

PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

Good afternoon.

Last week was extremely difficult and emotional as [changes to the Lobo Athletics program](#), including the discontinuation of four sports, were approved by the UNM Board of Regents in order to meet federal and fiscal requirements. These decisions are painful for all of us and have expectedly been met with sadness, anger and sympathy for the students, coaches, and supporters who have been impacted. Our students are at the core of all that we do, so understanding that what has been decided will forever impact the lives of many outstanding young men and women is especially difficult. Although the road ahead is by no means easy, and these first steps are some of the hardest, I feel confident that we are moving towards a more sustainable, accountable and compliant program, and that we presented the best option among the very tough ones available to us. We will continue to engage in discussion to explain how we arrived at this crossroads, as well as what we will be doing to improve the athletics department with respect to operations, finances and accountability.

Serving Student Veterans

At UNM, the growing presence of student veterans has become a dynamic part of our institutional culture. Ensuring that the student veteran experience here is welcoming and supportive has been a visible priority of my presidency. This morning, it was my great pleasure to [attend a training event designed to educate](#) those who work most closely with this population, sponsored by our Veteran's Resource Center and supported by Provost Abdallah, Chancellor Roth and my office. It was both humbling and moving to engage with the students, faculty and staff who make our student veterans a priority and actively work to serve them.

UNM Staff Voices

The discussions that I have had with various campus constituents have been invaluable opportunities to engage in open, direct dialogue. At a [Staff Town Hall held in the SUB this afternoon](#), we had a robust conversation about outreach and public input on the institutional level, work-life balance, how to improve campus climate and safety and several other topics. This input is critical for identifying areas for improvement that can make working here at UNM more fulfilling. Many thanks to all of you who were able to participate – in person, online and via emailed questions.

Strategic Planning to Begin this Fall

Tomorrow the statewide listening tour continues, heading south to Las Cruces, Deming and Silver City. I have grown to appreciate the vast diversity of New Mexico, in geography, people, culture and expectations for the flagship university. I am eager begin aligning action to our strategic goals. After the semester begins, this campus will be called upon to develop a focused blueprint for UNM's future that will allow us to address the most pressing societal challenges while preparing our next generation of global citizens.

Call for Nominations and Chief Legal Counsel Update

Provost Abdallah will be leaving UNM at the end of August to start his new position at Georgia Tech, and I will need to name an Interim Provost to serve while we conduct a national search. Your nominations for candidates to serve as Interim Provost are welcome. Please send them to me at PresidentStokes@unm.edu. We are also in the process of scheduling on-site visits including open forums for campus feedback with the finalists for UNM Chief Legal Counsel next week. Please visit the [executive search web site](#) later this week for details regarding the finalists and the on-site visits.

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President

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