



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



May 24, 2021

Good afternoon, Lobos –

We're two weeks away from the start of the Summer 2021 semester, which runs from June 7 through July 31, and our beautiful campuses are really beginning to show their warm-weather colors. Whether you're in Albuquerque or at one of our branches in [Gallup](#), [Los Alamos](#), [Taos](#), or [Valencia](#), I hope you'll take some time over the next few weeks to explore our exceptional campus landscapes, as well as our remarkable surrounding communities.

Even better, if you're fully vaccinated, you can move about on our campuses largely unmasked—though please, as always, [continue to follow all guidance on health and safety protocols](#) and comply with all signage on where masks may still be required. This is especially critical in many of our mixed-use areas in UNM Health Sciences Center facilities, where spaces may be integrated with patient care areas. And if you are not yet vaccinated, please continue to wear a mask in all common areas, whether indoors or outside.

As we did last year, we will be conducting our Summer 2021 semester entirely online. While our state is doing a remarkable job responding to the pandemic and striving to see that all New Mexicans are fully vaccinated as quickly as possible, we're maintaining remote instruction to ensure we continue to keep our pack protected as the work continues to get our campus communities as close to fully vaccinated as we can.

We are also using the next few months to prepare our campus, our classrooms, and our facilities for a return to full in-person instruction when the Fall 2021 semester begins in mid-August. We will still likely be operating with some health protocols in place, but we'll keep you updated on [what our expectations are](#) as we get closer to the first day of classes on August 23. While we have not yet determined the extent to which vaccinations will be required this autumn for faculty, staff, and students, we have developed [draft guidance](#) for [your comment](#). We're delighted to return to campus after more than a year away and want to make certain your own return experience is as exciting, and as safe, as we can possibly make it.

In the meantime, as we begin to transition back to some sense of normalcy, I want to encourage you to continue to take care of yourselves, and each other. Go outside—I know I don't have to convince any of you that we in New Mexico have some of the best weather anywhere—and if you've got annual leave you've been holding off on using because of the pandemic, start thinking about taking that well-deserved vacation, especially if [you have accrued more than 252 hours](#).

Lobo Alumni on the Move

It's always exciting—and gratifying—to see the various paths to success our Lobo alums are blazing as they build upon the foundation of achievement and leadership forged here at The University of New Mexico. I was thrilled to see [Lobo alum Graciela Ruiz on the recent Forbes 30 Under 30 for Games](#), where she and her fellow honorees were celebrated for [“leading a technological and artistic revolution.”](#) Ruiz graduated

with an Interdisciplinary Film & Digital Media (IFDM) degree, now Film & Digital Arts (F&DA) at UNM. She was in the 2nd cohort—one of our early graduates from the program—and is now working as an associate producer at Google, where she helped publish exclusive content for Stadia, the game streaming platform. I am also proud of and excited for 2018 Lobo graduate [Rana Chan, who recently accepted a job at National Public Radio](#) headquarters in Washington D.C. as a Digital Media Planning Associate. Chan graduated summa cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa, earning double degrees in Honors Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts and in Applied Mathematics. How inspiring it is to hear the ways our alumni are making their dreams come true and changing the world!

Branch Campuses Embody Leadership, Excellence, Innovation

Excellence is more than an objective; it's the Lobo state of mind. Whether in the mountains of Taos or the wide-open spaces of Valencia, UNM and its faculty, staff, and students continue to embody achievement and enrich their communities and the world around them; we can be proud of our reach and our impact around the state. In Taos, for example, an innovative collaboration between UNM-Taos, [UNM-Taos HIVE](#), [Not Forgotten Outreach, Inc.](#) and the Taos County Economic Development Corporation recently received [\\$500,000 from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for their workforce training certificate program](#) that supports the local food and small-scale farming economy in Taos. This is an exciting investment in the community and our state that will pay dividends in the future, and it is [one of several forward-thinking initiatives](#) to come out of UNM-Taos just this year.

At UNM-Valencia, [Chancellor Alice Letteney recently participated as panelist for the national La Academia de Liderazgo's seminar](#), "Overview of a President's Role in Advocacy & How do Institutions of Higher Education Make Their Best Case to Policy Makers?" This seminar was supported by the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and is intended to help guide the next generation of culturally diverse leaders for executive and senior-level positions in higher education, something Chancellor Letteney knows plenty about.

Meanwhile, in Los Alamos, our students continue to impress with their commitment to academic excellence, particularly in science and technology-related fields that are so vital to the economy of the region. I'm particularly inspired by the story of [UNM-Los Alamos student Althea Denlinger, who was recently named as the recipient of the Danny Nichols Memorial Scholarship](#) presented by [N3B](#). Denlinger, who enrolled in the [UNM-LA Associate of Science in Computer Science program](#) after earning her GED in 2019, was selected to receive the \$8,000 award to put toward her educational career. She also participated in the annual Waste Management Symposia International Conference, as part of the scholarship program, where she gained a better understanding of the cleanup industry and discussed safe and environmentally responsible ways to manage global radioactive waste. Congratulations to this remarkable Lobo.

As always, please [make sure you're registered](#) and ready to receive your vaccination, and please consider reporting your vaccination status through LoboCheckIn. This gives us a good sense of the real-time level of immunity in our community, which helps with our ongoing planning for in-person scheduling and activities throughout the summer and into fall. Please refer to [The Pack is Back: A Safe Return to Campus](#) for the latest information on health and safety protocols, building access, research guidelines, and more.

This will be the last Monday message until the summer session begins on June 7. Next Monday, May 31, is Memorial Day and as we enjoy the long weekend, I hope we will all take a moment to reflect on, commemorate, and express our gratitude for those men and women who have given their lives in service to our nation. Let us always remember the sacrifices, patriotism, and courage of our fallen soldiers, their families and their friends. We honor those who have served and those who continue to serve, in the name of our country, our freedom, and our liberty.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes

President