

# Academic Dispatch

**December 12, 2019**



Luminarias outside Zimmerman Library. Communication and Marketing.

## **Human Values, Hard Questions**

The holiday season is upon us, and each member of our Lobo Community is rushing to finish that last important task. Students are closing out a critical project or preparing for a last exam, faculty are grading their last papers, and our industrious staff are finishing the key tasks that allow the rest of us to complete our work in turn.

We are nearing the winter solstice, when the northern hemisphere has turned away from the sun as far as it can, and will now start to tilt towards the light. As the days begin to lengthen, this becomes a time of celebration and joy, a time of family and community. We reach for each other, because at heart human communities are about togetherness and fellowship. Within a research university, we also celebrate this fellowship and fundamental humanity. Be it through the wonderful fun and cheer of the Hanging of the Greens or the anticipation of celebrations to come in these final weeks of class.

At a research university, we also embrace our role as critics when our knowledge, principles and moral sense require that we do so. Many of the issues that confront all of us today, bigger than any one season, call us to challenge each other and the social systems in which we live. Universities are spaces where we can ask these hard questions, and enter into debate and dialogue with one another about the best way forward.



Singing carols during the Hanging of the Greens celebration.  
Communication and Marketing.

All of this is the work and heart of a research university. It brings me joy to see it and engage in it all, even when it is hard and challenging to me or to each of us.

Happy Holidays!

**Dr. James Paul Holloway**

**Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs**

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