

**NMSU Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC)**  
**February 27, 2025**  
**Zoom (<https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/86052805269>) and Hadley 130**  
**MINUTES**

1. **Call to Order** – Meeting called to order at 4:02 p.m.
2. **Recognition of Guests** – NONE
3. **Approval of Agenda**  
Moved and second to approve agenda.  
Senate Leadership approved the agenda.
4. **Approval of Minutes of 30 January 2025 meeting (Posted to Website)**  
Moved and seconded to approve minutes.  
Minutes approved and submitted by Senate Leadership.
5. **Reports on Legislation (posted to Website)**
  - **Proposition 09-24/25** – Memorial in Appreciation of Dr. Monica Torres for Serving as Interim President. **Sponsor(s):** T. Aguirre (DACC), K. Lopez-Gallagher (NMSU-A), C. Brown (A&S), O. Holguin (ACES), V. Chaitanya (Engineering), S. Hanson (ACES), M. Darapuneni (ACES), K. Grover (ACES), E. Lehnhoff (ACES), G. Duff (ACES), J. Hunter (A & S), J. Cook (A & S), J. Dalager (A & S), L. Hermanson (A & S), T. Conner (A & S), J. Bronstein (A & S), R. Obregon (A & S), K. Finlator (A & S), T. Cleveland (A & S), H. Baek (A & S), A. Ashley (A & S), I. Hanson (A & S), W. Walker (A & S), M. Furuhashi (A & S), H. Hampton (A & S), K.T. Manis (Bus), C. Erickson (Bus), F. Arslan (Bus), R. Rahman (Bus), Z. Shen (Bus), O. Bello (Engineering), M. Elshinawy (Engineering), R. Li (Engineering), H. Badawy (Engineering), R. Jayaraman (Engineering), T. Manz (Engineering), K. Kopera-Frye (HEST), L. Saiki (HEST), S. Lynch (HEST), J. Tomaka (HEST), J. Rice (HEST), C. DeBlieck (HEST), P. Smoak (HEST), F. Boutsen (HEST), W. Stem (HEST), D. Magoc (HEST), S. Walker (CES), S. Gordan (CES), K. Knight (CES), E. Gamboa (DACC), T. Price (DACC), G. Pina (DACC), L. Grant (DACC), T. Allred (Alamogordo CC), K. Lopez-Gallagher (Alamogordo CC), A. Romero (Grants CC), S. Elliss (NTT), M. Burkardt (NTT), R. Schumacher (NTT), R. Gioannini (NTT), C. Anaya (NTT), J. Sandstrom (NTT), D. Overstreet (NTT), I. Villicana Pedraza (NTT), E. Hetrick (NTT)  
**Sponsors requested the Senate to consider this as Emergency Legislation.**  
**Senate vote passed this as Emergency Legislation at the 6 February 2025 Faculty Senate meeting.**
  - **Proposition 10-24/25**– Proposal for name change from the “Department of Civil Engineering” to the “Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering.” **Sponsor(s):** Runwei Li (College of Engineering), Michaela Buenemann (College of Art and Science), Christopher Erickson (College of Business), Tawny Aguirre (Doña Ana Community College), Dylan McDonald (Library), Omar Holguin (College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences), Geoffrey Smith (College of Art and Science), Kristian Finlator (College of Art and Science), Jiayi Wang (College of Health, Education and Social Transformation), and Christopher Brown (College of Art and Science).  
**Assigned to Curriculum and Planning who discussed the bill at the 2.13.25 meeting.**

Vice-Chair Brown gave a brief update on the Propositions. Proposition 09-24/25 was passed by the Seante as an Emergency Legislation at the full Faculty Senate meeting on February 6, 2025. Proposition 10-24/25 Curriculum and Planning Chair Piña will give an update. (Please see Curriculum and Planning Report under Standing Committee Reports)

## 6. Proposed Legislation

- **Proposition 11-24/25** - Amendment to the Faculty Senate Constitution. **Sponsors:** Erickson (CoB), Walker (Extension).  
Senator Erickson gave a brief introduction on the Proposition. The proposition was assigned to University Planning. Discussion followed.

## 7. Other Business

- a. Discussion of items for Faculty Senate Agenda for 3.6.25 Full Senate meeting  
Recording secretary Cisneros will work with Chair Chaitanya to elaborate the agenda in a timely manner.
- b. **Standing Committees Reports**
  - Budget and Resources Chair, Stephen Hanson  
Chair Hanson made a very brief report. The committee discussed two possible memorials. [Full BR report is posted on the FS website.](#)
  - University Planning Committee Chair, Erik Lehnhoff  
Chair Lehnhoff gave a brief report. The committee met on February 12. Chair Lehnhoff mentioned that back in January, the committee had questions about how the Senate might work with the Union. They decided to invite Dr. Brown to provide information on Union negotiations and the relationship with the Faculty Senate. Dr. Brown attended a February Committee meeting for a brief Q&A session but did not advocate for the Union. After Dr. Brown left, Dr. Colleen Bond raised concerns about the differences in teaching loads between NMSU community colleges (15 credits) and UNM (12 credits). She is working on a proposition to address this discrepancy. The committee also discussed the ongoing confusion about Global initiatives. In 2024, the Senate passed a proposition for an advisory committee for Global, which was acknowledged by the administration but not acted upon. The committee suggested revisiting this proposition and possibly inviting Chancellor Kollman to a meeting for clarity on Global's operations and faculty involvement. These are the main points discussed in the meeting. [Full UP report is posted on the FS website.](#)  
*\*\*Discussion, questions and answers followed. Please refer to Proposition 05-23/24 for more information.*
  - Curriculum and Planning Chair, Gustavo Pina  
Senator DeBlieck gave a brief report on behalf of Chair Piña who was not available. The committee met on February 13<sup>th</sup> and had enough members present to review Proposition 10-24/25. The proposal suggested changing the name of the department of Civil Engineering to the department of Civil Engineering and Environmental Engineering. The committee found the proposal well-structured and in line with changes at similar institutions. While there were some concerns about the term 'environmental,' they were not deemed significant. The committee also noted worries about effects on diversity, equity, inclusion, and safety but ultimately supported the proposal unanimously and recommended moving it forward. Proposition 10-24/25 will go to the full Senate for discussion and a vote in the beginning of March. [Full CP report is posted on the FS website.](#)

- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Paul Tian  
Chair Tian reported that the committee met and discussed four items: (1) research administration issues, support for faculty in grant writing, and support for graduate and undergraduate students, (2) R1 status, (3) search for a new VPR, and (4) inviting the VPR or senior administrators to discuss better faculty support. The focus was on faculty research support and technician support for research in arts and education. They also talked about research quantity and quality in promotion and plan to invite VPR or administrators for future meetings. [Full RCA report is posted on the FS website.](#)
  - Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair, Karen Kopera-Frye  
Chair Kopera-Frye reported that the committee met on February 9. They had a quorum with Dr. Scholz, she is also the Lookout Board President, who shared updates and resources. The committee decided to pause the land acknowledgement due to ongoing issues within gender and sexuality studies. An email has been sent to invite colleagues from that department to the next meeting in March to discuss their proposals for support. The committee also requested a representative from the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) to speak at the General meeting about the steps for reporting sexual harassment by a student, emphasizing the importance of revisiting this topic. Additionally, there are ongoing discussions with human resources regarding faculty on medical sabbaticals and their obligations to repay if unable to return to work after a medical emergency. The committee is waiting for further clarification on this matter.
  - Student Success Chair, Tawny Aguirre  
Chair Aguirre reported that the committee met on February 20th with full attendance, including Vice Chair Brown and three guests. Kari Cena from study abroad discussed available scholarships and ways to increase funding for study abroad programs. Melissa Magnusson, the Director of Financial Aid, explained institutional scholarships and the appeal process for students who fall below the required GPA. She noted that students have the entire academic year, including summer, to improve their GPA. Lindley Hornsby, President of the Graduate Student Workers Union, addressed insurance issues facing international graduate students. She mentioned a lower-cost option that might complicate future green card applications. Aguirre plans to help Hornsby draft a proposal for better communication and options. [Full SS report is posted on the FS website.](#)
- c. Update from the Open Access Publication Fund Advisory Committee (Brown and Sandstrom)  
Vice Chair Brown updated the group about the Open Access Publication Fund Advisory Committee, which is deciding how to distribute a one-time fund of \$100,000 from Monica Torres. The committee now includes Rich Pratt from ACES, John Sandstrom from the library, Margaret Goehring from Arts and Sciences, Faruk Arslan from the College of Business, Abdessattar Abdelkefi from engineering, and Karen Kopera-Frye from HEST. During a meeting on February 17th, the members selected co-chairs, with John and Karen chosen to serve in this role. They discussed two bills related to their work and talked about the rules of engagement. They agreed to keep the pilot flexible for the first year and aim to support non-tenured faculty, possibly reserving some funds for them. John mentioned that the library could negotiate publisher agreements to eliminate article processing charges (APCs) for certain journals. The committee decided to create a rubric considering faculty rank, journal quality, and evaluation methods for arts and humanities submissions. Faruk will develop a team site to maintain an Excel file related to the rules of engagement. Margaret inquired if the funds could cover copyright expenses, leading to further discussion on the matter. Karen suggested including a budget in the applications. Although initial interpretations suggest funds may cover copyright fees, this remains undecided.

The group will set up a Teams site to keep track of pending issues, and leadership is officially handed over to John and Karen. Plans for future meetings have been established, with the next meeting

scheduled for March 20th, 10 to 11 AM. John and Karen will manage invitations for this virtual meeting, as it is deemed more efficient.

- d. Report on data analysis to determine if Senate Seats need to be re-apportioned (Brown)  
Vice-Chair Brown reported on data analysis to see if Senate seats need to be reapportioned. The data and an Excel spreadsheet with relevant calculations were shared in an Outlook invitation for this meeting. Calixto Melero assisted, and there were corrections made. After checking the work multiple times, the apportionment remained unchanged. Vice-Chair Brown is willing to share specific details about the data and the Excel spreadsheet.
- e. Prelim report on Admin/Faculty ratio (Chaitanya)  
See FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya remarks and announcements.
- f. Other comments from members  
Senator DeBlieck announced a healthy minds faculty and staff survey aimed at mental health and suicide prevention, funded by a SAMHSA grant. The survey is anonymous and is being conducted with help from the University of Michigan. An email about the survey was sent from the Provost's office on February 19th. Faculty and staff are encouraged to participate from February 18th to March 17th. The link to the survey can be found in the chat, and it is also available in emails from the Provost. Participants are asked to encourage their colleagues to take the survey as well.

## **8. Remarks and Announcements**

- FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya  
Chair Chaitanya shared some updates and mentioned that Senator Jon Cook wanted to review a study about the ratio of administrators to faculty. Dr. McAteer conducted a brief study and provided a hard copy of the results. While Chair Chaitanya currently does not have the numbers available, he plans to send the information via email to all Senate and FSLC members. The study shows that the number of administrators has decreased in the past few years, and the faculty-to-administrator ratio at their institution is better compared to UTEP and UNM. Additionally, Chaitanya noted that James could not attend due to union negotiations and that he could not reach him for the file. Discussion followed.

Chair Chaitanya is on the University System Budget Committee. There isn't much to share in detail, but some highlights include the decision to raise the student minimum wage from \$12 to \$12.65, which will cost the university an additional \$175,000 to \$200,000 each year. The university will now match the city's minimum wage. The committee also discussed a program called "access assets" that allows all students to pay the same fee for textbooks. This initiative has been approved for a second year by the Budget Committee, and more details may come from future evaluations by the NMSU main campus.

One significant event happening in Santa Fe is the legislative session, which lasts for 60 days and ends on March 20th. Chair Chaitanya was invited to join the Strike Force, which collaborates on Senate and House bills that may affect NMSU. The group meets daily to assign these bills to relevant campus committees, but no bills were identified that would impact faculty life directly.

In other updates, both Chair Chaitanya and Vice Chair Chris met with the Provost and President regarding executive orders from Washington, D. C. They are navigating uncertain circumstances and will share important information with the Faculty Senate as it becomes available.

Lastly, the search for the new Vice President for Research (VPR) is proceeding as scheduled. The search committee is expected to select finalists by mid to late July, with at least four candidates expected to visit the campus during the first week and a half of May. Although this timing is not ideal for faculty, it was the best option given the search timeline and the need to review a good candidate pool. Chair Chaitanya reported on discussions in the Budget Committee regarding the State Legislative

session. There is a request for 30 million dollars to address deferred maintenance issues, which have been highlighted by Facilities and Services. It's uncertain if this amount will be approved as a block. Those who experience being without heat during winter would understand the importance of this request.

Discussion followed on the “access assets”.

- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown  
Vice-Chair Brown mentioned he has two items to discuss. There is a lot of uncertainty regarding the Trump administration's policies. He met with the President and deputy provost about this issue. President Ferme is trying to navigate these challenges while protecting their work and shared a communication earlier this week. The Vice President of Research has provided guidance on externally funded projects. Seventeen people at Jornada lost their jobs, affecting many students. The HEST Dean search is ongoing, with Zoom interviews in March and candidate visits in April.

**9. Adjournment** – Meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.

**Present:** Vice-Chair C. Brown, Chair V. Chaitanya, T. Aguirre, K. Finlator, E. Lehnhoff, J. Cook, C. DeBlieck, K. Lopez-Gallagher, P. Tian, M. Burkardt, O. Holguin, D. McDonald, H. Badawy, S. Hanson, L. Saiki, L. Grant, K. Kopera-Frye,