

Academic Dispatch



Spring blossoms. Credit: Hyunju Blemel. University Communication and Marketing

April 2, 2021

Spring is here. The days are sunny, the trees are budding. While there is still a coat of white on the Sandia Crest, the weather is warming, and the air is filled with light and pollen. It's easy to feel optimistic about the future.

This is not to say the pandemic is done, and CDC warnings about a “fourth wave” and against travel yet abound. Cases have risen over 15% across the US over the last two weeks.

Yet vaccinations are available and the rate of the fully vaccinated is growing. In New Mexico, as of this writing, 29% of us are fully vaccinated. In fact, all New Mexicans who are 16 years of age or older will be eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine beginning April 5, 2021, and some of our younger students have already been called in for their first shot.

At the current rates of vaccination, there is good prospect that all adults in the US will be vaccinated by summer, or at least all those who wish it, will have been.

Owing to this overall direction, and mindful of the possibility of reversal, UNM is scheduling a largely in-person fall term. About 80% of courses in ABQ are scheduled as face-to-face classes, in contrast to this spring during which about 80% of courses are remote. With the expectation that the demands of public health continue to allow it, this will support us to create the in-person, socialized environment of learning and discovery that our students deserve and their learning demands. We are excited to get back in the classroom, the laboratory, the studio, and the equally important informal learning spaces that comprise the critical interstitials of our campus. Having this closer collaboration amongst our students, faculty, and staff will bring much life and joy to our campus.

Getting to this point will require continued discipline across our state and nation – wearing those masks, keeping distance – and it will require that a significant number of us get vaccinated. All of you [can register now](#), and I hope you will.

CARES Act Funding

In April of 2020 UNM distributed \$8.6M in funds allocated by the federal CARES act directly to students, and in March 2021 we distributed to students another \$9.7M in funds allocated by the federal Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund II (HEERF II), created under the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSAA). These funds went directly to students to help defray expenses such as food, housing, course materials, technology, health care, and child care. These funds are directed to students who have previously indicated and demonstrated financial need by completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) or state aid form. There will likely be additional funds available to students through the latest stimulus package from the federal government, so please do keep your financial aid information up to date. A FAFSA form link and instructions are available [here](#). Those not able or eligible to complete the FAFSA may complete the state aid form online or make an appointment with One Stop in UAEC by visiting the [One Stop website](#) to complete a paper version.

2021 Faculty Colloquium for Innovative Teaching

The [2021 Colloquium for Innovative Teaching: Post-Pandemic Pedagogy](#) will be held on Friday, April 16, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This year's colloquium focuses on how things we learned during the COVID-19 emergency may change how we teach after the emergency is over. Presentations will cover a variety of topics including: remote teaching discoveries to keep in a post-COVID environment, incorporating student research in undergraduate teaching, and anti-racist pedagogy. For more information, and to register, please visit the [event webpage](#).

Team Research Symposium Open for Registration

The [Team Research Symposium](#) will be held virtually from Tuesday, April 20 through Thursday, April 22. Our campus community will have the opportunity to select amongst 20 separate sessions devoted to bringing researchers together across disciplines. This free event will also feature keynote presentations by Michael O'Rourke, PhD, from the Michigan State University Center for Interdisciplinarity, as well as by our new Vice President for Research, Ellen R. Fisher, PhD. Registration is now open at the symposium's website: <https://ISCo-op.unm.edu/Teams>. For more information, please contact Tim Schroeder, Director of the STEM Collaborative Center, at timschroeder@unm.edu.

Racial and Intersectional Microaggressions (RIMA) Survey

The Division for Equity and Inclusion (DEI) launched the [Racial and Intersectional Microaggressions \(RIMA\) survey](#) on March 8. If you are a student and were selected for the stratified sample, you will have

received a link to the online survey. The first 500 students at Main or Branch campuses, and the first 500 HSC students who complete the survey will be offered a \$10 gift card. Here is how you can help: tell your friends about the RIMA survey, invite DEI to present to your student group or class, and if *you* receive a link: please fill out the survey! DEI will be holding workshops on microaggressions this fall. Watch for announcements on social media, in your email, or on the [DEI website](#).

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