



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

December 3, 2014

The Role & Reach of Academic Affairs: In my weekly posts I have tried to touch upon the many roles and initiatives in which the Office of Academic Affairs (also called the Office of the Provost) participates. In the current post, I would like to explain how the various activities fit together, and provide you with the overarching vision of the Office of Academic Affairs at UNM. This is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to lay some groundwork for a future communiqué regarding the strategic academic challenges and opportunities we now face.

Academic Affairs is responsible for all academic activities and personnel on UNM's main campus, and collaborates with the [Health Science Center](#) and the branch campuses on similar matters. These activities include overseeing curriculum design, [academic program reviews](#), the [accreditation](#) of the University through the [Higher Learning Commission](#) (HLC), and the accreditation of particular professional programs when appropriate. It is also responsible directly, or indirectly through a reporting division, for all student success initiatives, including enrollment management (through the [Enrollment Management Division](#)), advising (through [University Advisement](#) or one of the [Colleges](#)), first year initiatives ([Foundations of Excellence](#)), financial aid (through the [Enrollment Management Division](#) and other academic units), and [career services](#) (through the [Division of Student Affairs](#)).

Academic Affairs also implements the policies set forth in the [Faculty Handbook](#) regarding all faculty matters, including hiring, development, evaluation, and retention; all such activities are managed through the [Office of Faculty Affairs and Services](#) (formerly the Faculty Contracts and Services Office). It is also responsible for [Extended Learning](#) (the unit that delivers distance education) and [Continuing Education](#) (the unit that delivers adult and continuing education). Academic Affairs also oversees the [Global Education Office](#) (responsible for recruiting and assisting international students, delivering English as a Foreign Language, and managing international agreements) and the [Office of Institutional Analytics](#) (responsible for collecting and analyzing institutional data, and delivering reports to the State of New Mexico and the Federal Government). Last but certainly not least, the Office of Academic Affairs oversees the [Office of the Vice President for Research](#). In collaboration with that office and University faculty, Academic Affairs manages the crucial research enterprise of the UNM main campus, including its interaction with the [Science & Technology Corporation](#). All of these activities are conducted in collaboration with academic units (colleges and departments) mostly through the deans, as well as with the HSC (through the [Chancellor for Health Sciences](#) and his vice chancellors and appropriate offices).

What the Office of Academic Affairs does not directly lead (although it gets involved as a concerned and affected party) are initiatives focusing on athletics, physical infrastructure (building, land), information technology (IT) infrastructure, and all auxiliary services (the Bookstore, the Student Union Building, residence halls, the power plant, and so on).

With such expansive responsibilities, it is important to have a coordinated plan that focuses on the main mission of the office, namely to lead the academic priorities of the University. These include balancing access, affordability, and excellence while enhancing the undergraduate and graduate student experience. They were spelled out in the [University Council on Academic Priorities \(UCAP\)](#) report as the following goals: 1) Transform undergraduate and graduate education/research; 2) Create an environment that fosters quality and innovative service for all its constituents; 3) Nurture stable leadership; 4) Promote service learning and community and civic engagement; and 5) Embrace diversity.

The plan was incorporated into UNM 2020 and supported by the regents' decision to fund the academic priorities the last three years by providing new funding to hire new faculty members, more student advisers, and the establishment of various student success initiatives. The Academic Affairs office publishes a yearly report (see [here](#) for the 2012 and 2013 State of Academic Affairs reports). The first Provost's Communiqué of 2015 will outline where I see our strategic academic challenges and opportunities now, three years after the UCAP report.

To UNM Faculty: If you plan to order a textbook through UNM Bookstore next semester, please submit your book order now. Textbook buyback begins today. The Bookstore uses your orders to set used textbook prices, which helps to manage course material costs for our students. The order form can be found [here](#).

MLA Scaglione Prize: Carmen Nocentelli, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature at UNM, was awarded the Modern Language Association of America 22nd annual Aldo and Jeanne Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literary Studies. The award recognized her book “[Empires of Love: Europe, Asia, and the Making of Early Modern Identity](#).” The [prize](#) is awarded annually for an outstanding scholarly work written by a member of the association and that involves at least two literatures. Congratulations to Professor Nocentelli.

UNM Arts Indigenous Dome Project: is visiting Bayfront Park in Miami to present its experimental dome video project, featuring [Federico Meulas](#). More information can be found [here](#).

Chaouki Abdallah

Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

A PDF version of this communiqué is available at <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/communique-archive.html>. Your feedback and input are welcome at provost@unm.edu. Please also see the Provost’s Blog, which can be found here: <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>.