

**NMSU Faculty Senate Meeting**  
November 6, 2025, 4:00 p.m.  
Hadley Hall Rm 130 and [Zoom](#)  
**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 4:11 p.m, due to delay in making quorum as a result of email notification issue.
  2. **Recognition of Guests**  
Deputy Provost James McAteer.
  3. **Approval of Agenda**  
Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.  
Agenda approved.
  4. **Approval of Minutes of October 2, 2025, meeting**  
Moves and seconded to approve minutes.  
Senator Aguirre proposes a friendly amendment to add her to the present list.  
Moved and seconded to approve agenda with friendly amendment.  
Minutes approved and submitted.
  5. **Reports of Officers**
    - FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya  
Chair Chaitanya provided his report, beginning with an update on the search for the Vice President for Finance and Administration. He noted that the search has concluded to the extent that the committee's participation is complete. Five candidates were identified, with three receiving unanimous votes from the committee. Chair Chaitanya expressed that he was very pleased with the quality of the candidates and emphasized that NMSU continues to attract strong applicants. The President, through the search committee, requested that four candidates be recommended for consideration. However, the committee decided to recommend five candidates initially, allowing the President to select the fourth finalist, as the fourth and fifth candidates received the same number of votes. Chair Chaitanya noted that, unlike the accelerated search for the Athletic Director, faculty will have the opportunity to participate in this process. All candidates will visit campus during the week of November 17. The Faculty Senate Leadership Committee is scheduled to meet with each candidate from 9:00 to 9:45 a.m., followed by meetings with university leadership. Both the Chair and Vice Chair will represent faculty perspectives during these sessions. There will also be an open forum for each candidate, and details will be shared once the schedule is finalized. Chair Chaitanya encouraged faculty to participate actively in the process and to provide feedback directly to the President via a designated website. He stressed the importance of this position, noting that the Vice President for Finance and Administration plays a key role in shaping the faculty experience at NMSU.
- Chair Chaitanya also reported on discussions regarding experiential learning initiatives. With input from faculty and campus leaders, there is interest in developing an infrastructure to support experiential learning across departments and divisions. He referenced a recent visit from Michelle Claire, Dean of the

Experiential Learning College at the University of Cincinnati, who shared insights about their program involving 60 faculty members. Chair Chaitanya and the Vice Chair met with her and discussed the need for a similar support structure at NMSU—one that would help departments organize, implement, track, and report experiential learning activities without placing additional burdens on faculty.

Lastly, Chair Chaitanya reported that, during his weekly meeting with the President, there was discussion about revitalizing the Domenici Institute and reinstating the two-day annual event that was previously held. The President expressed interest in working with former Governor Carruthers to invite speakers from diverse political perspectives to engage in discussions on issues of civic importance. Full Chair report on FS website.

- FS Vice-Chair/SLC Chair, Christopher Brown  
Vice Chair Brown briefly summarized his written report, which is available on the Faculty Senate website. He noted that he continues to meet regularly with President Ferme and Provost Reddi. In one of their previous meetings, the Provost acknowledged that there are significant communication challenges within the institution that need to be addressed. Two issues highlighted as examples included the mishandling of the rollout of mandatory student Title IX training—where communication from a third-party vendor was mistaken for spam by both students and staff—and the central administration’s attempt to advance the “Books for Success” initiative without formally engaging Faculty Senate or ASNMSU. The President and Provost plan to meet with their leadership team and the Vice President for Marketing and Communication to improve communication processes going forward.

Vice Chair Brown noted that the Chair had already summarized recent discussions on experiential education following the visit from Michelle Claire of the University of Cincinnati. He reiterated that while NMSU already engages in many forms of experiential learning, there is a need for better coordination and institutional support so that the burden does not fall solely on faculty or department heads. He anticipates a more cohesive statement on this topic from the President and Provost as they review Dean Claire’s report.

The Provost also shared his intention to limit faculty fellow appointments from his office to two years, ensuring broader participation among faculty. Guidance on this policy was distributed to the campus community in a memo in October.

Vice Chair Brown reported that Faculty Senate leadership is now represented on the Global Advisory Committee. In March 2024, the Senate passed a bill requesting the establishment of an online Global Advisory Committee; however, prior leadership did not engage with it, and no progress occurred until August 2024, when notification was received that the committee had been formed. Since then, Chair Chaitanya and Vice Chair Brown have engaged with Mark Lawrence, Chair of the committee, and Chancellor Kollmann. Moving forward, the Chair and Vice Chair, will share representation responsibilities on the committee, depending on availability.

VC Brown also discussed the administration’s response to the Compact on Higher Education. The President distributed a faculty-wide survey, which

received 165 responses. He reviewed all comments in detail and prepared a campus-wide message summarizing his perspective and proposed responses to the compact.

Vice Chair Brown reported that the Academic Deans Advisory Council (ADAC) met twice in October. One key topic was a proposal for a \$100 million multidisciplinary building to serve the teaching and advising needs of the campus. Two potential locations were considered: one near Williams Hall, which was deemed too small and lacking parking, and another at Regents Row, which offers sufficient space and parking. Discussions will continue as planning advances, and a design firm has already begun preliminary consultations.

ADAC also discussed how the university handles late registration requests. The consensus was that the current process is complex and could be improved. Engineering was cited as a model for its approach, having a single, well-trained individual manage these requests effectively. Dean Lakey noted that the College of Arts and Sciences could adopt a similar model with proper training.

Additionally, Dean Koodali reported ongoing efforts to improve the workflow of various grant documents, with updates to follow as those improvements progress.

Vice Chair Brown noted that UPAC met in October and reviewed several degree proposals, all of which were approved. More detailed information is available in his written report for those interested.

Finally, he reported that the Policy Steering Committee has resumed regular meetings thanks to the efforts of Dr. Ottaviano, the newly appointed University Policy Officer. The committee is now meeting biweekly. Updates on active policy work are being shared via the Hotline, and the Policy Hub is now operational. Faculty are encouraged to monitor the Hotline and visit the Hub to stay informed about ongoing policy developments.  
[Full Vice Chair report on FS website.](#)

## **6. Reports of Standing Committees**

- **Budget and Resources**

Chair Hanson reported that the Budget and Resources Committee met and had a quorum. The committee discussed several upcoming items that will be addressed in the next few meetings, including the establishment of the Business Process Improvement Committee, which is being organized by D'Anne Stewart. Chair Hanson encouraged anyone who has ideas for improving business processes to reach out and share suggestions.

The committee also began considering a memorial requesting that the administration develop a short-term plan to bring the Athletic Department to a balanced budget. As Chair of Budget and Resources, Chair Hanson also participates in several related meetings.

The University Budget Committee discussed a few notable items, including temporary funding provided to EdTV and Radio, SNAP, ED, and CAMP programs.

Additionally, the IDC Task Force met to review indirect cost recovery allocations. While Chair Hanson was unable to attend that meeting, it was noted that the administration has a plan to set aside three percent of IDC funds to help address position losses resulting from recent federal administrative executive orders and actions. Chair Hanson concluded by noting that these topics represent areas of high interest and importance for continued monitoring and discussion.  
[Full BR report on FS website.](#)

- **University Planning**  
Chair Walker reported that the University Planning Committee was asked to review promotion and tenure (P&T) guidelines to ensure that no language within those documents would adversely affect faculty currently under review, particularly in light of ongoing federal funding challenges. Initially, the committee received limited responses from departments. However, after Deputy Provost McAteer sent a reminder, participation increased significantly. As of now, fifteen departments out of approximately sixty at New Mexico State University have completed their reviews. None of the departments that have reported back have found any need to revise their P&T guidelines due to the current federal funding climate. A few departments noted that they plan to propose revisions for unrelated reasons, but overall, committees have determined that existing language does not require changes at this time. Chair Walker concluded by noting that the University Planning Committee will meet again next week to continue its work.  
[Full UP report on FS website.](#)
- **Curriculum and Planning**  
Chair Bello reported that the Curricular & Planning Committee met on October 9 and had a quorum. The committee was tasked with reviewing and revisiting the Book Estimate Cost Resolution. During the meeting, members held a preliminary discussion in which two members raised objections to the resolution. It was agreed that those members would draft and submit proposed amendments for the committee's consideration. Senator Finlator attended the meeting to provide additional context and background on the resolution, as it had been referred to the Curricular & Planning Committee from his committee. Following the discussion, members voted via email on whether to accept the proposed amendments. Chair Bello compiled and posted the voting results in a table for transparency. At the conclusion of the vote, eight members objected to the proposed amendments, resulting in the majority agreeing to pass the resolution as originally written, without modification. Chair Bello concluded her report by noting that the committee's decision reflected consensus to move forward with the resolution in its original form. [Full CP report on FS website.](#)  
*The Senate moved and seconded to approve the Curriculum & Planning Committee report.*  
*The Senate votes in the affirmative to accept Curriculum and Planning Committee report to be passed and approved.*
- **Research and Creative Activity**  
Chair Holguin reported that the Research and Creative Activity (RCA) Committee met on October 14 and had a quorum. The committee welcomed a new member, Sandra Way, from (HEST). Interim Vice President for Research Patricia Sullivan,

who was scheduled to attend the meeting, had to cancel; the committee will work on rescheduling her attendance for a future meeting.

The committee received updates related to university software acquisition and licensing processes. Robbie Grant from Academic Technology provided helpful information and connected the committee with the Faculty Advisory Committee on Technology. A representative from that committee will attend the next RCA meeting in November to discuss current processes and practices in more detail.

The RCA Committee has also reached out to the Faculty Senate Open Access Committee, which has agreed to attend a future RCA meeting. John Sandstrom will represent the Open Access Committee to share updates on their initiatives and explore ways RCA might provide support.

Lastly, Chair Holguin reported that the committee has been examining whether the university's promotion and tenure (P&T) guidelines adequately recognize entrepreneurship as part of scholarship and creative activity. To support this effort, the committee reviewed materials from the PTI organization at Oregon State University, a group sponsored by the National Science Foundation that provides resources for integrating entrepreneurship into P&T evaluation. The RCA Committee reached out to the PTI organization, which responded positively, and plans are underway to schedule a presentation from them, hopefully at the November meeting.

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

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Chair Kopera-Frye was unable to attend the meeting. Senator and DEI Committee member Pedraza provided a brief report on her behalf. The DEI Committee met on October 16 and discussed the proposed change to the committee's name to align with administrative updates and current institutional terminology. This same topic was also listed under new business for the current meeting.

Full DEI report on FS website.

- Student Success

Chair Finlator reported that the Student Success Committee met with nine members in attendance, establishing a quorum. The committee hosted Interim Provost Reddi and Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs Dr. Toni Marin, who introduced and discussed a proposal to lower the minimum high school GPA requirement for admission to NMSU from 2.75 to 2.5. The committee engaged in a productive discussion on the proposal. Following the guests' departure, the committee expressed support for the proposed change and drafted Resolution 03-25/26 recommending its approval. Chair Finlator noted that the resolution would be assigned to committee during the current meeting.

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

## **7. New Business**

- 02-25/26 – Senate Bill Proposed Name Change to Faculty Senate Standing Committee Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Sponsors – k. Kopera-Frye (HEST), Y. Villicana Pedraza (NTT) Assigned to University Planning Standing Committee

Proposition has been officially assigned to University Planning Standing Committee.

- 03/25-26 - Recommending Support for Lowering the Minimum Cumulate GPA for NMSU Admission. Sponsors - K. Finlator (A&S), R. F. Obregon (A&S), and E. Oskey (NMSU-G) – **Proposed Committee - Curriculum and Planning**  
Senator Finlator provided a brief introduction to Proposition 03-25/26. Interim Provost Reddi proposes reducing the minimum cumulative high school GPA for admission to NMSU from 2.75 to 2.5. He submitted supporting statistics indicating that this change should not negatively impact student retention. After review and discussion of the data, the Faculty Senate sponsors found the argument reasonable and have drafted a resolution expressing support for the proposed change. The resolution also includes a request for the university to continue monitoring key retention metrics to ensure the adjustment does not have adverse effects.  
Vice Chair Brown noted that the proposition will now move to the Curriculum and Planning Committee for formal consideration during November. He encouraged any faculty members with strong opinions on the matter to attend the C&P meeting and work with committee members or bill sponsors to share their perspectives.

## **8. Unfinished Business**

- 01-25/26 – Resolution Estimate Book Costs. Sponsors – K. Finlator (A&S), J. Sandstrom (Library), E. Oskey (NMSU-G), T. Aguirre (DACC, M. Burkardt (NTT), R.F. Obregon (A&S) **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning Standing Committee.**  
Senator Finlator provided a brief introduction to Proposition 01-25/26, The Books for Success Program, a proposal to change how the NMSU Bookstore sells textbooks to students—from an equity access model to an exclusive access model. Under the proposed change, students would purchase textbooks on a term-by-term basis with an opt-out option, at a proposed cost of \$28 per credit hour per student.  
Senator Finlator explained that the sponsoring senators had concerns about the proposed pricing and implementation. Preliminary analysis suggested that the new cost could be nearly double what students currently pay for textbooks. The bill, therefore, requests that the university conduct its own cost analysis—rather than relying solely on the vendor’s (Follett’s) estimates—to determine whether the proposed program would truly result in cost savings for students.  
Vice Chair, Brown called for a motion to move the bill forward.

*Motion: Senator Sharp-Hoskins*

*Second: Senator Sandstrom*

### **During discussion:**

**Senator Hanson** shared preliminary calculations estimating that the proposed \$28 per credit hour would amount to roughly \$4 million per semester (about \$400 per student), representing approximately a 10% increase in tuition. He expressed strong support for an independent cost estimate given the magnitude of the potential financial impact. **Senator Sandstrom**, a co-sponsor, spoke in favor of the bill, noting that Follett has not disclosed its profit margins. He emphasized the importance of transparency, stating that while a reasonable profit is fair, the university should understand how much the vendor is earning from the program.

Senator Lopez-Gallagher expressed support for the bill but raised a question about a provision requesting that branch campuses conduct comparable cost analyses if desired, asking how that would function administratively.

Senator Finlator responded that this suggestion came from a member of Student Success at a branch campus. He explained that the intent is for the main campus to develop the necessary statistical infrastructure for the analysis, which could then be shared with branch campuses, fostering collaboration and consistency across NMSU locations.

Vice Chair Brown then moved the bill to a vote. There was a first and a second to approve the bill.

## **VOTE:**

**YES: 32      NO: -0-      ABSTAIN: -0-**

Motion passes: Proposition approved by Senate.

## **9. Other Business – NONE**

## **10. Remarks and Announcements**

- FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya

Chair Chaitanya provided remarks and announcements regarding upcoming events and faculty involvement. He noted that during the week of November 17th, all CFO candidates will be on campus. If the president brings all five candidates, visits will run from Monday through Friday; otherwise, four of the five days will be utilized. The Faculty Leadership Committee, which includes the Senate leadership, will meet each candidate at 9:00 a.m. Chair Chaitanya and the Vice Chair will also participate in sessions as part of university leadership, the president's Cabinet, and the search committee, as well as in the public forums. Senators who are not part of the leadership committee are encouraged to attend the public forum at 2:15 p.m., if they do not have scheduling conflicts. Information about the forums will be made publicly available to all faculty, including those at community colleges.

Chair Chaitanya also announced that the Senate is seeking a representative for the internal search for the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. Senator John Cook had previously expressed interest. This position is not expected to require extensive effort, with responsibilities including evaluating candidate credentials and participating in the first and final rounds of interviews. Chair Chaitanya requested that Senator Cook confirm his interest, which Senator did in the meeting. FS Vice-Chair/SLC Chair, Christopher Brown

Vice Chair Brown provided remarks regarding faculty representation on the NMSU Global Faculty Advisory Council. He noted that Faculty Senate leadership now represents the Senate's interests on the council and that he will be attending the first meeting on November 19th. Chair Chaitanya is occupied with the CFO search, so Vice Chair Brown will serve as a point of contact for senators who have concerns regarding global offerings or related issues, which he will bring to the attention of the advisory committee. He emphasized that all members of the committee are faculty members—there are no department heads, associate deans, or administrators—and that the committee is composed of faculty with extensive experience teaching online for NMSU Global. Senators were encouraged to share

any concerns with either Vice Chair Brown or Chair Chaitanya, and these concerns will be raised at the meeting.

- Update on Senate Leadership representation on the NMSU Global Faculty Advisor Council

\*\* See Chair Chaitanya's remarks and announcements.

- Update on Provost Search timeline

Vice Chair Brown provided an update on the Provost search timeline. He reported that the search committee has been working diligently and conducted four listening sessions hosted by the search firm partners. Attendance varied across sessions. A survey was also distributed to the campus community, yielding 24 pages of comments, all of which Vice Chair Brown reviewed. He compiled a hash mark histogram summarizing key themes and shared it with the search committee. Multiple iterations of the profile were developed in collaboration with Vice Chair Sullivan, Vice Chair Brown, and the President, with the final profile released late Friday afternoon. The profile will be shared with the campus community once final packaging details are completed. The search committee has now turned the process over to the search firm, whose role is to generate a candidate pool. Materials are expected to be received between now and mid-January, with the final materials anticipated in mid to late January. The search committee will then develop a "long shortlist," whose members will be invited for Zoom interviews in late February. Four candidates will subsequently be selected for on-campus interviews during the first two weeks of March. The goal is to finalize recommendations before spring break and submit them to the President, who has ultimate hiring authority. Offers will be extended after the President's decision, with an expectation that a final selection will be made when the university returns from spring break. Vice Chair Brown invited senators to contact him or Vice Chair Sullivan with any questions and noted that the search committee incorporated specific suggestions from members to finalize the profile.

## **11. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.**

**Present:** FS Chair V. Chaitanya, FS Vice Chair C. Brown, S. Hanson, J. Cook, M. Burkardt, E. Karshmer, K. Finlator, K. Knight, T. Aguirre, R. Jayaraman, K.T. Maniz, C. DeBlieck, R. Schumacher, I. Pedraza, J. Sandstrom, R. Ghimire, M. Elshinawy, Z. Shen, T. Allred, J. Rice, R. Villegas-Arguelles, D. Fuqua, D. Overstreet, K. Sharp-Hoskins, S. Walker, O. Bello, S. Way, S. Mikkelsen, P. Kemp, G. De Necochea, D. Magoc, H. Baek, M. Furuhashi, K. Lopez-Gallagher, C. Garcia-Anaya, O. Holguin, A. Ashley, Rec.Sec. M. Cisneros

**Guests:** Deputy Provost James McAteer.

**Revised and finalized by: Vice Chair Brown on 11/13/2025  
Chair Chaitanya on 12/03/2025**