



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



October 18, 2021

Good afternoon, Lobos –

Welcome back from what I hope was a safe and relaxing Fall Break, and I hope you're refreshed and ready to take on the rest of the semester. As we make our way toward November and December and your obligations intensify, I hope you'll keep making time to take care of yourself—and to check in on your fellow Lobos as well.

And since we're on the subject, I'd like to take a moment to say thank you to everyone in the Lobo community for doing your part to comply with our vaccination requirement. Across our campuses, 92 percent of students, 98 percent of faculty, and 97 percent of staff are either fully or partially vaccinated or have obtained an approved exemption and are abiding by the regular COVID testing. Your care and commitment to the health and safety of our pack makes it possible for us to continue to safely provide face-to-face instruction, enjoy each other's company, and celebrate events in person. I truly appreciate your doing your part.

I am also thankful to our vaccine verification team, who checked and double-checked the documentation submitted through our website and answered the countless questions that arrived by e-mail daily. I am also grateful to our team at HSC for providing a free and convenient COVID vaccination clinic on campus—it was terrific to see so many of you lined up in the SUB for your shot—and for helping us ensure our policies and practices were rooted in the best available science.

As always, we'll continue to monitor state, local, and national trends for COVID and will continue to make the safety of our campus and community our top priority. Our [UNM COVID dashboard](#) is updated regularly to reflect our vaccination rates as well as any reported cases on campus—a number, I'm relieved to say, that has remained low—and we're continuing to work to make sure 100 percent of the Lobo community has reported their vaccination status.

Thanks to all of you, our pack is truly back. And I'm looking forward to completing a successful and healthy Fall semester together.

New Student Enrollment Numbers Trend Upwards

Even as colleges and universities across the nation continue to see declining enrollments of new students in the face of COVID-related challenges, [first-year student enrollment at The University of New Mexico increased by 10 percent for Fall 2021, while new graduate student enrollment is up 19 percent](#). Just as encouraging, enrollment of new Native, Hispanic, and African American first-year students also continued to increase—a promising trend that reflects the diverse culture and history of our university and our state. As we emerge from a global pandemic, I truly appreciate the fantastic work our faculty and staff have done to

ensure our Lobo students continue to have access to a great education and the tools they need to succeed in the classroom and beyond, even as we acknowledge we have some work ahead of us to encourage our students who chose not to return this fall to get back on the path to their degrees.

PAIS Achieves LEED Gold Certification

I was thrilled to learn that our state-of-the-art Physics & Astronomy and Interdisciplinary Science (PAIS) building was recently awarded a prestigious [Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design \(LEED\) Gold certification by the U.S. Green Building Council](#). The internationally recognized [LEED credential](#) denotes proficiency in sustainable design, construction and operations standards, and indicates that a building is more energy and resource-efficient--and is, therefore, less stressful on the environment. If you've seen our PAIS building, you already know it's extraordinary; I'm pleased to see it honored with this distinguished recognition, which exceeds the state-required LEED Silver standard for new construction. PAIS is one of nearly 30 UNM facilities with a LEED certification and is [among our 18 buildings with a LEED Gold certification or higher](#).

UNM Charts Across Several Hispanic Outlook on Education Rankings

[Hispanic Outlook on Education Magazine](#) recently named its Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics, and I am pleased that [The University of New Mexico has been recognized in several categories](#)--including our ranking in the Top 10 for Architecture and related service degrees. The magazine annually reports on the significant growth of Hispanics in higher education, using U.S. Department of Education data to chart the national progress of Hispanics in higher education and to recognize the institutions that are meeting their needs. I am proud of the work we do at UNM as a Hispanic Serving Institution and that we have had such success cultivating a culture of diversity in which all our students thrive.

Salsa Showdown Winner Announced

Naming a winner in the annual Salsa Showdown is always a challenge, but worth it for a chance to try the incredible variety of salsas submitted each year. This year's Salsa Showdown--the kick-off event for the annual [UNM Gives United Way campaign](#)--asked Lobos to taste and rank six different recipes and vote on their favorite. This year's winner--and the recipient of one year of free parking, courtesy of PATS--was [Gary Bednorz, who submitted Salsa No. 1](#). Tied for second were Jim Williams (Salsa No. 5) and Amber Fitzgerald (Salsa No. 6). Congratulations to the winner, and all our contestants, for their amazing salsas. The UNM Gives campaign continues for faculty and staff through November 30--and the departments on main campus and HSC with the most noticeable levels of giving will receive pizzas delivered personally by me and Dr. Doug Ziedonis, Executive Vice President of the Health Sciences Center. Health protocols permitting, of course.

10 Digit Dialing Begins Sunday

Say hello to the 505. Ten-digit local dialing, which will require you to dial the 505 area code on campus phones for all local calls, begins on Sunday, October 24. [More information is available at FastInfo7885](#), including detailed information on updating equipment programmed to complete 7-digit dialing, updating auto attendant options and speed dials, and effectively transitioning to 10-digit local dialing. The new local dialing requirement is to accommodate the implementation of the new 988 National Suicide Prevention and

Mental Health Crisis Lifeline. The few seconds it takes to dial the area code could help save someone's life.

Please remember The University of New Mexico presently requires all students, faculty, staff, and visitors to wear masks at all times in UNM buildings, unless they are eating, drinking, or in an office alone. Please help us continue good public health practices (handwashing; staying home when ill; physical distancing, when possible; mask-wearing, etc.) so we all stay safe and healthy. As always, I appreciate your continued care and diligence in looking out for yourselves and our pack.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President