



NEVADA FACULTY ALLIANCE

The [Nevada Faculty Alliance](#) is the independent statewide association of faculty of the Nevada System of Higher Education. The NFA is affiliated with the American Association of University Professors, which advocates for academic freedom, shared governance, and faculty rights. The NFA works to empower faculty to be wholly engaged in our mission to help students succeed.

Priorities for the 2021 Session of the Nevada Legislature

• Collective Bargaining for Faculty

Bring faculty worker protections on par with other state employees.

The 6700 faculty employees of NSHE are the largest group of public employees in Nevada without collective bargaining rights in statute. We support [SB373](#) to **align collective bargaining rules for professional employees with other public employees** in NRS 288. Faculty unionization improves institutional efficiency, resulting in a more educated workforce through increased student completions at a lower cost. SB373 was approved by the Senate Government Affairs Committee on a bipartisan vote and referred to the Senate Finance Committee. **Amendments will be proposed to address fiscal notes and other stakeholder issues.**

• Performance-Based Merit Pay

Promote retention of diverse faculty and motivate excellence in teaching and research.

The NSHE Performance Pay Task Force recommended that a performance pay pool of 1% or greater of faculty salary budgets be reallocated internally for merit-based raises, **at no additional cost to the state**. Unfortunately, [GovRec](#) includes back-language bill which was [deleted from the appropriations bill](#) in 2019 that prohibits use of state funds for professional merit increases. **The appropriations language needs to be permanently revised to approve the use of available state funds (as well as non-state funds) for performance-based in-rank salary advancement** for academic and administrative faculty. This revision is essential for faculty hiring and retention.

• Other Issues

- ✓ **Diversified State Revenue:** NFA has joined the Revenue Coalition **in support of more diversified and stable revenues** for the State of Nevada to mitigate against the high volatility of tax receipts with economic cycle.
- ✓ **NSHE Community College Governance:** [AB450](#) establishes a two-year study of opportunities to align workforce training and programs offered by the community colleges, including an examination of governance structures. **The bill should be amended to ensure faculty and student participation on the study committee.**
- ✓ **NSHE Legislative Audit:** NFA supports [AB416](#) to require the Legislator Auditor to examine NSHE accounts.
- ✓ **Constitutional Status of Board of Regents:** NFA proposes an [alternative](#) to [SJR7](#), a repeat of Question 1 which failed at the ballot box in November 2020, to better accomplish the goals of Question 1, protect academic freedom, and make it less confusing to voters.

• PEBP Benefits Restoration

Preserve the health care of state employees, especially the most vulnerable

The executive budget calls for drastic reductions in healthcare and other benefits to state employees: increased deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums, as well as the elimination of Long-Term Disability insurance. These cuts shift the most costs to the most vulnerable employees—those with serious and chronic health conditions. **American Rescue Plan funds have provided a windfall to the state, only a fraction of which would be necessary to restore PEBP benefits.** Additionally, PEBP could draw from its projected \$20M to \$30M in Excess Cash Reserves to ensure its employees continue receiving the health care they deserve.

• NSHE Funding and Budget Cuts

Budget cuts far exceed pandemic-related drops in enrollment, slashing resources per student

The Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 decrease in FTE enrollments at all NSHE institutions was 3.2%, while the instructional budgets for 2020-21 in AB3 (special session) were cut 19.8%, amounting to **six times the percentage drop in enrollment**. With the rollout of vaccines this spring and summer, enrollments are expected to bounce back in Fall 2021, yet GovRec proposes 12% across-the-board cuts to NSHE budgets, which would result in additional layoffs, hinder campuses from fully reopening, and undermine pandemic recovery efforts. **Community college budgets would be hit especially hard by a reduction in the caseload growth funding, affecting workforce development.** [American Rescue Plan](#) funds to the state are available to address revenue shortfalls.