

Minutes

- **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 4:01 p.m.
- **Approval of Agenda**
Moved and seconded to approve agenda.
Agenda approved.
- **Recognition of Guests** –
Dean Ranjit Koodali, Deputy Provost James McAteer, Robbie Grant.

- Graduate School Dean Ranjit Koodali 10 Minutes
Summary of Proposed Framework for Interdisciplinary Graduate Programs

Introduction

Dr. Lakshmi Reddi, the interim Provost, has requested the creation of a framework for interdisciplinary graduate programs. Leveraging Dean Koodali's experience as the Dean of the Graduate School and his background in developing interdisciplinary grants, he collaborated with Dr. Rick Marlatt to present their ideas.

Key Points

1. Purpose of Interdisciplinary Programs:

- The goal is to enhance the university's standing as an R1 institution by fostering collaboration among faculty from various departments.
- National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health support the need for interdisciplinary education, emphasizing that teamwork can lead to innovative solutions.

2. Current Structure:

- Interdisciplinary graduate programs (IGPs) will not replace existing academic departments but will function similarly to current programs, such as Water Science Management and Molecular Biology.
- Faculty will continue to report to department heads while also engaging in IGP activities.

3. Administrative Support:

- The graduate school will facilitate conversations between faculty from different colleges and provide graduate assistantships to promote collaboration.
- An IGP Executive Committee will govern the program, supported by an Advisory Council including representatives from various academic and administrative bodies.

4. Faculty Recognition:

- We aim to offer incentives to faculty for teaching interdisciplinary courses. Adjustments to faculty workload considerations related to tenure and promotion will also be made to facilitate this.

5. Student Involvement:

- Graduate student organizations will form within these programs to enhance student leadership and community.
- Collaboration with IT is planned for analytics and reporting to track educational outcomes effectively.

Conclusion

This white paper outlines a structured approach to support, strengthen, and expand interdisciplinary graduate programs. By focusing on collaboration, faculty recognition, and student participation, we aim to ensure long-term success and innovation in academic offerings at our institution.

- **Approval of Minutes of October 3, 2024, meeting**

Moved and seconded to approve minutes.

Vice-Chair proposes a friendly amendment to fix minor typos.

Moved and seconded to approve agenda with the friendly amendment.

Minutes approved and submitted.

- **Reports of Officers**

FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya

03 Minutes

On October 25, I attended a Board of Regents meeting where it was announced that President Ferme has signed his contract. He will officially start as president on January 2, 2025, and will visit the campus several times before Christmas. Chair plans to arrange a meeting between the incoming President and our Senate Leadership Committee and will inform everyone once the details are set, as it's important for everyone to participate.

Chair Chaitanya also attended the President's Cabinet meeting, where he gathered information on various topics like deferred maintenance. Moreover, he found out about an Academic Affairs Committee meeting, which he was not invited to but discovered that it was formally known as Academic Dean's Council. This is where he learned about interdisciplinary programs. He is invited to these meetings going forward.

In addition, Chair Chaitanya attended the NMSU Online Advisory Committee, where he talked about a pilot project involving an AI tutor bot. Shortly after this discussion, it was decided to end the pilot project, and the tool has already been deactivated in Canvas to ensure no further accounts can access it.

He also participated in the University System Budget Committee meeting, where a significant request was made by the Athletics Department. He inquired if they followed proper protocols for such requests, and they confirmed that they did. The leadership is focusing on addressing faculty compensation, and some of us may visit Santa Fe to present this matter to relevant committee chairs.

Furthermore, the Chair joined the IT Governance Committee meeting, where the new CIO expressed a desire to improve team efficiency and project planning. He highlighted issues with multiple requests for the same software, recommending a collective approach to procure better pricing. Notably, he mentioned that Windows 10 will no longer receive updates past October 14, 2025, meaning users should consider upgrading their operating systems or devices to avoid security risks.

He also attended the Enrollment Management and MCA monthly meetings. Additionally, he is part of an International Student Services (ISS) committee tasked with improving support and advisement for international students. This committee is co-led by two Deans and is currently drafting a report that will address our findings and suggestions for better services for these students.

Guest Robbie Grant gave an important brief update on the pilot project. After having some conversations over the last few months and some emails going back and forth., the decision was made this morning to terminate the pilot project on an AI tutor bot and personal learning assistant with check hosted by CHEGG. The tool has already been turned off in Canvas. It has been deleted as well as Honor Shield. They have also removed the integration tool on the back side as well and at this point the pilot has

been terminated and nobody can activate any further.

FS Vice-Chair, Christopher Brown

03 Minutes

The report has been posted on the Senate website, with highlights including meetings with the President and Provost on the distribution of financial aid and discussion of HR issues. Policy changes affecting faculty work, status, or salary have been paused based on guidance from the provost office. University planning on promotion and tenure revisions has also been paused. The Faculty Grievance Review Board process has been put on hold. The Policy Steering Committee is addressing issues related to sponsored youth programs and freedom of expression, with updates to come from Chair Chaitanya and Vice-Chair Brown.

• **Reports of Standing Committees**

15 Minutes

• Budget and Resources

Chair Hanson gave a brief report. There was a meeting with almost full attendance, only missing one member. No official business was discussed, but several guests including Chris Kingsley, D'Anne Stuart, and Kim Rumford from budget departments were present. Productive discussions were had on important issues and plans for the upcoming year.

[Full BR report on FS website.](#)

• University Planning

Chair Lehnhoff gave a brief report. The committee met on October 9th and they discussed potential revisions on ARP 9.2 and 9.3, which deal with promotion and tenure. The committee has been working on the documents offline and making progress. They will meet again next week; no guests attended the meeting. [Full UP report on FS website.](#)

• Curriculum and Programming

Chair Piña was not available to give a report.

Senator Connie DeBlieck gave a brief report. The committee met on October the second Thursday of the month. They discussed proposal 4.50, asked for edits, and planned to vote on it after revisions. They had enough members present for quorum and did not have any guest speakers. The report will be posted soon on the [FS website.](#)

• Research and Creative Activity

Chair Tian gave a brief report. The committee met on the second week of October. They discussed the topic of faculty members who gave grants, summer salary or supplemental pay. There were three different proposed scenarios but no conclusion on that. They will continue to discuss this topic at their next meeting. [Full RCA report on FS website.](#)

• Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Chair Kopera-Frye was not present to provide a verbal report.

[Full DEI report on FS website.](#)

• Student Success

Chair Aguirre was not present to provide a verbal report.

[Full SS report on FS website.](#)

• Approval/Acceptance of all Standing Committee reports presented*

Moved and seconded to accept all FS Standing Committee reports.

The Senate votes in the affirmative to accept all standing committee reports with Research and Creative Activity, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Student Success

committees to be passed and approved by acclamation.

- **New Business** 05 Minutes
- 05-24/25 – Establishing Continuing Support for Open Access Publication Cost-Sponsor(s): K. Finlator (A&S); F. Arslan (CoB)
Senator and sponsor Kristian Finlator introduced the bill.
The proposition is assigned to Research and Creative Activity.
- **Unfinished Business-** 05 Minutes
03-24/25 - Clarifying Exceptions to Final Exam Requirements in ARP 4.50. Sponsors – K. Finlator (A&S); J. Burchett (A&S), M. Burkardt (A&S); and M. Prescott (A&S).
Assigned to Curriculum and Programming Standing Committee. Chair Piña was not available to give a report.
- **Other Business - NONE**
- **Remarks and Announcements**
 - a. FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya 02 Minutes
NONE
 - b. FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown 02 Minutes
Report on FS website. Vice-Chair is extending a special thanks to guest Robbie Grant for his longstanding support and dedication to finding new tools and being receptive to input from faculty.
- **Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 4:46 p.m.**

Present: FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya, FS Vice-Chair Christopher Brown, S. Hanson, E. Lehnhoff, A. Romero, T. Stolte, A. Ashley, H. Baek, E. Hetrick, R. Schumacher, W. Walker, L. Saiki, K. Knight, R. Figueroa, M. Darapuneni, C.DeBlicek, L. Hermanson, D. Magoc, S. Lynch, J. Tomaka, R. Jayaraman, J. Rice, G. Duff, K. Finlato, Z. Shen, P. Smoak, T. Cleveland, K. Lopez-Gallagher, I. Pedraza, P. Tian, M. Elshinawy, T. Conner, W. Stem, S. Gordon, R. Li, C. Erickson, D. McDonald, J. Sandstrom, H, Badawy, F. Arslan, L. Grant, J. Hunter, T. Manz, M. Furuhashi, S. Walker, O. Holguin, J. Dalager, R. Giannini, O. Bello, Parliamentarian LaPlue, RecSec. Cisneros.

Guests: Deputy Provost James McAteer, Executive Director Academic Tech Robbie Grant.