

NMSU Faculty Senate Meeting

January 9, 2025; 4:00 p.m.

Hadley Hall Rm 130 and [Zoom](#)

MINUTES

- **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 4:01 p.m.
- **Approval of Agenda**
Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.
Senator Lopez-Gallagher proposes a friendly amendment to be removed from Proposition 08-24/25 as a sponsor.
Moved and seconded to approve agenda with the friendly amendment.
Agenda approved.
- **Recognition of Guests-**
Chair Chaitanya welcomed Deputy Provost James McAteer.
- **Approval of Minutes of November 7, 2024, meeting**
Moved and seconded to approve minutes.
Minutes approved and submitted by the Senate Leadership.
- **Reports of Officers**
FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya
As Chair and Vice-Chair reports will indicate, they held meetings with the Provost and the interim President, and the new President joined them in December. These meetings have been helpful for both faculty and administrators, and our input is valued.

Chair Chaitanya serves on various committees, one focusing on services for international students and scholars. This committee, co-chaired by two Deans, has made recommendations that led the Provost and the President to consider renaming international services as an independent entity, separate from both the graduate school and NMSU Global. This new entity would report to the Deputy Provost.

Additionally, during a recent Faculty Senate Leadership committee meeting with the President, the President mentioned his desire to create an institute of artificial intelligence. He plans to request funding for this initiative. Chair Chaitanya said this is a positive development, as artificial intelligence is increasingly important. As a Land Grant institution, we should lead in applying AI across various fields, especially in agriculture.

FS Vice-Chair, Christopher Brown

Vice-Chair reported that they are forming an open access advisory committee to decide how to use \$100,000 from Central to support the program. I aim to complete this committee by late January.

They are also discussing with Central about getting more funding for faculty and graduate worker salaries. As Dr. Ferme mentioned at the last FSLC meeting, we have been invited by George Munoz, the chair of the Senate Legislative Finance Committee, to manage the online program for all universities in New Mexico doing online classes. These discussions are in the early stages, and we will hear more soon. Additionally, the Board of Regents has requested a formal audit of academic programs due to concerns about new programs that do not seek resources, and NMSU not unsettling any existing ones. This ties into the academic program sustainability proposal put forward by UPAC, and we hope to hear comments from the Provost on this issue soon.

UPAC has not met in December and won't meet in January because of the holidays, and the Policy Steering Committee also experienced cancellations. I will meet with Chair Chaitanya and Deputy Provost McAteer to discuss how to get the policy process back on track. Hameed Badawy submitted a proposal to amend ARP 6.43 on graduate faculty appointments, but it is on hold until collective bargaining talks with NMSU NEA proceed. I don't think the revisions significantly affect faculty workload, but we don't control what happens in the Policy Steering Committee.

- **Reports of Standing Committees**

- Budget and Resources – Chair, Stephen Hanson
The Budget and Resource Committee met in December and had a quorum, missing only one member.
Chair Hanson gave a brief report. The committee discussed how a key issue regarding the protection of graduate student scholarships was resolved through recent collective bargaining. They will now proceed to HR.
Full BR report on FS website.
- University Planning – Chair, Erik Lehnhoff
The committee met in December.
Chair Lehnhoff gave a brief report. The committee continued to work on updates to Arp 9. 3, which focuses on promotion and tenure, and they finalized the recommendations. Chair Lehnhoff has written a detailed summary of their work, which is available on the website. You can ignore the last bullet about potential changes to the timeline, as he discussed this with Vice-Chair Brown. Everything else is as suggested, and feel free to share any comments or questions.
Full UP report on FS website.
- Curriculum and Planning - Chair, Gustavo Piña
The committee met on December 12 and discussed several propositions.
Chair Piña gave a brief report. The committee voted on Proposition 08-24/25, which passed without changes, involving only minor wording adjustments. For Proposition 07-24/25, there was a lengthy discussion, and the committee decided to accept the report with a change in terminology from "policy" to "practice." The report has been submitted and posted in more detail. If there are any questions, members are encouraged to reach out.
Full CP report on FS website.
 - The Senate moved and seconded to approve the Curriculum and Planning Committee report with the voted Proposition 07-24/25.
 - The Senate votes in the affirmative to accept Curriculum and Planning Committee report with the voted Proposition 07-24/25 to be passed and approved.
 - The Senate moved and seconded to approve the Curriculum and Planning Committee report with the voted Proposition 08-24/25.
 - The Senate votes in the affirmative to accept Curriculum and Planning Committee report with the voted Proposition 08-24/25 to be passed and approved.
- Research and Creative Activity – Chair, Paul Tian
The committee met on December 19th with no quorum.
Chair Tian gave a brief report. The committee discussed three main topics. First, they emphasized the importance of recruiting and retaining good graduate students. Second, they identified the need for a technician in the Art department due to safety concerns with materials used in art classes. Senator Motoko Furuhashi will prepare a proposal for this. Lastly, the committee talked about ways to attract quality researchers, noting that potential candidates might receive several offers. They aim to enhance their offers to stand out, as having high-quality research is crucial for the University. They will seek more information on this in the upcoming semester.
Full RCA report on FS website.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – Chair, Karen Kopera-Frye
Chair Kopera-Frye was not available to give a report. Senator Pedraza from the DEI Committee said the committee did not meet in the month of December.
- Student Success – Chair, Tawny Aguirre
The committee met on December 17 but did not have enough members present for a quorum.
Chair Aguirre gave a brief report. The committee discussed goals for 2025, including the issue raised by Senator Burkardt regarding students losing their institutional scholarships if they drop below a certain GPA, instead of just being lowered to a different tier. President Ferme mentioned exploring broader issues of enrollment, retention, and student success, which may lead to increased funding for study abroad programs.
Full SS report on FS website.

- **New Business**
NONE

- **Unfinished Business-**
- 07-24/25 – Resolution to allow NMSU main campus students to enroll in and receive credit for NMSU system branch courses. Sponsors: R. Gioannini (NTT), T.Aguirre (DACC), K. Lopez Gallagher (Alamogordo), and K. Finlator (A & S). **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning Standing Committee.** Discussion and clarification about the proposition followed.

VOTE:

YES: 44 NO: -0- ABSTAIN: -0-
Motion moved and seconded.
Motion passes; Proposition approved by Senate.

- 08-24-25 - Changes to ARP 4.46. Lead Sponsor: T. Aguirre (DACC), Sponsors: K. Finlator (A&S), J.Rice, (HEST), M. Elshinawy (ENG), D. Magoc (HEST), S. Lynch (HEST), R. Gioannini (NTT). **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning Standing Committee.** No discussion.

VOTE:

YES: 44 NO: -0- ABSTAIN: -0-
Motion moved and seconded.
Motion passes; Proposition approved by Senate.

- **Other Business –**

Nominations for Chair of the Senate

Vice-Chair Brown opened the floor for nominations for the 2024-2025 FS Chair.

- Chair Chaitanya self-nominated himself for the second year as Chair.
- Senator Sandstrom self-nominated himself to run as chair.
- Senator Finlator nominated Senator Aguirre. Senator Aguirre declined the nomination.

Nominations closed.

Vimal Chaitanya and John Sandstrom were elected as FS Chair nominees (2024-2025) without objections.

- **Remarks and Announcements**

a. FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya

The President plans to hold on-campus interviews for the Chief of Staff position and wants the involvement of the faculty in the interview process. President Ferme asked Chair Chaitanya to choose some faculty members to take part in this process. He believes this is a significant change, as he doesn't think faculty have been included in selecting the Chief of Staff in the past. Chair Chaitanya appreciates the President's commitment to shared governance.

Chair Chaitanya sent an email regarding the four Chief of Staff interviews scheduled. He apologized for not including everyone in the initial email; it only went to the Senate Leadership Committee. If any Senators want to participate in the interviews, there are three internal and one external candidate. Please email Chair Chaitanya to confirm your availability and he will provide the times to avoid class conflicts.

b. FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown

The vice chair commented on the positive relationship with Monica Torres and Lakshmi Reddi as interim leaders. They have been responsive to requests for data and funding for article processing charges, which they have addressed. This partnership shows a commitment to shared governance. Vimal highlighted that all signs point to this relationship continuing positively as it has over the past six months.

Regular meetings are scheduled with the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee and the administrative team on the second Thursday of each month at 9 o'clock, though these may be rescheduled due to the legislative session. The administrative assistants aim to keep this date consistent, as it is already in everyone's calendar. Additionally, Chair and Vice-Chair will meet weekly with Lakshmi Reddi, Valerio Ferme, and James McAteer. The community college bill was discussed, with Chair Chaitanya proactively engaging about it. Overall, Vice-Chair Brown feels optimistic about the future.

- **Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 5:04 p.m.

Present: FS Chair V. Chaitanya, FS Vice-Chair C. Brown, E. Gamboa, T. Aguirre, K. Lopez-Gallagher, C. Anaya, R. Jayaraman, T. Cleveland, S. Gordon, E. Hetrick, L. Saiki, M. Darapuneni, D. McDonald, R. Figueroa, F. Arslan, H. Badawy, J. Sandstrom, T. Price, E. Lehnhoff, F. Boutsen, R. Schumacher, D. Overstreet, L. Grant, J. Tomaka, Z. Shen, P. Tian, I. Hansen, O. Holguin, G. Piña, J. Cook, H. Baek, E. Oskey, A. Ashley, M. Burkardt, S. Walker, R. Gioannini, A. Romero, O. Bello, K. Finlator, L. Hermanson, T. Allred, T. Manz, S. Hanson, W. Stem, C. DeBlicke, I. Pedraza, M. Elshinawy, K. Knight, G. Duff, RecSec Cisneros.

Guest: Deputy Provost James McAteer.