Cooperative Extension Service,

- 1 from the University Library, and
- the remaining 46 tenure-track members shall be divided into 2 categories, 23 elected from the Las Cruces campus's colleges in proportion to the number of majors enrolled (both graduate and undergraduate) and attending the main campus academic departments, and 23 elected from the Las Cruces campus's colleges in proportion to the number of tenured or tenure-track faculty in the main campus academic departments in each college.

The remaining 10 members shall be non-tenure-track faculty members, allocated as given below:

- 2 from Dona Ana Community College,
- 1 from NMSU-Alamogordo,
- 1 from NMSU-Grants,
- 1 from the Cooperative Extension Service; and

5 from the Las Cruces Campus' colleges, with the following stipulations: a) no more than one (1) nontenure-track representative from any department may serve at the same time, and b) no more than two (2) nontenure-track representatives from the faculty of a single Las Cruces campus college, and no more than two (2) from the University Library. Section. 2.

For colleges in which the number of departments exceeds or equals the number of elected senators, no more than one elected senator shall serve from a single department. For colleges in which the number of departments is less than the number of elected senators, there shall be at least one elected senator from each department.

Using data from the Spring semester census, the Vice Chair will analyze and report the Faculty Head Counts and the Faculty full-time equivalents by college and campus for tenured and tenure track faculty. Also using the Spring semester census, the number of majors enrolled (graduate and undergraduate) will be based on Student Headcount. For the Main Campus, only majors within the college are counted. Students with majors not housed in academic colleges such as interdisciplinary majors and students majoring at the community colleges but enrolled in Las Cruces Campus courses are not counted toward college totals and are not used in calculating the allocation of senators.

ARTICLE IV – ELECTION OF SENATORS

Section. 1.

Definitions:

Voting group: A voting group is a group of faculty members who elect a particular senator or a group of senators and from which a senior senator is identified.

Representative group: A representative group is a group of senators that caucus together to elect representatives to the faculty senate leadership committee, .

Section 2.

The Faculty Senate consists of fourteen (14) voting groups:

1. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Alamogordo Campus;
2. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Doña Ana Community College;
3. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Grants Campus;
4. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the University Library;
5. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences;
6. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the College of Business;
7. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the College of Engineering;
8. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the College of Health, Education, and Social Transformation;
9. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences, including those from the Agricultural Experiment Station;
10. Tenured and tenure-track faculty of the Cooperative Extension Service;
11. Non-tenure-track faculty of the Alamogordo Campus;
12. Non-tenure-track faculty of the Doña Ana Community College;
13. Non-tenure-track faculty of the Grants Campus;
14. Non-tenure-track faculty of the Las Cruces Campus, including those from the Cooperative Extension Service and the University Library.

Faculty, as defined in Article I, may only vote for senators from their voting group. For faculty who hold appointments in more than one voting group, they may only vote for senators from the group which is the largest fraction of their appointment. Elections will be on the basis of one person, one vote. There is one ballot for each voting group.

There are nine (9) representative groups:

1. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from Alamogordo Campus, Dona Ana Community College, and Grants Campus;
2. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the University Library;
3. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the College of Arts and Sciences;
4. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the Cooperative Extension Service;
5. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences;
6. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the College of Business;
7. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the College of Engineering; -
8. The tenured and tenure track-faculty from the College of Health, Education, and Social Transformation;
9. The non-tenure track faculty of Alamogordo Campus, Dona Ana Community College, Grants Campus, Las Cruces Campus, including from the Cooperative Extension Service and the University Library

Section. 3.

Elections of senators for each voting group will occur in March.

Section. 4.

The Faculty Senate Vice Chair, or their designee with the approval of the Faculty Senate, shall oversee the election of Senators. The Vice Chair shall, working with the relevant senior senators, be responsible for compiling lists of eligible voters by voting group and determining the method for administering the vote.

The election of senators for each voting group shall be conducted by the senator with the longest continuous service within that group, designated as the Senior Senator. If multiple senators have served for the same duration, the Senior Senator shall be determined by lot.

The Senior Senator shall solicit nominations for their voting group. They shall advertise open positions for no fewer than two (2) weeks, using appropriate media to ensure that potential candidates are informed of the opportunity. Any faculty member who is a member of the voting group may be nominated. Self-nominations are allowed.

Elections shall be conducted by secret ballot using a secure electronic method. If an electronic ballot is not practical, as determined by the Faculty Senate Vice Chair, a written ballot may be used. The vote shall remain open for ten (10) business days. In the event of a tie vote, the result shall be determined by lot.

Within ten (10) business days after the close of the election, the Faculty Senate Vice Chair shall inform the Faculty Senate Chair, the recording secretary, and the Senior Senator of the results. The Senior Senator shall notify the nominees of the outcome.

ARTICLE V – TERM OF OFFICE OF ELECTED SENATORS

Section. 1.

The Faculty Senate year shall begin immediately following the last day of the second semester of an academic year and end the last day of the second semester of the next academic year.

Section. 2.

The usual term of office for elected senators shall be 3 years. However, when reapportionment makes it necessary, the terms of some newly elected senators shall be for 1, 2, or 3 years so that the terms of an approximately equal number of senators from each faculty electing group expire each subsequent year. No faculty member shall be elected to a Faculty Senate term which will result in more than seven consecutive years of service. The Chair of the Faculty Senate

shall be responsible for implementing this section.

Section. 3.

Vacancies in the Faculty Senate created by the expiration of senator's terms of office shall be filled at the regular annual elections.

Section. 4.

In the case of the death, resignation, loss of eligibility to serve, or retirement of a Senator, a successor shall be elected to fill out the unexpired term at a special election called for that purpose. The provisions of Article IV, Section 4, shall apply to such an election.

Section. 5.

In the case of a leave of absence of a senator, the incumbent senator shall appoint a temporary replacement who shall serve until the absent member returns from leave, or until the member's term of office has expired, whichever comes first.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section. 1.

The officers of the Faculty Senate shall be a Chair, a Vice Chair, a Parliamentarian, and a Recording Secretary. The terms of the Faculty Senate Chair and Faculty Senate Vice Chair shall begin on the first day following the end of the spring semester and end on the last day of the following spring semester. The Faculty Senate Chair shall not serve more than two consecutive terms but may serve as Faculty Senate Chair again after serving at least one year as a non-chairing senator. The Parliamentarian and the Recording Secretary shall be appointed by the Senate Chair with the approval of the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate Chair and Faculty Senate Vice Chair shall be elected members of the Faculty Senate, representing different senate representative groups. The Recording Secretary shall be a staff member, and the Parliamentarian shall be a volunteer faculty member, both of whom have non-voting status.

Section. 2.

The current Faculty Senate Chair will appoint the Recording Secretary to oversee the election of the incoming Faculty Senate Chair. The Faculty Senate shall elect two nominees for the position of Chair at the December meeting, one of whom may be the current Faculty Senate Chair. The nominees must be current, elected members of the senate at the time of nomination and must intend to continue as active (nonretired) faculty during the following academic year.

The current Faculty Senate Chair shall be considered to be a current, elected member of the Senate even if their original Senate term has expired. Within sixty (60) calendar days of these nominations, the Recording Secretary shall create a secure electronic ballot and notify all faculty as defined in Article I of its availability. The Recording Secretary will be responsible for tabulating the results and announcing the winner. The winner of the election, until assuming the office of the chair, will be designated the Chair-elect. The Chair-Elect shall not be from the same senate electing group as the Chair (except when the current Chair is re-elected). If the Chair-Elect is a standing senator at the time they assume the position, the representative election group shall elect a replacement. Should the Faculty Senate Chair become unable to perform their duties, the Faculty Senate Vice Chair shall fulfill the remainder of the Chair's term of office.

Section. 3.

During the week prior to the last meeting of the senate year, the senators for the next year from each representative group shall caucus and elect their members to the Senate Leadership Committee. At the beginning of the last meeting of the year, the Senate Leadership Committee shall caucus and elect its Chair, who will also be Vice Chair of the Senate. These actions shall be reported in the minutes of the last Faculty Senate meeting. Should the office of Vice Chair become vacant, the Chair of the Faculty Senate shall call a special meeting of the Senate Leadership Committee to elect a new Chair of the Senate Leadership Committee.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

Section. 1.

The standing committees of the Faculty Senate shall be the Senate Leadership Committee, and six typical standing committees.

Section. 2.

The membership of the standing committees shall be as follows:

1. Each topical standing committee shall consist of at least 11 voting members as assigned from the elected senators by the Senate Leadership Committee. Each elected senator shall serve on one and only one of the six committees, with the exception of the Chair of the Senate Leadership Committee, who need only serve on that committee. Each committee shall elect a chair at its first meeting. Should a standing committee Chair no longer be willing or able to serve as chair, a new chair shall be elected at the next meeting of the standing committee. The names and purviews of typical standing committees shall be articulated in the Faculty Senate Bylaws.
2. Senate Leadership Committee: The Senate Leadership Committee shall consist of the six chairs of the standing committees; and one member from each senate electing group for each five elected senators or major fraction thereof. Each representative group shall have at least one member regardless of its senate representation. Vacancies shall be filled by caucus of the elected senators from the representative groups.
3. Committee of the Whole: The Faculty Senate by majority vote may convene as a Committee of the Whole to discuss and shape possible legislation pertaining to a particular issue. While sitting as a Committee of the Whole, the Faculty Senate may not pass new resolutions.

Section. 3.

The term of committee membership shall be 1 year. Members may serve more than one term.

ARTICLE VIII – MEETINGS

Section. 1.

Meetings of the Faculty Senate shall take place no less frequently than once a month during the academic year, but only on a special meeting basis during the summer sessions.

Section. 2.

The time and place of each regular meeting shall be determined in discussions between the Chair, the Vice Chair, and the Recording Secretary. Meetings shall be simulcast through appropriate electronic media, ensuring equitable accessibility to all attendees. Senators shall be marked present and will be afforded full rights of participation whether they attend in-person or via electronic media.

Section. 3.

The Faculty Senate Chair may call special meetings at any time. A special meeting shall be limited to the consideration of the specific items of business designated in the call for the meeting. Special meetings shall abide by the regular rules of the Faculty Senate.

Section. 4.

Ex-officio members shall have the right to attend and participate in the discussions and deliberations meetings of the Faculty Senate and its committees. Ex-officio members do not have a vote. Any member of the university community may attend regular meetings of the Faculty Senate and its committees and, by invitation or recognition, may participate in the discussions and deliberations.

Section. 5.

A simple majority of the voting members of the Faculty Senate shall constitute a quorum.

Section. 6.

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the parliamentary procedures of the Faculty Senate in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and any bylaws the Faculty Senate may adopt.

Section. 7.

The officers of the Senate shall make arrangements for Senate meetings. The Recording Secretary will send a notice of the meeting and an agenda to each member of the Faculty Senate.

ARTICLE IX – PROPOSITIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

Section. 1.

Propositions to be considered by the Faculty Senate shall be presented initially to the Senate Leadership Committee by one or more voting or nonvoting senator; sponsor(s) must be a faculty senator. First-time propositions will not be sponsored or presented in the name of standing or ad hoc committees.

Section. 2.

Each proposition shall be prepared in writing by the sponsoring senator(s).

Prior to submission, the sponsors should make every reasonable effort to get propositions reviewed and approved when required by the NMSU Administrative Rules and Procedures and the NMSU Regents Policy Manual.

The proposition must be submitted to the Chair of the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee at least two (2) days prior to presentation to the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee. The Chair of the Faculty Leadership Committee is responsible for distribution of copies to members of the Senate Leadership Committee.

Once the proposition is properly submitted, the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee shall hear a first reading, including a brief summary of the proposition by the sponsor(s). The Faculty Senate Leadership Committee Chair shall assign the proposition to a standing committee(s). The committee assignment may be altered by a vote of the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee. After referral to the standing committee, the proposition is placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Faculty Senate.

Section. 3.

Propositions to be considered by the Faculty Senate must be posted on the faculty senate website at least two (2) days prior to the Faculty Senate meeting at which they are to be considered. A proposition shall be given a first reading during which the sponsoring senator(s) will be allowed to give a brief explanation of the proposition. This will include a brief explanation by the sponsoring senator(s), and then referred to the appropriate committee(s) by the Faculty Senate Vice Chair during the Senate Leadership Committee meeting in which the proposition is first presented. A challenge to the referral to committee may be made by any senator present at the meeting. The decision on the Committee or Committees to which referral shall be made will then be by majority vote of the Senate.

Section 4.

In exceptional cases, a proposition may be considered by the Faculty Senate as emergency legislation without referral to its committees, provided either:

- (a) previous notice and an outline of the nature of the proposition was given in the agenda of the meeting and the senate accepts consideration of the proposition by a two-thirds vote, or
- (b) lacking previous notice, the Senate accepts consideration of the proposition by a three-fourths vote.

Section. 5.

Committees shall hold hearings on all propositions referred to them. These hearings shall be open to the public. Members of the public may make presentations to the committee with the permission of the committee Chair. The committee shall prepare a report on each proposition referred to them. The decision as to the nature of a committee's report on each proposition shall be by majority vote of the committee. The committee may ask for one additional month of consideration. Commentary for and against the proposition may be submitted with the report. Propositions

shall be reported out with one of three recommendations to the senate: RECOMMEND FOR PASSAGE (with or without amendments); RECOMMEND AGAINST PASSAGE; or RECOMMEND FOR FULL SENATE DISCUSSION.

Section. 6.

Propositions shall be reported out by the committees and forwarded to the recording secretary of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Chair prior to the next Faculty Senate meeting. A committee shall be given additional time when the Committee Chair, prior to that next meeting, notifies the Faculty Senate Recording secretary of the Faculty Senate and the Faculty Senate Chair that additional time is needed. In no case, however, shall committee deliberation of a proposition extend beyond

the second regular Faculty Senate meeting following introduction of the proposition. The recording secretary shall be responsible for informing the Faculty Senate Chair of any violations of this provision that may occur.

Section. 7.

Legislation reported out of committee shall be placed on the Faculty Senate agenda for full consideration in any of three possible circumstances:

- If the committee recommends for passage (with or without amendment),
- If the committee recommends against passage but the Faculty Senate, after debate, votes for full consideration, or
- If the committee recommends for full Faculty Senate discussion: in this case, after Faculty Senate debate, the proposition may be referred to a committee for further consideration.

In the case where the committee recommended no passage, and committee's report is accepted, the proposition is considered defeated. The legislation shall also be considered defeated if it does not receive full Faculty Senate consideration. When the unfinished business portion of the agenda is reached, each of the items that have been voted for full Faculty Senate consideration shall be moved for adoption and will thus be subject to debate, amendment, and normal parliamentary procedures. However, when a committee recommends for full senate discussion, such legislation may be voted on by the full senate, or referred back to a committee for further discussion.

ARTICLE X – AMENDMENTS TO THIS CONSTITUTION

Section. 1.

Amendments to this Constitution shall be initiated as propositions and shall follow the procedures of Article IX. Upon passage by the Faculty Senate and under the oversight of the Faculty Senate Vice Chair, amendments shall be posted electronically to the Faculty Senate website and notification of the posting sent to all faculty or, at the discretion of the Faculty Senate Chair and with the concurrence of the Faculty Senate as a whole, duplicated and distributed to all members of the faculty.

Section. 2.

Such proposed amendments shall be considered as adopted when approved by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the faculty who vote, except that amendments which only change nouns referring to internal NMSU entities do not require a vote by the general faculty. Such voting shall be by a secure electronic method.

Section. 3.

This Constitution may also be amended by an initiative and referendum election. Such an initiative shall specify the amendment(s) to be made and shall require the signatures of 10 percent of the faculty. Verification of the signatures upon the initiative shall be by the officers of the Faculty Senate. Upon verification, such amendments shall be submitted directly to the faculty without prior approval of the Faculty Senate. The amendment(s) shall be considered as adopted when approved by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the qualified members of the faculty who vote.

Article XI – BYLAWS

Section. 1.

All procedural decisions and guidelines adopted by the Faculty Senate to implement its Constitution shall be appended to that document in an addendum to be labeled "Bylaws."

Section. 2.

Adoption and amendment of bylaws shall be by a simple majority vote of the Faculty Senate. Presentation of proposed bylaws or amendments thereof shall follow the procedure for presentation of proposals detailed in Article IX of this Constitution.