



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



February 15, 2021

Good evening, Lobos -

Our long-standing tradition of celebrating a week in February with ‘random acts of kindness’ has, like so many other traditions, been altered by the pandemic. But we’re standing firm in our commitment to caring for each other; we need it now, more than ever. This week, February 15th through the 19th, is BeKind UNM Week. [All week long](#), we’ll be holding virtual events to encourage and inspire acts of kindness, from online games of BINGO to donations to our Lobo Food Pantry. Take some time to reach out and let someone know how much you appreciate them—and be kind to yourself, too. You deserve it.

I know there will also be questions about traveling during Spring Break, March 14th through March 21st, and whether New Mexicans who leave the state will be required to quarantine for a certain amount of time on their return. As of February 14th, the State of New Mexico is *recommending*, though *not requiring*, a 14-day quarantine. However, that policy could change, depending on conditions in the state, so please keep checking the [Public Health and Executive Orders issued by the New Mexico Department of Health](#) for the latest policies, as well as our own [Bringing Back the Pack](#) website, where we make information available as soon as we have it.

For those wanting to travel, you don’t need to go very far from home—the Land of Enchantment is the perfect playground, with many local adventures being just a car-ride away. You can get great ideas from our students who curate [The Lobo Life](#), the [New Mexico Department of Tourism](#) and [Visit Albuquerque](#). Just be sure to look for COVID-safe options, including checking for current levels of operation.

In the meantime, The University of New Mexico remains [open and accessible](#), though many restrictions remain in place to protect the health and safety of our community. As of today, UNM dining will be open at 25% capacity. UNM Libraries are open, but please [check the hours of access](#), and maintain all health and safety protocols. Meanwhile, the UNM Bookstores are open, though operating on [reduced hours, at a reduced capacity, and with all safety protocols in place](#). Johnson Center, too, has reopened, but [limited hours](#) and [requires reservations](#). And remember: masks continue to be required at all times.

Our state is continuing to make progress in the fight against COVID—but with new strains and nearly 3,500 of our fellow New Mexicans lost to the virus, we owe it to them, ourselves, and our communities to remain vigilant. I appreciate everything you’re doing to keep yourself and others safe and healthy.

Lobo Day 2021 Celebrates YOU

[February 28th is officially Lobo Day 2021](#)—celebrating that moment 132 years ago when, with the stroke of a pen, The University of New Mexico was founded on a quiet Albuquerque mesa just east of the Rio Grande. While we would normally be gathering in person to celebrate our shared history and Lobo pride at a variety of events, the pandemic has, predictably, meant a change in plans. This year, Lobo Day is all about

you. Instead of meeting in the SUB for the annual birthday photo, we're asking Lobos to [submit a selfie, dressed in your best Lobo gear and Lobo colors](#), which we'll use as a birthday mosaic to mark one of the most unusual birthdays in UNM history. The deadline to submit your photo is Wednesday, February 24 at midnight—and you'll be automatically entered into a drawing to receive some Lobo birthday surprises.

Anderson School of Management Makes Executive MBA More Accessible

An exciting change is afoot at the Anderson School of Management as [the Executive MBA Program moves to a hybrid format](#) and adds a location in Northern New Mexico. The new format and expanded location, which take effect beginning in June 2021, make our program more accessible to more students. The hybrid format consists of online coursework and in-person classes once or twice a month, providing more flexibility and convenience for MBA students. I'm delighted we're expanding our outreach to make this exceptional program even more widely available.

New Mexico Legislative Session Update: Recommendations Advance

As we reach the mid-point of this 60-day legislative session, I would like to take the opportunity to thank our legislative committees for their deliberative approach to the challenges we have faced in higher education. This past Saturday, the House Appropriations and Finance Committee (HAFC) heard presentations on the state of higher education in New Mexico, and recommended: full restoration of the federal funding swap; a half percent (.5%) increase to Instruction & General (I&G); and a one-and-a-half percent (1.5%) compensation increase for faculty and staff.

I appreciate the leadership of HAFC Chairwoman Patty Lundstrom, the Legislative Finance Committee, and Higher Education Secretary Stephanie Rodriguez, as well the many staff members that have provided detailed analyses and input. I feel optimistic, and we look forward to our continued work with them, as well as with Senate Finance Chairman George Muñoz and his committee, and also the New Mexico Council of University Presidents (CUP) as we continue to advocate for our institutional priorities over the next month.

Finally, I would also like to recognize ASUNM leadership, who collaborated with their peers at NMSU and NM Tech to author an [op-ed in yesterday's Albuquerque Journal](#) outlining their support of funding for the Legislative Lottery Scholarship and expansion of the Opportunity Scholarship for four-year students. Their participation in the legislative process is an important reflection of how we prepare our students to be global citizens.

Stay safe, stay healthy, and let's go, Lobos!

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President