

**AGENDA**  
**NMSU Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC)**  
**November 20, 2025, 4:00 p.m. (1 week early due to Thanksgiving)**  
**Zoom(<https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/83656717192>) and Hadley Hall Rm 130**  
**PLEASE NOTE NEW LINK**

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 4:00 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda  
Moved and seconded to approve agenda.  
Senate Leadership approved the agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes of 30 October 2025 meeting (Attached)  
Moved and seconded to approve the minutes.  
Senator Sandstrom proposes a friendly amendment to change him from Library to Non-Tenure-Track (NTT). Another friendly amendment to correct Senator's Bronstein name on the Present list.  
Moved and seconded to approve minutes with the friendly amendments.  
Minutes approved and submitted.
4. Recognition of Guests  
Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration Chris Kinsley  
  
Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration Chris Kinsley provided an update on the Books for Success proposal. He thanked the committee for the opportunity to speak and noted that while the presentation remained in draft form, it had been shared with Dr. Brown. He stated that his goal is to finalize the proposal for review by the University System Budget Committee at its next meeting. He also acknowledged the recent Faculty Senate resolution requesting a study on the cost of books and materials and confirmed that his office will be working on that effort. IVPFA Kinsley reported that the originally planned cost of \$28 per credit hour—aligned with DACC and Alamogordo—had been reduced to \$27 and then to \$26 per credit hour, with \$23 designated for Follett and \$3 for NMSU to cover internal operations. He noted that Follett may or may not accept the lower rate but emphasized that the reduction was in response to feedback from faculty and student leadership. He also referenced the ongoing debt obligation tied to the bookstore facility, which adds approximately \$1 to \$1.50 per credit hour to costs. Senator Burkardt commented on a candidate visit in which the candidate reported that their university had taken on bookstore operations internally and generated revenue for the institution rather than relying on a vendor. IVPFA Kinsley acknowledged the comment and said this model was worth exploring, though current costs and past commitments complicate the situation.

Senator Lopez Gallagher clarified that the per-credit-hour cost at Alamogordo is currently \$24. IVPFA Kinsley acknowledged and accepted the correction, noting that DACC is at \$28 while Alamogordo remains at \$24.

Senator Sandstrom expressed concerns about the perception that the Books for Success program might already be decided, emphasizing that faculty expected further study before any implementation. He noted that the university receiving a portion of the revenue raises potential conflicts of interest and stated that he had not seen evidence that the program would be beneficial for students, citing his own experience of paying significantly more under an inclusive access model than he would have paid independently.

IVPFA Kinsley responded that the proposal is not a done deal. No contract has been signed, nor has approval been granted by the Regents, the Regents Finance Committee, or the University System Budget Committee. He clarified that the program could only be implemented for Fall 2026 if approved by the December Regents meeting due to financial aid packaging timelines, but that the university could also choose not to move forward. He emphasized that whether the program is more cost-effective depends on individual student circumstances, some would pay less under the proposed model, while others might pay more.

Senator Hanson thanked IVPFA Kinsley for attending and for his willingness to meet with the Budget and Resources Committee, expressing appreciation for his engagement.

Further comments and discussion followed.

## **5. Reports on Existing Legislation**

- 01-25/26 - Resolution Estimate Book Cost. Sponsors – K. Finlator (A&S), J. Sandstrom (NTT), E. Oskey (NMSU-G), T. Aguirre (DACC), M. Burkardt (NTT), R.F. Obregon (A&S). **Sent to Central for signature on November 13<sup>th</sup>.**

Senator Finlator, the lead sponsor, noted that the resolution had been passed by the full senate and forwarded to the administration for signatures. Recording Secretary Cisneros reported that the signed resolution was received earlier today. The committee noted that this item will be a point of discussion during next week's meeting with the administration.

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

Senator Kopera-Frye, the lead sponsor, noted that she brought the proposal to the DEI Committee meeting the previous day to gather initial feedback on the amended name. She reported that committee members expressed mixed reactions: three members were supportive, while others were neutral or uncertain. Questions

were raised regarding whether the proposed name would be temporary or could be changed again in the future as circumstances evolve.

Chair Brown noted that the bill has been assigned to the University Planning Committee. The committee has met, adopted an amendment, and passed the amended version. Senator Walker will provide the University Planning report later in the meeting.

- 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). **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning.** Senator Finlator, the lead sponsor, reported that he attended the Curriculum and Planning Committee meeting, where he was invited to provide input and answer questions. He noted that he was unsure of the outcome of the committee’s vote and would await their report.

## **6. Proposed Legislation**

- 04-25/26 - Faculty Senate input to Academic Program Sustainability Plan Proposal. Sponsors – O. Bello (Engineering), C. Brown (A&S), and others to follow. **Proposed Committee – Budget and Resources.** Vice Chair Brown introduced the proposed legislation. He provided background on the development of the plan, noting that former Provost Alan Shoho tasked the University Program Approval Committee (UPAC) with this work in March 2024. UPAC worked through the summer and produced a draft document for the administration in late 2024. Following the federal election and shifting administrative priorities, progress slowed as university leadership addressed new executive orders and funding concerns. Brown explained that central administration now wishes to move the plan forward, and the Regents continue to request updates from the President and Provost. Provost Lakshmi Reddi asked for Faculty Senate input, and the proposal was forwarded to Senator Bello and her committee, who prepared a report. Brown stated that the purpose of the bill is to send the report to the full Senate for review and possible endorsement. Senator Bello noted that, given the background, the next step is simply to advance the legislation to the full Senate. Brown proposed assigning the item to the Budget and Resources Committee once it is introduced as new business at the December 4 Senate meeting, and the committee agreed. Senator Bello will provide a brief presentation when the bill is introduced. The report produced by the Standing Committee and the accompanying brief bill have been posted to the Faculty Senate website. Brown emphasized that the Senate may endorse the report as written or propose modifications. He added that timely

action would be beneficial, as the university will soon hire a new provost; having the plan endorsed and settled may help prevent future uncertainty regarding program evaluation and sustainability metrics.

Brown also commended Provost Reddi for reframing the initiative from a focus on low-yield program elimination to a broader and more constructive approach centered on program sustainability. Further discussion will occur at next month's meeting.

## 7. Other Business

- a. Discussion of 4 December 2025 Faculty Senate Agenda Items – all  
Chair Brown led a brief discussion regarding preparation of the Faculty Senate agenda for the December 4 meeting. He noted that Chair Chaitanya was unable to attend due to commitments with the CFO search. Brown asked the Recording Secretary whether she had sufficient information from the committee's discussion to prepare the agenda; she confirmed that she did. The agenda will be finalized either next week or upon coordination between Mari and Vimal, and it will be posted at the beginning of the following week. Brown emphasized the continued effort to post materials at least three days prior to the meeting and confirmed that materials will certainly be posted no later than two days in advance to allow senators adequate time for review.

- b. Discussion of Provost's proposal for working group to review evaluation process for deans – VC Brown  
Chair Brown introduced the next agenda item: discussion of the Provost's proposal for a working group to review the evaluation process for deans. He explained that a faculty member had expressed concerns about the outcome of a dean's evaluation and requested that Faculty Senate leadership address the issue with central administration. Brown noted that the Provost shared his perspective with the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee regarding the ACES dean's evaluation. Brown's interpretation is that if deans and department heads use soft, quantitative data, such as ordinal rankings, to evaluate faculty, a similar approach should be considered for evaluating deans. Erickson also proposed drafting a formal proposal, in collaboration with Vimal, to circulate to the FSLC for discussion at the next meeting. Senator Bronstein noted concerns about inconsistencies between numerical scores and written comments in evaluations, cautioning against cherry-picking favorable data. Chair Brown outlined three key issues: term limits for deans, a better evaluation instrument to reconcile conflicting data, and timely execution by central administration. Bronstein suggested forming a working group including a Provost's office representative, a Faculty Senate member, a department head from main campus, and a faculty member from a community

college. He asked the committee to consider whether this should be a Faculty Senate-led or Provost's Office-led project.

Karen Kopera-Frye supported making it a Faculty Senate project, noting that the Senate should have input on how evaluations are interpreted. Senator Boutsen seconded her comment. We did not have a clear consensus on if this should be a Senate Project or a Provost Project.

Senator Creusere recommended focusing first on the dean evaluation issue specifically, suggesting that related department-level issues be treated separately to avoid a sprawling discussion. Kopera-Frye and Boutsen offered support in drafting the proposal. Brown concluded that a draft proposal addressing the dean evaluation process would be brought to the next FSLC meeting for review, with discussion of other related issues to follow at a later time.

Discussion highlighted differing perspectives on quantitative versus subjective measures, evaluation consistency, and appropriate oversight for the proposed working group.

c. Standing Committees Reports

- Budget and Resources Chair, Stephen Hanson

Chair Hanson reported that the committee met and achieved quorum despite some initial technical issues with organizing the Zoom meeting. The committee spent the entirety of the meeting discussing the Books for Success program, with guest Chris Vice providing information consistent with what was shared in the current meeting. Chair Hanson noted that he has not yet submitted the written report online, as he circulated it to all committee attendees for review and verification. He expects to submit the final report by tomorrow or Monday. The committee's general consensus—pending any corrections or additions from committee members—was that it is unclear whether the Books for Success program provides any meaningful enhancement beyond what is already available to students. Additionally, without firm financial data, the committee could not determine the full cost impact; however, indications suggest it would likely result in additional costs to students. The committee's understanding is that the Books for Success program expands the existing Follett Access model by making participation automatic for all students, with an opt-out option that students are unlikely to use. This shifts a course-by-course benefit into a mandatory per-credit hour charge. Chair Hanson expressed the view that this approach may not serve students well. [Full BR report on FS website.](#)

- University Planning Chair, Stephanie Walker  
Chair Walker reported that the committee focused on two main assignments at its last meeting. First, the committee continues to track departmental reviews of their Promotion and Tenure (P&T) guidelines, particularly to identify any elements that could adversely affect faculty seeking P&T in light of current challenges with federal funding. Chair Walker noted that only a limited number of departments had submitted their reviews. She sent an updated spreadsheet to Deputy Provost McAteer yesterday, including a list of departments that had not yet responded. Following that update, additional responses were received today. At present, 24 of approximately 60 academic departments at New Mexico State University have reported. Deputy Provost McAteer is eager to have this process completed before the end of the semester and will continue encouraging departments that have not submitted their reviews.

The second item of business was Bill 02-25-26, submitted by the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, proposing a change to the committee's name. The committee expressed concern that, in the current climate, their name may draw undue attention or discomfort and requested review and consideration of a renaming. The UP Committee discussed the proposal at length and ultimately voted by majority to approve a name change. While some members strongly opposed any change, most felt that if the committee originated in the committee believed a name change was necessary for its work, the request should be honored. After discussion, the committee proposed the name Access, Opportunity, and Belonging, as they felt it better reflected the committee's function than the originally suggested "NMSU Engagement and Service." In this regard, the committee accepted the bill with a revision. Vice Chair Brown added that the amended bill will come before the full Senate for discussion on December 4, at which time it may be further amended, passed, or rejected. A substantive discussion will take place during the Faculty Senate meeting.

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

- Curriculum and Planning Chair, Oladayo Bello  
Chair Bello reported that the committee held its November meeting last Thursday, during which members were asked to review the bill proposing a reduction in GPA requirements from 2.75 to 2.5 as a strategy to increase enrollment. Senator Finlator and the Vice Chair

attended the meeting to provide additional context and clarify details of the bill. After their departure, the committee proceeded with its vote, and all members voted in favor of the proposal.

Chair Bello noted that committee members supported the bill primarily because it could increase enrollment and provide broader access for marginalized populations. However, the committee also expressed significant concern about ensuring appropriate interventions and support structures for students admitted under the lower GPA threshold. Members emphasized the importance of retention and program completion, stating that simply admitting students without adequate support may place them at risk and undermine long-term success. The committee stressed the need for a comprehensive, end-to-end process that includes strategies and interventions to help these students progress through their programs and complete their degrees. The bill was approved. Vice Chair Brown added that the bill will return to the full Senate for discussion at the December 4 meeting and expressed appreciation for Chair Bello's leadership on the matter.  
[Full CP report on FS website.](#)

- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Omar Holguin  
Chair Holguin reported that the committee met earlier this week and focused primarily on presentations from two guests. The first guest, Paul Hamilton, Chair of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Technology, discussed how the university adopts institutional licenses for software packages. Chair Holguin noted that the committee found it informative to learn that when the total cost of independently purchased licenses across the university exceeds the cost of an institutional license, this triggers the university to purchase the institutional version. This process is how the university ultimately acquired Grammarly.

The committee also heard from Open Access Fund co-chairs John Sandstrom and Karen Kopera-Frye. They provided updates on the fund's early challenges, including faculty concerns about not receiving notifications after submitting applications. The issue was traced to IT-related problems that affected the circulation of applications, but these problems have since been resolved. The Open Access Fund is now issuing award notices and correction requests to applicants, and the co-chairs reported encouraging progress, citing strong quality in the open access publications moving forward. They also noted that this is an opportune time to re-advertise the program to colleagues, as the initial

announcement was released during the summer and may not have reached all faculty. Additionally, there was discussion about the possibility of expanding similar types of support programs in the future — for example, funding structures that could assist with open-access-style venues for artwork or museum-related fees. Chair Holguin concluded his report with no further updates.

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

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair, Karen Kopera-Frye  
Chair Kopera-Frye reported that the committee addressed two major items at its most recent meeting. The first involved a follow-up visit with Dr. Freda Trujillo, Director of Disability Access Services (DAS), and Will Waller, Assistant Vice President for Wellbeing. This follow-up stemmed from concerns raised by a student guest at the September DEI meeting regarding communication challenges with DAS. Dr. Trujillo shared several notable statistics, including that between March 1 and August 1, 2025, a total of 943 students were registered with DAS. Much of the discussion focused on the FlexPlan accommodation process, which is primarily intended for students with chronic illnesses or disabilities. The committee also sought clarification on procedures for temporary limitations, such as injuries requiring a cast. It was noted that faculty had expressed concerns about the lengthy automated questionnaire associated with FlexPlan notifications. Dr. Trujillo reported that this feedback was well taken and that the questionnaire will be revised for the spring semester to be more concise and targeted. She acknowledged staffing shortages within DAS but stated that a new position is being filled, which should help address communication issues raised by the students. For informational clarity, the committee learned that temporary disabilities lasting up to two weeks are handled through Student Services, while those expected to exceed two weeks fall under DAS due to the need for more extensive case management and coordination. Dr. Trujillo also commented that the current processes were implemented quickly and are now undergoing evaluation to identify gaps and improvements from both student and faculty perspectives.

The second item involved follow-up discussion on the proposed name change for the DEI Committee, which had been reviewed by UPC. Chair Kopera-Frye shared the committee's perspectives and asked members how they felt about the issue, including whether such a name change might be temporary or revisited in the future. The majority expressed



neutral or flexible views, while three of the eight members indicated support for the suggested name change.

Chair Brown added that because this is an informal name change that has not gone through the Constitution and Bylaws process, any approved change would be reflected on the website. If a future proposal seeks to revise the name again, it could be addressed at that time. However, because the committee's name is currently embedded in the Constitution, a formal change would require a faculty-wide vote. Vice Chair Brown recommended that in the spring the Senate move the committee name out of the Constitution and into the Bylaws, which can be amended through a two-month Senate process rather than the six-month process required for constitutional changes.

- Student Success Chair, Kristian Finlator  
Chair Finlator reported that the Student Success Committee had no official business at its recent meeting. The committee met with a quorum and began a discussion on developing a university-wide approach to limiting access to and use of digital devices in the classroom. Several points were raised during the conversation, but no formal proposals were introduced. The committee expects to continue this discussion in future meetings. [Full SS report on FS website.](#)

## 8. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya  
Chair Chaitanya not available.
- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown  
Chair Brown reported on the Global Advisory Committee, noting that although Senator Vimal was not present, he wished to provide an update. The committee was established by Senate legislation in March 2024 and spent several months developing bylaws. During that process, James McAteer informed leadership that the committee created by the bill had moved forward without formal Senate participation. Although Faruk Aslan had been serving on the committee, his Senate term ended, prompting a meeting with the Provost, the President, the Chancellor of Global, Vimal, and Vice Chair Brown. As a result of that meeting, it was agreed that either the Senate Chair or Vice Chair will serve as a formal member of the Global Advisory Committee, subject to availability. Vice Chair Brown noted that he suggested allowing a designated representative, but this proposal was not adopted. Vice Chair Brown attended the committee meeting earlier this week and reported that a large number of faculty with extensive online teaching

experience were present, with no administrators in attendance. He invited any senator with concerns related to distance education, remote delivery, or Global Campus operations to bring those issues to him so he can convey them to the committee. He added that his understanding is that the committee meetings are open to all faculty. He emphasized that the committee will conduct its work diplomatically and in accordance with its bylaws, which he can share with anyone interested. Chair Brown encouraged senators to contact him with any concerns or issues they would like raised.

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

**Present:** Vice Chair C. Brown, K. Finlator, J. Cook, C. Creusere, O. Bello, C. Erickson, S. Hanson, M. Burkardt, K. Sharp-Hoskins, F. Boutsen, K. Kopera-Frye, K. Knight, L. Grant, M. Montañez, O. Holguin, S. Walker, J. Bronstein, J. Sandstrom, K. Lopez-Gallagher, Rec. Sec. M. Cisneros.

**Guest:** Interim Vice President of Finance and Administration, Chris Kinsley

**Absent:** Chair V. Chaitanya

**Revised and finalized by:  
Vice Chair Brown on 12/01/2025**