

Faculty Senate Vice Chair Report – Activities for August 2025

Christopher Brown, filed 9.11.25

Below, I share highlights of work I have completed as Vice Chair in August 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.

- **Efforts to re-imagine the Office of EID** – A task force met over the summer and provided a very detailed plan, but this plan was actually going to grow budget and admin lines. President Ferme put this plan on hold; we can expect new ideas to be shared in fall term.
- **Meetings of HED and LFC on budget requests** - HED and members of the LFC came to campus to hear capital outlay ideas. Luis Campos (HED point) and NMSU are going to ask for a \$100M building to support A&S, and this has the following asks:
 - \$100M building
 - \$35M for infrastructure
 - \$39 million to expand research efforts
- **Update on exec searches**
 - Search for Athletic Director is proceeding, and we can expect to hear finalists announced fairly soon.
 - CFO position description is finalized, the search is getting underway, and Christian Kinsley will serve until December.
 - William Dial has joined NMSU as VP of HR, I have had positive interactions with him, and I think we will see some improvement in various HR practices in fall term.
 - Provost search – I have been tapped to serve as Vice Chair of this search, Patricia Sullivan will co-chair, and we are working to build the search committee and start discussions with the search firm.
 - VPR - Patricia Sullivan has been named interim VPR, as well as Interim Director of PSL and Interim Director of Arrowhead Center.
- **Books4 Success** – this is a plan that leadership of Follett, the NMSU bookstore vendor, developed with NMSU, whereby all main campus UG students would be assessed a flat fee for books per credit hour, regardless of whether books are required for class. This was formally dropped on the campus community as classes started; thanks to Senator Burkhart for letting us know this was in play. Chair Chaitanya and I expressed our considerable disappointment regarding the lack of shared governance that was in play to the President and Provost, and Central has moved back the launch date to fall of 2025. We have asked the Senate Student Success Committee to review this proposal and bring some ideas on a formal Senate response to the Senate in fall 2025. We have time to provide input and impact if and how Books4Success is implemented, and I look forward to hearing ideas from Student Success as they advance their work.

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

- **ADAC** – We met twice during August, and discussions have focused on the following issues (some of this detail comes directly from ADAC minutes, with permission of ADAC Chair Ben Widmer):
 - **Webmaster/Website Update** – Lizely Madrigal provided updates dealing with potential service level agreements, efforts to improve service across campus, and partnering with NMSU Marketing Communication (MarCom) to define roles and develop a standard or template for campus websites. Cecilia Hernandez emphasized the critical nature of website updates for Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation, with an assurance argument due in 2027.
 - **Grad School News** - Dean Koodali noted several new awards for grad students will be in play this term, and he also reviewed the revised Graduate Faculty Directory. Graduate faculty are encouraged to check their terms in the directory and work on status renewals as needed.
 - **CPOS Update** – this is the tool that Records is using to make sure NMSU is complying with USDoEd rules on federal funds only being used to cover degree requirements. For main campus students, initial contact for CPOS questions will be Aggie One Stop. Melissa Magnusson clarified that federal aid primarily considers enrollment at the census date. Renita Hicks stressed the importance of audit exemptions for courses not in the catalog but are legitimate for the program (e.g., MAP courses, cross-listed courses). Marissa Fowler noted an ongoing need for students to declare concentrations, as failure to do so results in all courses showing as ineligible for CPOS.
 - **Assessment and Annual Program Review** - Cecilia Hernandez announced that the academic program review process opened on August 1st, and communication was sent to department heads and associate deans. A Canvas course has been created for the 2025-2026 academic program review, and associate deans will be invited to the page.
 - **Graduate Orientation Canvas Class**– Dean Koodali noted an online Canvas course for new graduate students that was launched during COVID has been significantly improved. The non-academic course contains six modules, covering topics from NMSU history and wellness initiatives to resources for international students, academic success, and technology needs.
 - **Travel Ban** - Dean Koodali advised that in mid-June, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State issued a travel ban affecting individuals from 19 countries (a complete ban for 12 and a partial ban for 7). This ban prevents individuals from these countries from obtaining visas to study in the United States. Approximately 13 admitted NMSU students for the fall semester are from the affected countries, with 10 from Iran. Citizens of these countries who are already in the U.S. can transfer their I-20 to join NMSU.

- **UPAC** - UPAC did meet in August, and we reviewed 4 programs that were submitted to UPAC.
 - Borderlands and Ethnic Studies – Master of Arts – UPAC approved the revised proposal to support this going to the BoR Student Success Committee, but I recently learned this was tabled – I do not by whom or why.
 - Wildlife and Fisheries Ecology – Doctor of Philosophy– UPAC approved the proposal, and this will now head to the BoR Student Success Committee.
 - Applied Artificial Intelligence – Master of Applied Artificial Intelligence (online) - UPAC approved the proposal, and this will now head to the BoR Student Success Committee.
 - Computational Social Science – Doctor of Philosophy – UPAC had some concerns with the budget and did not approve this in the meeting. Proposers of the program had discussions with UPAC co-chairs, Dean Koodali, and Dean Marlatt. Changes were made that UPAC approved by email vote, and the proposal will move forward in a future meeting of the BoR Student Success Committee.

- **PSC** – After not meeting for 9 months, the PSC met once in August and once in September. Thanks to the leadership of Donna Ottaviano, the new University Policy Officer, things are moving. Several changes to the ARP are proposed, proposals are in various stages of the review process, and details are provided at the NMSU Policy Hub - <https://policy.nmsu.edu/>. Donna has started posting changes in play in Hotline, and interested parties are encouraged to review progress and also submit proposed changes at The Policy Hub.