

NMSU Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC)
FINAL MINUTES
August 28, 2025, 4:00 p.m.
Zoom(<https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/83656717192>) and Hadley 130
PLEASE NOTE NEW LINK

1. Call to Order – Meeting called to order at 4:09 p.m.
2. Welcome to new FSLC members
The committee welcomed new and returning members to the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC).
Returning to Senate Leadership after a break:
 - Senator Bronstein
 - Senator Sharp-Hoskins**New FSLC Members for this year:**
 - Senator Karshmer (Library)
 - Senator Montanez (ACES)
 - Senator Bello (Engineering)
 - Senator Creusere (Engineering)
 - Senator Walker (ACES)
 - Senator Knight (CES)
 - Senator Boutsen (HEST)**Returning FSLC Members:**
 - Senator Cook
 - Senator Erickson
 - Senator DeBlieck
 - Senator Hanson
 - Senator Holguin
 - Senator Burkardt
 - Senator Grant
 - Senator Lopez-Gallagher
 - Senator Kopera-Frye
 - Senator SandstromEach member introduced themselves briefly during the meeting.
3. Approval of Agenda
Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.
Senate Leadership approved the agenda.
4. Approval of Minutes of 24 April 2025 meeting (Attached)
Moved and seconded to approve the minutes.

Minutes approved and submitted by the Senate Leadership with a formal amendment to strike **discussion followed** on page 3 on the DEI very last part by DEI Chair Kopera-Frye.
Minutes approved as amended.

5. Introduction of new and continuing Standing Committee chairs

1. Budget and Resources – Stephen Hanson
2. University Planning - Stephanie Walker
3. Curriculum and Planning - Oladayo Bello
4. Research and Creative Activity – Omar Holguin
5. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - Karen Kopera-Frye
6. Student Success – Kristian Finlator

Vice-Chair Brown read through each name during the meeting, naming as new Committee Chairs, Senator Oladayo Bello – Chair of the Curriculum and Programming Committee, Senator Kristian Finlator – Chair of the Student Success Committee, Senator Omar Holguin – Chair of Research and Creative Activities, and Senator Stphanie Walker – Chair of University Planning.

6. Election of Parliamentarian and Recording Secretary – Chair Chaitanya
- Chair Chaitanya discussed the next agenda item regarding the parliamentarian, Lawrence LaPlue, who is a non-voting member appointed by the Chair of the Senate. Lawrence will continue serving but has a class to teach until 4:15 on Thursdays, meaning he may miss the first half of meetings even if he joins via Zoom. Chaitanya is glad he will remain but is open to other candidates since a parliamentarian does not need to be a senator. Chris Erickson expressed interest but was unsure if a sitting senator could serve in that role, noting that it may not be allowed and that the parliamentarian needs to remain neutral. Chaitanya emphasized the parliamentarian's role in interpreting bylaws and ensuring adherence to Robert's Rules. As stated in the Constitution, "The recording secretary shall be appointed by the Senate Chair with the approval of the Faculty Senate." This item will be on the Faculty Senate agenda for the next scheduled meeting.

7. Reports on Existing Legislation – N/A

8. Proposed Legislation – N/A

9. Other Business

- a. Discussion of 4 September 2025 Faculty Senate Agenda Items – all
Chair Chaitanya has confirmed that we do have adequate data to build the agenda. We are also planning to include some guest speakers, which will help

inform and enrich the discussion during the meeting. Chair Chaitanya and Recording Secretary Mari will work on the agenda in the next days.

- b.** Discussion of Books4Success and possible assignment to Student Success – Chair Brown and Senator Burkhardt (see attached graphic)
Vice-Chair Brown introduced a discussion about the Books for Success program, which may be assigned to the Student Success Committee. In early 2025, a meeting occurred with key university figures, including the Provost and the bookstore manager, where the concept of Books for Success, created by Follett leadership, was shared for consideration. The initial discussions included some opinions, but then faculty went on summer break. The University Budget Committee later discussed it, with members from diverse backgrounds participating. A chart was presented showing that the system would be implemented starting in January. However, concerns were raised by committee members about the faculty senate not having sufficient opportunity to examine the program’s details and implications. There were noted pros and cons. The decision on implementation has been postponed until the fall of 2026, allowing time for further study. It was also emphasized that student body had not been consulted, highlighting the need for more input before moving forward.
- Senator Michaela Burkhardt discussed a committee meeting where they addressed concerns regarding a new initiative. The committee consists of one faculty member from each college, along with Vimal and the senator as Faculty Senate representatives, while the rest are administrators. Burkhardt highlighted her repeated inquiries about the timeline for the initiative, noting that no answers were provided until the end of the meeting. The plan is still aimed at Spring 2026, despite acknowledging the need for potential delays, particularly towards summer. Burkhardt expressed her belief that beginning any new projects should wait until the fall, allowing more time to consider implementation and other issues on main campus. She indicated that discussing the initiative in Faculty Senate would take at least two months, as faculty members need time to become informed and have conversations about it. She emphasized that with the current timeline, there’s little chance to address concerns before the October deadline for faculty to adopt books. New information shared in the meeting indicated that all classes with an AMDU identifier and under 5,000 would be included, while global classes seem excluded. Burkhardt raised questions about courses that require additional materials, such as notebooks for labs, and inquired about whether costs like lab fees could be included in the new process. She opposed charging students an extra per-credit fee without providing the necessary materials. The committee responded positively to her concerns, indicating flexibility in discussing what

could be included in the "Books for Success" model. Burkardt asked about the possibility of including institutional licenses for tools like Gradescope in this initiative. The meeting concluded with plans to gather questions and concerns from the main campus community and produce a frequently asked questions document, with the hope that the Student Success Committee could assist in this effort.

Chair Hanson discussed a meeting about Follett, noting that they felt misinformed. Although Follett presented a brief overview with a brochure, important details like plans and pricing were not shared. It became clear that student involvement was minimal, as students had seen only the same overview. This led to disappointment from the President and Provost, resulting in the discussion being tabled. Upper administration is now supportive of having the proposals reviewed by both Faculty Senators and students. There is an emphasis on gaining input and support rather than facing opposition.

Christopher Brown suggested continuing the discussion on Student Success and asked for a motion to assign it to that committee. Jonathan Cook moved, and John seconded the motion. They voted to send the matter to Student Success with 21 votes in favor, no votes against, and no abstentions.

- c. Implementing Task Force on P&T Issues related to Trump EOs, possible assignment to University Planning – Chair Brown
Vice-Chair Brown stated the need for a task force on P&T issues related to Trump executive orders, which was approved last Senate term. Deputy Provost McAteer suggested that instead of forming a new committee, the matter be handed over to University Planning. The Faculty Senate Leadership Committee agreed to this proposal. A formal motion was made by Frank and seconded by Kim, resulting in a unanimous vote of 21 in favor. The bill is now on the Senate website, and it is up to the members to discuss the next steps as it moves into University Planning.
- d. Program Sustainability Proposal, how do we provide input, possible assignment to University Planning? – Chair Brown, leading all
Vice-Chair Brown introduced a proposal focused on program sustainability, originally prompted by Alan Shoho when he was the provost. He highlighted the need to examine programs with low enrollments, initially forming a Low Yield Committee. The proposal addressed programs with few majors and low degree completions. After Alan left the university, Lakshmi took over and presented the proposal to the University Program Approval Committee in late spring or early summer of 2024.

A subcommittee from UPAC worked on this over the summer to create a document that outlined the necessity to evaluate low-yield programs and find ways to improve their success. Lakshmi supported renaming the committee to Program Sustainability Proposal instead of the Low Yield Year on Notice Proposal. However, discussions around this proposal were temporarily sidetracked due to national events when Donald Trump became president, which caused widespread distraction for about six months. Eventually, the proposal returned for review by the department heads, and lively discussions ensued regarding its future. The discussion expanded to include a suggestion from Michaela to redirect it to a different committee, Curriculum and Planning. Vice-Chair Brown emphasized the importance of understanding the reasons behind programs struggling to maintain enrollment and achieve degree completion. The intent is not to put programs on notice for closure but rather to foster improvement through a three-year plan. This plan includes initial assessments, discussions, and improvement proposals from departments addressing issues like recruitment and budgeting. Ultimately, it aims to assist programs in becoming more productive rather than causing immediate closures. Vice-Chair Brown proposed sending the proposal to the Curriculum and Planning committee, calling for a motion and vote, which resulted in unanimous agreement to proceed.

- e. Do members want to continue monthly meetings with Admin Team? – all
- Vice-Chair Brown raised the question of whether the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC) would like to continue holding monthly meetings with the administrative team, which includes the President, Provost, and Deputy Provost. The FSLC had discussed this in April, and the intent was to maintain regular engagement with administration. Vice-Chair Brown noted that while there is interest in continuing these meetings, scheduling has been challenging. He asked for the committee's support in reinforcing the importance of these meetings. If the FSLC formally supports continuing them, it strengthens the message when working with the administration's scheduling constraints. There was also some discussion about whether a regular meeting day had been established previously (Wednesdays or Thursdays were mentioned, but no set pattern was confirmed). Vice-Chair Brown emphasized that consistent communication with the administration is valuable and that unified support from the committee would help ensure these meetings occur regularly.

10. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya

Chair Chaitanya provided a brief update, noting that he will be reaching out to all Standing Committee chairs with the names of their respective committee members, which are also available on the Faculty Senate website. He also informed the committee of three important ongoing administrative searches: Athletic Director – Chair Chaitanya is serving on this search committee. Chief Financial Officer / VP for Finance and Administration – Chair Chaitanya is also serving on this committee; he noted that this search may progress more slowly than the Athletic Director search. Provost (Permanent Appointment) – Chair Chaitanya invited Vice-Chair Brown to provide additional information, as he is involved in this search process.

- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown
Vice-Chair Brown provided an update on the Provost Search Committee, which he is co-chairing alongside Patricia Sullivan at the request of President Ferme. He noted that they have reviewed detailed prospectuses from Parker Executive Search, the external search firm assisting with the process. Both co-chairs submitted extensive feedback, with Vice-Chair Brown emphasizing the importance of shared governance and faculty voice being reflected in the position description. A key concern he raised was that the initial timeline provided by the firm did not explicitly state that the search committee would receive and provide feedback on the position description step he considers essential. Legal review of the prospectus is still pending, and the committee expects to have a signed contract with the firm by mid-September. Once finalized, the search firm will begin active recruitment and vetting of candidates. Vice-Chair Brown reiterated that while logistical aspects (e.g., interviews, travel) are well-managed by the firm, ensuring faculty input in the position description is critical to the integrity of the process.

11. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

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

**Revised and finalized by:
Vice-Chair Brown on 9/18/2025**