



## PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

Good afternoon.

### The State of Higher Education in New Mexico and Beyond

The New Mexico Statewide Higher Education Master-plan (NM SHEM) Committee met on Friday, July 28, to exchange ideas about the [state of higher education in New Mexico](#). Of particular note, is the presentation by Dennis Jones comparing the various states' higher education systems. A [new survey of university business officers](#) also came out recently, describing the financial challenges facing higher education. The good news is that we are not unique nor alone in our current financial situation. The bad news is that there is no silver bullet, and as such, our re-engineering effort is more needed than ever. Inside Higher Ed publishes a number of very [informative and diverse surveys](#) that address issues facing higher education institutions.

### Re-Engineering Academic Leadership at UNM

This summer has seen some outstanding promotions within and additions to our faculty and administrative staff. Six faculty were recently announced by Provost White and Chancellor Roth as [promoted to the rank of distinguished professor](#). They include: Mark Burge, Ke Jian "Jim" Liu, Kurt Nolte, Anil Prinja, Jim Stone and Adrian Brearley. The rank of distinguished professor is the highest honor that can be awarded to a faculty member at UNM, and is a reflection of having achieved the greatest level of scholarship over the course of one's career.

There have also been a number of [changes within the Office of the Provost](#) that demonstrate how we can approach thoughtful re-engineering of our internal administrative structures. In addition to the internal changes, [Provost White recently appointed Laura Valdez as director of University Advisement](#), a critical position to ensure our undergraduate students are successful in their academic efforts and timely in the completion of their degrees. Having a strong and focused team in place, to advance UNM's academic enterprise, is absolutely foundational to student success.

### An Aside on an English Grammar Rule

As a non-native English speaker, I continue to make my share of mistakes while writing and speaking. This is especially frustrating when the rules don't make sense. However, I occasionally come across [an algorithm](#) that surprises and delights me, such as: "Adjectives absolutely have to be in this order: opinion-size-age-shape-colour-origin-material-purpose Noun. So you can have a lovely little old rectangular green French silver whittling knife. But if you mess with that order in the slightest you'll sound like a maniac."

Until next time.

Chaouki Abdallah  
Acting President

Follow me on Twitter [@chaoukita](#)

There is so much more that happens on the UNM campus than can be conveyed in a weekly message. To find out about the latest stories and events, please visit the [UNM Newsroom](#), the central source of news and information for the UNM community.