



## President's Weekly Perspective

Good afternoon.

### Student Success Reaching New Heights

A major goal for UNM is to help every student that comes into the University complete a degree program, and one of the first steps toward achieving that goal is giving students the support needed to successfully finish their freshman year. We measure progress in this area with our 3rd semester retention rates, which is the percentage of freshmen who return for their sophomore year at UNM.

Over the past couple of years, several departments have implemented new programs and processes to aid student success, and it is largely thanks to these implementations that we have reached [high records in student retention](#). Last week, we reported the 3rd semester retention rate at 79.1 percent, the second highest it has been in the last decade, and more importantly we had the highest total number of students in our history enroll for their second year at UNM. In addition to that, our Hispanic full-time 3rd semester retention rate is higher than ever at 80.1 percent, which is more than a 5 percent increase over four years.

These numbers are great indicators of future graduation rates, and it is a reflection of the hard work of our staff and faculty who strive to keep students motivated to learn and graduate with the skills necessary to achieve their career goals.

I met with three employees from our enrollment and advising offices last week to get more insight into what we are doing that is working and how to keep this trend going. Corine Gonzales, Vanessa Harris and Jennifer Gomez-Chavez spoke with me about their strategies for keeping our students engaged. The common emphasis shared among them is giving students more personal attention. Our enrollment staff is calling students to have peer-to-peer conversations about registration. Our advisors now have longer sessions to clarify degree tracks and requirements. Academic coaches are giving insight to programs and classes to help students who feel overwhelmed or want to get ahead. These are only some of the changes that have improved student success rates.

Thank you to Corine, Vanessa, Jennifer and all of their staff for creating a caring culture where students get the help and support they need to graduate. The work of these teams is invaluable to the mission of UNM.

### [LoboRESPECT](#)

Sexual violence is an issue being addressed on a national level, which is why UNM's Task Force on Sexual Violence has developed several proactive strategies to educate and combat violence, misconduct, stalking and other types of harassment. [LoboRESPECT \(Respond, Educate, Support, Prevent, Empower, Consent, Train\)](#) is UNM's new "comprehensive approach to preventing and responding to sexual violence in our campus community," and it will serve to increase awareness and training on this important topic. We will see a lot of actionable items come from this initiative, but one immediate outcome has been the development of the [LoboRESPECT](#) website, which will serve as an educational

and training resource in an effort to maintain a safe and respectful campus culture. Thank you to Dean of Students Tomas Aguirre and the entire task force for developing and promoting new ways to strengthen our Lobo community.

### **Sarah Belle Brown Award**

I would like to remind everyone that my office is still accepting nominations for the prestigious [Sarah Belle Brown award](#) that recognizes a student, faculty member and staff member with a \$1,500 award for their commitment to community service. The deadline has been extended to 5 p.m. on Monday, Sept. 29. I encourage you to take the time to nominate a friend, colleague or co-worker who has gone above and beyond in serving our community.

I know that our Lobos will make us proud in the UNM vs. NMSU football game this weekend. To everyone attending [Red Rally](#) on Thursday, have fun and raise our Lobo spirits, and to those of you traveling to Las Cruces for the game, travel safe and represent UNM pride and passion.

Have a great week and Go Lobos!

Bob