

## **Faculty Senate Vice Chair Report – Activities for February 2026** **Christopher Brown, filed 3.4.26**

Below, I share highlights of work I have completed as Vice Chair in February of 2026. As always, I am very happy to visit with anyone who would like to gain more data on activities reported.

**Group of 4 Meetings with President Ferme and Provost Reddi** – During February, Chair Chaitanya and I attended two Group of 4 Meetings on 2.4.26 and 2.18.26. I share data on issues discussed below.

- **Mechanics of Simple Syllabus Rollout** – Although we are not 100% clear on exactly who did what to make this happen, President Ferme, Provost Reddi, and Deputy Provost McAteer agree that this happened with inadequate engagement with faculty. They also agreed that Central needs to do better on purchasing and launching S/W that impacts teaching. This did go to FACT, Senator Erickson noted the discussion was limited and not decisive, yet the tool was purchased and launched. Provost Reddi and Deputy Provost McAteer are in discussion with leadership of FACT to make sure the FACT review process is more robust, and they are also exploring an alternate means to gather needed input.
- **Update on Legislative session**
  - House acted on \$55M for the ID building, \$16m for PSL, \$20M for infrastructure. \$14M for Press box. Big ? = what will the Senate do?
  - Leg. does not want tuition increases because Opportunity is running out of \$. Increased enrollment is providing \$ to help, but this is short term fix.
  - Leg. will only give 1% for staff/faculty increases, this is all they will support, and President and CFO are looking for funds to augment with additional 1%.
- **Launch of the Program Sustainability Plan** – with Senate action on this completed, we can expect to see this move forward Further details is provided in UPAC update below. Senator Bello has expressed interest in providing a Senate leadership voice to this process, and I will see that she is invited to this process as it advances.

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

- **ADAC** – We met once during February, 2.23.26, and discussions have focused on the following issues (some of this detail comes directly from ADAC minutes, with permission of ADAC Chair Ben Widmer):
  - **Research and service load** – in past discussions of moving back to quantitative teaching evals, the issue of variations in service load arose. Tara Gray and I briefed ADAC on a panel the Teaching Academy did in the past, and Tara shared a detailed request to Central that she sent to Dan Arvizu and Jonn Floro asking that Central examine this issue. She received no reply, and ADAC agreed that we should restart this discussion with Central, using Tara’s letter as a starting point.
  - **Early Petition for Spring Commencement** – various Academic Deans noted a considerable # of students apply to walk early, then do not complete needed courses in

the summer. ADAC members will do some added research and bring this issue back for future discussion and possible changes to how A Deans handle these requests.

- **Room and class scheduling issues** – members brought 2 issues to the table – how we schedule rooms, and how departments schedule classes. NMSU has tools by which these processes may be improved, but this would require departments to let some form of centralized scheduling happen. ADAC members will do some added research and bring this issue back for future discussion and possible changes to how classes and rooms are scheduled.
- **UPAC** – UPAC did meet in February, and our sole order of business was reviewing a template by which the Program Sustainability Plan would advance that Cecilia Hernandez developed. The generated a very rich and productive discussion in which I proposed that we build a working group to move this forward that would have similar composition to the Deans Eval Working Group – admin, Senate leadership, and DH representation. I shared a draft proposal with UPAC members and asked for input, and I then revised the proposal and secured a formal approval via email to move this forward. I will present this to the Provost and President at the next Group of 4 Meeting, and I append the proposal to the end of this report.
- **PSC** – The PSC met on 2.12.26, several changes to the ARP are proposed, proposals are in various stages of the review process, and details are provided at the NMSU Policy Hub - <https://policy.nmsu.edu/>. Donna Ottaviano has started posting changes in play in Hotline, and interested parties are encouraged to review progress, provide input to changes that are in process, and also submit proposed changes at The Policy Hub. Below are tables noting things currently in play, this detail pulled directly from the January PSC agenda:

1. Proposed Policy Actions Donna/Lisa

| Record # | ARP   | Title                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
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| 2024.05  | 16.79 | NMSU Sponsored Youth Programs (proposed title: Programs Involving Minors)<br>The UPO reviewed the history with the PSC, including the recently submitted revision resulting from community feedback. After some discussion, the committee asked the UPO to determine if "Form 2" as referenced in Part 2, D.1, includes parent signatures. If so, they agreed to proceed with sending the proposal to the members of the President's Cabinet. (Note – the UPO reviewed Form 2 and confirmed that it requires uploading of the signed "Parent Informed Consent and Assumption of Risk" form.) |
| 2025.19  | 3.45  | Assistive, Service, and Companion Animals on University Premises.<br>The UPO reminded the committee of the history and actions with the PSC so far, including distribution to the members of the President's Cabinet,                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

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|         |      | with no feedback submitted. The UPO advised that the next step would be to the President.<br><br>Bill Dial raised objections to the policy as written, specifically to the inclusion of Emotional Support Animals and to some of the language. The committee took no action on this proposal. Bill Dial will contact the proposal sponsors for further discussion, and it will be brought back to the PSC at its next meeting on Feb 23. |
| 2025.09 | 4.55 | Grade Reports<br>The UPO reviewed the history and actions of the PSC up to the recent distribution to members of the President's Cabinet, leading to minor changes to the policy as presented today. Dr. Brown asked that the reference course in the revised section be changed to GEOG 598 – Intro to Geography AI. With that change, the committee agreed to send it to the President for review/approval.                            |

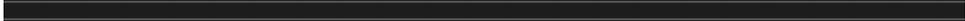
| <u>Record #</u> | <u>ARP</u> | <u>Title</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| 2025.11         | 3.40       | <b>Process for Disability Accommodation</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|                 |            | <p>Initially submitted in September 2025. The initial draft has been submitted for review. The UPO advised that the policy is presented in the new format and that language for the first two introductory sections did not exist. Otherwise, the changes were minor and non-substantive. The UPO also advised that because the policy applies system-wide, there are no clear "stakeholders," and it could go directly to community-wide review.</p> <p>Lisa Henderson cautioned the committee that the faculty union might consider the proposal to be changes to terms and conditions of employment, even though they are minor.</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the proposed changes in wording, and feeling they did not change any terms and conditions, agreed to proceed with posting the policy for community-wide review. They also understood that if the union raised objections, they may need to halt the proposal's progress.</p> |

## 2. Status Reports

| <u>Record #</u> | <u>ARP</u> | <u>Title</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <u>Status</u>                       |
|-----------------|------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 2025.08         | 4.69       | <b>Academic Rules for Distance Education</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Revised Draft Being Prepared</b> |
|                 |            | <p>Community-wide review/feedback ended on 12/23. Feedback was received and sent to the Proposal Sponsor on January 5 for review. As of Feb 5, modifications are being prepared but are not yet ready to submit for consideration.</p> <p>The following discussion occurred:</p> |                                     |

|         |       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                     |
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|         |       | <p>Dr. Brown expressed that he believes this policy should go to the faculty senate for review, even though it is beyond the stage at which that normally occurs. At the time of submission, he believed there were time constraints and reviewed the submission with only 2 members of the faculty senate, rather than the full senate, which takes 2 months. Dr. Brown asked that the faculty senate be given a 10-day review period to do an expedited review of the proposal.</p> <p>The UPO reviewed the timeline of activities with the PSC.</p> <p>As the committee has yet to receive a revised proposal from the sponsor, they agreed to wait until one is submitted and then consider allowing the faculty senate to do an expedited 10-day review.</p> |                                     |
| 2025.13 | 16.12 | <b>Clery Act Compliance</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Revised Draft Being Prepared</b> |
|         |       | <p>Distributed to the President's Cabinet members on Dec 10. Feedback deadline EOB 12/23. No feedback received, and the next step would have been to the President for review. The proposal is paused while additional research is conducted on whether changes are being made to the Clery Act, or "geographic areas".</p> <p>There was no discussion.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                     |

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| 2024.02 | 3.10  | COI: Prohibitions in Procurement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <u>See Note</u> |
|         |       | Initially sent to the President's Cabinet for review and discussion at their Meeting on October 13. On Oct 7, it was pulled from the agenda by the sponsor. UPO was asked to give the Finance department more time to complete a review.<br><br>There was no discussion  |                 |
| 2024.03 | 14.92 | Sales and Solicitation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <u>See Note</u> |
|         |       | Initially sent to the President's Cabinet for review and discussion at their Meeting on October 13. On Oct 7, it was pulled from the agenda by the sponsor. UPO was asked to give the Finance department more time to complete a review.<br><br>There was no discussion. |                 |



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| 2024.08 | 3.63 | Freedom of Expression (proposed title: Freedom of Expression and Peaceful Assembly)                                                                                                               | <u>Revised Draft Being Prepared</u> |
|         |      | Process paused for further evaluation by the proposal sponsor. The FOE committee met, and another version is being prepared with assistance from S. Field of UGC.<br><br>There was no discussion. |                                     |

I do note the following that may not be 100% clear from the above.

- ARP 4.55, the change to grades on classes that grad students repeat – this has cleared all review bodies, including the President, and this is now updated in the online ARP.
- ARP 4.69, Distance Education – as noted in a previous report, Chair Chaitanya and I mishandled this in the earliest stage of the PSC process. This resulted in this proposed change not coming to the Full Senate for review as it should have. Chair Chaitanya and I working with PSC members to allow a full Senate review as this moves. As of the date of writing this report, the PSC has not seen a revised version in which the sponsors of this ARP change addressed concerns CC faculty raised. Senator Erickson has introduced a bill that would send the revised ARP to the full Senate for review, and I will work to connect the next version of the APR change to the bill as it moves through the PSC and Senate processes.