

Faculty Senate Vice Chair Report – Activities for April 2025

Christopher Brown, filed 4.30.25

Below, I share highlights of work I have completed as Vice Chair in April of 2025. As always, I am very happy to visit with anyone who would like to gain more data on activities reported.

Meetings with President Ferme and Provost Reddi – Chair Chaitanya and I continue to enjoy access to the President and Provost through our weekly meetings, and I share data on issues discussed below.

- **Questions on options for grad students to obtain health insurance** – Questions have arisen as to limitations and costs of the 2 options students are offered, and we continued discussions on this issue in our April meetings. Dean Koodali has asked to slow down the announcement on options to let negotiations with providers unfold to get the best deal for students, and Provost Reddi sees value in slowing things down. We expect to hear the final word on his in early May.
- **Benefits for part time employees** – As noted in last month's report, Provost Reddi acknowledges the need to respond to Senator Burkhardt's request that Central explore the cost of providing benefits similar to what UNM offers, and President Ferme, VP of HR Parks, and CFO Kinsley are working on this research. We had hoped to have them join us at the May Senate meeting to share results of their research, but data are not yet at hand. We will follow up on this over the summer.
- **Status of int'l students who have had visas revoked** – As had been noted in the news, 9 NMSU students had their visas revoked, all due to arrests that did not involve any protest or social media action. I read a recent Sun News story today that noted all of these students have had their visas restored, and their academic status/standing was not impacted. Dean of Students Anne Goodman has provided extensive support through her Care Team, and NMSU is also hiring an immigration attorney on a retainer basis to answer questions.
- **Reaction to recent Trump threat on DEI to K-12 and Dear Colleague Letter**
 - One idea = rebrand DEI as office of community engagement, but the units within the office may have trouble working with this. President and Provost are exploring options, a university wide task force is meeting, and we should see a message on how to proceed fairly soon.
 - Current thinking by President and Provost is to maintain a low profile, don't make waves, and stay below the radar. EOs need to be put into law by Congress, so this most likely will continue to be a fluid situation as many lawsuits make their way through court.
- **Discussions of issues with Global** – Chair Chaitanya and I met with the President, Provost, and Chancellor Kollman in April, and we explored how best to resolve these issues. The Senate passed a bill in 2023-2024 calling for an Online Advisory Committee, and the committee has met in fall 2024 and spring 2025. We are working to put in place CC and Library representation and explore how this committee can help advance these discussions. We expect to continue to meet over the summer to continue these discussions.

Meetings of the FSLC with President Ferme and Provost Reddi – Owing to schedules of the President and Provost, we were not able to meet in April. Chair Chaitanya and I have secured a commitment from Central that these meetings continue, FSLC members have agreed that continuing these meetings is a good idea, and we will work to get them started again as grades file so we can meet over the summer.

Meetings of the Academic Deans Advisory Council (ADAC), University Program Approval Council (UPAC), and the Policy Steering Committee (PSC)

- **ADAC** – We met twice during April, and discussions have focused on the following issues (some of this detail comes directly from ADAC minutes, with permission of ADAC Chair Rick Marlatt):
 - **Graduate Grade Replacement Policy** – For the last few months, ADAC and the Graduate Faculty Council (GFC) have explored drafting a grade replacement policy which resembles current practice for undergraduate students and is aimed at student success and degree completion. ADAC and the GFC shared a policy document, I worked this into a Senate bill that was introduced at the 4.3.25 Senate meeting, and it went to Student Success in April. Under Senators Aguirre and Burkardt's leadership, SS discussed the bill, offered amendments, and passed the bill and policy as amended. This will come to the full Senate in May for a vote.
 - **Registration Paperwork and Workflow** - For the last few months, ADAC has had discussions concerning the challenges and benefits of the current retroactive registration process, and forms and workflows involved. At the 28 April ADC meeting, draft documents were offered regarding automating grad committee and exam meetings, ICT is working on how to implement these, and we can expect to see advice from the Grad School on his moving forward.
 - **NMSU Graduate Faculty Directory** – Associate Grad Dean Rick Marlatt led a discussion of the updated iteration of the newly published Graduate Faculty Directory, which offers a user-friendly, streamlined interface that is alphabetized according to graduate faculty members with all pertinent information displayed in a single accessible row. A searchable text box and departmental drop-down option are also available. This work coincides with pending revisions to ARP 6.43 and recommendations concerning the Final Exam Forms. I checked my graduate faculty status in the new system, I learned that my status has expired, and I need to pursue the existing process for renewal. I suggest that all graduate faculty check their status, as I did NOT get any advice of my expired status.
- **UPAC** - UPAC did meet in April, and we basically reviewed progress on the over 100 proposals for new degree programs that came our way. Most proceeded to external review with the NM Council of Graduate Deans, NMHED, and the NM Board of Finance, and I can provide details on how these proposals did off campus if anyone would like these data. Co-Chair Joe Lakey and I will be meeting with HEST faculty who proposed a PhD program in Computational Social Science that UPAC did not approve, and I will provide details as these discussions unfold.
- **PSC** – We again did not meet in April, and, as noted in my previous report, I shared my concerns with the Provost about getting the policy review process back on track. The

reason for no action of late is concern by UGC Henderson that policy changes related to faculty work conditions may interfere with the CBA negotiations. Chair Chaitanya and I did meet with UGC Henderson to discuss getting this process back in action, and we will be working on policy changes that do not impact faculty work conditions in the coming months.