

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

**December 18, 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. Guest – Deputy Provost James McAteer**

Deputy Provost James McAteer provided an update regarding recent federal immigration and travel policy changes and their potential impact on international students.

On Tuesday evening, President Trump announced a new travel ban that expands:

- The full travel ban to 20 countries (previously 12), and
- A partial travel ban to an additional 20 countries (previously 7).

This policy is scheduled to take effect on January 1.

The university anticipated such changes and has proactively contacted:

- International students from affected countries who are currently in the U.S. to provide guidance on maintaining their status and personal safety.
- Prospective students from affected countries who are awaiting visa issuance and planning to arrive.

Deputy Provost McAteer also noted significant delays in visa processing:

- The International Office has been issuing I-20s efficiently; however, embassies and consulates remain severely backlogged.
- As of this time last spring, approximately 120 I-20s had been issued with 90 visas approved.
- This year, 105 I-20s have been issued, but only 7 visas have been approved to date.

Due to these delays and the new travel ban, some students expected to begin in the spring semester may be unable to do so. While the overall numerical impact on spring enrollment is not expected to be substantial, each affected student represents an individual hardship.

Deputy Provost McAteer emphasized that although the spring impact may be limited, continued restrictions could have a more significant effect on fall enrollment. The university is closely monitoring developments and keeping academic programs informed so they can plan accordingly.

**Conclusion:**

The situation is not unexpected, and the university remains actively engaged in tracking policy changes, communicating with affected students, and mitigating potential impacts where possible.

**3. Approval of Agenda**

Moved and seconded to approve agenda.

Senate Leadership approved the agenda.

**4. Approval of Minutes of 10 November 2025 meeting (Attached)**

Moved to second to approve the minutes.

Minutes approved and submitted by Senate Leadership.

**5. Reports on Existing Legislation**

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

Senator Walker reported that the University Planning Committee approved a committee name change; however, the bill was amended because the originally proposed name did not fully reflect the scope of the committee's responsibilities. The amended version of the bill was subsequently brought before the full Senate, which voted to approve a different committee name. Senator Walker noted that she could not recall the exact wording of the amended name approved by the full Senate.

Chair Brown stated that there had been some lack of clarity regarding the status of the bill due to the amendment process. He confirmed that the amended bill had been approved by the Senate. Chair Brown indicated that he asked Senator Walker to ensure that Mari receives a copy of the most current version of the bill so that the transmittal can be prepared and processed. Chair Brown noted that his comments were intended to clarify the bill's status.

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)

**Transmittal Administrative Action Routing Form prepared for signatures on 15 December.**

04-25/26 – Faculty Senate input to Academic Program Sustainability Plan Proposal.

Sponsor (s) – O. Bello (Engineering), C. Brown (A&S), and other to follow.

**Assigned to Budget and Resources.**

**6. Proposed Legislation**

05-25/26 –Proposal to Establish Task Force on the Integration of Artificial Intelligence in Pedagogy. Sponsor (s) – C. Erickson (Business), K. Sharp-Hoskins (A&S), and others to follow. **Proposed committee Curriculum and Planning.**

## 7. Other Business

- a.** Discussion of 15 January 2026 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  
Senator Hanson noted that the committee had already discussed whether the bill, 04-25-26, should receive a due pass as amended. He added that although the amendments were substantial in volume, they did not change the tone or intent of the original proposition and instead served to add additional detail. He expressed appreciation for the significant efforts of several members, including Jonathan, Chris E., Kelly, Marcel, and others, emphasizing that the work required a considerable collective effort and resulted in strong outcomes.

Vice Chair Brown stated that the committee would forward the proposal to Central with a recommendation of due pass as amended, noting support for the proposal in principle along with several questions and suggestions.

- University Planning Chair, Stephanie Walker  
Chair Walker reported that the committee had previously discussed approval of the name change for the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, which passed as amended and was subsequently approved by the full Senate with further amendments. She then addressed the committee's other major item of business, the requested review of promotion and tenure (P&T) guidelines at the beginning of the semester. Chair Walker explained that Deputy Provost McAteer issued a request to all departments to review their P&T guidelines and revise any language that might adversely affect faculty currently seeking promotion and tenure, particularly given the continued challenges posed by the federal funding landscape. She expressed appreciation for his efforts, including sending multiple reminders to departments.

Chair Walker noted that responses from departments were initially slow. She stated that there are approximately 60 departments campus-wide and reported that only 10 departments have not yet submitted a response. She explained that some confusion contributed to the delay, as several department heads believed that no response was required if no changes were needed, or were unaware that they needed to copy her on their

responses. She noted that Deputy Provost McAteer helped clarify expectations and encouraged departments to complete the process. Chair Walker reported that several departments, including her own, Extension Plant Sciences, identified additional items in their P&T guidelines that required revision and are working on those updates. She stated that the Public Health Science Department identified issues through this requested review and is addressing them. She clarified that the Counseling and Educational Psychology Department had identified and addressed issues in their P&T guidelines during the previous semester. Overall, she reported that the majority of departments felt there was sufficient flexibility in their P&T guidelines and that current faculty pursuing promotion and tenure would not be adversely affected. Chair Walker listed the departments that had not yet responded, including Anthropology, Astronomy, Government, Languages and Linguistics, Philosophy, Theatre Arts, Engineering Technology and Surveying Engineering, Industrial Engineering, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, and Borderlands and Ethnic Studies. She asked whether the committee should continue pursuing the remaining responses or proceed with the information currently received.

Deputy Provost McAteer suggested an alternative approach, noting that nearly all of the departments that have not responded are represented by a senator who voted in favor of the proposal last year. He proposed that senators raise the issue at their next departmental faculty meetings to encourage completion of the review on behalf of the Senate. He acknowledged that the correspondence had already gone directly to departments, through the Provost's office, and through the deans, and noted that this time of year presents challenges due to competing obligations such as performance evaluations, departmental reviews, and the preparation of promotion and tenure letters. He reiterated that the intent was to complete the reviews earlier in the semester, though timing constraints have delayed responses.

Deputy Provost McAteer emphasized that the review process requires a relatively modest commitment, noting that most departmental documents are five to seven pages in length. He reported that, to date, no departments have identified major issues related to financial impacts from federal funding changes, though several have found other areas for improvement, which he characterized as a positive outcome of the review process. He suggested that a gentle reminder from senators in the remaining departments could help bring the process to completion.

- Curriculum and Planning Chair, Oladayo Bello

Chair or committee member not available to present a report.

- Research and Creative Activity Chair, Omar Holguin  
Chair Holguin was not available to present a report. Senator Creusere, a member of the RCA Committee, provided a brief update, stating that the committee had met but that the meeting was primarily informational in nature. He noted that no substantive business was conducted and no votes were taken. He added that the discussion consisted of general informational items and did not include any action items.
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Chair, Karen Kopera-Frye  
Chair Kopera-Frye reported that the committee formerly known as Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion has been renamed Access, Opportunity, and Outreach. She stated that the committee met as scheduled the previous day but did not have a quorum. She explained that the committee's discussion focused on two main items, the primary one being a proposed joint resolution.  
Chair Kopera-Frye explained that she was contacted by Jen from Central New Mexico College regarding a joint resolution opposing the Compact for Academic Excellence in Minor Education. She noted that the resolution had been approved by the CNM Faculty Senate and was developed collaboratively with a representative from the University of New Mexico, where it also received Faculty Senate support. She stated that the resolution represents a joint effort between the two institutions. She reported that she consulted with colleagues, including Vamal and Christopher, to discuss how to proceed. After some delay in communication, the resolution was revisited late last week. Chair Kopera-Frye noted that while an initial plan was to prepare a short bill for introduction at the current meeting, time constraints prevented that from occurring.  
Chair Kopera-Frye proposed that she and Karen share a draft of the resolution with the Senate as an informational item to begin discussion. She stated that the same information would be shared at the January Senate meeting. She further explained that she would work with Karen to prepare a bill to be introduced at the January Faculty Senate Leadership Committee meeting, assigned to a committee in February, and brought forward for discussion and a vote in February and March, respectively.  
Chair Kopera-Frye reported that the committee expressed support for the resolution with a caveat. Committee members emphasized the importance of ensuring that the President and Provost are aware of and

comfortable with the proposal, in order to avoid representing the institution as taking an official position in opposition to the compact without appropriate administrative awareness. She requested confirmation on whether the matter has been discussed with the President and Provost and whether it is appropriate to proceed.

- Student Success Chair, Kristian Finlator  
Chair Finlator reported that the committee met with a quorum and followed up on a discussion that began in the spring with Dean Koodali and the newly appointed Director of IPC, Derek Yu, regarding international student onboarding. She noted that the committee had previously reviewed data and prepared a brief report on this topic and that the recent meeting served as a follow-up to assess progress and developments.  
Chair Finlator stated that the discussion highlighted significant activity and improvements, beginning prior to students' arrival through the implementation of a Canvas course designed to support onboarding before students enter the country. She also noted revisions to publications and guidelines, updates to the website, rethinking of orientation programming, and expanded opportunities for tax training for international graduate students. She reported that these efforts addressed many of the concerns previously raised by the committee.  
Chair Finlator indicated that while not all issues identified in the earlier review have been fully addressed, the committee was pleased with the progress made. She noted that a written report is forthcoming and will provide additional details once completed.

## 8. Remarks and Announcements

- FS Chair Vimal Chaitanya  
Chair Chaitanya provided several brief remarks and announcements. He recalled previous concerns regarding the onboarding of graduate students, particularly international students, and noted that the committee had discussed conducting a survey on this topic. He acknowledged Senator Finlator's leadership in developing draft survey questions and noted that discussions had taken place with the Student Success Committee and student leaders. He reported that there was agreement to wait for the appointment of the new Director of International Student and Scholar Services before finalizing the survey, in order to include that individual in refining the questions.  
Chair Chaitanya reported that the Provost recently suggested forming a small task force to address international student onboarding, consisting of Chair Chaitanya, Senator Finlator, Dean Ranjit Kodali, the Graduate Dean, and

Derek Yu, the new Director of International Programs and Compliance. He noted that this initiative would be announced by the Provost's office, potentially in the coming year, following the academic break.

Chair Chaitanya also announced that the final "Crimson and White Day" this cycle will not be scheduled back-to-back with NMSU Day at the Legislature. He stated that NMSU Day in Santa Fe is scheduled for February 9 and indicated that he plans to attend.

Chair reported on enrollment-related updates, noting that although applications had declined in the previous year, the number of students who ultimately enrolled increased. He attributed this improvement in part to efforts led by Tony Marin and the graduate leadership team and expressed hope that similar strategies could be implemented this year. He noted ongoing discussions about making the admissions process more efficient, including ensuring that all application materials are complete before program leads review them so they can engage with prospective students more effectively.

Chair also provided an update on the university's new strategic initiative, noting that a town hall and several focus group meetings have taken place. He stated that, based on this input, the President is expected to form a group or committee to work on developing the new strategic initiative plan for the university. Concluded by extending holiday wishes to the Senate and expressing that he looks forward to reconvening in January.

- FS Vice-Chair / SLC Chair, Christopher Brown

Vice Chair Brown reported on several matters. First, he noted that the Policy Steering Committee and the policy review process are back on track and that he has provided detailed updates in his Faculty Senate report and will continue to do so. He highlighted three policies currently open for community-wide review that have significant implications for faculty: assistive service and companion animals on university premises; academic rules for distance education; and grade reports. He noted that the Faculty Senate previously passed a bill revising how graduate course repeats are calculated in cumulative GPAs and that this change is included in the current review. He stated that these policies are open for community feedback through December 23 and encouraged faculty to submit comments through the Policy Hub. He also noted that a notice would be sent to faculty to raise awareness of these review opportunities and that the Policy Steering Committee would meet prior to the comment deadline, though no action would be taken at that meeting.

Vice Chair Brown, reported that several changes to the Administrative Rules and Procedures (ARP) are forthcoming in response to federal directives, including revisions related to underutilization, affirmative action, diversity-related terminology, and consistency. He explained that these revisions are

being guided by the University General Counsel and involve removing or revising specific language. He noted that similar efforts are underway across campus units, including updates to web content, and referenced the formation of a new committee to address these changes. He indicated that additional details would be included in his Vice Chair report in January.

Vice Chair provided an update on the Provost search. He reported that applications will close on January 20, with materials forwarded to the search committee on January 27. The committee will reconvene on February 10 to review applications and develop a shortlist for initial interviews. Final candidates are expected to visit campus during the first two weeks of March, with the goal of announcing a decision shortly thereafter. He expressed appreciation for the work of the search firm and committee and encouraged faculty to submit nominations or suggestions for potential candidates.

Vice Chair also provided an update on scheduling a Faculty Senate Leadership Committee administrative team meeting. He reported that a poll was distributed and received multiple responses, with 88 percent of respondents indicating support for meeting between January 5 and January 15. He stated that he will coordinate with the President's and Provost's offices to schedule the meeting and noted that virtual participation will allow broader attendance. During announcements, Senator Michaela raised concerns regarding a memo from Dean Pontelli related to separating policy and procedures within the Promotion and Tenure framework, specifically noting issues with the definition of service. Vice Chair Brown clarified that the proposed changes are separate from ongoing ARP revisions and from Senator Walker's committee work. Concerns were expressed that the definition of service emphasizes professional service while excluding service to the university, college, or department, including Faculty Senate service. Vice Chair encouraged senators, particularly those from Arts and Sciences, to review the document closely and provide feedback, emphasizing that shared governance and service are foundational to the institution.

The meeting concluded with a motion to adjourn, which was seconded and approved by voice vote. Vice Chair Brown thanked members for their service to the Senate, the Faculty Senate Leadership Team, and the campus, and wished all attendees a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

## **9. Adjournment: Meeting adjournment at 5:00 p.m.**

**Present:** Vice Chair C. Brown, Chair V. Chaitanya, C. Erickson, M. Burkardt, S. Hanson, K. Kopera-Frye, F. Boutsen, C. Creusere, K. Sharp-Hopkins, J. Bronstein, J. Cook, K. Knight, K. Lopez-Gallagher, S. Walker, K. Finlator, Rec.Sec. M. Cisneros.

**Absent:** E. Karshmer, O. Bello, J. Sandstrom, O. Holguin, L. Grant, M. Montañez.

**Guest:** Deputy Provost James McAteer.

**Revised and finalized by:  
Vice Chair Brown on 1/6/2026**