



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

The US Constitution

I thought it appropriate given recent events on campus and around the nation, to recall the first amendment of the US constitution:

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

This [website](#) provides explanations and historical context to help us all as we learn more about the genius of the framers of the constitution.

Recent events have also given me reason to contemplate my own journey as an immigrant to the United States. A retiring diplomat, Tom Countryman, recently remarked that “the torch carried by the Statue of Liberty is not only a magnet for immigrants, it is a projector. It shines the promise of democracy around the world.” I trust that promise will be sustained for future generations.

Upcoming Town Hall Meetings

I enjoy meeting in person with the campus community so we can share views, concerns, and insights about our university. I have two Town Hall events scheduled this month. For main campus, I will be at the SUB Ballroom on Monday, Feb. 13. For Health Sciences, I will be at the Domenici Auditorium on Monday, Feb. 20. Each event will be from noon to 1 p.m. These conversations are a great supplement to more formal means of communication.

Resources for DACA Students

The legal issues surrounding the impact of decisions being made by our executive branch can be daunting. We are compiling a variety of resources to assist those with [questions and concerns](#). For example, the UNM School of Law Career and Student Services office maintains a DACA bulletin board with information for DACA students, information on DACA listservs and offers of support from law professors and attorneys with expertise in immigration law. The School also has a newly formed Immigration Law Student Association, which provides student-to-student support to DACA and other immigrant students.

Emergency Alerts and Advisories

Tomorrow morning the University will be testing [emergency notification systems](#) as well as our siren system. The test is a routine, semester activity to make sure that our alert systems are working properly and ready in

case of a real emergency. If you do not receive a notification via text or email, please go to the LoboAlerts website and make sure that your contact information is correct. LoboAlerts are used to notify the campus of an immediate emergency, while LoboAdvisories send information about potentially dangerous situations. This messaging tool is one of the best and quickest ways to notify the campus community of critical situations.

Commencement Changes

It's early in the semester for most of us to be thinking about commencement, but I want everyone to be aware of modifications that will affect UNM's May ceremony. We will have a single Spring 2017 UNM Commencement ceremony in the Wise Pies Arena aka the PIT, on Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 9 a.m. This ceremony will recognize graduates from all degree programs at all levels. If you have any questions about college, school, department, and program ceremonies, please contact your program.

Best wishes for a great week ahead!

Chaouki T. Abdallah

Acting President

Follow me on Twitter [@chaoukita](https://twitter.com/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.