

NMSU Faculty Senate Student Success Subcommittee Chair Report

Meeting: 11/13/2025

Submitted by: Kristian Finlator

Committee Attendance: 8 committee members attended; 3 were absent

Guests: Vice-Chair Christopher Brown (dropped in)

I. 16:00 Quorum Established and Agenda Approved

II. Discussion of Digital Device Use in the Classroom Chair Finlator proposed starting a conversation about how NMSU faculty might approach limiting student access to (or use of) digital devices including smartwatches, tablets, smartphones, and laptop computers in the classroom.

Senator Burkardt led off by noting that, as a classroom observer for the Teaching Academy, she has seen many different adoption modalities across classrooms. Senators Lynch (SL), Burkardt (MB), and Magoc (DM) added the following observations:

- SL: Students have been spotted watching football on their laptops at a weekend seminar. Likewise, a faculty colleague was observed watching something unrelated during a PhD defense.
- MB: some students use digital devices to feed a fidget habit, possibly associated with ADHD. This argues for the need for Disability Access Services to develop accommodation guidelines if restrictions are adopted.
- DM: while limiting access to distracting devices is clearly desirable, explaining the motivation for the limitation is difficult. Moreover, explaining that some students who have access to a device owing to a formal accommodation while others don't without violating the privacy of disabled students is difficult; DM therefore chooses not to pursue limiting access or use.

Both Senator Burkardt and Vice-Chair Brown noted the example of the University-wide menu of options regarding AI adoption in classrooms and suggested that analogous language might be devised that could restrict device usage if not device access.

Following this initial discussion, recent challenges in obtaining federal financial support for graduate students was noted and proposed for further discussion.

Finally, MB cited recent difficulty in obtaining graduate college approval for an international graduate student in Physics. In particular, she reported that the Graduate College needed four weeks to approve the student's MS, which had been awarded by NMSU.

III. 16:30 Meeting adjourned.