

**MINUTES - NMSU Faculty Senate Leadership Committee (FSLC) Meeting**

**October 30, 2025, 4:00 p.m.**

**Zoom( <https://nmsu.zoom.us/j/83656717192>) and Hadley Hall Rm 130**

**PLEASE NOTE NEW LINK**

**1. Call to Order- Meeting called to order at 4:02 p.m.**

**2. Approval of Agenda**

Moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

Vice-Chair Brown amended the agenda, under *Other Business, Item C*, Senate Leadership Committee Review of a Change to ARP 4.69. The Item originated from the Policy Steering Committee in late September, with only a 10-day window for input. Chris Erickson and John Sandstrom provided feedback, which was sent to the policy sponsor, Mark Lawrence (Chair of the Online Distance Education Committee). An amendment was made; however, Vice Chair Brown noted that Chancellor Kollmann had not yet reviewed the updated version.

Senate Leadership approved the amended agenda.

**3. Approval of Minutes of 25 September 2025 meeting (Attached)**

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes.

Minutes approved and submitted by Senate Leadership with one abstain vote by Senator Finlator.

**4. Reports on Existing Legislation**

- 01-25/26 - Resolution Estimate Book Cost. Sponsors – K. Finlator (A&S), J. Sandstrom (Library), E. Oskey (NMSU-G), T. Aguirre (DACC), M. Burkardt (NTT), and R.F. Obregon (A&S). **Assigned to Curriculum and Planning.**

Chair Bello provided a brief report on the proposition. Some committee members were initially apposed to the bill and requested an amendment. Chair Bello explained that any proposed amendments were shared with all members via the shared drive for review and voting. Following a lengthy discussion during the meeting, the committee conducted an online vote regarding the amendment, which did not pass. A subsequent vote was held on the main proposition, and the committee ultimately voted to recommend a “**Do Pass.**”

Proposition will go to the Full Faculty Senate meeting on November 6, 2025, for a vote.

- 02-25/26 – Senate Bill Proposed Name Change to Faculty Senate Standing Committee Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Sponsors – K. Kopera-Frye (HEST) and Y. Villicana Pedraza (NTT). **Assigned to University Planning.**

It was noticed that this proposition was discussed at the previous meeting, with the accompanying bill to follow. Since the bill was not available at that time, the proposition had not yet been assigned to a Standing Committee, though a suggested committee was identified. The proposition has now been assigned to the University Planning Standing Committee, and it has been forwarded to the committee for review.

**5. Proposed Legislation**

- 03-25/26 - Recommending Support for Lowering the Minimum Cumulate GPA for NMSU Admission. Sponsors - K. Finlator (A&S), R. F. Obregon (A&S), and E. Oskey (NMSU-G) The Senate Leadership recommended Proposition 03-25/26 to be formally assigned to Curriculum and Planning Standing Committee.

## 6. Other Business

- a.** Discussion of 6 November 2025 Faculty Senate Agenda Items – all Chair Chaitanya and Recording Secretary Cisneros will work on the agenda promptly. Suggestions to go on the agenda are welcome.

### **b.** Standing Committees Reports

- Budget and Resources Chair, Stephen Hanson  
Chair Hanson reported that the committee met as scheduled and had a quorum. The committee discussed potential items to refer to the Business Processes Improvement Committee and considered a bill requesting that the Athletic Department operate on a balanced budget or that the administration develop a plan to achieve one. Further discussion on this bill will take place next month, when the committee will decide whether to forward it as a memorial to the full Faculty Senate.  
[Full BR report on FS website.](#)
- University Planning Chair, Stephanie Walker  
Chair Walker reported that the committee met on October 10 per the new meeting schedule, with a quorum present. The committee discussed its assignment to track departmental progress and review Promotion and Tenure (P&T) guidelines to determine whether revisions are needed in light of current federal funding challenges. To date, the committee has received official responses from three departments, none of which indicated a need for revisions. Chair Walker also noted that the Extension Plant Sciences P&T Department, which she chairs, found no need for revisions related to federal funding challenges. Full UP report on FS website.
- Curriculum and Planning Chair, Oladayo Bello  
Chair Bello reported that the committee met on October 9. The committee reviewed Proposition 01-25/26 – Estimate Book Cost and held a detailed discussion. Senator Finlator attended to provide background and context for the bill that had been referred to the committee. Some committee members expressed concerns and proposed an amendment. The proposed amendment was uploaded to the shared drive for review and an online vote. The majority voted against the amendment. Subsequently, the committee conducted an electronic vote on the bill itself and voted in favor of its passage. [Full CP report on FS website.](#)
- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Omar Holguin  
Chair Holguin reported that the committee met on October 14, with a quorum present. The committee welcomed Sandra Way as a new member representing the College of HEST, replacing Senator Peter Smoak. Chair Holguin noted ongoing efforts to work with the VPR office to better understand the impacts of reduced IDC at the university; a meeting with Interim VPR Patricia Sullivan had to be postponed and will be rescheduled. The committee is coordinating with the Faculty Advisory Committee on Technology (FACT), with Sonia White and the FACT committee chair scheduled to join the November meeting to review university software acquisition and licensing. Efforts are also underway to explore ways to support the Faculty Senate Open Access Fund, with Senator John Sandstrom agreeing to provide guidance in a future meeting. Additionally, the committee is examining whether P&T guidelines should be revised to reflect entrepreneurship. To this end, the

committee has connected with PTI, an NSF-sponsored organization led by Oregon State University, whose representatives will join a future meeting to share recommendations and best practices from other institutions. Chair Holguin concluded by noting that the committee continues to organize and coordinate members to ensure active participation in these initiatives.

[Full RCA report on FS website.](#)

- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair, Karen Kopera-Frye  
Chair Kopera-Frye reported that the committee met with a quorum present. The committee discussed four main issues. First, members reviewed feedback from the Imagining America event, which was largely positive regarding hosting it in Las Cruces. Some participants suggested offering more online access in the future to accommodate those with scheduling conflicts or limited flexibility. This feedback will be shared with the event organizers. The committee also discussed the response to the protest at Corbett Student Union. It was noted that the protest involved free speech protected under the First Amendment and therefore could not have been legally interrupted by law enforcement. Chair Kopera-Frye reminded members about the Provost's listening sessions and encouraged faculty participation to ensure their concerns and suggestions regarding desired qualifications for the new provost are heard. Finally, the committee discussed concerns related to the Flex Plan under Disability Access Services (DAS), which had been adopted quickly in August. A student guest expressed concerns regarding communication and potential FERPA issues related to automated emails disclosing disabilities to instructors. Chair Kopera-Frye and Senator Kim met with Dr. Trujillo, Director of DAS, who clarified several of these issues. Dr. Trujillo will attend the committee's November meeting to provide additional clarification and address any remaining questions.  
Vice-Chair Brown added comments regarding the issues raised about the Provost Search Committee and the development of the provost position profile. He explained that the President provided the search committee with a draft profile outlining who NMSU is, the university's core values, and the desired qualifications for the next provost. The committee engaged in significant discussion about whether to include language referencing HSI and MSI status. Ultimately, such terms were removed due to concerns raised by a naturalized U.S. citizen regarding potential risks tied to current federal scrutiny of naturalized citizens. He also noted that the committee agreed it was possible to address the university's diversity and inclusion values without using specific terminology, instead emphasizing service and engagement with the complex cultures of New Mexico, including rural populations and tribal entities. He further reported that he and Patricia Sullivan met with the President earlier in the day and believe that a final draft of the profile is ready, pending one final review before being sent to the search firm for distribution through its national network. Vice-Chair Brown concluded by affirming that the committee's approach maintains NMSU's values and identity while exercising care in the public framing of language to protect candidates' professional security at their home institutions. He asked for the Faculty Senate's trust and confidence that the process was handled appropriately. Full DEI report on FS website.

- Student Success Chair, Kristian Finlator  
Chair Finlator reported that the committee met with nine of eleven senators present, establishing a strong quorum. The committee held a productive discussion with the Interim Provost Reddi and Dr. Tony Marin regarding the proposal to reduce the minimum high school cumulative GPA for admission to NMSU from 2.75 to 2.5, returning it to the level used in 2016. The Interim Provost and Assistant Vice President addressed several questions and provided valuable context for the proposal. After their departure, the committee continued its discussion, raised several concerns, and ultimately agreed to recommend support for the proposal. The committee subsequently drafted legislation reflecting its recommendation for approval and included suggestions for metrics the university should continue to monitor as the change is implemented. [Full SS report on FS website.](#)
- FSLC Review of change to ARP 4.69 on Distance Education  
Vice-Chair Brown advised that the agenda item regarding ARP 4.69 (Change on Distance Education) has been pulled. The item was removed from the current agenda and will be reviewed at the next meeting.

## 7. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya  
Chair Chaitanya gave his remarks and announcements. He shared two informational items. First, NMSU is increasing its focus on experiential learning opportunities for students. Both Chair Chaitanya and Vice Chair Brown are involved in leadership discussions related to this initiative. The university is expected to receive approximately \$2 million in state funding to support the program. Chair Chaitanya noted that many departments already engage in experiential learning, though it may not be formally labeled as such. He emphasized the importance of creating a structure to accurately track and report these activities without placing additional burdens on faculty. More detailed information will be shared at a future Faculty Senate meeting. He also reported on NMSU's new partnership with Fujitsu, which was formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The partnership aims to promote collaborative research in areas such as artificial intelligence, computational sciences, and smart grid technologies. The MOU was signed at the state level, and President Ferme represented NMSU during the signing. Chair Chaitanya further informed members that the search for a new Vice President for Finance and Administration (CFO) is underway. The committee has identified candidates for initial Zoom interviews, with on-campus visits scheduled for the week of November 17. Each candidate will meet with the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee at 9:00 a.m. during their visit. Chair Chaitanya encouraged faculty participation in the interviews, emphasizing the importance of selecting a CFO who values faculty input and understands the need to invest in research infrastructure and faculty support. Lastly, Chair Chaitanya announced that the Graduate School is conducting an internal search for an Associate Dean and has requested a Faculty Senate representative to serve on the search committee. He encouraged senators involved in research or graduate student advising to consider volunteering and to contact him promptly, as the Graduate School is requesting the name as soon as possible. [Full FS Chair report on FS website.](#)
- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown
  - Update on Senate Leadership representation on the NMSU Global Faculty Advisor Council

Vice Chair Brown gave his remarks and announcements. He discussed Senate leadership representation on the Global Faculty Advisory Council, noting that in March 2024, the Senate passed a bill requesting the establishment of the committee. Later that month, President Gouge approved the acknowledgment transmittal, indicating that the Faculty Senate Chair should continue participating in whatever form the committee would take. Vice Chair Brown explained that former Senate leadership had not engaged with Global on this matter, and the issue only resurfaced in the fall when James McAteer suggested using the Global Advisory Committee for related discussions. Since then, Vice Chair Brown has worked with Chancellor Coleman and Mark Lawrence, the committee chair, to secure Senate representation. After discussions, it was agreed that the Faculty Senate Chair or Vice Chair will serve on the committee, providing flexibility and support to the Chair, who has multiple obligations. He noted that this outcome resulted from a positive and productive meeting with the President, Provost, and Chancellor of Global. Vice Chair Brown also reported that during that meeting, they discussed pilot projects managed through Academic Technology and the role of the Faculty Advisory Committee on Technology (FACT). Following up on earlier concerns raised by Senator Sharp-Hoskins, Vice Chair Brown stated that administrators were asked to provide clarification at next month's meeting regarding the process and criteria for implementing pilot programs.

Senator Chris Erickson, who serves on the FACT committee, added that while FACT functions effectively in its current capacity, it is not adequately equipped to address the complexities of integrating artificial intelligence (AI) into university systems. He emphasized the need for a new, broader committee—potentially called a “Task Force for AI Integration”—with strong faculty representation to ensure that AI implementation supports critical thinking and discipline knowledge.

Senator Kellie Sharp-Hoskins asked whether the “Group of Five” meeting addressed broader oversight strategies or discussed establishing a new AI task force beyond the pilot project questions. Vice Chair Brown responded that the topic was only briefly mentioned, and further exploration would be needed. He noted that FACT performs its current duties well, but that faculty should have a stronger role in decisions related to AI integration into learning management systems.

Vice Chair Brown concluded by suggesting that he and Chair Chaitanya continue discussions in the next Group of Four meeting to explore potential structures for greater faculty engagement in AI-related decisions. The Senate agreed to support this direction and to revisit the proposal once more information is available.

- Request for volunteer to serve on Search Committee for Director of Employee Relations and Engagement

Vice Chair Brown reported that Bill Dial, Vice President of Human Resources, has requested Faculty Senate representation on the search committee for the Director of Employee Relations and Engagement. He suggested that the Faculty Senate Leadership Committee would be a good place to start in seeking a volunteer for this position and asked if anyone had interest in serving. A question was raised regarding the timeline of the search, and Senator Sandstrom noted in the chat that no specific timeline has been provided.

Chair Chaitanya added that a similar request has been made for Faculty Senate representation on the search committee for the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. He emphasized the importance of this role, noting that the onboarding experience for newly hired faculty and graduate students has not been satisfactory and that the Associate Dean could play a significant role in improving this process. He clarified that the Associate Dean position is an internal search and that the search committee will play an important part in identifying the finalists for the Dean's review. Chair Chaitanya encouraged anyone interested in serving on either search committee to contact him as soon as possible.

Vice Chair Brown provided an update on the provost search timeline. He stated that the draft position description has been submitted and will soon be finalized and posted through the search firm's network. The search committee expects to receive application files in January, with preliminary Zoom or airport interviews to take place in February. Finalist candidates will be invited to campus during the first two weeks of March, and it is the committee's intention to reach a final decision before spring break. Vice Chair Brown noted that the search firm has been highly responsive and that the search committee's work has been greatly appreciated.  
Vice Chair Brown then raised a question regarding the status of the Program Sustainability Proposal. He acknowledged that earlier in the term he had asked a committee to review the proposal without specifically requesting a bill, which was an oversight. Senator Erickson had previously pointed out that formal committee action requires a bill request. Vice Chair Brown asked for clarification on the current status of the proposal within Faculty Senate processes.

Senator Bello confirmed that the proposal had been referred to the Curriculum and Planning Committee, which was asked to review it, express concerns, and make recommendations rather than produce a bill. Vice Chair Brown acknowledged the clarification and requested that the committee provide a formal report to him and Chair Chaitanya. He explained that the Board of Regents has been seeking updates on the matter and that, although the process has taken longer than anticipated, the work completed by UPAC and its subcommittee has been productive. He asked that the committee's report include comments, recommendations, and questions regarding the proposal so that the information can be shared with the Provost and President, who will then update the Board.

Vice Chair Brown raised two questions. The first concern, the name change for the DEI Committee. It was clarified that the name change did not formally get assigned to a committee because it was submitted too late, arriving on the same day as the FSLC meeting. As a result, the agenda posted to the website was incorrect. The item has since been properly assigned to the University Planning Committee, which will conduct a first read at its upcoming meeting. Discussion will take place in November, with a formal vote expected in December. If the committee requires additional time, an extension will be granted.

The second question concerned the status of the Vice President for Research (VPR) search. It was noted that the search process has not yet begun, and there has been no indication from administration regarding a start date. Chair Chaitanya shared that he had asked the President about the anticipated timeline and any potential role for Faculty Senate but had not received details. He speculated that the administration

likely intends to complete the Provost search first before initiating the VPR search.  
Vice Chair Brown agreed, noting that based on the current Provost search timeline, a  
July 1 start date for the new Provost seems reasonable, and it would not be practical  
to begin a major search such as the VPR during the summer. Until that process  
begins, the university will continue working with the current interim VPR.

**8. Adjournment: Meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.**

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

**Absent:** J. Bronstein.

**Revised and finalized by:  
Vice Chair Brown on 11/17/2025**