



NEVADA FACULTY ALLIANCE

May 21: SB373 needs a hearing in Senate Finance to remove fiscal notes per proposed amendment.

The [Nevada Faculty Alliance](#) is the independent statewide association of faculty of the Nevada System of Higher Education and is the bargaining agent for faculty bargaining units at the College of Southern Nevada, Truckee Meadows Community College, and Western Nevada College. 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.

SB373—Collective Bargaining for NSHE Faculty

[Senate Bill 373](#) *establishes collective bargaining rights for NSHE faculty in Nevada statutes.*

“Every American deserves the dignity and respect that comes with the right to collectively bargain.” – Joe Biden

“Where free unions and collective bargaining are forbidden, freedom is lost.” – Ronald Reagan

Effective and efficient employment settings depend on the proper balance of power. Because NSHE faculty lack collective bargaining rights in statute, existing bargaining units operate under NSHE Code, giving the Board of Regents the sole power to write and determine the implementation of collective bargaining rules. SB373 upholds the legacy of a longstanding American tradition to empower faculty, so they can retain the dignity and respect necessary to provide a high-quality education to the students who will decide Nevada’s future.

Institutional Efficiency

Increase student/faculty retention and improve academic governance

Collective bargaining provides a framework for helping faculty achieve institutional goals, as evidenced by research demonstrating a **statistically significant increase in student retention with faculty unionization.**

Faculty unionization also improves the efficiency of academic governance—through a variety of research-backed models—by encouraging meaningful faculty participation in shared institutional decision-making.

Fiscal Responsibility

Reduce cost per degree awarded without a fiscal impact to the state

A 2014 study associated faculty unionization with a savings of \$13,500 in core expenses per degree awarded (and an additional 1.2 degrees awarded per 100 students enrolled). Among eight variables, **faculty unionization was the only method that achieved both lowered cost and increased student completion.**

By increasing efficiency, collective bargaining offsets any salary increases, resulting in **no fiscal cost to the state.**

Fairness, Equity, and Freedom

Treat faculty workers equal to other state employees and promote academic freedom

The 6,700 faculty members of NSHE are the largest group of public employees in Nevada who do not have collective bargaining rights in statute. We support SB373 to **align collective bargaining rules for NSHE professional employees with those of state classified employees and local government employees** in NRS 288.

The Nevada Faculty Alliance supports this legislation to affirm and uphold the tradition of academic freedom necessary for a full and effective education.

Additional Highlights

- Securing collective bargaining rights in statute will save time and money by giving faculty employees access to the Government Employee-Management Relations Board (EMRB) for conflict resolution, as an alternative to litigation.
- Because NSHE already allows collective bargaining and has the supporting infrastructure, the modest EMRB fees represent this bill’s only fiscal impact.
- The bill would not interfere with unions for local government or state Classified employees, nor would it change existing right-to-work law.
- Bargaining units would be flexibly defined, allowing each NSHE institution to negotiate based on local needs.

Collective Bargaining for NSHE Faculty ([SB373](#))

SB373 would establish statutory collective bargaining rights for certain professional state employees, primarily faculty at NSHE, similar to those in NRS 288 for local government employees and for state Classified employees.

The specific policies and procedures in SB373 with our proposed amendment to remove fiscal notes:

- The Board of Regents has granted limited collective bargaining rights for faculty through NSHE Code, but this means management both writes and interprets the rules of engagement. A better-defined process in statute will enable both parties to negotiate expeditiously in the best interests of our institutions.
- SB373 largely follows the collective bargaining rules already established in NRS 288 for local government employees and state Classified employees, with some clarifications needed for professional employees in higher education, including for example shared governance and academic freedom as mandatory items of negotiation. The new sections are in a separate subhead of NRS chapter 288 and do not affect the sections for local government employees and state classified employees.
- SB373 covers state professional employees, including NSHE faculty and explicitly excluding state Classified staff and local government employees. *Per the proposed amendment, **other state boards and commissions are excluded from the definition of state professional employer if they have fewer than 400 professional employees, currently leaving on NSHE.***
- The definition of bargaining units uses the "community of interest" standard, which is flexible so that employees and administrators of each NSHE institution can negotiate the composition of bargaining units. For example, bargaining units for academic faculty and administrative faculty and various campuses could be separate or combined according to campus needs and culture. The bill would allow formation of bargaining units for part-time instructors and assistants.
- SB373 gives NSHE professional employees and their professional organizations access to the state Government Employee-Management Relations Board (EMRB) for conflict resolution as an alternative to litigation. This would lower costs in time and money—a clear benefit to both sides.
- Three NSHE campuses (CSN, TMCC, WNC) currently have collective bargaining under NSHE code represented by the Nevada Faculty Alliance. The bill would continue those bargaining units and their contracts until renegotiated under the new statute.
- SB373 would clarify the right for representation for faculty employees in disciplinary or grievance meetings, similar to the rights for state classified employees in NRS 284.
- Because NSHE already has collective bargaining under its own Code, the support infrastructure is in place and the only expected fiscal note would be the annual fee of up to \$10 per employee that NSHE would pay to support the Government Employee-Management Relations Board. *Per the proposed amendment, **NSHE and not the state Labor Relations Unit will be responsible for all negotiations and labor relations within NSHE, removing fiscal notes for DHRM and the Department of Administration.***
- *Per the proposed amendment, **negotiations over PEBP and PERS are specifically excluded, removing the fiscal note from PEBP.***
- Nevada is a right-to-work state with no-strike provisions for public employees. This bill would not change that.

Sources

- Bucklew, N., Houghton, J. D., & Ellison, C. N. (2012). Faculty Union and Faculty Senate Co-Existence: A Review of the Impact of Academic Collective Bargaining on Traditional Academic Governance. *Labor Studies Journal*, 37(4), 373-390.
- Cassell, M., & Halaseh, O. (2014). The Impact of Unionization on University Performance. *Journal of Collective Bargaining in the Academy*, 6(1), Article 3.
- Porter, S. R. (2013). The Causal Effect of Faculty Unions on Institutional Decision-Making. *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, 66(5), 1192-1211.

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