

NMSU Faculty Senate Meeting

April 2, 2026, 4:00 p.m.

Zoom and Hadley Hall Rm 130

MINUTES

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m.

2. **Recognition of Guests**

- **Will Waller, Asst VP Student Affairs**

Will Waller opened the discussion by thanking attendees for their time, noting the meeting occurred late in the day before a holiday. He explained that the purpose of the presentation was to provide an update on the university's international insurance program and to gather feedback as the renewal process moves forward. In his role as chair of the committee overseeing the insurance plan, he works with representatives from the International Student Services Office, the Aggie Health and Wellness Center, student representatives, and external brokers to evaluate and secure coverage options for students.

He reviewed the previous year's rollout of a two-tier insurance model, which included a higher-cost plan at \$975 per semester (\$163 per month) and a lower-cost option at \$807 per semester (\$134 per month). While the lower-cost plan reduced monthly expenses, it came with higher deductibles and led to increased out-of-pocket costs for some students. Feedback collected throughout the year indicated that some students who initially selected the cheaper plan later attempted to switch after realizing the financial implications, though plan changes were not permitted once enrollment was finalized. Data showed that 15% of students chose the lower-cost plan, while 85% selected the higher-cost option.

Waller emphasized the complexity of health insurance and its importance, particularly for international students for whom coverage is mandatory. He noted broader market trends, including projected insurance cost increases of 6–8%, and highlighted rising demand for services such as mental health support. He also shared that the university averages two to three student medical transports per week, underscoring the need to balance affordability with comprehensive coverage so students can focus on their education without undue financial or health-related stress.

As part of the current renewal process, the committee is exploring potential changes, including moving from a two-tier plan structure to a single, more affordable comprehensive plan. This approach could improve negotiating power with brokers and simplify decision-making for students, though Waller acknowledged that some may prefer having multiple pricing options. Additionally,

the university plans to expand its evaluation process by engaging with three different brokers instead of one to ensure competitive pricing and quality coverage. Waller also identified communication as a key area for improvement, particularly in providing clearer and earlier information to international students before arrival. He stressed the importance of aligning insurance education with orientation efforts to better prepare students.

During the discussion, Senator Burkardt raised concerns about whether lower-cost insurance options could be considered subsidized plans, potentially affecting international students' immigration status. Waller clarified that such concerns were associated with the state marketplace, Be Well New Mexico, which the university and other institutions in the state have moved away from due to issues related to visa compliance, tax liabilities, and limited provider access. He explained that the university's current and proposed plans are offered through private carriers, such as Blue Cross Blue Shield, and are not part of the subsidized marketplace.

Senator Finlator asked about student enrollment patterns between the two plans, prompting Waller to share the 15% versus 85% split. Finlator suggested that, given recent changes such as expanded tuition coverage for graduate students, the university might consider offering only the higher-tier plan to reduce confusion and financial risk for students. While acknowledging that this would remove an element of choice, Finlator noted it could simplify decision-making and improve overall value. Waller agreed that this was a compelling perspective and reiterated that gathering such input was a primary goal of the presentation.

Waller concluded by noting that the administration is aiming to finalize the new insurance plan by mid-April and emphasized that faculty input is critical, as faculty members are often the first point of contact for student questions. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to present and invited further questions and suggestions.

- **Robbie Grant, Exec Dir, Academic Technology**

Robbie Grant, Executive Director of Academic Technology, addressed the Faculty Senate and thanked Faculty Senate Chair Chaitanya, Vice Chair Brown, and members for the opportunity to speak. He explained that he had recently learned of a proposed resolution to move Academic Technology under the Provost's Office and out of NMSU Global and stated that he and his team strongly oppose the proposal. He argued that the rationale presented in the resolution—that the Provost's Office serves the entire system—is inaccurate, noting that the Provost's Office is designed to serve the Las Cruces campus, whereas NMSU Global serves the entire university system. Based on that distinction, he asserted that Academic Technology is appropriately housed within Global.

Robbie Grant clarified that there continues to be confusion about the scope of Academic Technology's work, emphasizing that the unit's responsibilities extend well beyond Canvas. He described their support for learning management systems, educational technology platforms, academic analytics, student success systems, administrative technologies, immersive learning, instructional media services including audiovisual and Zoom support, educational media production, and IT support services. He invited members of his team present to stand in recognition and underscored that Academic Technology is not part of central IT.

Robbie Grant reflected on the unit's history, explaining that prior to joining Global in 2020, Academic Technology spent 17 years moving between various campus units, including time under the Provost's Office, while experiencing staffing reductions and maintaining services with minimal personnel. Since joining Global, the unit has grown significantly to include 16 full-time staff, graduate assistants, and undergraduate employees, and now supports 33 applications. Robbie Grant stated that the unit has expanded its reach to serve not only faculty and students but also Cooperative Extension, staff development, and communities statewide, adopting a learner-centered and modality-neutral approach.

Robbie Grant addressed concerns about how technologies are adopted, explaining that Academic Technology does not independently select or implement software. Instead, proposals are reviewed through the Faculty Advisory Committee on Technology (FACT), a long-standing Provost committee with broad representation. Following FACT review, proposals go through IT acquisitions for security and compliance review and then to procurement. He noted that the Provost's Office had recently taken steps to expand FACT's role.

Robbie Grant expressed concern that the resolution had been introduced without prior consultation, stating that he and his team were blindsided. He emphasized his long-standing connection to the university, spanning nearly three decades as a student and employee, and called for a culture of trust and open communication. Robbie Grant reiterated that, in his view, moving Academic Technology out of Global would be detrimental given the unit's growth and accomplishments over the past six years. He offered to meet individually with faculty members to discuss concerns and provide further information.

During discussion, Senator Erickson acknowledged Robbie Grant's concerns and apologized for any sense of being blindsided, explaining that the resolution was intended to prompt the Provost to review the matter rather than mandate a decision. He noted that the issue may become moot given the transition to a new Provost and indicated that the resolution might be withdrawn.

Senator Sandstrom also expressed regret that Robbie Grant felt blindsided but raised concerns about communication, specifically questioning the activity and

visibility of FACT, citing a lack of recent updates on its website. Sandstrom suggested that these gaps contribute to trust issues among faculty and emphasized the need to improve communication moving forward.

Senator Allred expressed strong support for the work of Academic Technology but questioned whether Global effectively serves the entire system from a faculty perspective, describing it as lacking transparency and communication. Allred suggested that placing Academic Technology under the Provost might improve visibility and alignment with faculty needs.

Vice Chair Brown issued a personal apology, acknowledging responsibility for not reaching out to Robbie Grant when the resolution was received and emphasizing that further discussion about the proposal should occur outside the meeting.

Senator DeBlieck spoke in support of Academic Technology and the role of FACT, noting prior experience on the committee and its contributions to technology decisions and student success. DeBlieck suggested that while there may be concerns about Global, FACT remains a valuable and reliable mechanism for faculty input and should continue to play a role moving forward.

In response to concerns about FACT's activity, Robbie Grant stated that the committee has remained active despite turnover and limited participation, and that meeting records are available. He explained that challenges in maintaining consistent communication were due in part to staffing limitations and lack of leadership continuity within the committee.

Senator Bronstein asked how specific technologies, such as Grammarly, were adopted. Robbie Grant explained that Grammarly was introduced through broader institutional initiatives, including the AI Council and prior review through FACT and other advisory groups. He clarified that only basic functionality is widely available to users, while more advanced features are limited to specific test groups, and that the implementation aimed to reduce costs for students who might otherwise purchase such tools independently.

Robbie Grant concluded by reiterating his openness to continued dialogue and his commitment to transparency and collaboration.

3. Approval of Agenda

Vice Chair Brown proposed an amendment to the agenda to table item 10-25/26, which concerns the proposal to move Academic Technology to the Provost's Office. He stated that while the topic warrants thorough discussion, the timing is not appropriate, noting both his own oversight in not consulting with Robbie Grant beforehand and the recent hiring of a new Provost, Joe Bull. He argued that it would be more appropriate to delay consideration until the new chief academic officer is in place. Senator Finlator seconded the motion to table.

During discussion, several senators expressed concern about the manner in which Academic Technology staff attended the meeting, with one senator describing it as inappropriate and potentially intimidating. At the same time, it was noted that the decision to table the proposal had been made independently by the sponsors prior to the meeting, based on the anticipated transition in Provost leadership. Senators emphasized that the Faculty Senate does not have decision-making authority to implement such structural changes but instead makes recommendations for administrative consideration.

Additional comments reflected concerns about communication breakdowns on both sides, including the perception that staff presence and outreach may have escalated tensions. Some senators speculated that fears about job security or resource allocation may have contributed to the strong response from Academic Technology staff. Others highlighted broader concerns about governance, including the role of Global in resource allocation and the lack of clarity around oversight of Academic Technology, suggesting that these structural questions were central to the original proposal rather than the performance of the unit itself.

It was also noted that any future review of the proposal would follow standard Faculty Senate procedures, including referral to committee, opportunities for stakeholder input, and subsequent votes before being forwarded to the Provost and President. Senators acknowledged the importance of maintaining respectful communication and shared governance moving forward, while also recognizing that underlying issues still need to be addressed at an appropriate time.

Following discussion, the motion to table agenda item 10-25/26 was approved by acclamation. The Senate Leadership Committee confirmed that the agenda was approved as amended, with 3 No and 2 Abstain, the proposal to move Academic Technology to the Provost's Office was tabled until further notice.

4. Approval of Minutes of March 5, 2026, meeting

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes.

Minutes approved and submitted.

5. Emergency Legislation

- 13-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Vice Chair Brown. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 14-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Chair Chaitanya. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 15-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Provost Reddi. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 16-25/26 – Memorial Thanking President Valerio Ferme for his First Year. Sponsor (s): K. Finlator (Astronomy/A&S), M. Burkardt (Physics/A&S), T.

Aguirre (DACC), D. Magoc (Public Health Sciences/HEST), C. Brown (Senate VC and A&S).

Chair Chaitanya moved to reclassify all four emergency legislations as Unfinished Business and to consider them collectively with a single vote. The motion was properly seconded. Following brief consideration, the motion passed, and all four emergency legislations were moved to Unfinished Business for joint consideration.

6. Reports of Officers

- FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya

Chair Chaitanya reported that a written report had been submitted to the recording secretary, though possibly too late for immediate posting, and noted that it should be available soon. The Chair highlighted several key updates rather than reading the full report. The Books for Less program has been adopted by the Alamogordo campus and was approved by the Board of Regents at their meeting the previous day. The Board also approved an increase in dining costs for premium and voluntary student meal plans of approximately 3.89%.

The Chair noted that there was a broad and spirited discussion during the meeting regarding the proposed 2027 budget, which was presented by Kimberly Rumford. A significant portion of that discussion focused on the potential need to increase student tuition at NMSU, as tuition has not been raised in several years. It was indicated that the Board of Regents appears ready to consider such an increase. The Chair also addressed the experience of international students, noting that survey results have been collected but are not yet fully organized or codified. These results will need to be reviewed again, and recommendations for changes are expected soon.

Additionally, there is support for the FACT committee to receive staff assistance, including a staff member who would be responsible for taking minutes and ensuring they are made available on the website. This initiative is being supported through the Provost's Office. Chris Erickson continues to serve as the Senate's designated representative on the strategic planning committee.

Regarding the university's strategic plan, the Board of Regents inquired about its progress, and the President indicated that a working draft document is expected to be presented to the Regents in May. The Chair noted that the Senate would also like to review this document once it is available.

The Chair concluded by stating that additional details could be found in the written report and invited questions. No questions were raised.

[Full FS Chair report is posted on the FS website.](#)

- FS Vice Chair/SLC Chair, Christopher Brown

Vice Chair Brown reported that his report was posted on Tuesday morning and noted several updates discussed at the Group of Four meeting. Among these was the issue of international graduate student health insurance, which was covered by Will Waller. He also discussed a U.S. Department of Justice decision from April 2024, stemming from lawsuits against universities for non-compliant web

materials under ADA standards. In response, MarCom has spent the past two years working with university units to bring public-facing websites into compliance. A memo was introduced proposing that all Canvas course materials also meet ADA compliance standards. Vice Chair Brown indicated that, given the scale—thousands of courses developed by hundreds of faculty—this would not be feasible within a short timeframe. He stated that the administration will work with Deputy Provost McAteer to develop a more practical plan and noted that the memo requiring rapid compliance was successfully halted before being widely distributed.

Vice Chair Brown also provided updates on the sustainability plan initiative, which has progressed with support from the Senate. Oladayo Bello and Jonathan Cook will represent Senate leadership. Appreciation was extended to John Sandstrom and Chris Erickson for their interest. Cecilia Hernandez will lead the initiative, with additional participation from Martha Desmond of ACES and Hari Sankaran from the College of Business as department heads. Beth Apodaca will represent UPAC, and Sashi from the Provost's Office will serve as the data support lead.

An update was given on NMSU Leadership Global, noting that Sherry Kollmann has submitted her resignation and will depart on June 1. The President has initiated an external search to fill the position. Efforts to relaunch the FACT initiative are being led by Deputy Provost James McAteer, with further updates expected at a future FSLC or Senate meeting. Vice Chair Brown also noted progress on Adobe Sign workflows, crediting Carly Casey for advancing efforts to replace paper signatures and email attachments with digital processes.

Additional updates included ongoing discussions regarding internship policy, specifically the potential use of memoranda of understanding for individual internships, with more information forthcoming. In graduate school updates, it was noted that theses and dissertations must meet ADA compliance standards by April 24, in accordance with the DOJ ruling. Questions on this matter were directed to Associate Dean Kopera-Frey outside the meeting.

Vice Chair Brown reported on the work of the Policy Steering Committee, noting that several initiatives are progressing, including policies related to programs with minors, Clery Act compliance, and processes for disability accommodations. A reduction-in-force policy is being prepared for community review; it applies to postdoctoral scholars but not to students or faculty. It was determined that this policy does not need to formally come before the Senate. Finally, he noted that a Senate bill related to distance education is pending, awaiting a revised policy before it can move forward. Vice Chair Brown concluded by inviting questions, comments, or concerns. None were raised.

[Full Vice Chair report is posted on the FS website.](#)

7. Reports of Standing Committees

- Budget and Resources Chair, Stephen Hanson
Chair Hanson reported that the Budget and Resources Committee met recently and, due to time constraints, provided a brief summary. The written report was posted shortly before the meeting and will be available if it is not already

accessible. The committee met with budget unit leads from administration to discuss the Senate and the state legislative budget, with full details included in the written report. Chair Hanson highlighted a key concern that the Board of Regents may be on a potential collision course with the state legislature, particularly regarding signals from legislators indicating opposition to a tuition increase. He noted that further developments are expected on this issue. The Chair concluded by referring attendees to the written report for additional details.

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

- University Planning Chair, Stephanie Walker
Chair Walker reported that the committee met on March 13 and considered Bill 08-25-26, which proposes amendments to the requirements for the Faculty Senate Chair and Vice Chair. The meeting had full attendance and included several guests, and the discussion was extensive. A central issue under consideration was whether elected Faculty Senate leadership should also be permitted to serve as leaders in the emerging union. The committee also discussed a related proposal to amend the Constitution to remove the names of standing committees, allowing future changes to committee names to be made through bylaw revisions rather than constitutional amendments. Following substantial discussion on both matters, the committee determined that additional time was needed for deliberation and voted to postpone action on the bill for one month, noting that the process had felt somewhat rushed. The next meeting is scheduled for April 10 at 1:00 p.m., and interested parties are invited to attend. The committee specifically requested that the two sponsors of the original bill be present to explain their rationale and also asked for a clean, consolidated version of the bill to review and vote on, as the current version had been assembled in a piecemeal manner prior to the previous meeting.
[Full UP report is posted on the FS website.](#)
- Curriculum and Planning Chair, Oladayo Bello
Chair Bello reported that the Curriculum and Planning Committee met on March 12 and achieved a quorum. The primary agenda item was consideration of Bill 07-25-26, which addresses proposed revisions to ARP 4.69, the policy governing academic rules for distance education. Although the Policy Steering Committee had revised the policy, the updated documentation reflecting those changes was not available for the committee's review at the time of the meeting, consistent with earlier remarks from Vice Chair Brown. Senator Erickson had been invited to attend and provide input; however, he was unable to be present. In the absence of both the necessary documentation and the invited speaker, the committee waited approximately 30 minutes before deciding to adjourn the meeting. The meeting concluded at 4:35 p.m. on March 12, and the committee requested an extension to allow adequate time to review the bill once the revised materials are made available. Chair Bello noted that, upon receipt and review of the documentation from the Policy Steering Committee, the committee will proceed

with deliberations and determine whether to approve, reject, or propose amendments to the bill.

Chair Bello then asked if there were any questions. Senator Erickson asked Vice Chair Brown about the status of the Policy Steering Committee's actions on Bill 07-25-26 and ARP 4.69. Vice Chair Brown responded that the policy had been circulated to the community, and two community college faculty members submitted comments. The policy was then returned to the Global Campus unit around the time of a recent legislative session. He explained that the matter is currently with the sponsor, Mark Lawrence, a Professor of Practice in the College of Engineering and a Global Campus faculty member, and that the Senate is awaiting its return. Vice Chair Brown also noted that, in the interim, Sherry Kollman had submitted her resignation, and administrative turnover may be contributing to delays, as other issues may be taking priority.

He further stated that the bill remains pending and that, once the revised ARP document is received, it will be attached to the bill so that it can move forward. Given the current circumstances, he expressed doubt that the revised materials would be ready in time for the current cycle. Senator Erickson then asked whether Vice Chair Brown would communicate ahead of the next committee meeting about whether the committee would need to hear the bill or allow it to lapse. Vice Chair Brown confirmed that he would provide that communication.

[Full CP report is posted on the FS website.](#)

- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Omar Holguin
Chair Holguin reported that the RCA Committee met on March 10 at an alternative time due to a conflict with spring break. Attendance was low, and as a result, no formal business was conducted, although a few informal discussions took place. Chair Holguin provided several updates on committee activities, noting that he has met with Arrowhead and the Provost's Office to gather information related to promotion and tenure policies, as well as entrepreneurship and innovation initiatives. These conversations have produced useful suggestions and generated positive momentum. He also reached out to the Faculty Senate Chair and Vice Chair for additional input on how to advance these efforts. In addition, the Vice President for Research's Office has invited the RCA Chair, along with the University Research Council, to participate in monthly meetings. The first of these meetings is scheduled for April, and Chair Holguin indicated that more information about their structure and content will be available after that initial session. He concluded by noting that the RCA Committee plans to reconvene with full attendance on April 21, at which time they will work through the recommendations and suggestions received from leadership and the Provost's Office.

[Full RCA report is posted on the FS website.](#)

- Access, Opportunity, and Outreach, Interim Chair, Kim Lopez-Gallagher
Chair Lopez-Gallagher reported that the Access, Opportunity, and Outreach

Committee met on March 11 and achieved a quorum. Vice Chair Brown attended the meeting as a guest and conducted an election to select an interim chair following the departure of Karen Kopera-Frye Chair Lopez-Gallagher stated that she ran for the position and was elected as interim chair. She noted that the committee did not consider any legislation at that meeting but did hold a discussion that resulted in the development of a bill which has been placed on the agenda under new business. Chair Lopez-Gallagher added that her full report has been posted to the website. [Full AOO report is posted on the FS website.](#)

- Student Success Chair, Kristian Finlator
Chair Finlator reported that the Student Success Committee met on March 12 and achieved a quorum; however, no official business was conducted. The committee drafted a letter to the deans of the academic colleges requesting that they survey their respective units regarding current practices for admitting graduate students without guaranteed graduate assistantships. Responses are anticipated within the next few weeks. The committee also engaged in a broad discussion regarding the relationship between the main NMSU campus and the branch campuses. The meeting concluded early. [Full SS report is posted on the FS website.](#)

8. New Business

- 09-25/26 – Updating the Names and Functions of the Faculty Senate Standing Committees. Sponsor (s): K. Finlator (Astronomy), C. Brown (Geography), K. Lopez-Gallagher (NMSU-A). **Assigned to University Planning.** Chair Chaitanya provided an update on Proposition 09-25/26, which proposes revising the names and functions of the Faculty Senate standing committees by moving this authority into the bylaws. This change would allow Senate members to approve updates directly, rather than requiring a vote of the full faculty. He reported that an additional month of review has been requested. Accordingly, the University Planning Committee will be asked to report back on its progress at the next meeting, anticipated to be the final meeting in May.
- 10-25/26 – Proposal to Place Academic Technology under the Provost. Sponsor (s): K. Sharp-Hoskins (A&S), C. Erickson (CoB), C. Brown (A&S), K. Finlator (A&S). **Assigned to Budget and Resources** Proposition 10-25/26 has been tabled.
- 11-25-26 – Request to Central Administration to provide resources to part time faculty. Sponsor (s): I. Villicana-Pedraza (DACC), Kim Lopez-Gallagher (Alamogordo), Jason Bengtson (NMSU Library), C. Brown (A&S, Senate Vice Chair), and other to follow. **Assigned to Budget and Resources.** Chair Chaitanya introduced Proposition 11-25/26, which requests that central administration provide additional resources for part-time faculty. The proposition was referred to the Budget and Resources Committee for consideration, and Chair Hanson accepted the assignment.
- 12-25/26 – Request for Faculty Senate to review DRAFT proposal for a Doctoral Accelerated Program submitted by the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC). Sponsor (s): C. Brown (A&S), O. Bello (ENG), D. Rutledge (HEST and GFC Chair), J.

Tomaka (HEST), and others to follow. **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning.** Chair Chaitanya introduced Proposition 12-25/26, which is a request for the Faculty Senate to consider and include a draft proposal for an accelerated doctoral program submitted by the Graduate Faculty Council. The proposition was assigned to the Curriculum and Planning Committee, and Chair Bello accepted the assignment.

9. Unfinished Business

- 13-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Vice Chair Brown. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 14-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Chair Chaitanya. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 15-25/26 – Memorial in Appreciation of Provost Reddi. Sponsor (s): T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, D. Magoc.
- 16-25/26 – Memorial Thanking President Valerio Ferme for his First Year. Sponsor (s): K. Finlator (Astronomy/A&S), M. Burkardt (Physics/A&S), T. Aguirre (DACC), D. Magoc (Public Health Sciences/HEST), C. Brown (Senate VC and A&S).
 - The four emergency pieces of legislation were moved for adoption by acclamation. Moved and seconded to approve.

VOTE:

YES: 38

NO: -0-

ABSTAIN: -0-

- 06-25/26 – Supporting CNM and UNM Joint Resolution Against the “Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education.” Sponsor (s): Karen Kopera-Frye (HEST), Christopher Brown (A&S), and others to follow. **Assigned to University Planning.** Chair Walker reported on Proposition 6-25/26, noting that the committee deliberated on the item and voted unanimously to support it, expressing support for CNM and UNM. The proposition had been tabled at the previous Faculty Senate meeting for one month, and a motion and second were currently on the floor. Vice Chair Brown provided brief background, explaining that in November or December he, Chair Chaitanya, and Karen Kopera-Frye received an invitation from Senate leadership at CNM and UNM to discuss a resolution being developed in response to the Trump administration’s proposed higher education compact. He noted that discussions with CNM and UNM representatives have continued over approximately six months. He further explained that the effort is evolving into a broader concept, potentially forming a New Mexico

Association of Faculty Senates, with the goal of facilitating ongoing statewide collaboration among faculty senates on issues beyond the specific compact. He indicated that this matter would be included in the transition materials for incoming Senate leadership, and reiterated that the resolution itself clearly outlines its intent.

Chair Walker added that the committee also received feedback expressing concern that the resolution could unnecessarily “put a target on our back,” noting that there was meaningful dissenting opinion, even though the committee ultimately voted unanimously to approve the proposition.

Senator Erickson spoke in opposition to the bill, stating that the issue is no longer active as the compact is not currently being pursued by the administration, though it may reemerge in the future. He expressed concern that the resolution could place the institution at risk and suggested that the Faculty Senate should avoid making statements on political matters where there is internal diversity of opinion. He further argued that individuals should instead use their disciplinary expertise to engage in public discourse independently rather than through institutional statements. He cited his own professional activities as examples of engaging in policy critique through academic and public channels. He concluded by reaffirming his opposition to the bill while noting his broader opposition to actions of the Trump administration.

VOTE:

YES: 24

NO: 11

ABSTAIN: -0-

Motion passes: Proposition 06-25/26 is approved.

- 07-25/26 – Bill sharing input to Policy Steering Committee on proposed changed to ARP 4.69 on Distance Education. Sponsor (s) – C. Erickson (CoB), C. Brown (A&S), and other to follow. **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning.** The Proposition was tabled due to the document not being available for review. The committee will bring it back at the next meeting. No action was taken at this time.
- 08-25/26 – Amendment to Article VI of the Faculty Senate Constitution to change the requirements for Chair and Vice Chair. Sponsor (s) – C. Erickson (CoB), V. Chaitanya (ENG). **Assigned to University Planning.** The University Planning Committee, to which the item was assigned, will continue deliberations for one additional month. No action was taken at this time.

10. Other Business – NONE

11. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya
Chair Chaitanya announced that Dr. Bull has been named the incoming Provost of NMSU, as officially announced by the President the previous day. He noted that the search for this position has concluded successfully. However, he also emphasized that several other administrative searches remain ongoing across the university. Chair Chaitanya indicated that additional discussion on these searches may be appropriate, potentially in fall 2026, and referenced several key positions that are still open or anticipated to be part of future search processes, including the Vice President for Research, Director of PSL, Chancellor approval-related roles, the Dean of Engineering, and Innovation leadership positions, among others. He noted that there are likely additional searches beyond those listed and brought this to the attention of the Senators for awareness.
- FS Vice-Chair/SLC Chair, Christopher Brown
Vice Chair Brown thanked members of the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee who attended breakfast meetings and met with the candidates. He expressed appreciation for the opportunity to engage in the selection process and noted that he looks forward to Dr. Joe Bull joining the university leadership team.

Guests Dean Ranjit Koodali and Associate Dean of the Graduate School, Karen Kopera-Frye, reported that the Graduate Faculty Council met earlier that day and discussed a proposed amendment to the bylaws. The suggestion is to include a Faculty Senate representative as an ex-officio member of the Graduate Faculty Council in order to provide input on matters such as the DAP and other emerging policies. She indicated that this proposal will be brought forward through the bylaws process for consideration and expressed hope that it would be viewed favorably. Dean Koodali shared an example of the old forms from an Oral Defense and noted that the newer electronically submitted form does not require Committee signatures, rather asks whether the student passed or failed. This form was created to expedite the process of reporting and can be found here: <https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/current-students/graduate-forms.html> The new forms have been viewed favorably by ADAC and the Graduate Faculty Council. Chair Chaitanya responded by noting that this discussion also highlights an additional need for Faculty Senate representation on an active search in Marketing and Communications. He stated that a request had already been made to the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee, but no volunteers had come forward. He added that the search is expected to conclude within approximately one month and would not extend into the summer, with participation available remotely. Chair Chaitanya urged anyone willing to serve to contact him as soon as possible, noting that progress on the search is currently delayed due to the lack of a designated Faculty Senate representative.

12. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 5:14 p.m.

Present: FS Chair V. Chaitanya, FS Vice Chair C. Brown, C. Erickson, E. Gamillo, S. Hanson, J. Bronstein, M. Burkardt, K. Sharp-Hoskins, K. Finlator, K. Knight, R. Jayaraman, L. Grant, J. Klocksiam, R. Schumacher, M. Montañez, H. Baek, L. Grant, I. Pedraza, K.T. Manis, W. Walker, P. Tian, T. Allred, S. Way, S. Lynch, C. Creusere, G. Piña, D. Rutledge, S. Mikkelson, H. Memon, O. Bello, D. Magoc, A. Cox, T. Aguirre, C. DeBlieck, K. Lopez-Gallagher, G. De Necochea, J. Bengtson, J. Sandstrom, L. Hermanson, M. Talipov, V. Murga, R. Figueroa, R. Villegas-Arguelles, S. Walker, E. Oskey, C. Garcia-Anaya, P. Kemp, R. Ghimire, O. Holguin, Z. Klein, Parliamentarian L. LaPlue, Rec.Sec. M. Cisneros.

Guest: Deputy Provost James McAteer, Asst. VP Student Affairs Will Waller, Exec Dir Academic Tech Robbie Grant, Associate Dean of the Graduate School Karen Kopera-Frye, Rachel Portillo, Sofia Ugarte.

Revised and finalized by:

Vice Chair Brown 4/21/2026