



President's Weekly Perspective

Good morning.

Last week, I wrote about the opportunities and responsibilities related to local engagement. The past several days have gotten me thinking about how we communicate and engage at the national level and how UNM is perceived beyond our state's boundaries. Our public representation affects the University on a number of levels, connecting UNM to an expanded network of interests and positioning the University as an influential voice.

The Importance of University Federal Relations

I made my first trip to Washington D.C. as the President of UNM, in the company of our Government & Community Relations team. We clearly understand that state support is essential to keeping college affordable and accessible for all students, especially low-income students, but the federal government also has a critical role to play. Congress needs to ensure that federal student aid programs are adequately funded. A priority example is the Pell Grant program. Over 9,000 UNM students are reliant in some way on the Pell Grant for their ability to finance their attendance. Without appropriate funding for Pell Grants and loans, students in New Mexico and across the country will not have the necessary access to higher education.

While in our nation's capitol, I had the pleasure of being invited to the New Mexico State Society Centennial reception, where I was able to share my enthusiasm for being back in the Land of Enchantment with some of our fellow New Mexicans now living in Washington D.C. As you know, it is hard to leave New Mexico; those in attendance verified the affection we feel for our state. Some in attendance had been coming to UNM and New Mexico Society events 30 years after leaving New Mexico. For UNM, it is important to maintain relationships with UNM alumni and New Mexicans outside of the state. Our graduates' love for the University is an important source of support we must develop.

The Engaged University

In referencing our funding formula last week, I discussed the tangible outcomes associated with student success. We need to now go a step further to address outcomes developed across the entire learning experience.

We are a community of critical thinkers, and as such can more effectively contribute to our students' abilities to bring together skills and knowledge from a variety of disciplines to solve complex problems. The challenge is to maintain the progress we have made. As stated in [Higher Ambitions: The Future of Universities in a Knowledge Economy](#), published by UK Department for Business Innovation and Skills, "in a knowledge economy, institutions of higher learning are the most important system we have for generating and preserving, disseminating, and transforming knowledge into wider social and economic benefits."

George Kuh, an eminent leader in the field of student engagement, will be [coming to UNM this week](#) to discuss practices to enhance college student engagement and retention. Dr. Kuh's research on high-quality student experiences places a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students' intellectual and practical competencies.

In the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) report "[College Learning for the New Global Century](#)," to which Dr. Kuh contributed, a new framework for excellence is suggested, emphasizing "education that intentionally fosters, across multiple fields of study, wide-ranging knowledge of science, cultures and society; high-level intellectual and practical skills; an active commitment to personal and social responsibility; and the demonstrated ability to apply learning to complex problems and challenges."

I have previously worked with Dr. Kuh. As we at UNM begin the deeper discussions related to promoting diverse learning experiences both within and outside the classroom, I am confident Dr. Kuh can provide the leadership we need to improve our student engagement.

Engagement is a commitment to sharing and reciprocity. We now have more than 1,000 responses to the President's Questionnaire, which will remain open through the end of June. If you have not yet had an opportunity to do so, I encourage you please participate.

UNM Influencing National Educational Issues

As we talk about UNM as an institution in terms of the national and global landscape, it's also important to recognize the impact of individual achievements that reflect favorably on the University, highlighting the level of expertise and leadership within our community.

Dr. Erin Corriveau, senior resident in the UNM Health Sciences Center Family and Community Medicine Department, recently received an appointment as the sole medical resident to the [U.S. Council on Graduate Medical Education \(COGME\)](#).

The 17-member board is appointed by Secretary Kathleen Sebelius of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The group provides the Secretary and Congress with ongoing assessments of physician workforce trends, training issues and financing policies, and recommends appropriate federal and private sector efforts on these issues. COGME has a powerful voice in the funding of health professions in the United States. The views of Council are translated into Graduate Medical Education policy and reimbursement as well as Medicare funding. COGME is at the lead of the debate on how to increase the funding and effectiveness of primary care. As a family physician, Dr. Corriveau's appointment provides more impetus for primary care providers, places UNM at the "national table" and is a tremendous opportunity for her.

There are many levels of accomplishment and distinction that are achieved by members of the UNM family, which bring recognition and honor to the University. I am delighted to recognize the achievements of individuals such as Dr. Corriveau. Our collective accomplishments reflect on the entire University community, and are a tremendous source of pride for all of us.

Have a great week and Go Lobos!

Bob