

Faculty Senate Vice Chair Report – Activities for September 2025

Christopher Brown, filed 9.29.25

Below, I share highlights of work I have completed as Vice Chair in September of 2025. As always, I am very happy to visit with anyone who would like to gain more data on activities reported.

Meetings with President Ferme and Provost Reddi – Chair Chaitanya and I continue to enjoy access to the President and Provost through our weekly meetings, and I share data on issues discussed below.

- **Communication challenges on campus** – in our 9.24.25 meeting, Provost Reddi noted several areas where communication among key campus units could be improved. Of note is the botched rollout of the messaging to students about the mandatory SET training – students got the message, but DHs and faculty did not. The manner by which Books4Success was advanced with no formal student or faculty input is another example. Of note, Books4Success is on hold, with a possible deployment date of fall 2026. Chair Chaitanya and I will join future discussions on how this communication can be improved.
- **Changes to NMSU's Office of DEI** - Federal funding for the highly successful and long- standing CAMP program was cancelled due to mentions of diversity and LGBTQ+ programming, NMSU is appealing the decision with relevant federal offices, and this is evidence that NMSU's DEI activities are being examined by federal agencies. This drove the discussion of re-imagining NMSU's DEI effort that [President Ferme and Chair Chaitanya noted in their 9.19.25 memo](#). We can expect continued discussion on this change in the near future.
- **Proposals coming to the Senate** – Provost Reddi has sent 2 proposals to the Senate that we are currently researching:
 - Proposal to lower the CGPA required for UG admission to 2.5 from 2.7.
 - The Program Sustainability Proposal we have discussed of late.

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

- **ADAC** – We met twice during September, and discussions have focused on the following issues (some of this detail comes directly from ADAC minutes, with permission of ADAC Chair Ben Widmer):
 - **DAS FLEX Plan** - Dr. Freda Trujillo, the new Director for Disability Access Services (DAS), presented the new DAS FLEX Plan. The plan is designed to provide structured and equitable support for students with severe, chronic, and unpredictable disabilities that are episodic in nature. Of note, we have heard of some challenges in implementation, and Karen Kopera-Frye will be meeting with Dr. Trujillo to discuss these issues.
 - [Complete College America](#) - James McAteer provided an update on the Complete College America initiative, which NMSU recently joined. As part of the process, a survey with 30-40 questions will be sent to members of ADAC, Faculty Senate, department heads, and other campus leaders; James McAteer will provide details at the 10.2.25 Senate meeting.

- **MS2 Course Offerings** - Marissa Fowler stressed the urgent need for more Mini Semester 2 (MS2) course offerings. She shared an Excel file showing a significant shortage of available sections, particularly in general education and Viewing a Wider World categories, with most existing sections already full.
- **Student Technology Advisory Committee (STAC) Update** - Lizely Madrigal and Sarah Rydecki requested help recruiting students for the STAC. The goal is to gather authentic and diverse feedback from the student body, as past membership has been heavily composed of IT student employees.
- **Transcript requirements** - I described a situation where a non-traditional graduate student with a recent bachelor's degree from UNM was asked by the Graduate School to provide official transcripts from all previously attended institutions to finalize admission (n=8, making this a costly and time-consuming effort). Dean Ranjit Koodali explained that this is a standard practice outlined by the Council of Graduate Schools and the NMSU catalog to prevent fraud and ensure institutional integrity. Students that want to attend NMSU need to meet this need.
- **UPAC** - UPAC did meet in September, and we reviewed several graduate minors/certificates and a few new programs. All programs proposed were passed, with the exception of the Industrial Engineering – Bachelor of Science in Industrial Engineering. UPAC voted not to advance this due to several lab science classes not yet being offered online. College of Arts and Sciences ADA Lakey (UPAC co-Chair) is speaking with departments involved to explore getting these needed lab science classes into a 100% asynchronous online modality.
- **PSC** –Thanks to the leadership of Donna Ottaviano, the new University Policy Officer, the PSC is again meeting regularly. We met on 9.8.5 and discussion focused on 3 changes in play:
 - **Change to ARP 3.63, Freedom of Expression** – draft changes were reviewed by the PSC, and we are in the process of IDing stakeholders.
 - **Change to ARP 4.69, Academic Rules for Distance Education** - Stakeholders were IDed, the Senate is one of them, and VC Brown asked 2 Senators who drafted the Senate bill establishing the Global Advisory Committee (Chris Erickson and John Sandstorm), to provide initial input. Thanks to Chris and John for their timely input. This will come back to the full Senate later in the review process.
 - **New ARP rule on how AI Assistants can be deployed in meetings** – This deals with the need to advise meeting participants that an AI assistant is being deployed to capture meeting details, the policy is out for community review, and [relevant documents are posted at this URL](#).