



# The Interim Provost's Weekly Brief

**October 27, 2017**

I recently attended the Fall Council of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), and enjoyed presentations and discussions on the future of finance. One of the broad themes of those discussions concerned the impact of technology on the economy. Advancements in artificial intelligence and automation have the potential to dramatically change the economy of the future. To get a sense of the scale of change, the [automation of trucking](#) alone could impact up to 3.5 million jobs.

For universities, it presents new questions and challenges about the best ways to prepare students to navigate the quickly shifting terrain (or [welcome our new robot overlords](#), as the case may be). While it may not be clear how extensive the changes will be—likely somewhere between the utopian and dystopian visions—we can begin thinking about the kinds of work that are most and least susceptible to automation. Some of the activities most likely to be automated in the near future are predictable and repeatable forms of physical work and manufacturing, data processing, and data collection. Less automatable work activities include analysis, leadership, customer service and health care, and unpredictable forms of physical labor. More jobs will require adaptable skill sets, as students prepare for occupations that have yet to be invented, or exist now but will look completely different in ten years.

For today's college students, the challenges of an uncertain future continue to point toward a combination of liberal arts curriculum and flexible skill sets that emphasize information literacy, critical thinking, creativity, leadership, and working effectively in diverse communities. We need to focus on strong general skills and knowledge, to help students adapt to changes as they come, and expect that the education process will continue in substantial ways throughout a career and lifetime. This will have implications to how we structure education and support lifelong learning.

## **UNM Presidential Search**

The search for UNM's next president is entering the final stages. The Board of Regents is receiving feedback from campus constituencies this afternoon, and will meet on Monday to review and discuss the finalists. I'd like to thank all those who participated in the University's search process, and those who have taken time to attend or review the open forums and application materials, and have submitted feedback to the Regents. Each of us defines all of us—your contributions are appreciated. The final selection will be made no later than Sunday, Nov. 5.

## The Fall 2017 Shared Knowledge Conference

The [Fall 2017 Shared Knowledge Conference](#) is quickly approaching. It takes place Wednesday, Nov. 8 from 9-5 p.m. in Hodgkin Hall, on UNM main campus (a previous Weekly Brief incorrectly had the event on Nov. 9). The conference showcases the talent and research of UNM graduate students, and offers many opportunities to share ideas and engage in discussion. I encourage you to see the poster sessions, located throughout the hall, as well as the LoboBITES competition (in the Bobo Room), which is the “three-minute-thesis” competition. I’m looking forward to it, and hope to see you there.

## CAPS Recognized for Excellence

The Center for Academic Program Support (CAPS) recently earned certification as a Learning Center of Excellence from the National College Learning Center Association, which recognizes high-quality learning centers in higher education. This is great news for the center, and continues a long tradition of excellent service to the University. Students across campus use CAPS services throughout their academic career. Students who take advantage of CAPS and the Writing Resource Center maintain a higher grade point average, are more likely to stay at UNM, and are likely to graduate and graduate sooner. The certification recognizes the substantial impact of the program, the efforts of the CAPS staff, and the direction and leadership of Drs. Anne Compton and Aeron Haynie. Congratulations.

## Cheo Torres Honored by HACU

Long-time vice president for Student Affairs, Eliseo “Cheo” Torres, received some much-deserved recognition with an [induction into the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities Hall of Champions](#). Hall inductees are those who “embody HACU’s mission of championing Hispanic success in higher education.” Congratulations, Cheo.

## Mandatory Training Reminder

Just a reminder that the deadline for completing all university-wide mandatory training sessions has changed this year to **December 1**. The training is required for all regular and temporary faculty and staff (including on-call staff) and student employees (including graduate students). More information can be found [online](#). If you encounter issues accessing or completing any of the training, contact the IT Help Desk at 277-5757 or [help.unm.edu](http://help.unm.edu).

## Craig White

**Interim 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](mailto:provost@unm.edu).