



# PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



May 4, 2020

Good afternoon.

Like the rest of our community—and the rest of world—we at UNM are adapting to life during the COVID-19 pandemic. We've had to fundamentally reconsider the way we think and operate—but because of the hard work, commitment, and flexibility shown by every one of you, we're still carrying out our fundamental duties, even under these most challenging of circumstances.

I recently had the opportunity to discuss [UNM's response at length with the Greater Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce](#). We've been fortunate, as one of the largest employers in the State, to keep over 15,000 people working for their families and communities. And thanks to all of you, we're still providing excellence in education, and ensuring that our students remain on their academic journeys and ready to join the workforce. We're still conducting top-tier research, including research on the COVID-19 virus. Our health professionals are on the front lines, saving lives and caring for patients, with the highest standards of care and dignity. Our engineers, biologists, and mathematicians have been working with community partners to develop creative solutions to keeping those health professionals safe—just last week, in fact, [our partnership with the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security and Emergency resulted in getting face shields and masks 3D printed by our School of Engineering](#), and then distributed to medical providers and other first responders across the state.

In short, our mission hasn't changed a bit—nor has the deep public responsibility we share to serve all New Mexicans. What has been fundamentally altered, however, is our sense of normalcy. We're redefining 'normal' almost daily—whether it's making the transition to remote instruction, conducting research electronically, or maintaining safe facilities for students and employees who remain on campus—and that can pose a challenge to moving forward with determination.

And yet, at UNM, we're determined to move forward. As educators, innovators and leaders, we're thinking differently, planning differently, budgeting differently, teaching differently—and not just for the coming weeks and months, but for the coming years. Adaptability is our new normal.

So what do the next few months look like? We've already moved our first summer session entirely to remote Instruction. At the moment, however, we're not sure what's in store for our Fall semester. Based on assumptions that in-person experiences will still need to be limited in number, we are developing multiple approaches to increase social distancing while still providing the richness of in-person education. We don't have all the answers yet, but that's part of how we lean into over 135 years of seeking answers to society's greatest challenges, preparing Lobos to lead and engage within our communities, and pushing ourselves to not only do well, but to do good.

Moving forward, we'll be making decisions on and plans for budgets and operations, enrollment, personnel, instruction, research capability, health care services—everything it takes to keep a university running, knowing that we must align with state government and city plans for varying levels of social distancing.

And while some decisions will need to be made quickly, they won't be made in haste. As we develop plans for the future, we are guided by the following principles:

- To protect the health of our faculty, staff, students and all New Mexicans;
- To fulfill our deeply-rooted mission to educate, discover, create and serve; and
- To protect the University to ensure it remains strong for both the coming months and the years to come.

Equally as important is that we act with social responsibility, inclusivity, deliberation, integrity and transparency. This is how we remain on course, both now and in the future.

Let's keep moving forward together, Lobos. With your wisdom, leadership, and perseverance, we're certain to emerge from this pandemic stronger, smarter—and yes, more adaptable—than ever.

## **UNM Physics Professor Carlton Caves Elected to Ranks of National Academy of Sciences**

The National Academy of Sciences was established at the height of the Civil War in 1863 by Congress and President Abraham Lincoln, who understood that the drive for intellectual inquiry “added the fuel of interest to the fire of genius, in the discovery and production of new and useful things.” We can all share in the pride of having one of our UNM faculty members elected to the National Academy of Sciences, one of the highest honors accorded to scientists and given in recognition of distinguished and continuing achievement in original research. Distinguished Professor Emeritus and Research Professor of Physics and Astronomy [Carlton Caves has now joined the ranks of this most esteemed body of national thought leaders on scientific inquiry and scholarship](#). Professor Caves adds this distinction to a long list of accomplishments. He has made great contributions to the field of quantum information theory and quantum computation, to his students and to UNM. Congratulations to Professor Caves on this tremendous and well-deserved honor, and for advancing our understanding of, as he's said, “the way the world works at the microscopic level.”

## **UNM Condemns Racist Attack on Professor**

As you may have read, one of our own faculty members was recently the victim of a horrendous act of racial hatred, directed at him and his family through an electronic survey fielded by campus librarians, and on social media. At UNM, each of us defines all of us—so when statements of hate and threats of physical harm are made against one in our pack, we stand resolute to [communicate our inclusive values and our unwillingness to tolerate such assaults against one of our own](#).

Currently, the UNM and Albuquerque Police Departments, as well as the FBI, are investigating this matter, and we will move swiftly to exert corrective action against perpetrators.

This serves as a regular reminder that anyone who has received any offensive communications via e-mail or in person should reach out to the UNM PD and OEO and [fill out a hate bias incident report](#). Reports can be made anonymously and are investigated fully.

UNM also has confidential reporting sites for students, staff, and faculty who may not be sure if they wish to proceed with an OEO report or if their concern warrants an OEO report. Confidential advocates can be reached via e-mail at [women@unm.edu](mailto:women@unm.edu), [loborespect@unm.edu](mailto:loborespect@unm.edu) or [fiyero81@unm.edu](mailto:fiyero81@unm.edu).

In the meantime, we want the UNM community to know that we will do what is necessary to ensure the safety of our faculty member, as well as his family and community. I know this was also very upsetting for several members of our library staff who fielded similar online form requests that contained racist and threatening language; please know that we are here for you, too.

### **Clauve Awards go to Outstanding UNM Seniors**

Even in the midst of a global pandemic and remote instruction, our students continue to inspire us with their drive and accomplishments. This year, [seven outstanding seniors will receive UNM's prestigious Clauve Award](#), presented to exemplary seniors who have succeeded academically and made significant contributions to the campus community and distinguished themselves through their leadership and involvement in student organizations and activities. This year's recipients are Adam Biederwolf, Nieajua Gonzalez, Kianna Holian, Madalyn Lucas, Sonia Ramirez, Stefani Strong, and Xavier Vallejo. Congratulations to these seven remarkable Lobos!

### **Help Those on the Front Lines of the Pandemic with #LobosCareDay**

This Tuesday, May 5, is #GivingTuesdayNow, a global day of unity and giving, created to help those affected by the COVID-19 global pandemic. At The University of New Mexico, we'll be showing our support through our #LobosCareDay initiative, encouraging our Lobo community to support our health care providers, patients and students—and thanks to the generosity of the UNM Foundation Board of Trustees, every donation will be matched. Visit the [UNM Foundation's Lobos Help Lobos webpage](#) to learn more about the funds and to make a gift. Together we can accomplish amazing things and support our Lobos in need.

### **Rescheduled Staff Council 2020 Precinct Elections - Voting Starts Today**

At its April business meeting, the UNM Staff Council formally rescheduled the 2020 Precinct Elections, which had earlier been postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Because the Staff Council Constitution requires elections to be conducted during the Spring semester, the rescheduled elections begin today, Monday, May 4, and will end at 5 p.m. this Friday, May 8. Voting will be held online, and ballots will be emailed to eligible staff on Monday, May 4. Instructions for voting can be found in both English and Spanish.

Have a good week, and let's go Lobos!

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes  
President