



The Wednesday Communiqué

December 5, 2018

Greetings from a work road trip: In Chicago for national conference on increasing graduation rates and supporting achievement and equitable outcomes for students. Next: in Tennessee with VPR Gabriel Lopez' team, learning new strategies for strengthening research ties to the national labs.

From all of us in Academic Affairs, best wishes as you finish up the semester. Let's celebrate the progress made in learning & teaching; in research, creative work, and publishing; and in engaging and serving New Mexico's communities and people. And in particular, let's be sure to pause and truly celebrate those students finishing undergraduate and graduate degrees. [Commencement](#) is Friday evening, December 14—and there is still time to sign up if you act immediately. See you there.

- Richard L. Wood, Interim Provost

Redesigning the University

We have now re-launched the Redesign process, which went on hiatus for three months as we worked to line up several separate strands of planning work within UNM. A Redesign Core Committee will be prioritizing ideas and designing consultative processes to vet those ideas. Ultimately, some of the ideas raised by the Redesign Task Forces will flow into UNM's strategic planning (including ongoing revisions to UNM2020 and development of President Stokes' future plan that will take us beyond 2020); some redesign ideas will be acted upon more quickly; and some may be judged dead ends. But all will be considered carefully. Thanks to all the redesign task force members whose thought and work will help UNM move forward, over the last year and in the future.

Graduation Rates

Great [new data](#) from the data wizards at the UNM Office of Institutional Analytics: Compared to where we would be "expected" to perform based on incoming student GPAs, ACT scores and other factors, we way outperformed expectations for 4-year graduation rates for the cohort entering college in 2014. National patterns would predict a four-year graduation rate (2014-2018) of 23.7%; UNM's four-year graduation rate for that period was 34.5%. That's an important improvement over the recent past, testimony to great work by students, staff, and faculty. However, we also need to continue to improve: We think we can further improve our four-year rate, and UNM does not do nearly so well on five- or six-year rates, where we are right around the national predicted rates. Bottom line: Thanks to all of you whose efforts have made such a difference in students' lives! But let's all keep building on and investing in student success.

Student Health & Counseling Accreditation

I am pleased to announce that Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) has recently been accredited by the Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC). This is an important milestone in the continuing growth and success of our student health service at UNM. Pursuing accreditation shows SHAC's commitment to providing the highest levels of quality care to our students, and the same high level of quality in its business practices. Achieving accreditation by AAAHC is proof that we have met the rigorous standards of a nationally-recognized third party, which *only about 30% of student health services nationally have achieved*. All those who work at SHAC—and all those who fund its work, especially ASUNM and GPSA via student fees—can be proud to have met the challenge of accreditation. SHAC intends to consistently uphold their commitment to quality improvement in patient care into the future.

I take this opportunity to celebrate the excellent work of all those whose labor sustains SHAC's patient care, and to recognize the outstanding leadership of Dr. James Wilterding, SHAC Executive Director, as he departs for a new job in Massachusetts.

Grand Challenges @ UNM:

As you finish the tasks of semester teaching, please keep UNM's [Grand Challenges](#) initiative on your radar. In order to give broad interdisciplinary teams a bit more time to develop ambitious and analytically grounded ideas, the deadline for submitting proposals has been extended to Thursday, January 17.

Biomedical Informatics Seminar Series


HSC runs a great biomedical informatics seminar [series](#). The [next seminar](#) is scheduled for Thursday, Dec. 6 from 10-11 a.m.

Life in NM

We have some cultural and musical jewels in New Mexico. One of my favorites, just a couple blocks from campus: The [Outpost Performance Space](#) regularly hosts some of the great national touring and local jazz musicians, as well as art exhibits and youth musical development classes. Great



Jazz singer Luciana Souza, originally from Brazil and now based in New York, with band members Scott Colley (bass) and Chico Pinheiro (guitar) at The Outpost last week.



upcoming jazz event there: saxophonist Chris Potter in the spring, date TBA.

CORRECTION: I mis-identified Dr. Irene Vasquez in last week's email. My apologies – but still heartfelt congratulations to Chicano/Chicana Studies for new M.A. and Ph.D. degrees!

Richard L. Wood

Interim Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Professor of Sociology

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