

The Weekly Communiqué

April 17, 2019



Credit: Event Horizon Telescope Collaboration

Last Wednesday, the world witnessed one of the greatest scientific achievements in recent memory, the imaging of the innermost region of space around a black hole—and it had [a UNM tie-in](#). An international team of astronomers combined observations from eight radio telescopes around the world, creating a telescope with the equivalent sharpness of a single telescope the size of the Earth, to image a supermassive black hole in a galaxy 55 million lightyears away. The observations, data analysis, and modeling required a team of 200 scientists. The result is stunning. The image above shows the innermost ring of photons, and in the center, the dark void, the shadow of the black hole itself, caused by the severe gravitational bending of spacetime. It is not possible to see further into the black hole, as all light and information is lost to us, once the event horizon is crossed. Einstein's theory of General Relativity, which has been standing up to observational scrutiny for the last one hundred years, was shown again to be an excellent descriptor of gravity in extreme conditions. But beyond the importance of the scientific work, there is a link to UNM. One of the authors of the study, Raquel Fraga-Encinas, is a graduate of UNM, earning her B.S. in Astrophysics in 2001. She is now studying for her Ph.D. at Radboud University, the

Netherlands, though her work there is not her first experience with radio astronomy research. She did a senior honors thesis here at UNM, studying another galaxy with New Mexico's Very Large Array, under the mentorship of Prof. Richard Rand in the Department of Physics and Astronomy. All of us at UNM who are involved in training our students in research know that what we do here has a deep effect on our students, and on the world. Our impact is limitless—at UNM, we literally teach our students to reach for the stars.

Guest-written by: Dr. Patricia Henning
Professor of Physics and Astronomy
Associate Vice President for Research

VP for Equity and Inclusion

The candidates for the search for the next VP for Equity and Inclusion completed their visits to UNM last week. Recordings of their open forums are available for viewing until Friday, April 19. All recorded forums can be found [online](#). Please consider viewing the recordings and completing a feedback survey.

2019 Tech Navigator Challenge

The Innovation Academy hosted the second-annual Tech Navigator Challenge last Friday, April 12. Fourteen teams answered the challenge, sponsored by the Air Force Research Laboratory, to create a commercialization plan for an assigned technology from one of the Innovation Academy's partners, the Air Force Research Laboratory or Sandia National Laboratories. Innovation Academy Director Rob Delcampo said, "The program was a huge success, and our technology partners were beyond impressed with the caliber of our students' ideas and presentations." The winning team (pictured at right) included Kalin Baca, Eric Deichmann, and Mary Louise Gucik. They won \$10,000 for their plan to commercialize AFRL's Passive Alert Sensor Patch. The money will support the team's continued work on their idea. Some of the leading teams this year were made up of liberal arts and humanities students—more evidence of thriving interdisciplinarity at UNM.



UNM graduate chemical engineering students (from left) Eric Deichmann, Mary Louise Gucik, and Kalin Baca, with team mentor Chris Ziomek (second from left). Photo Credit: Rebecca Rodriguez.

General Education Enhancement

Please join us for Academic Affairs General Education Faculty Fellows presentations on strategies for enhancing general education courses. The presentation of “Race and Social Justice in Gen Ed” will be offered twice (all presentations are held in the Roberts Room, Scholes Hall), on Thursday, April 18, 12:30-2 p.m. (or join via Zoom: <https://unm.zoom.us/j/729739639>) and Friday, April 19, from 3-4:30 p.m., by Drs. Leola Tsinnajinnie, Lani Gunawardena, Emma Trentman, Andrea Mays, Abdullah Serag, Carmen Samora, Kathryn Wichelns, Heather Sweetser, Jamal Martin, and Julia So. The presentation on “Global Awareness in Gen Ed” will be held (again, in the Roberts Room both days) on Friday, May 3, 3-4:30 p.m. (or join via Zoom: <https://unm.zoom.us/j/692149624>) and Thursday, May 9, 12:30-2 p.m., and given by Drs. Maria Lane, Chris Duvall, Gary Weissmann, and Jamal Martin.

Common Course Numbering

The New Mexico legislature passed laws in the spring of 2017 requiring that similar lower-division courses in community colleges and universities across the state share the same subject prefix and number. The goal of common course numbering is to make transfer between schools easier for undergraduates. Beginning with registration for Fall 2019, almost all lower-division courses will have common course numbers with a new 1000- and 2000- numbering system and a new subject prefix system. The same common course numbering will be used at every public college or university in New Mexico. The Higher Education Department also established universal subject prefixes for particular subjects, but the new universal prefixes only apply to lower-division (1000- and 2000-level) courses. Because of common course numbering prefixes, students will, in some cases, see different subject prefixes for lower-division (1000- and 2000-) and upper-division (300- and 400-) and graduate and professional (500- and 600-) courses offered by the same department. Student transcripts will explain the numbering system. Unfortunately, it is possible for students to register for a course under a new number that they may have already taken. Please encourage students to work with their advisors.

UNM Press 90th Anniversary Publishing Cake Walk

This year is the [90th anniversary of UNM Press](#). To celebrate, the campus community is invited to learn about the world of book publishing on Wednesday, April 24. UNM Press is hosting a “publishing cake walk” so students, faculty, and staff can ask questions about finding the right publisher or agent, honing a pitch and submitting a book proposal, developing and revising a manuscript, pursuing a career in publishing, and much more. The Press staff will share their insights from both UNM Press and from their experiences with publishers across the industry. This casual, come-and-go event will be held 2-4 p.m. in the Zimmerman Library Waters Room. As a bonus, the 2018 Association of University Presses Book, Jacket, and Journal Show will also be on display in the Waters Room, April 15–26.

UROC—Undergraduate Research Opportunity Conference

The second annual [Undergraduate Research Opportunity Conference](#) (UROC) will be held on Thursday, April 18 in the Student Union Building. There will be 153 research presentations provided by UNM undergraduate students throughout the day. The event is open to the public.

12th Annual Mentoring Conference

UNM's [annual mentoring conference](#) is one of the best mentoring resources in the country, and I strongly encourage chairs, supervisors, and senior faculty to attend this year's event, the 12th Annual Mentoring Conference, "Towards the Science of Mentoring," taking place October 21-25 in the Student Union Building.

Life in NM

The [UNM Wind Symphony](#) is performing in Popejoy Hall next Wednesday, April 24 from 7:30-9 p.m. The show features the work of Vittorio Giannini, Adam Gorb, Gustav Holst, David Maslanka and Dwayne Milburn, and is conducted by Eric Rombach-Kendall, Katie Henderson and Nevi Zerkle. One more part of the thriving live-music scene in Albuquerque, both on campus and in the wider community.

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.