

NMSU Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC)

AGENDA

Thursday, 26 February 2026, 4:00 p.m.

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 4:02 p.m.
2. Approval of Agenda
Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.
Senate Leadership approved the agenda.
3. Approval of Minutes of 29 January 2026 meeting (Attached)
Moved and seconded to approve the minutes.
Senator Burkardt proposes a friendly amendment to correct several clerical errors. Specifically, Senator Karen’s name is misspelled in a few locations. Additionally, the title “Deputy McAteer” appears in a couple of instances, which appears to be an error. The title should be corrected to “Deputy Provost” for consistency.
Moved and seconded to approve minutes with the friendly amendments.
Minutes approved and submitted.

4. Reports on Existing Legislation

04-25/26 – Faculty Senate input to Academic Program Sustainability Plan Proposal. Sponsor (s) – O. Bello (Engineering), C. Brown (A&S), and other to follow.

Final draft approved by Senate, Transmittal and addendum sent to Central.

The Recording Secretary confirmed that Proposition 04-25/26 has been signed by Central Administration and has been uploaded and posted on the Faculty Senate website.

05-25/26 –Proposal to Establish Task Force on the Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Pedagogy. Sponsor (s) – C. Erickson (Business), K. Sharp-Hoskins (A&S), and others to follow. **Discussed by Curriculum and Planning, report to follow.**

Senator Erickson noted that the item was tabled at the last meeting; therefore, no action was taken by the group. As a result, it will automatically return at the next full Faculty Senate meeting and should appear as the first item under Unfinished Business at the Senate.

06-25/26 - Supporting CNM and UNM Joint Resolution Against the "Compact for Academic Excellence in Higher Education.” **Assigned to University Planning, who discussed and approved unanimously.**

Chair Brown provided brief background on the proposition, noting that it was brought to Senator Karen and him by the chairs of the CNM and UNM Senates. The proposal is related to the New Mexico Mutual Academic Defense Compact Council, a group composed of senators from UNM, CNM, and several other New Mexico institutions. Chair Brown added that Senator Karen had taken the lead on the matter but is no longer serving in the Senate.

Chair Brown stated that he believed the item had been referred to the University Planning Committee and invited the committee to share its discussion during its report.

Senator Walker confirmed that Senator Karen attended the committee’s most recent meeting a couple of weeks prior and provided background on the proposal. Senator Walker reported that the

committee had a quorum, with two members absent, and that the committee unanimously approved the bill in support of CNM and UNM.

Chair Brown concluded that the item would return to the Senate for further discussion and a vote at the next full Faculty Senate meeting.

5. Proposed Legislation

07-25/26 – Bill sharing input to Policy Steering Committee on proposed change to ARP 4.69 on Distance Education. Sponsors – C. Erickson (CoB), C. Brown (A&S), and others to follow.

Bill 7-25/26, concerns sharing input with the Policy Steering Committee regarding a proposed change to ARP 4.69 on Distance Education.

Chair Brown provided brief background, explaining that the proposal originally came to the Policy Steering Committee in late fall but was inadvertently handled there rather than being brought directly to the Faculty Senate. He noted that although the item did not fall within the standard 10-day community review window, it should still have been routed to the Senate, and that step had been missed. The proposal has since been returned to the Policy Steering Committee. Chair Brown further explained that several community college representatives suggested significant edits, which were sent back to the bill sponsors, Mark Lawrence and Sherry Coleman, Vice Chancellor of Global. As of the meeting, a revised version had not yet been received. He also noted that the upcoming Policy Steering Committee meeting had been canceled due to a Regents meeting, which would allow additional time for discussion.

Senator Erickson stated that Chair Brown had summarized the situation well and added that the matter clearly falls within the scope of shared governance. He referenced Policy 100.G in the Regents Policy Manual, which outlines matters that should be brought before the Faculty Senate, and noted that delivery methods of instruction are also identified as shared governance issues by the AAUP. Senator Erickson explained that these considerations prompted him to introduce the bill so the Senate could provide input.

Chair Brown suggested that additional supporting information, including references to AAUP guidance and other materials previously shared, could be incorporated into the bill before it proceeds through committee review. He also noted that introducing the bill now allows it to move through the Senate process while the Senate awaits the final revised version from the sponsors.

The Senate discussed which committee should review the bill. A vote was taken to determine whether the bill should be referred to Curriculum and Planning or University Planning. The vote favored referral to the Curriculum and Planning Committee, and the record will reflect that Bill 7-25/26 was **assigned to Curriculum and Planning.**

08-25/26 - Amendment to Article VI of the Faculty Senate Constitution to change the requirements for Chair and Vice Chair. Sponsor – C. Erickson, V Chaitanya (ENG).

Senator Erickson explained the reasoning behind the proposal, noting that he had been considering the issue for more than a year and had discussed it previously with several individuals, including Vimal and Chair Brown. He clarified that he was not implying their support but was outlining the logic behind the proposal.

Senator Erickson stated that the roles of the faculty union and the Faculty Senate are distinct. The union operates under a negotiated contract, while the Faculty Senate does not. He further explained that the Faculty Senate represents multiple constituency groups whose membership overlaps with the union but is not identical. As an example, he noted that Extension faculty are represented within the Faculty Senate but are not covered under the union contract.

Based on these differences, Senator Erickson suggested that establishing a clearer separation of leadership could help maintain a clear chain of responsibility and avoid potential conflicts of interest. He also indicated that such separation could strengthen the positions of both bodies. When the Faculty Senate and the union reach the same conclusions independently, he argued, their shared positions may carry greater weight, rather than creating the perception that one body simply follows the other. He also noted that there may be situations where one organization has a position on an issue while the other does not. Following Senator Erickson's remarks, discussion took place among senators, after the decision was made to **assign them to the University Planning Committee.**

6. Other Business

- a. Discussion of 5 March 2026 Faculty Senate Agenda Items – all informing Mari Cisneros and Senate Chair Chaitanya

Chair Chaitanya and Recording Secretary Cisneros will work on the agenda promptly. Suggestions to go on the agenda are welcome.

- b. Standing Committees Reports

- Budget and Resources Chair, Stephen Hanson

Senator Sharp-Hoskins reported that the committee meeting included several guests from IT and Central Administration Finance. The discussion focused primarily on the process for AI-related purchasing. During the conversation, some responsibility for aspects of the process was attributed to Academic Technology. Participants acknowledged that there has been confusion about decision-making responsibilities, and the committee was promised a flowchart outlining who makes decisions at various stages of the process.

Senator Sharp-Hoskins noted that, by the end of the meeting, several individuals had agreed to follow up by outlining their specific responsibilities and identifying areas where confusion or operational challenges occur. She described the meeting as productive.

Senator Erickson added that the committee learned that Academic Technology reports to Global. He expressed the view that this reporting structure may not be appropriate and suggested that Academic Technology would be better placed within the Provost's Office.

Vice Chair Brown indicated support for the idea of strongly suggesting that Central Administration move Academic Technology into the Provost's Office. He noted that, in terms of the Senate timeline, if a bill could be prepared for the March Faculty Senate Leadership Committee meeting, it could receive a first reading in April, be assigned to a committee, and potentially be voted on in May. Senator Sharp-Hoskins agreed to draft the bill. [Full BR report posted on the FS website.](#)

- University Planning Chair, Stephanie Walker

Chair Walker stated that there was little additional information to add beyond previous remarks. She noted that Senator Karen had provided a report regarding a recent federal executive order, which establishes criteria that institutions of higher education must meet to receive preferential treatment.

Chair Walker explained that CNM and UNM initiated a bill to determine whether the Faculty Senate would support refusing to comply with the executive order. She was

unable to recall the exact name of the executive order at the time and asked for clarification from Christopher.

Chair Brown added that the group of people who approached the Senate regarding this matter is the New Mexico Mutual Academic Defense Compact Council.

[Full CP report posted on the FS website.](#)

- Curriculum and Planning Chair, Oladayo Bello
Chair Bello reported that the committee met with a quorum present. While there was no formal task assigned to the committee at this time, members were given an initial review of the compact. The committee downloaded the document, conducted an internal discussion, and retained the compact for further consideration.
- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Omar Holguin
Chair Holguin reported that the RCA Committee met on March 17 with a quorum present. While there was no formal business, the meeting included two guests: Patricia McGregor-Mendoza from the Provost's Office and Rich Carter from Oregon State University, representing the PTIE (Promoting Technological Innovation and Entrepreneurship) organization.
Rich Carter gave a presentation on PTIE, highlighting examples of institutions that have adopted PTIE recommendations, noting that over 60 institutions nationwide are currently implementing or exploring these guidelines. The discussion focused on recognizing innovation, entrepreneurship, and societal impacts in promotion and tenure processes.
Patricia McGregor-Mendoza provided feedback regarding the committee's questions on institutional policies. Committee members asked questions about how policies could better support faculty and other institutions in recognizing entrepreneurship-related activities. The discussion was described as very productive, providing significant information and guidance.
Follow-up actions include outreach to the Arrowhead Center and coordination with the new interim director, Winnie Lee, as introduced by Patricia.
[Full RCA report posted on the FS website.](#)
- Access, Opportunity, and Outreach, Karen Kopera-Frye or replacement
Senator Kim Lopez-Gallagher presented the final report on behalf of Senator Karen Kopera-Frye. The committee met on February 18 with a quorum present.
The committee discussed the bill supporting the joint resolution of CNM and UNM opposing the Higher Education Compact 1.0. Senator Karen shared that the bill had been sent to the University Planning Committee for review at their upcoming meeting and indicated that she would attend the UPC meeting to respond to any questions.
Senator Karen also announced that she had accepted the position of Associate Dean of the Graduate School, effective February 23. She consulted with Vice Chair Brown regarding the process for selecting a new chair of the AOO Committee. Vice Chair Brown advised requesting nominations, and that process has now begun. Senator Karen asked that nominations for the chair position be emailed to her. No further business was reported. [Full AOO report posted on the FS website.](#)

- Student Success Chair, Kristian Finlator
Chair Finlator reported that the committee had no official business but met with a quorum and discussed three topics. One topic emerged from the Task Force for International Graduate Students and concerned the practice of admitting international graduate students without guaranteed graduate assistantships (GAs). The committee discussed the potential risks associated with this practice and agreed that it should solicit a status update from the other colleges. Dean Koodali has already obtained substantial information from HEST regarding their practices in this area. The second topic concerned athletics. Senator Aguirre expressed concern that some varsity athletic teams appear to receive more promotion than others and suggested that equity in promotional efforts should be reconsidered. The committee plans to invite a representative from Athletics to speak about this issue. The final topic was Faculty Talk 2.0. Members noted that the initiative, originally proposed by Senator Sharp-Hoskins and then-Senator Ben Hoff and intended to be promoted every semester through a process facilitated by the Faculty Senate, has not been occurring and has effectively become inactive. After discussion, the committee agreed that unmonitored listservs would not be an appropriate solution. Instead, the Faculty Center leadership should follow the intent of the original proposal and promote Faculty Talk 2.0 each semester as specified. [Full SS report posted on the FS website.](#)

7. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair, Vimal Chaitanya
Chair Chaitanya announced that an election had been held for Faculty Senate Chair between Senator Finlator and Senator Sandstrom. Senator Finlator was elected as the new Chair. Chair Chaitanya congratulated Senator Finlator and thanked Senator Sandstrom for his willingness to run and for his support. It was noted that the transition to the new leadership will occur at the end of the current term, which is believed to be the last official day of the spring term. This date corresponds with the first day of summer, May 19, when grades are due, at which time Chair-elect Finlator will officially begin the role. Vice Chair Brown suggested that, for continuity, the incoming chair join the outgoing chair at the next Senate meeting so that introductions can be made, and members can be informed about the transition. The same approach was suggested for the vice chair position. No objections were raised by the Senate. Senator Sharp-Hoskins raised the topic of onboarding for new senators, noting that previous concerns had been expressed about new members not fully understanding Senate procedures or expectations. Newly elected senators typically attend the final meeting of the year without voting, and Senator Sharp-Hoskins suggested that the Senate consider ways to better orient these members regarding what they will observe at that meeting and what to expect when they begin participating fully in the fall semester. Senator Erickson noted that in the past an onboarding session had been held at the beginning of the fall semester. This session included a brief overview of parliamentary procedure led by the parliamentarian, along with general guidance about Senate operations, including the importance of committee work where most of the deliberation takes place. The session lasted about 45 minutes and was considered helpful in preparing new senators for their roles. Vice Chair Brown indicated support for improving onboarding and raised the possibility of

holding a special Senate meeting the week before the final meeting of the year to conduct the necessary caucuses. This would include the college caucuses that generate the Senate Leadership Committee and the Senate Leadership Caucus that elects the Senate leadership, including the Vice Chair of the Senate. Conducting these caucuses separately could reduce the workload and complexity of the final meeting. Brown asked whether there were any objections in principle to holding such a special meeting; none were raised.

Vice Chair Brown clarified that if a special caucus meeting were held, incoming senators would participate in the caucuses to select representatives from their respective groups, while at the final Senate meeting the current senators would vote on items of business and the incoming senators would observe the process. Brown also noted the need to work with the Secretary to review the Senate roster, determine which members are rotating off, and identify which positions require elections. This process typically involves coordination with senior senators and has been successfully managed in the past with assistance from Recording Secretary Mari.

Senator Lopez-Gallagher suggested that new senators should be contacted ahead of time and informed about what will occur during the caucus meetings and other transition activities. She noted that when she first joined the Senate she was unaware of these processes and felt unprepared. Providing advance information would help incoming senators better understand expectations. Vice Chair Brown agreed with the suggestion and asked Senator Lopez-Gallagher if she would be willing to draft a short one-page guide outlining what new senators should expect during the relevant meetings. Brown proposed that the draft could then be refined collaboratively by the chair, vice chair, and possibly members of the Senate Leadership Committee. Senator Lopez-Gallagher agreed to prepare such a draft.

Chair Chaitanya noted that a document explaining general Senate procedures and operations had previously been created and could be shared again with incoming senators. The document covers general Senate processes rather than only caucus procedures. Chair Chaitanya acknowledged that the document had not been consistently forwarded to new senators in recent years and accepted responsibility for that oversight, noting that it had originally been developed with considerable effort and could again be used for orientation. Chair Chaitanya also provided an update on the search for a Vice President for Research (VPR). The current indication is that the president intends to begin the search during the summer so that initial Zoom interviews can take place by the time faculty return. On-campus interviews would occur once faculty are back on campus.

- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown

Vice Chair Brown provided an update on the provost search process. Four candidates will visit campus on the 2nd, 3rd, 10th, and 12th, as announced in an earlier email. A dedicated meeting with the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee will take place from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. on each of those days. Due to a dissertation exam and a medical appointment on one of the dates, Vice Chair Brown and Chair Chaitanya will divide responsibilities for facilitating these meetings. Brown encouraged members to ensure that everyone has an opportunity to ask questions and listen to the candidates.

In addition to the leadership meeting, each candidate will participate in an open forum beginning at 10:15 a.m., with details to be circulated via email. There will also be an open session in the afternoon for faculty, staff, students, and administrators. Brown noted that these sessions provide multiple opportunities for engagement with the candidates and

encouraged senators to attend when possible. He also emphasized that part of the process is demonstrating to candidates the strengths and opportunities at the university. Following each candidate's forum, a survey will be available for 48 hours to gather feedback from those who attend or review the presentations.

Chair Chaitanya added that if senators would prefer to use pre-designed questions during the leadership committee meetings, they should submit them to him. He also emphasized the importance of Faculty Senate participation in the process, noting that the Senate's role as a representative voice of the faculty is significant. Chaitanya encouraged members to attend the sessions, explaining that it reflects poorly on the Senate when only a small number of senators are present.

Senator Erickson asked whether the committee intended to use pre-arranged questions or proceed with extemporaneous discussion. Senator Burkardt advised against using pre-designed questions, noting that there are both internal and external candidates and that different discussion points would likely apply to each. The consensus of the group was to proceed without pre-assigned questions.

Senator Lopez-Gallagher asked whether the sessions could be attended virtually. Vice Chair Brown clarified that the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee meetings with the candidates from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. would not be streamed and would require in-person attendance. However, the broader open sessions for the university community later in the day will be streamed and accessible remotely. Brown acknowledged that this arrangement may disadvantage those who are not on campus and encouraged members who cannot attend to share their questions in advance so they can be raised during the meetings. Chair Chaitanya explained that the intent of bringing candidates to campus is to facilitate face-to-face interaction, which is why the leadership meetings are being held in person, although he noted that the issue could be raised for further clarification if needed.

Vice Chair Brown also reported that the Program Sustainability Plan has been approved and that the addendum has been sent to the central administration. He proposed forming an ad hoc committee to interpret the document that was passed, review comments from the standing committees, and help move the process forward. The committee would have two primary tasks: reviewing the document to finalize any necessary edits and examining the first round of program evaluations to identify ways the process could be improved, particularly in cases where departments may not have fully considered strategies to improve enrollment or graduation outcomes.

The proposed committee membership would include a staff member from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, such as Cecilia or Anna from assessment; two members of the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee; two department heads representing a small and a large department; one member of UPAC; and Sashi from the Provost's Office, who currently manages the relevant data. Brown noted that initial program data have already been reviewed and shared with deans, who may be discussing them with department heads. He acknowledged that while the committee could begin its work during the current semester, expecting members who are not on contract to work over the summer would be problematic. Brown emphasized that developing a proactive process is important, noting that legislation in Indiana recently mandated the elimination of low-enrollment programs, and that similar pressures from legislators and governing boards make it important for the university to demonstrate responsible program review practices. The proposal will be presented to the provost at the next meeting, after which a call for volunteers may be issued.

Senator Bello has already indicated interest in participating, given her previous involvement with the issue.

Chair Chaitanya also shared an early update regarding faculty compensation. Pending the governor's approval, a 1% salary increase has been included in the budget. The university's new CFO and the president are also exploring whether additional internal funds could be allocated to increase the raise. Any additional adjustment would likely include both an across-the-board component and a merit-based component. Chaitanya noted that there is a possibility the total increase could exceed 1% for the next academic year.

Vice Chair Brown also referenced a document that had been posted to the website and shared via email proposing minor changes to graduate school policies regarding duplicate master's degrees. The proposal followed a previous discussion in which concerns were raised that international students pursuing a PhD might want to earn a master's degree along the way, or that PhD students who do not complete the doctorate could benefit from earning a master's degree reflecting their completed work. The revised language states that the university discourages duplication of master's degrees, but in cases where a program wishes to admit a student to pursue a duplicate master's, a letter of support from the department must be submitted to the Graduate Dean at the time of admission. The applicant must meet all standard admission requirements and graduate school policies, including transfer credit rules. Students pursuing a duplicate master's must fulfill all program requirements, including completing a thesis when required. Financial aid may not apply to the duplicate degree. Brown explained that the proposal had been developed in consultation with the Graduate Dean and ADAC and does not require review by ARP because it is not part of the policy manual. He asked whether members had any objections or concerns before moving to the next agenda item.

Vice Chair Brown introduced another revised internal rule change related to graduate admissions. He explained that the organization responsible for the exam is changing the way scores are calculated. As a result, the Graduate School has developed a document establishing equivalencies between the old scoring system and the new scoring system. Under the proposed approach, the university will accept either scoring format, with a conversion that specifies how the previous scores correspond to the new ones. This policy will apply to both international and domestic students.

Brown noted that the change is largely administrative, reflecting adjustments made by the external body that administers the exam. He stated that the proposal resulted from discussions among ADAC, the Graduate Dean, the Graduate Faculty Council, and himself representing the Faculty Senate. Because the change must be included in the catalog immediately, it is being implemented without a formal Senate vote.

Senator Erickson noted that the matter had been approved by the Graduate Council but expressed the view that it should still come before the Faculty Senate for discussion, given the significance of TOEFL scores in teaching and graduate admissions. Erickson indicated that the proposal likely made sense but questioned why it could not be discussed by the full Senate. Vice Chair Brown responded that the change needed to be incorporated into the catalog by the following day and reiterated that it was primarily a response to external changes in exam scoring. He encouraged anyone with concerns to contact the Graduate Dean directly. Further discussion followed.

8. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.

Present: FSLC Chair C. Brown, FS Chair V. Chaitanya, K. Finlator, K. Sharp-Hoskins, O. Bello, J. Cook, M. Burkardt, C. Creusere, L. Grant, J. Sandstrom, C. DeBlieck, F. Boutsen, J. Bronstein, J. Bengtson, K. Knight, K. Lopez-Gallagher, O. Holguin, S. Walker, Rec.Sec. M. Cisneros.

Guest: Deputy Provost James McAteer.