

## Redesigning the University<sup>1</sup>

**General Guidelines:** The Redesigning the University initiative has begun with the appointment of a chair and team of participants to each of six task forces. Each task force will rely on its collective expertise to identify external forces facing UNM and to generate recommendations intended to position UNM for financially sustainable academic success for the next 25 years. The task forces are described below, but there are general guidelines that apply to all. In conducting their work, task force members are encouraged to think broadly and creatively. Everything is on the table including existing operating assumptions and procedures, existing pedagogical assumptions and practices, existing academic structure and organization, and existing funding and budgeting models and processes. Recommendations should be data-driven and lead to assessable outcomes, embrace simplicity, be based in service blueprinting where relevant, and contribute to a positive staff and faculty work environment. Task forces are encouraged to collect and archive materials describing other institutions' efforts to respond to the challenges facing higher education, to organize brainstorming sessions, and to contact or bring to campus national leaders in higher education from outside the University.

The redesigning effort will be divided into two phases. In Phase 1, which runs through the spring '18 semester, task forces will collect information, conduct analyses, and submit their recommendations for change by June 1, 2018. In addition to final reports, all task forces will generate a one-page infographic that summarizes their findings and recommendations and to deposit these and all relevant background materials into a general Redesigning Initiative library. Phase 2, scheduled for the 2018-19 academic year, will involve the actual implementation of the task force recommendations and assessment of their effects and potential scalability. Subsequent phases and components of the Redesign Initiative will depend upon the outcomes of Phase 2.

### Phase 1 Task Forces

**Task Force 1: Changing demographics and needs of future learners and advances in the science of learning and pedagogy designed to meet those needs and enhance learning.**

The demographics, educational needs and learning preferences of future student populations are changing. In order to fulfill their educational mission and optimize the educational experiences of future students, universities will need to identify and proactively adapt to these changes. Critical components of that adaptation will be to identify and teach the skill sets (e.g., computational skills, communications skills, non-routine problem solving, self-management) and mindsets (e.g., adaptability, inclusiveness, persistence, flexibility, globalization, entrepreneurship) necessary to succeed in today's world. Task Force 1 should identify relevant advances in the science of learning and demonstrably effective new educational modalities,

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curriculum structures and learning assessment methods. This taskforce should also consider the enhanced learning opportunities afforded by undergraduate research experiences and interdisciplinary study programs as well as transitioning from a “learning as information retention” model to an educational model premised on deeper learning and focused on analytic thinking and accessing reliable information. That transition should incorporate advances in the neuroscience of adult learning, and alternative means of assessing learning and satisfying curriculum requirements. The purpose of this task force is to identify likely changes in the demographics and learning preferences of future UNM students and to propose modifications or additions to the University’s pedagogic practices designed to deliver transformative learning experiences that develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets necessary to succeed post graduation.

### **Task Force 2: Potential new populations and markets of students/learners and innovative programs to meet their needs**

In the future, UNM will likely see fewer “traditional” students and more “non-traditional” students. This will include increasing numbers of part-time students, students seeking additional education to enhance their occupational opportunities, students seeking specific types of educational certificates or credentials, students seeking advanced degrees on a part-time basis, and others. Task Force 2 should consider a variety of responses to these new populations, including but not limited to: expanding lower-cost, on-line degree programs, distance education programs, potential academic programs—such as the Navajo Language program—that are unique or particularly relevant to New Mexico or the Southwest, flexible semesters, expanding and formalizing the use of retirees and community experts as instructors, 4-day instead of 5-day course schedules, Veteran’s initiatives, specific programs for National Laboratory employees, and specific workforce development programs that reflect the strengths of a research university. The purpose of this task force is to identify potentially new populations or markets of students and to propose new curricula, unique and online degree programs, and other educational opportunities/programs to meet their needs.

### **Task Force 3: New funding scenarios/models, potential new partners and internal budgeting models and processes**

New Mexico’s economic problems have resulted in severe cutbacks in UNM’s level of state funding over the past several years. Although there have been recent signs of improvement in the state’s financial picture, the future of higher education funding is uncertain. Critical to future planning for the University are accurate analyses and predictions of the state’s economic situation and available funding for higher education. In addition, UNM’s internal budgeting processes should be examined to determine whether they are best suited to UNM’s mission, especially in a changing funding environment. In this regard, all aspects of UNM’s budget should be considered, including academic affairs, athletics, physical plant, etc. The purpose of

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this task force is to analyze the state's economic situation, identify likely future funding scenarios, identify alternative funding sources and potential new funding partners, review and, if warranted, propose alternative internal budgeting processes (e.g., more distributed financial governance across campus) to facilitate UNM's research and teaching mission.

**Task Force 4: Trends in higher education and best practices of peer institutions with respect to student services that align with UNM's strengths and mission.**

In response to changing demographics and future trends in higher education, it is critical that universities examine and adapt their approach to student services and educational practices. Task Force 4 should consider student outreach and recruitment, advising, course scheduling, methods of demonstrating academic competence and satisfying curricular requirements, optimal use of summer sessions, community internships, financial aid, campus environment, extracurricular activities, etc. Several universities have successfully adopted a service blueprinting or "customer's perspective" approach to student services in an effort to better align those services with student needs. The purpose of this task force is to review trends in higher education and best practices of our peer institutions with respect to student services and to propose recommendations within a service blueprinting model that best align with UNM's strengths and mission.

**Task Force 5: New and better ways of engaging UNM with the local community.**

Universities across the country are increasing their engagement with local communities to their mutual benefit. As the state's flagship University, UNM already plays a prominent role in the local community, but there is considerable potential benefit to enhancing that engagement in new and innovative ways. The purpose of this task force is to review the community engagement efforts of other universities and propose ways for UNM to improve and expand its community engagement.

**Task Force 6: Academic structure and organization.**

Like most universities, UNM is discipline-centric in that departments identified by academic discipline are the fundamental administrative units. While this defines the status quo, it creates both administrative and pedagogical redundancies that consume resources that might otherwise be used to advance UNM's teaching and research mission. Moreover, it detracts from efforts to move toward more interdisciplinarity in both research and teaching, which is a clear trend in higher education and research-funding institutions. Some universities, most notably Arizona State University, have successfully reduced administrative costs and facilitated interdisciplinary scholarship by combining departments into larger, thematically related schools and programs. The purpose of this task force is to explore, with a focus on UNM's unique opportunities and strengths, possible reorganization scenarios and to propose a process by which those with a high probability of success will be implemented and assessed.

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## Phase 2 Task Force description

### **1. Generation and implementation of experimental pilot projects.**

Subsequent to the completion of Phase 1, task forces will be appointed to evaluate the various Phase 1 proposals and design their implementation and assessment.

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