

THE ACTING PROVOST'S WEEKLY BRIEF

January 25, 2017

Welcome back to everyone as we start the spring semester! I look forward to working with you while serving as acting provost. There are many challenges and opportunities to be faced over the coming months. Already, it has been a pleasure working with the faculty and staff in the Academic Affairs office and meeting a broader group of individuals from across campus.

My plan is to continue Acting President Abdallah's practice of keeping you informed via these weekly communications. I will seek to identify some of the primary issues faced in Academic Affairs and provide my perspectives on those issues. Also, as you identify topics that could use further clarification or comment, please let me know and I will seek to address them in future reports.

Hope your semester is off to a great start!

Free Speech and a Respectful Campus

UNM must be a place in which we can freely debate difficult questions in a respectful, inclusive way. Free exchange of ideas is vital to our mission as a university. However, these times bring challenges to preserving a campus climate that fosters both free speech and respect for others. Unfortunately, some individuals use the freedom of speech we all hold dear, and the high level of protection it is therefore afforded, primarily as a means to provoke others and benefit themselves.

This week Milo Yiannopolis will visit UNM for a speaking event sponsored by the College Republicans student organization. This is not a UNM event, and Mr. Yiannopolis receives no UNM funds for his appearance. Just as Mr. Yiannopolis has the right to speak, protest is a protected right under the First Amendment and under our university policies. UNM will do all it can to ensure security for this event, and seek to uphold the principle of free speech and encourage respectful dialogue.

Whatever your views, all should be aware that as UNM faculty, students, and staff, we are bound by our respectful campus and free speech policies ([Policy 2220](#) and [Policy 2240](#)). Anyone attempting to disrupt or shut down a speaker, to verbally or physically attack protestors, or to silence or harass others, may face sanctions.

We also encourage you to check out the many programs and activities focused on current events and contemporary issues, scheduled in the coming weeks, which provide a wide array of information and debate, venues for discussion, tools for thinking, and opportunities for community-building. These are listed at diverse.unm.edu and on the news.unm.edu.

Budget Leadership Team

The Budget Leadership Team (BLT) process is in full effect, meeting as a committee every other week. In the off week, subcommittees are meeting to discuss specific topic areas. The scope of each subcommittee corresponds to a different component of the overall budget. The subcommittee topic areas are the following: 1) New revenue models, 2) Tuition/Fee modeling, 3) Cost allocation, 4) Long-term strategic planning, and 5) Branch campus tuition and fees.

The overall committee's goal is to provide innovative recommendations to the president. Of course, there are no silver bullets. The ultimate outcome will be a function of what is possible within state budget allocations, enrollments, and tuition levels.

The BLT committee this past week supported the recommendations of the Student Fee Review Board for further consideration in the budget development process. Other items on the agenda this week were an overview of potential "must fund" items—including insurance and utilities—and an overview of the status of legislative budget proposals.

Details regarding the membership of the budget leadership team, the budget development process, and a calendar of the development process can be found [here](#) (near the middle of the page on the left).

Farris Engineering Building Beam

Congratulations to the College of Engineering on the substantial progress made on the renovation of the Farris Engineering Building! This week the final beam was put in place completing this portion of the construction process. Attendees at the ceremony were encouraged to sign the beam, which will act as a type of time capsule. Below is a picture from the signing.



ASUNM "Two Sides to Every Story" Campaign

The Associated Students of the University of New Mexico (ASUNM) is working to raise awareness of homelessness among UNM students. As part of this campaign, ASUNM recently installed two posters in the student union building highlighting this issue. Here's a picture of one of the posters:

If you would like to learn more about this campaign there is a [great story](#) in the Albuquerque Journal that goes into much more detail.



2017 NM Legislative Session

I encourage you to stay up to date on legislative issues impacting UNM. The Office of Government Relations has a [sign-up list for email updates](#) and a [Bill Tracker](#), which includes updates on bills affecting the University.

Craig White

Acting Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

A PDF version of this Weekly Brief is available on the [Academic Affairs website](#). Your feedback and input are welcome at provost@unm.edu. Please also see the [Provost's Blog](#).