

Proposition: 03-25/26

Proposal Type: ☐ Bill ☒ Resolution ☐ Memorial ☐ Joint Proposition ☐ Other
(If Joint proposition, also select type)

Title: Recommending Support for Lowering the Minimum Cumulate GPA for NMSU Admission

Date Submitted: 10.21.2025

Sponsors: K. Finlator (A&S), R. F. Obregon (A&S), E. Oskey (NMSU-G),

Proposed Committee: Curriculum and Planning

Prior Approvals: N/A, none needed.

Proposal: We ask the NMSU Faculty Senate to *support* the proposal to lower the minimum cumulative high school grade point average (cGPA) for admission to undergraduate study at NMSU from the current 2.75 down to 2.5. We also *request* that the NMSU Central Administration prepare for this change and track its effects in the following ways:

1. Work with the Colleges to develop programs analogous to the “University Transition Program” of the early 2000s and the Arts & Sciences College’s “Aggie Jump Start” program so that students whose high school cGPAs fall in the 2.5-2.75 range will benefit from extra support in transitioning to undergraduate education. The challenge is that such support must avoid imperiling financial aid eligibility by remaining congruent with each student’s Course Program of Study.
2. Continue to support small (≤ 30 students) “Freshman Seminar” classes.
3. Track the impact of scholarship losses on student retention.
4. Encourage incoming freshmen to apply for financial aid through Scholar Dollars early and often.

Background and Rationale: In 2016, NMSU raised the minimum cGPA for admission from 2.5 to 2.75. This change was implemented to improve student retention. Interim Provost Reddi now proposes¹ to reduce the minimum cGPA back to 2.5. While this change would expand the pool of high school graduates that NMSU can serve, it also raises the question of whether NMSU can adequately prepare them for success. The following evidence² is cited to address this concern:

- NMSU’s one-year retention rate did not change significantly in response to the increased minimum cGPA in 2016.
- NMSU’s slowly increasing four-year graduation rate did not show a significant change for the class that matriculated in 2016. Rather, the steady growth recorded for the

¹ https://faculty senate.nmsu.edu/meetings/Memo---GPA-Requirement---09122025_Signed.pdf

² <https://oia.nmsu.edu/nmsudata/grad-ret-reports/FALL-2025-Ret-Grad-Multi-Categories---20251006.pdf>

2009-2018 entering classes continued uninterrupted, suggesting that other factors such as improvements to student support and reduced curricular complexity³ dominate.

- UNM has retained a cGPA minimum of 2.5 throughout 2016-2025, and a direct comparison⁴ between UNM's and NMSU's first-year retention rates does not indicate that NMSU's increased minimum cGPA improved student retention.

There is good reason to believe that NMSU's ability to serve New Mexico's high school graduates will expand, provided that additional support and tracking are implemented for the anticipated increased incoming class resulting from a reduced minimum cGPA. While noting the suggestions above, we therefore ask the full Faculty Senate to endorse the proposed reduction to the minimum cGPA for admission to undergraduate study.

³ <https://www.aplu.org/news-and-media/blog/2022/01/19/how-reducing-curricular-complexity-can-help-boost-graduation-rates/>

⁴ <https://facultysenate.nmsu.edu/meetings/Student-Retention-data1.pdf>