



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE



February 21, 2022

Good afternoon, Lobos --

Last week, Governor Lujan Grisham announced that the New Mexico Department of Health has [modified its health order regarding our state's mask mandate](#) for indoor spaces. The modified health order indicates that our COVID cases are in decline, and the overall trends across the state are generally positive, which is certainly good news.

Along with the modified mandate, the New Mexico Higher Education Department has advised colleges and universities that they may make independent decisions about COVID-19 safe practices.

The University of New Mexico continues to safeguard the health and well-being of our communities, through thoughtful and data-informed decision-making, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We know that COVID is still putting significant stress on our health care professionals at UNM Hospital and other facilities and still affecting members of our community. Therefore, The University of New Mexico's leadership team is reviewing the revised mandate and consulting with our public health and infectious disease experts before making any appropriate adjustments in our own COVID-related policies.

Because returning to and maintaining an in-person learning experience at UNM continues to be a priority, [UNM's indoor mask mandate will remain in place](#), pending our review. Masks remain available to those who need them when they are on campus. What this means for the moment is that **masks will still be required inside UNM facilities**, unless eating, drinking, or in an office alone.

Similarly, large university entertainment venues will also be conducting a review and may be permitted to adjust their policies accordingly. Popejoy Hall has determined that it will continue to require masks and proof of vaccination for admittance to events. University Arena will encourage, though will not require, masks for men's and women's basketball games, and proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test will still be required for admittance to events.

Further updates will be provided to the campus community by UNM leadership. As always, thank you for doing your part to protect the pack.

Get Ready to Celebrate 133 Years!

[February 28th is officially Lobo Day 2022](#)—celebrating that moment 133 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. For the first time since 2020, we're able to celebrate our birthday in person, though in a new location. This year's celebration will be outdoors, on Cornell Mall just east of the SUB, on Monday, February 28, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. With the help of ASUNM Lobo Spirit and the Student Activities Center, there will plenty of activities and giveaways to celebrate the occasion, including free candy, a photo booth, and live entertainment. Free

shirts will be given to the first 133 students to arrive—but if you're not among the lucky 133, shirts are also for sale at the UNM Bookstore. We'll also be taking a birthday photo –again, for the first time since 2020--so remember to proudly wear your Lobo red and smile!

Traveling Office Hours Resuming

With our increasing ability to return to in person events, I am delighted to be able to resume holding regular traveling office hours, which is my opportunity to talk about The University of New Mexico with those who understand it best: you. Open office hours provide me with the privilege of coming directly to you to learn more about your concerns and aspirations for our university, and I'm always inspired by the enthusiasm for a meaningful conversation about life as Lobos. Traveling office hours are on Wednesdays from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., and if you'd like to invite me to come visit your department, just [sign up and ask](#). I look forward to our conversation.

Lobo Student Among Truman Scholarship Finalists

I was delighted to learn that one of our Lobo students in the Honors College, [Abrianna Morales, has been selected as a finalist for the 2022 Truman Scholarship](#)—the fourth consecutive year we've had a Lobo on the list of esteemed finalists. Presented annually by the Truman Foundation to honor the 33rd President of the United States, the [Truman Scholarship](#) is awarded to students who plan to attend graduate school to prepare for careers in public service. Morales—who is also a McNair Scholar—is a psychology and criminology student, and founder of an advocacy group devoted to supporting, empowering and connecting youth sexual assault survivors. She'll be interviewed by the Truman Foundation later this Spring, and I know the entire UNM community joins me in wishing her well.

Teacher Residency Partnership Wins National Award

As The University for New Mexico, dedicated to improving the lives of citizens across our state, we never take for granted that great minds are our state's most valuable commodity—and that our best tools for cultivating those minds are great teachers. That's why, since 2017, our College of Education & Human Sciences has partnered with Albuquerque Public Schools and the Albuquerque Teachers Federation to create a residency pathway, the [Albuquerque Teacher Residency Partnership](#) (ATRP), to improve the preparation and retention of effective, diverse teachers for high-need schools. Last week, [the ATRP received the Billy G. Dixon Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award](#) from the [Association of Teacher Educators](#) at its annual meeting in Chicago—continuing testimony to the efficacy of this creative, compassionate, and culturally-aware program. My congratulations to everyone involved.

UNM Law Ranked Best School for Native Americans

I am delighted, though not at all surprised, to learn that our [nationally-ranked School of Law](#) has earned another nice accolade, this time from *preLaw magazine*, which ranked our law school Number 1 as the “Best School for Native Americans,” earning an A+ rating across all ranking criteria. UNM Law was also ranked at Number 2 on the “Best School for Hispanics” list, also with A+ ratings across ranking criteria. You'll find these rankings, as well as more information on our Border Justice Initiative, which was among the “25 of the most innovative initiatives at law schools,” and a nice piece on our law school's chapter of the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, in the [Winter 2022 issue of preLaw](#). Congratulations—and well done.

And finally, I hope you'll join me later this week for my annual State of the University address, which, for the

continued health and safety of the community, will be virtual. The State of the University is scheduled for noon on Thursday, February 24, and will be broadcast at that time on UNM's [YouTube](#) and [Facebook](#) pages, and will also stream on [my website](#).

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

Regards,

Garnett S. Stokes
President