



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

Good afternoon.

Budget for 2016-2017

While the state budget will not be finalized until the Legislature adjourns on Thursday, it is now clear this will be one of the most challenging years we have encountered. The drop in oil and gas prices has led to a very low estimate of state revenue, which combines with the growth of Medicaid expenses to create a dire scenario. We anticipated a difficult year and have been carefully paring our budget since September, but the magnitude of the potential cuts is far greater than we previously expected. Over the coming weeks we will revise our plans to deal with the new reality. We won't be able to avoid every painful decision, but we will always keep the best interests of the University and our students foremost. We will continue to keep you informed of these issues as they develop because we will need the help of the entire campus to address this challenge.

University Accreditation

What is university [accreditation](#) and why does it matter? It's a quality check that says that our programs are up to par with academic institutions across the nation. It determines whether or not students attending UNM qualify for federal student aid. It makes it possible for students to transfer academic credits to and from UNM, because it means that our academic curricula are comparable to curricula from other colleges and universities. It is essential to the academic reputation of UNM.

The University of New Mexico has been accredited through the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) since 1922, and goes through a comprehensive accreditation review every 10 years. As you can imagine, this is not a simple process, because it involves in-depth reports on governance, teaching and learning, and resource planning for main campus, the four branch campuses, and the Health Sciences Center. To give you an idea of how long this report takes, we are already working to prepare for our next accreditation review in 2019.

I wanted to communicate to you about this today because it is important that everyone on our campus understands the importance of this effort. In the coming months, several people working in and with the Office of Academic Affairs will be reaching out to departments and individuals to collect information needed for this report. Also, there will be a number of improvements required as a part of this process, and you or your colleagues could be called on to contribute. If someone comes to you for information regarding this effort, please take the time to support them in this work. They deserve all of our help throughout this process.

ROTC 100-Year History

On Saturday, the [UNM Army ROTC](#) was recognized at the Men's Basketball game during a halftime ceremony. Nationally, ROTC is celebrating its 100-year history this year, and we are fortunate to have such a well-rooted and impactful program at our own University. Thank you to everyone, past and present, involved with UNM ROTC for your dedication to our institution, and the nation.

New Mexico Support through School of Law

The UNM School of Law received a [\\$2.6 million grant](#) that will go to a project to vastly improve the well-being of our states children and families in need of legal support. The funding is for this project comes from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and follows a 2014 grant from the same foundation that was used to plan the initiative.

“The impact of the project will be more public interest lawyers, better representation and ultimately, improved health and well-being for New Mexico’s children and families in poverty,” said Alfred D. Mathewson, co-dean of the UNM School of Law.

Congratulations to our School of Law’s, Corinne Wolfe Center for Child and Family Justice, whose excellence and dedication has led to receiving the grant. The center will manage the project, in partnership with the Health Sciences Center.

Have a great week and Go Lobos!

Bob