



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



June 1, 2020

Good afternoon.

Like most of you, I have spent the last few days watching and reading about horrendous acts of racism and racial violence inflicted against people of color. And like you, I am all at once angry and deeply saddened. I also understand the unrest and anxiety we've seen in response to such acts, with people taking to the streets in protest in communities across the country, from Minneapolis to Phoenix, and from Columbus, Ohio to the streets of Albuquerque where, thankfully, no one has been seriously hurt. But the outrage over the betrayal of basic human rights and human decency remains.

Unfortunately, here in New Mexico, we are not immune to the ugliness of racism. Only a short time ago, a member of our faculty in Africana Studies was sent racially-laced death threats. There is never room for hatred at UNM—this is not who we are as Lobos. Anti-blackness will not be tolerated in our community, and I am proud to stand with our faculty who [forcefully condemned the racist actions leveled against our Africana Studies program and its leadership.](#)

I have been asked 'what can we do?' As a community, we must never be silent. Across the university, we're raising our voices to condemn hatred and reaffirm our strong support for black communities in New Mexico and across the nation. Over the weekend, [I issued a statement alongside UNM Police Chief Kevin McCabe.](#) The [Health Sciences leadership has issued a joint statement,](#) as has the [UNM Athletics Department,](#) the [UNM Division of Equity and Inclusion,](#) and the [UNM Office of Equal Opportunity.](#)

We must all continue to do more, through our words and actions, to support our communities of color against violence and injustice. This week, on June 3, the City of Albuquerque is hosting an Albuquerque Human Rights Board public meeting to [discuss the recent events here in our city surrounding the #blacklivesmatter protest.](#) And on June 4, UNM and community African American leaders [will discuss the impact of the census complete count on African American communities as well as police brutality and related issues.](#)

As we work in the coming months to slowly return our university to more active on campus operations, we remain committed to keeping our community safe and free from racism and violence. We urge anyone who has experienced racial discrimination or has been the victim of a hate crime to contact our Office of Equal Opportunity and fill out a hate bias incident report. These can be made anonymously and will be investigated fully. Similarly, if you see an act of hatred committed against someone, please file a report as well. **Let's have each other's backs.**

And if you find you require additional help in this stressful time or just need someone to talk to, we can help. UNM offers a number of [mental health services for students,](#) faculty, and staff, as well as support services [provided by many advocacy groups](#)—so please reach out for the help you want or need.

As educators, we have a responsibility to enlighten and empathize, and in challenging times like this, we have a fundamental obligation to empower. As a hero of mine, the writer and activist James Baldwin, once wrote:

“The paradox of education is precisely this—that as one begins to become conscious, one begins to examine the society in which he is being educated.”

Keep examining, Lobos. Keep talking, and by all means, keep listening. Someone's life may depend on it.

It's June 1st. Here's What You Need to Know.

As New Mexico begins to slowly and safely re-open, The University of New Mexico is also working hard to responsibly “bring back the pack” by [enacting a comprehensive plan](#) to move our campus back to a fully operational status. As of today—and for the next few weeks—here's what you can expect:

- To the extent possible, please continue to work remotely. Some faculty and staff will need to return to campus to carry out their functions; please do so in a safe and responsible manner, following [worksite protocols](#).
- Summer courses, starting June 1, will be carried out remotely.
- We are preparing for a hybrid fall term in which we can deliver the critical elements of an in-person education in a controlled way that minimizes transmission of the COVID-19 virus
- Social distancing and the use of face coverings will be required whenever individuals are working or spending any time around others.
- To help slow the spread of infection, we will continue with our [policy of self-reporting](#) either symptoms of or a positive test for COVID-19.

We're looking forward to bringing back our pack and resuming operations in a carefully phased approach—whatever that may look like in a new reality. Your patience and flexibility continue to be greatly appreciated.

Annual Tech Days Event Goes Home on June 4

One of UNM's premiere tech-related conferences, the annual Tech Days event, which showcases new technology and provides attendees with the opportunity to test drive technological innovations, [has moved entirely online](#) and retitled as Tech Days @ Home. This year's keynote address, “How Technology is Enabling UNM to Meet the Needs of the Future,” features UNM Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration Teresa Costantinidis and UNM Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs James Holloway. It all begins live on Thursday, June 4, beginning at 8:30 a.m.

Everyone stay safe, take care, and let's go Lobos!

Regards,

Garnett Stokes
President