



The Acting Provost's Weekly Brief

April 26, 2017

Good afternoon! We are quickly approaching the end of semester, the time of year for celebration and recognition of the outstanding accomplishments of students, faculty, and staff. It is important to recognize this work as it is the basis for furthering our research, education and service mission. In today's Weekly Report, I highlight two of these activities: the Annual Research Lecturer Award, and the Presidential Scholarship Program Banquet. Along these lines, I encourage you to [nominate](#) deserving advisors for the "Excellence in Advising" and "Outstanding New Advisor" Awards. UNM's advisors play a critical role in the success of students. Further information regarding these awards and the nomination process can be found [here](#). I look forward to bringing you further information about recognitions and awards over the next few weeks.

Annual Research Lecture Award

Congratulations to Distinguished Professor Vince Calhoun on being the recipient of the UNM 62nd Annual Research Lecture Award! The award is the highest honor for research and creativity that the UNM faculty can bestow on a colleague.

Dr. Calhoun is currently Executive Science Officer and Director of Image Analysis and MR Research at the Mind Research Network and is a distinguished professor in the Departments of Electrical and Computer Engineering, Biology, Computer Science, Neurosciences, and Psychiatry at The University of New Mexico. He is the author of more than 500 peer-reviewed journal articles and over 550 technical reports, abstracts and conference proceedings. Much of his career has been spent on the development of data-driven approaches for the analysis of brain imaging data.

Dr. Calhoun's lecture was titled "Discovering Patterns of Promise for Unraveling the Mystery of the Human Brain in Health and Disease." His talk did an outstanding job of showing the exciting research paths the Mind Research Network is exploring in seeking to better understand the functioning of the brain in different tasks over time. The award was a well-deserved recognition of Dr. Calhoun's work in this area.

Presidential Scholarship Program Banquet

The annual Presidential Scholarship Program Banquet was held this past Thursday at the SUB. It brought together faculty, donors, and the student recipients of the scholarships. The entire ballroom space was


utilized for the dinner. It was encouraging to see the great turnout for the event—over 430 guests in total. The Presidential Scholarship is a huge benefit for the students. The award can make the difference in a student’s ability to attend UNM and complete their degree. Uniformly, the donors are happy and proud to support the program.



Adrian and Michelle Chavez with Presidential Scholars Brandon Currier, Celeste Nunez, and Jordyn Webb. (Credit: Cathy Bunch, UNM Foundation)

Academic Program Review

An interesting aspect of serving as acting provost has been learning more about internal program assessment. The [Academic Program Review](#) (APR) process is an important part of this work. The review consists of the following nine criteria: 1) Program Goals; 2) Teaching and Learning: Curriculum; 3) Teaching and Learning: Continuous Improvement; 4) Students (Undergraduate and Graduate); 5) Faculty; 6) Resources and Planning; 7) Facilities; 8) Program Comparisons; and 9) Future Directions. Those criteria are aligned with the criteria of the Higher Learning Commission, our regional accreditor, so



that the program review process feeds directly into the accreditation for the University. The review is performed by two to three external reviewers and a UNM reviewer from a different department. The APR process takes place on a ten-year cycle for each program.

During the spring semester, there have been four APRs: 1) Department of Mathematics and Statistics, 2) Department of Biology, 3) Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, and 4) Department of Spanish and Portuguese. The self-study documents and depth of analysis of the review teams are extremely impressive. The work concludes with a “debrief” session of the findings with the department members, dean, and provost office representatives. The findings have been balanced between recognizing the positive aspects of the programs and providing feedback on areas for attention. The process is taken very seriously and I am confident that the attention to these matters will help to keep these departments strong and support the assessment and improvement of the entire curriculum as we cycle through these reviews.

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A PDF version of this weekly brief is available on the [Academic Affairs website](#). Your feedback and input are welcome at provost@unm.edu.