

The Wednesday Communiqué

January 9, 2019

Happy New Year, and welcome back from the holiday break. I hope you had a chance to detach from routine work a bit and attach to loved ones and your own deep abiding interests—and get some rest, relaxation, and reflection at the end of the year. Please go out of your way to welcome students back to the Spring 2019 semester. Assuring that students feel positively engaged on campus is a big part of retention. I would like to invite you to participate this spring in the broader process around crucial reviews and hires that will shape the future of our institution.

UNM HLC Assurance Argument: Public comment period now open

An accreditation team from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) will visit UNM main campus on March 4-5, as well as UNM-Taos and UNM-Gallup on March 1, 2019. We are now releasing for public comment the [assurance argument](#), the key long document that lays out our case for reaffirmation of accreditation, prior to finalizing it for the HLC's use. Corrections of inaccuracies are especially welcome. The document includes links to digitized evidence; since this "evidence library" is still in preparation, not all links are live. Please support UNM in this crucial work of preparing for accreditation by [reviewing the draft](#) and offering your feedback online. Comment deadline: January 24, 2019 at 11:59 p.m. One additional note: there will be three events open to the public during the site visit and moderated by the HLC review team. These "university conversations" will be organized around the criteria for accreditation and will provide more information and clarity to the reviewers. We would greatly appreciate your participation in these events. More details on times and locations will be forthcoming

Executive Searches

The Office of the President, with the support of academic search firm Isaacson, Miller and an internal search committee made up of UNM staff and faculty, has officially launched the searches for the next Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs, Senior Vice President for Finance & Administration, and Vice President for Equity & Inclusion. Full position descriptions and information on how to apply are available [here](#). You can nominate someone or apply yourself via that link. As in the past, finalists will give public presentations.

Transition in state government

The transition to a new administration in Santa Fe is well underway, with new appointments being made almost daily. Advisory committees, named by Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, will help with the choice of new regents for the state's universities, a standing request of the UNM faculty dating back at least to

2010. Prominent Albuquerque attorney Roberta Ramo has been [named](#) to head the advisory committee regarding future UNM regents. She is the first woman to serve as president of the American Bar Association, a former UNM regent, and a long-time friend of the university. With the advice of the committee, Governor Lujan Grisham will be naming five new UNM regents in coming weeks, subject to confirmation by the New Mexico Senate. Dr. Kate O’Neill has been named as Secretary of Higher Education for the state. As former Executive Director of the UNM-Taos branch campus, she brings deep knowledge of New Mexico, our students, and our opportunities and challenges.

Grand Challenges - Deadline January 17

The Grand Challenges request for proposals ([instructions here](#)) is nearing its deadline of Jan. 17 (submit proposals at grandchallenges@unm.edu). There will be one more discussion session on Jan. 9 at 10:30 a.m. ([Zoom link here](#)). For questions, contact grandchallenges@unm.edu.

Honoring Lori Tafoya

Please join us in honoring the memory of our friend and colleague Lori Tafoya who passed away unexpectedly on Dec. 27, 2018. Lori’s exemplary service to the University of New Mexico and UNM IT over an impressive 24-year history is underscored by the strong relationships that she forged with her teammates and business partners. She always put people first and every endeavor she was involved in benefited from her empathetic approach and cheerful attitude. Lori was an admired and well-respected friend and colleague and will be missed on campus and within the UNM community. A Celebration of Life Event is being planned for all of Lori’s friends and colleagues here at UNM. For information on the event, please contact the Office of the CIO at 277-8125.

Life in NM

In way of rest and relaxation: I got in some amazing time on New Mexico ski slopes over the break, flying through 24” of powder one day and 30” another day—if you’re the type, you won’t find better skiing than in NM: great snow and blue skies most days... unless it’s snowing cats and dogs, which is even better!

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.



Photo from this week, fountain frozen in front of Northrup Hall and CERIA, on UNM main campus