



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



March 8, 2021

Good afternoon, Lobos.

Spring Break is nearly upon us—and with it the realization that it's time to begin thinking about the coming Fall 2021 semester. With millions of doses of COVID vaccines beginning to be administered at sites across the nation—including The Pit—I am guardedly optimistic that we will be able to begin to return to an instruction model that more closely resembles a traditional schedule by autumn.

I am pleased, then, that in order to allow faculty to plan for their Fall 2021 class offerings--and to give students time to carefully consider their options when the course schedule opens next month--Academic Affairs is working on plans to offer a greater face-to-face UNM experience beginning in the Fall 2021 semester.

This will, of course, depend on state health orders and might include continued precautions such as mask wearing, symptom checking, and facility disinfection. We will remain adaptable and if we must shift to a different format to ensure health and safety, we will. Decisions impacting staff returning to campus, allowing visitors, and event planning will be carefully considered and communicated in a comprehensive and timely manner over the coming months.

I appreciate your continued patience and understanding through all of this. As we approach Spring Break, it has been nearly a year since we and most of the world were turned upside down, and I know it has been a year of challenges and, at times, disappointments. We're closing in on a return to something close to normal--but getting there also requires us all to remain conscientious about taking care of ourselves and each other.

Please stay safe over Spring Break – and I again encourage all of you to take advantage of the exceptional recreational opportunities our state has to offer during the week.

DEI Wants Your Views on Racial and Intersectional Microaggressions

At UNM, we are continuing our commitment to make our campus welcoming and free of any form of discrimination or violence. You should receive in your inbox sometime today an invitation from the Division of Equity and Inclusion (DEI) to complete a 10- to 20-minute online survey on Racial and Intersectional Microaggressions (RIMA). [I encourage you complete the survey](#), which will ask you to indicate places on campus that make you feel uncomfortable or unsafe. The more Lobos who answer these questions, the better we can do in designing interventions to improve our campus climate. DEI is also planning to hold workshops concerning microaggressions this fall.

Netflix Expansion Offers Opportunities for Lobo Film Students

For the third year in a row, Moviemaker has ranked Albuquerque as “the best city to live and work as a filmmaker,” due in no small part to the success of shows like Better Call Saul and the perpetual presence of Netflix, which plans to expand its investment at ABQ Studios by nearly \$1 billion. Their involvement is [great news for students in UNM's Film & Digital Arts \(F&DA\) department](#), many of whom have had the opportunity to work on Netflix productions. [As part of its Mentor Series](#), celebrating 30 years of UNM's film program,

F&DA will soon be hosting an event in which our students will have the opportunity to hear from and speak with Netflix alumni about opportunities in the film industry.

VP for Student Affairs Cheo Torres Announces Retirement

One of our campus's most familiar faces, Professor Eliseo "Cheo" Torres, recently announced that he will retire from UNM, effective August 1. Torres has served as our Vice President for Student Affairs for 25 years, where he has had an enormous impact on ensuring the Lobo student experience is a positive and formative one. While I'm sad to see him go, I'm pleased he will still be teaching his popular course on curanderismo—the ancient art of Mexican healing—which he has taught since 2000. Cheo is a genuine 'institution' at our institution, and I know the entire Lobo community joins me in wishing him a long and happy retirement.

UCAM Team Receives National and International Accolades

The University Communication and Marketing (UCAM) team was recently honored by two professional organizations for outstanding creative work showcasing The University of New Mexico. UCAM received two District IV Accolades from the Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE), recognizing the best communications and outreach from educational institutions. Our team also received three awards at this year's AVA Digital Awards, an international competition that recognizes excellence by creative professionals responsible for the planning, concept, direction, design, and production of digital communication. Congratulations to UCAM for their creativity and commitment to showcasing the University for New Mexico.

UNM Celebrates 132 Years of Tradition and Excellence

The University of New Mexico celebrated its birthday at the end of February, marking 132 years along our flagship journey from a lone building on an empty mesa just east of the Rio Grande to five campuses across the state and New Mexico's only academic health center. Although current safety protocols meant we couldn't celebrate Lobo Day by gathering in the SUB for a birthday photo and cake as we usually do, we asked for Lobos everywhere to submit selfies for a birthday collage—and hundreds responded. [This year's Lobo Day photo](#) is a reminder that we don't have to be in the same room to celebrate Lobo pride—it's our sense of belonging to the Lobo family that truly brings us all together. Happy 132nd birthday, Lobos.

As always, I'd like to ask that you please make sure you've [registered with the New Mexico Department of Health to receive the COVID-19 vaccine](#) when it becomes available. In the meantime, please remain diligent about wearing your mask, washing your hands, and maintaining a safe, physical distance from others.

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President