



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



January 14, 2019

Good afternoon,

Welcome back and happy new year! I hope everyone enjoyed the winter break and is ready for the spring semester.

2019 Legislative Session Kicks Off Tomorrow

State lawmakers officially begin New Mexico's legislative session in the Roundhouse tomorrow, addressing such broad issues as the state's budget, education reforms and economic stimulus. UNM Day at the Roundhouse is Monday, Jan. 28 and our Government Relations team, in close collaboration with institutional leadership, has outlined the [UNM Legislative Priorities](#) that we will focus on this year. They include an increase to the funding formula and compensation funding, changes to general funding allotment and solvency of the New Mexico Lottery Scholarship. You can keep up with these initiatives by signing up for the [Government Relations listserv](#), and being aware of [our policies on political activity](#).

I would also like to take a moment to recognize the members of [UNM family who are joining the new administration](#) in Santa Fe: Kate O'Neill, William Scott Carreathers, Dr. David R. Scrase and Kathy Kunkel have been appointed to fill roles in our state government that will build and maintain a strong New Mexico.

Higher Learning Commission Accreditation Visit

The University of New Mexico has been continuously accredited through the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association since 1922. The [HLC accreditation](#) covers all of UNM's campuses and programs, and our last comprehensive review occurred in April 2009, resulting in a full 10-year reaffirmation of accreditation. As mentioned in the [Provost's Communiqué last week](#), the HLC will soon be coming to UNM for a scheduled site visit. The accreditation team will be on campus March 4-5, after visiting UNM-Taos and UNM-Gallup on March 1. I encourage you to look over the [assurance argument](#) and provide comments before Jan. 24 at 11:59 p.m., after which it will be submitted to the HLC (please be aware that some links are not yet live). There will also be several open events for the public during the HLC visit, which will focus on accreditation criteria, for those who are interested. Dates, times and places are to be announced and will be shared in my weekly message when they are confirmed.

UNM and CNM Awarded Grant to Increase Graduates in the Humanities

Higher education institutions do not operate in a vacuum; instead they rely on support from and collaboration with other schools. UNM and CNM are partnering to make humanities degrees more accessible to New Mexico students, thanks to a [\\$2 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#). The grant will focus on supporting students who are studying humanities at CNM so they can more readily transfer to UNM in order to complete their degrees. Such partnerships enable students to move at their own pace, allowing for life/work/school balance as needed, and will help ensure more graduates from those academic areas.

Checking Our Blind Spots

Although psychologists continue to debate the nature of the “unconscious,” what we do know is that we are not always fully aware of the snap judgements or conclusions we draw about people, places and events. The conversation surrounding “unconscious bias” is one that is prevalent in our nation today, and in recognition of the importance of this issue to our university community, our Student Activities Center (SAC) leaders have arranged to have the [CEO Action Check Your Blind Spots unconscious bias tour](#) visit campus later this week. I encourage you to stop by the free event happening on Smith Plaza on Jan. 17 from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. This national initiative will have innovative, interactive exhibits and activities set up that will help you recognize any hidden bias and contribute to the ongoing conversation on our campus about inclusion and acceptance.

Traveling Office Hours Continue

This semester, I'm continuing my [traveling office hours](#) and look forward to meeting many of you and hearing your perspective on how UNM is doing and what active steps we can take to make it a better place to work and study. This Wednesday, January 16, traveling office hours will be hosted by the Department of English in room 235 of the Humanities Building from 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Have a great first week of classes and let's go Lobos!

Garnett S. Stokes

President