



NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY

Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC) Meeting

MINUTES

Facilitator and Chair: Oladayo Bello

Date: 27 August 2026

Time: 4:00-5:00pm

Location: ROOM: Milton Room 185J

ZOOM: <https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/86577180548>

Attendance: Senators (Abdelkefi, Bello, Burkardt, Campbell, Cook, Erickson, Finlator, Garay, Holguin, Kemp, Lopez Gallagher, Manis, Mason, Murga, Obregon, Pimentel, Sandstrom, Sievert, Tian). Guests (Beth Apodaca, Robbie Grant, Dr Madrigal, Dean Koodali, Deputy Provost McAteer) and Recording Sec. Cisneros

Call to Order

- At 4:00pm, the meeting was called to order, and VC Bello welcomed all attendees.

1. Welcome and agenda approval

- The agenda was presented for approval, there were no additions or changes, a motion to approve the agenda was moved, seconded and the agenda was approved.

2. Approval of minutes of 04/30 meeting

- The minutes of the previous meeting were presented. Sen. Burkhardt mentioned a concern about the meeting which Record. Sec. Cisneros clarified. A motion to approve the minutes was moved, seconded, and the minutes was approved.

3. Introduction of new and continuing Standing Committee chairs

- Standing committee chairs introduced themselves by providing their name, college, department, and standing committee.
- Research and Creative Activity- Omar Holguin, faculty member in the Department of Plant and Environmental Sciences, introduced himself as the continuing chair of the Research and Creative Activity (RCA) Committee. This will be his second term serving as committee chair. He welcomed the opportunity to continue in the role and expressed appreciation to the group.
- University Planning - K.T. Manis introduced himself as a faculty member in the College of Business, Department of Marketing. K.T. Manis has served on the University Planning Committee for the past two and a half years since being elected to the Faculty Senate. K.T. Manis expressed that he is glad to be part of the committee.
- Curriculum and Planning - John Sandstrom introduced himself as a Faculty Senate representative for non-tenure-track faculty. He has served on the Curriculum and Planning Committee since joining the Senate several years ago. He is based in Branson Library, working in Acquisitions.
- Budget and Resources - Steve Hanson reported that he chaired the Budget and Resources Committee for the past two years. Chris Erickson will serve as chair for the coming year; he was not present at today's meeting.
- Student Success - Rebecca Campbell introduced herself as the Chair of Student Success from the College of HEST.
- Access, Opportunity, and Outreach - Kim Lopez Gallagher introduced herself as the committee chair. She was elected interim chair last year and subsequently elected chair during the committee

caucus. She is a faculty member at Alamogordo Community College and has served on the committee for one year. She expressed enthusiasm about serving as chair this year.

4. Guest introduction and presentation

- [Dr. Lizely Madrigal: Update on classroom modernization efforts:](#) Dr. Madrigal gave a presentation on the modernization efforts for the classrooms. She reported the following outcome from a faculty survey that was administered in fall 2024: 288 faculty partially responded and 190 completed the survey. While 71% of respondents indicated issues with classroom technology, 37% rated overall functionality as average or below average, and 17% expressed dissatisfaction with technical support availability. In relation to specific technology improvements 24% identified learning technology, 24% provided no comment or indicated satisfaction, 7% identified other/non-digital needs, 4% identified hardware, 3% wireless, 3% network issues, and 2% software. Based on the survey results, IT developed a data-driven plan to standardize technology in centrally controlled classrooms. NMSU has 202 classrooms: 74 department-owned and 128 centrally scheduled. IT's annual allocation of approximately \$110,000 supports the centrally scheduled rooms. Currently, standardized Windows PCs and laser projectors have been deployed in all 128 centrally scheduled classrooms, and new control systems have been installed in 98 rooms. She noted that the classroom modernization allocation has not increased since 2012, despite the number of classrooms having doubled, and discussions with the CFO are underway regarding additional funding. Going forward, the multi-year roadmap includes auditorium upgrades in 2027, student lab modernization and charging stations in 2028, and continued faculty surveys in 2029 to guide future investments. In addition, virtual labs remain available to allow students to access software remotely. She also noted that IT has worked with students on classroom refresh efforts and that students plan to advocate during the legislative session for funding to modernize 10 classrooms in Science Hall. Dr. Madrigal emphasized the importance of faculty input in classroom technology decisions. IT has discussed establishing a formal governance group with faculty participation and has also discussed the modernization plan with the Deputy Provost and CFO. The plan is being aligned with the institution's Integrated Campus Development Plan. She encouraged faculty to participate in the governance process and to provide feedback through future surveys. She emphasized that survey data and faculty comments are reviewed and analyzed to ensure that technology investments address actual classroom needs.

Questions/Comments	Dr. Madrigal's response/s
Sen. Sandstrom asked whether modernization applies only to main campus or also to community colleges.	She explained that the allocation is specifically for centrally scheduled classrooms on the main campus; community colleges have separate funding sources for technology needs.
Sen. Burkhardt reported disruptive changes that occurred to a classroom between her visit to the classroom before the semester began and the first day of class, including removal of a second monitor and protected power outlet, without direct notification.	She noted that outreach had occurred through email, open houses, and college convocations. She agreed that more targeted communication may be necessary. She requested the specific classroom information and indicated that IT would review the concerns, investigate the reported issue and develop a better strategy for notifying faculty about classroom-specific changes.
Sen. Erickson asked about the number of classrooms included in the inventory.	She confirmed 202 classrooms in total: 74 are managed by departments and 128 centrally scheduled, noting that the total may fluctuate.
Sen. Pimentel mentioned that the reliability of existing equipment should	She noted that pre semester equipment checks are being considered. Usable equipment removed from upgraded rooms is

remain a priority, including small fixes such as cables, rather than focusing only on new equipment.	redistributed to department owned classrooms. In addition, extended support hours of 8 a.m.–8 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m.–5 p.m. weekends during fall and spring are available.
Sen. Sandstrom asked about the approximate cost of upgrading an individual classroom.	Dr. Madrigal and Francisco provided the following estimates: Classroom control system with an HD video switcher: ~ \$3,000–\$6,000, Standard PC: ~ \$1,200, Laser projector: ~ \$1,800, Hybrid classroom system: ~ \$9,000–\$10,000, including cameras, ceiling microphones, and lapel microphones; additional costs may apply for sound reinforcement and other specialized equipment.

Dr. Madrigal concluded by emphasizing that the goal is to continue modernizing, standardizing, and improving the reliability of classroom technology so that faculty encounter consistent systems and spend less instructional time troubleshooting technology.

- [Associate Dean Karen Kopera Frye: Graduation Commencement Policy](#): Associate Dean Kopera-Frye was not available to present the Graduate Commencement Policy and Dean Koodali presented on behalf of the Graduate School. He mentioned that the Graduate Commencement Policy had been deferred due to pending clarification and suggestions raised at the ADAC meeting, then revision through the Graduate Faculty Council for further consideration. So, he used the opportunity to present the new automated Graduate Tuition Remission process for eligible graduate assistants, which replaces the manual and intensive process. It applies to eligible graduate research assistants, graduate teaching assistants, and graduate assistant fellows funded through grants, instruction and general funds, or trainee/fellow mechanisms. The model was developed collaboratively by HR, Payroll, University Accounts Receivable, Administration and Finance, the Graduate School, and IT, with approval from the President and Budget Office. By September 4, all eligible graduate assistants are to be coded for in state residency in Banner; by October 16, tuition remission is to be posted to eligible accounts. Graduate assistants are exempt from the standard September 15 payment-plan deadline, with associated fees deferred to October 16. Dean Koodali stated that students enrolled for fewer than nine credits with an approved part-time enrollment waiver will be processed manually within the same timeline. Tuition remission covers tuition for fall 2026 and subsequent fall/spring semesters in which assistantships are active, but does not cover parking, laboratory fees, housing, books, or other non-tuition charges. Students remain responsible for those charges. Dean Koodali concluded by noting that the Graduate School is conducting outreach about the new process through the Graduate Faculty Council and ADAC. He welcomed additional suggestions from Senators regarding opportunities to communicate information about the new tuition remission process.

5. Sen. Finlator: Election of Parliamentarian and Recording Secretary

Election of Parliamentarian and Recording Secretary was deferred to full Faculty Senate meeting.

6. Legislations and Committee Assignment

1. **Amendments and Proposed:** The following amended and proposed bills were assigned:

- [02-26/27: Open Access Publication Fund Allocation Rules Amendment](#) :The bill proposes amendments to the Open Access Publication Fund. Sen. Abdelkefi provided a brief introduction and noted that Prof. Arslan was expected to attend and provide a presentation but was not present, so no formal presentation had been prepared. However, Sen. Finlator provided context for the bill and the reason for the amendment. He noted that the fund has been successful and recognized the work of Sen. Abdelkefi and Prof. Arslan in administering the fund, as well as Sen. Sandstrom, who chaired the committee the previous year. The committee spent most, but not all, of the funds allocated during the previous year and received a new allocation for the current year. He explained that the

amendment proposes an increase in the maximum expenditure cap of the existing \$100,000 annual fund, explicitly permitting student participation when faculty are involved, and making clarifying edits. The bill was assigned to the **Research and Creative Activity (RCA) Committee**.

- [03-26/27: Amend Proposition 05-23/24 to Establish a Voting Faculty Senate Seat on the NMSU Global Faculty Advisory Council. \(RefDoc\)](#): The bill seeks for a Faculty Senate Seat on the NMSU Global Faculty Advisory Council. Sen. Erickson spoke about the history of the bill and clarified the context of the amendment. He explained that he originally proposed the legislation approximately two to three years ago to establish the council. The proposal was approved by then-President Gogue, with several modest conditions that Sen. Erickson considered acceptable. When the council was subsequently implemented, the Faculty Senate Chair was designated as an ex-officio, non-voting chair and was not permitted to appoint a designee. Sen. Erickson noted that this differed from the standard practice in which ex-officio members may vote and may designate a representative when they are unable to attend. The current proposition seeks to clarify that the Faculty Senate Chair, serving as an exofficio member, has voting rights and may designate a representative. Sen. Erickson stated that the proposed change is intended to align the council's structure with the original intent of the legislation and standard ex-officio practices. The Faculty Senate Chair's seat should carry voting rights and permit a designee to attend in the Chair's place. It was assigned to the **Access, Opportunity, and Outreach (AOO) Committee**.
- [04-26/27: Establishing a Task Force on Dual-Career Recruitment and Retention](#): Sen. Holguin, who is set to champion this bill explained the rationale behind it. The newly proposed bill asks for the consideration of Dual Career Recruitment and Retention. He explained that the consideration is to attend to the issue arises when a new faculty is being recruited or when an existing faculty is seeking retention support and requires accommodations for a spouse or partner's employment. Although an existing institutional policy indicates that the university may support dual-career hires, Sen. Holguin noted that there is currently limited policy guidance regarding how such arrangements should be implemented. He reported that discussions with the college's HR unit, the Provost's Office, the Chair, and several administrators, including two deans, led to the proposal to establish a university-wide task force. The task force would examine existing policies and practices across the university system, including both the community colleges and main campus, and consider how the institution can better address faculty recruitment and retention through dual-career and spousal/partner accommodations. Thus, the bill **proposes** a task force to review spousal/partner hiring accommodations, compare peer institutions, and develop clearer system-wide guidance. The bill was assigned to the **Budget and Resources (BR) Committee**.
- [05-26/27: Establishing a Task Force for Innovation and Entrepreneurship achievements in Promotion and Tenure and Faculty Evaluation](#): This bill is also being led and co-sponsored by Sen. Holguin. He explained the rationale for the bill, which is for the consideration of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Promotion and Tenure. It proposes a task force to examine how innovation and entrepreneurship would be recognized in the promotion and tenure process. Sen. Holguin mentioned that the resolution to establish a task force developed from work conducted by the RCA during the previous Faculty Senate term. The proposal is intended to examine promotion and tenure policies and documents across the university, particularly how evaluation metrics are established and whether they adequately recognize faculty work in innovation and entrepreneurship. He noted that faculty pursuing innovation and entrepreneurial activities, particularly early career faculty, may face challenges because such work does not always produce traditional academic outputs. To inform this work, the RCA contacted a national organization supported through NSF funding that has worked with more than 50 institutions to develop policies recognizing innovation and entrepreneurship in faculty evaluation. The RCA had initially planned to conduct a survey and gap analysis. During the

spring term, however, the VPR's Office established monthly meetings involving the URC, RCA, and the VPR's Office. During those discussions, the VPR's Office offered to support the survey and gap analysis through the RCID Office. Following discussions with the Faculty Senate Chair, the proposal evolved toward establishing a university-wide task force to evaluate the survey and gap-analysis results and examine related policies across the institution at the system level. Sen. Holguin reported that the proposition has received positive support and that the VPR's Office is fully supportive of the resolution. The bill was assigned to the University Planning Committee.

2. New

- [Drafted: 01-26/27: Memorial for Dr. Patricia MacGregor Mendoza](#): A memorial resolution honoring Dr. Patricia MacGregor-Mendoza was introduced by Sen. Pimentel in recognition of her significant contributions to NMSU faculty success. He highlighted Dr. MacGregor-Mendoza's significant work and service to faculty, noting that her efforts have helped create an easier path for those who follow. He emphasized that her contributions should be remembered and that a memorial would provide an appropriate means of recognizing her lasting impact. Senate Leadership recommended that the proposition go to the September 3rd Faculty Senate meeting agenda as Emergency Legislation to be approved by consent without referral to any committee. Senators and faculty wishing to be added as co-sponsors were encouraged to contact Sen. Pimentel. Sen. Burkhardt indicated her intention to be a co-sponsor.
- Draft pending: Adoption of Pass/NC grading for first semester of first year: Sen. Bello introduced a grading model for the first semester of first year students. It is a potential student-success initiative discussed during the recent meeting with the Provost. She reported that she had learned about a similar approach being adopted by the University of Michigan and noted that the Provost had also referenced Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and other institutions using comparable models. The proposed strategy would establish pass/no-credit grading for students during the first semester of their first year. Under this model, grades earned during the first semester would not be calculated into the student's GPA. She explained that the intent would be to give first-year students an opportunity to acclimate to the university environment while supporting student success, in alignment with NMSU Forward goals. As a next step, Sen. Bello proposed establishing an ad hoc committee to investigate the feasibility of such a policy at NMSU. The committee would consult with the Registrar's Office, the Division of Student Enrollment and Success, ADAC, and other relevant offices before developing a formal proposition. She made a call for interested faculty who would like to participate in gathering required information needed to draft the bill. Sen. Pimentel raised questions regarding the potential impact of pass/no-credit grading on scholarships, financial aid and programs such as the New Mexico Opportunity Scholarship, which have GPA requirements. He also asked whether state approval would be required and whether data is available regarding outcomes at institutions that have implemented similar policies. Sen. Bello responded that these issues would need to be examined as part of the feasibility review, including consultation with the Registrar's Office, Student Enrollment, and Financial Aid. She noted that other institutions have implemented similar models and that the ad-hoc committee would investigate how such a policy might be structured at NMSU.

3. Policies to be assigned for review

- [ARP 4.61 Transfer of Credit](#): Sen. Finlator provided an update on the policy review process. He explained that he and Sen. Bello serve on the Policy Steering Committee, which manages the Academic Regulations and Procedures (ARP). Two of the committee's nine members are faculty representatives. Proposed policies affecting academics are brought to the Faculty Senate for review and input because faculty are stakeholders in the process. ARP 4.61, governs transfer credit, including the conditions and definitions under which coursework completed at another institution may be applied toward a student's degree. The proposed revisions to this policy include: 1) Clarifying that

only official transcripts, rather than unofficial transcripts, may be used to award transfer credit. 2) Allowing students who have earned an Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree from an accredited New Mexico postsecondary institution to be admitted at the junior level at baccalaureate degree-granting institutions. 3) Requiring individual departments to maintain records of course equivalencies and update those records every three years. 4) Expanding the individuals who may appeal a transfer-credit decision to include a student advisor, in addition to an affected student or faculty member. Sen. Finlator characterized the proposed changes as primarily clarifications and administrative updates and suggested that the policy did not require review by a Faculty Senate committee. Following discussion, the committee determined that ARP 4.61 should be returned to the Policy Steering Committee for further processing. Thus, the policy was approved as amended and would be returned to the Policy Steering Committee.

- [ARP 4.62 Academic Agreement](#): The policy was assigned to **Student Success (SS) Committee** for review and then provide feedback indicating whether amendments are required or not.
- [ARP 4.65 General Education courses required for graduation](#): The policy was assigned to the **Curriculum and Planning (CP) Committee** for review and feedback.

7. New Business

1. Strategies to communicate FS governance contribution, increase faculty awareness and participation in senate.

- Sen. Erickson shared his experience with increasing awareness about Faculty Senate, noting that he has presented about Faculty Senate to the College of Business at the opening convocation of each fall and spring semester for approximately 10 years. He initially began providing the report while serving as Parliamentarian and has continued doing so as a Faculty Senator. His report typically focuses on four to five of the most consequential Faculty Senate bills for the College of Business. Sen. Erickson noted that he generally discusses bills that have passed and does not typically include unsuccessful or routine, noncontroversial measures. The approximately 10-minute presentation includes a discussion of the potential advantages and disadvantages of the selected legislation. When possible, he also provides updates from meetings with higher university administration. As a member of the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee, he has been able to report on discussions with the President and Provost and share updates regarding their priorities and perspectives. Sen. Erickson emphasized that serving as a Faculty Senator provides faculty with access to university administration and opportunities to participate in institutional decision making. He uses the annual presentation to demonstrate the work of the Faculty Senate and highlight faculty access to university leadership.
- Sen. Finlator: [Introduction to Faculty Senate flyer text](#): Sen. Bello introduced a discussion regarding the development of a Faculty Senate informational flyer to distribute broadly to faculty members. The goal is to increase awareness of the Faculty Senate's role, responsibilities, and activities. Sen. Finlator explained that, at the beginning of the academic year, he has been conducting outreach similar to Senator Erickson's presentations. He developed a brief, approximately three-minute "elevator speech" explaining the role and functions of the Faculty Senate and has shared it as a resource. Sen. Bello reported that it would be reviewed by the AOO committee with the plan to develop it into printed flyers for distribution campus wide

2. Strategies to support first year students:

- Sen. Campbell: President Mentorship Program pilot phase: Sen. Campbell provided an update on the President's Mentorship Program pilot, co-chaired by Dr. Spencer Herrera and Sen. Campbell. She reported that the program has currently matched 250 students with 50 faculty, staff, and leadership mentors across DACC, Global, and main campus. The best-practices kickoff session has been completed, and early assessment indicates participants found the experience valuable, and the program is now in the active mentoring phase.

8. Other Business: Discussion: (Sen. Finlator -Weaving the needs of native American students into the system), Concern (Salary Inversion by Sen. Burkhardt), and Questions

- Sen. Finlator reported that the President, Provost, and other university representatives have been meeting with tribal communities throughout the state. He noted that these communities have generally expressed positive views of NMSU and that their students report positive experiences at the university, including students who do not ultimately complete their degrees. A significant challenge identified is the conflict between traditional and cultural obligations and academic requirements. Students may need to be away from campus for extended periods, sometimes one to three weeks, to fulfill traditional obligations. Sen. Finlator noted that students may not know how to request appropriate academic accommodation, which may contribute to students leaving the university. Sen. Finlator and Campbell will meet with representatives from the American Indian Program (AIP) and continue discussions with Academic Advising to better understand the needs of these students and identify ways the university can provide appropriate support. Robbie Grant recommended reviewing the former Digital Pathways Project, developed by the College of Extended Learning approximately 15 years ago. He explained that the project worked with Pueblo and reservation communities and developed a model that accommodated feast days and other periods when students needed to return to their communities for extended periods. Senator Sandstrom offered to assist with the initiative, noting that his dissertation addressed related issues. He also indicated that he remains active in Gallup and with organizations within the Navajo Nation and would be available to provide additional assistance.
- Sen. Burkhardt raised concerns regarding salary equity and discrepancies that can arise during faculty searches. She reported that a recent faculty search advertisement in her department listed a salary approximately \$7,000 higher than the salaries of four current assistant professors in the department. The discrepancy prompted concerns among current faculty about salary equity and retention. She noted that the search committee chair was also one of the affected assistant professors. Sen. Burkhardt reported that the advertisement was subsequently revised and the salary information removed. She noted that, although the posted salary may have been reasonable for the position, the incident highlighted broader concerns regarding salary levels and disparities across departments and disciplines. She also expressed concern that some assistant professor salaries may be below salaries offered for postdoctoral positions at other institutions. Sen. Holguin described a practice within his college for addressing salary discrepancies. When a proposed new hire would create a significant salary disparity within a department, the department may determine that existing faculty salaries should also be adjusted. In such cases, the offer is not made unless funding can be identified to address the internal salary discrepancy. He noted that this practice is generally applied within departments rather than across departments. Sen. Burkhardt asked whether the Faculty Senate should raise the issue with university administration or develop a statement addressing salary equity. Sen. Finlator reported that the President has acknowledged salary inequity concerns in both President's Cabinet meetings and Faculty Senate Leadership Committee administrative meetings. He also reported that a Salary Inequity Committee has been meeting and is expected to provide results soon. Sen. Finlator asked Senator Burkhardt to provide the details of the situation so they could be raised during the next meeting with the President and forwarded to the Salary Inequity Committee for consideration. Sen. Erickson, drawing on his previous service on two university salary study committees, noted that salary inequities and faculty retention concerns have been longstanding issues. He stated that faculty turnover and the loss of experienced faculty can provide a strong basis for discussions with university administration and the Legislature regarding faculty compensation. Sen. Erickson also discussed the importance of allowing departments to recruit qualified candidates at competitive salaries while subsequently addressing internal salary equity. He noted that having a newly hired faculty member earn more than existing faculty can provide a basis for requesting salary adjustments for current faculty. Sen. Campbell noted that salary discrepancies may reflect a broader systemic issue involving differences in

departmental practices, training, policies, and procedures. She suggested that greater standardization and clearer guidance for department heads could help address inconsistencies in how salary offers and equity issues are handled. Sen. Campbell also recommended examining the cost of faculty turnover and recruitment, including search expenses and startup costs, to better understand the institutional financial impact of losing faculty. She further noted that HR has an existing process through which faculty can request a salary equity analysis when a newly hired faculty member is offered a higher salary. She encouraged use of that process as a mechanism for addressing documented salary disparities. Sen. Holguin added that the College of ACES has an internal HR unit that conducts salary equity analysis during the offer process. The analysis can identify potential inequities before an offer is finalized. If a higher salary is considered necessary to recruit a candidate, the dean may be required to identify funding to address resulting salary disparities among existing faculty. He noted that this process allows salary equity concerns to be addressed in real time during the hiring process.

9. Announcement and Remarks

- Sen. Finlator and Sen. Bello

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm by Sen. Bello thanking everyone for a productive afternoon. The next meeting is scheduled for 9/24, 4-5pm.

Action Items

Action Item	Responsible Member/s	Target Timeline
Review Bill 022627 – Open Access Publication Fund Amendment.	RCA Committee	September 24
Review Bill 032627 – Faculty Senate Seat on NMSU Global Faculty Advisory Council.	AOO Committee	September 24
Review Bill 042627 – Dual Career Recruitment and Retention Task Force.	Budget & Resources Committee	September 24
Review Bill 052627 – Innovation and Entrepreneurship in P&T Task Force.	University Planning Committee	September 24
Review the Academic Agreement Policy.	Student Success Committee	September 24
Review General Education Courses Required for Graduation.	Curriculum & Planning Committee	September 24
Form ad hoc committee to assess Pass/No Credit first-semester proposal and prepare a formal bill if feasible.	Dr. Bello / interested faculty	Fall 2026
Review the Faculty Senate elevator speech and support broader distribution of outreach materials.	AOO Committee	September 24
Meeting with AIP and advising to develop improved support structures for Indigenous students.	Sen. Campbell & Sen. Finlator	Fall 2026