



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



April 26, 2021

Good afternoon, Lobos -

I know that the days since the verdict in the Minneapolis trial of Derek Chauvin have continued to be mentally and emotionally draining. The just and correct outcome of the trial is only the beginning of a longer and tougher reckoning as a nation with issues of equality and social and racial justice.

As Lobos, we find both strength and solace in supporting each other, circling our pack to take care of those who are hurting, and recognizing that sometimes, the best thing to do is to simply listen to each other. Last Thursday evening, our Division for Equity and Inclusion and their partners hosted a webinar, "Justice on Trial, The Verdict and Its Aftermath: A Space for Reflection," to offer members of our community a space to share concerns and experiences. I am encouraged by the empathy and understanding I heard that night; genuine healing begins by opening our hearts to each other. It also starts by inviting others, and allowing ourselves, to be uncomfortable in order to grow.

I hope we will all continue to be open, understanding, and supportive as the conversation, and the healing continues in our community and across the nation. Keep reaching out and keep talking with each other. And as always, if you or someone you know needs additional support, [UNM offers a variety of services](#) to help you take care of your mental health and well-being.

Join the Discussion for UNM 2040

Even as our path as a university was fundamentally altered and challenged by the global pandemic, I have never lost my optimism about our future as The University for New Mexico. Watching as our faculty, staff, and students created more thoughtful and more innovative ways of solving problems, adapting to change, and advancing our mission has me both excited and confident about the direction of UNM. As we continue the process of developing our vision of what UNM will look like by 2040, I hope you'll take the opportunity to join us in our virtual conversations about the vision, values, and goals of [UNM 2040: Opportunity Defined. Registration for our May 7 launch](#) is now open, and we will also be holding focus groups for [students, faculty and staff](#). If you can't make it, not to worry; we'll be offering plenty of opportunities to make your voice heard between now and February 2022.

Distinguished Professor Elected to American Academy of Arts and Sciences

Excellence is more than just success in the classroom; it's a way of life that informs all of our actions. It's an ideal our Founders aspired to as well--which is why, in 1780, John Adams, John Hancock, and others who helped create a new republic also founded [The American Academy of Arts & Sciences](#) to honor exceptionally accomplished individuals and engage them in advancing the public good. It is very much my privilege, then, to congratulate [Jane Lancaster, Distinguished Professor Emerita of Anthropology, for her election to the prestigious Academy](#). Dr. Lancaster is one of only 252 outstanding individuals elected nationally in

2021—and one of only a little more than 13,500 elected since 1780--and joins other eminent anthropologists at the academy, including the late Mary Douglas Leakey and Margaret Mead. Congratulations again to Dr. Lancaster; the entire Lobo community celebrates this amazing achievement.

Athletics Shines Through a Challenging Season

Even as health and safety-related protocols related to the pandemic meant significantly altering the way most of our teams competed, UNM's athletes have remained upbeat, competitive, and continue to succeed both on the field and in the classroom. This year, we've seen Lobos clinch five Mountain West championships, celebrating titles in [women's cross country, which won the title for the thirteenth year in a row](#), [women's soccer](#), [women's basketball](#), [women's golf, which won a conference-record ninth championship](#), and [men's tennis, which clinched its second-straight title with a win over Air Force this weekend](#).

Off the field, our athletes are recording some of the highest GPAs in school history, with a cumulative GPA of 3.34 for all athletics in Fall 2020, and the 25th straight semester—going all the way back to 2008—that our athletes have turned in a GPA of 3.0 or higher. In fact, our women's tennis team turned in the highest GPA by any program in the history of Lobo Athletics with a 4.03 GPA, while our baseball players recorded a 3.32, tying for the best GPA in program history—and all during a pandemic. I'm obviously proud of their commitment as student-athletes; I've also had the opportunity to watch many of our teams play this year, and I'm always impressed by their tenacity and team spirit—two hallmarks of the Lobo way of life.

As always, please be sure you are [registered](#) and ready to receive your vaccination. We also encourage you to [report your vaccination status](#) through LoboCheckIn. This will help give us a better sense of the level of immunity in our community and will inform our decisions regarding in-person classes and activities into the summer and fall. Please also continue to wear your masks, maintain a safe physical distance, follow all signage, and wash your hands. While our state has proven itself a model for distributing and administering the COVID-19 vaccine, there's still work to do to continue to keep us all safe.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President