



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



August 17, 2020

Good afternoon, Lobos.

Welcome to the Fall 2020 semester at UNM! Whether you are attending or teaching class in person or remotely, we have all become connected by the unexpected - by shared experiences and coming together to overcome obstacles. Just as we connect with friends, family, and colleagues, we've also succeeded in doing so in completely unforeseen ways as we find new, physically distant means to meet with and support each other. To paraphrase the Greek philosopher Heraclitus, the only constant in life is change. And, the changes we face today are some of the most transformative many of us have ever experienced in our lives.

As a member of our pack, you're officially part of more than 130 years of history and proud tradition, and a vital member of one of the most unique and diverse student bodies and campus communities in the world. And what a community it is. Since March, I've watched the way the entire UNM faculty and staff pulled together to support our students—being flexible, patient, and creative in coming up with new ways to advance our mission in an ever-changing, ever-challenging environment. That passion is personal, and I was never prouder of our UNM community than I was watching them work to ensure that, through it all, our research never stopped, our healthcare providers never wavered, and our students never stopped asking questions.

I was so happy to welcome our incoming Freshmen yesterday in the [Lobo Launch during the virtual Freshmen Day](#), and while I would have loved to see the Class of 2024 and their families in person at Popejoy Hall, getting to join them online was a special opportunity as well. The [Lobo Launch recording will remain on the UNM Facebook page](#), so anyone who missed the live broadcast can still enjoy the video. While it was an event specifically for Freshmen, I think it's something everyone can enjoy. Thank you to all who helped throughout the day to welcome our newest Lobos.

I also encourage everyone to watch the [video of the proud families of UNM Freshmen](#). This touching video with messages from moms, dads, brothers, sisters, and many others was truly heartwarming, in a time when I think everyone could use some words of encouragement. Every student here should be proud of what you've done to get to UNM and everything you've accomplished since you started your college journey.

As we look to the long term, UNM, like other institutions in our society, is learning how to live and operate effectively in the face of a global pandemic. More than ever, we remain committed to our mission—and to you. You're the future of the university, writing new chapters of our history, and creating the new traditions we warmly embrace. We want and expect our faculty, staff, and students to succeed, and as we move forward into this most unusual semester, we're here to support each other in achieving that mutual success.

Our students have risen to the unprecedented challenges of this pandemic with grit and determination, and no small amount of patience. You've been remarkably flexible in adapting to new modes of teaching and

learning, and you've inspired us with your determination. We appreciate you bearing with us as we worked to responsibly "[Bring Back the Pack](#)" and implement hybrid instruction as part of our overall plan to keep everyone healthy and safe. But we also know that even as we've tried to make your return to campus—or your campus debut—as smooth as possible, you may still need some help navigating the new normal.

Students who need assistance with the mechanics of the hybrid schedule can find [information and assistance readily available from the Registrar](#). We're also making assistance available on Monday and Tuesday with our [virtual AskMe sessions](#) and kiosks, where students will have the opportunity to have their questions about scheduling, registration, financial aid—and just about anything else—answered in real time, by real members of the UNM community. We've also created a dynamic new "Student Guide" tab available on [MyUNM](#), to serve as an online one-stop in support of student success. The tab connects students to advisors, registration, UNM Learn, computing resources, COVID-19 response information, technology resources and more. We also regularly provide information on UNM's social media sites, so be sure to follow UNM on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#).

Your health and safety, too, are as critical to us as your academic success. When you're on campus, please remember to wear your masks, wash your hands, follow all the appropriate signage and floor markings, and maintain physical distancing. While I can't call what we're going through ideal, I'm certainly glad we're going through it together—but if there are times when it seems too much, or you just need someone to talk to, [services are available to students through Student Health and Counseling \(SHAC\)](#), while faculty and staff may call on [Counseling, Assistance & Referral Services \(CARS\)](#). Stay safe and healthy, Lobos.

But even as you're practicing physical distancing, please stay connected, stay involved, and stay engaged! Even reduced to the size of Zoom windows, we're all part of a campus community, and there are still countless student groups and organizations you can join and participate in from the convenience of your laptop, no matter where you might be. [Check in with our Student Activities Center](#) for plenty of opportunities to engage with your fellow Lobos.

As we all adjust to a different kind of campus life, we at UNM have never stopped doing what we do best: conducting top-tier research, delivering compassionate and cutting-edge health care and services, and providing a diverse student population with access to a great education and dedicated faculty and staff members. That never changes, nor does the boundless curiosity, engagement, and enthusiasm of our remarkable students. We're glad you're here, and we're proud that you're part of the Lobo Pack.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President