

Academic Dispatch

Communication from the Office of Academic Affairs



Lobo Welcome Center. (University Communication and Marketing)

October 24, 2024

New spaces open a world of opportunity

Winston Churchill once said, “We shape our buildings; thereafter they shape us.” It was an expression of the importance of space in shaping human institutions and human experience.

At UNM, one of our tactics to support the UNM 2040 strategic planning framework is the transformation of the physical spaces in which we work – we need to reshape our spaces at UNM to support our aspirations for learning and discovery, and we know we have a lot of work to do. Over the last few years, we have done much to reshape spaces at UNM: we renovated Clark Hall, opened a new Workforce Training Center in Valencia, a STEM-H building in Taos, the Interdisciplinary Substance Use and Brain Injury Building, renovated a new ROTC center, and much more. I won’t even try to list them all here. We are constantly working to create the 21st century spaces that are required for teaching and research – the up-to-date spaces that our students, faculty, and staff deserve in order to undertake their work.

And this fall it continues with several new projects opening or launching in the Academic Affairs units. These new spaces are not only aesthetically pleasing and hopefully stimulating to the mind, but they instill confidence in the continuing promise of UNM to shape our state through learning. New spaces have the power to increase student engagement, facilitate connection in the classroom and research laboratory, and attract the attention of future Lobos.

Here is a quick glance at just a few of the new (and upcoming) spaces on the UNM campus:

The Lobo Welcome Center, located in the former Naval ROTC space along Yale Boulevard, provides a quintessential New Mexican space from which to launch campus tours for future students and families. It combines the state’s rich history – it was designed in 1941 by renowned architect John Gaw Meem and is one of two only two buildings on campus made with actual adobe bricks – with UNM’s bright future. I invite everyone to stop by and check it out!



The Transfer and Transition Student Center. (University Communication and Marketing photos)

The Transfer and Transition Student

Center is a first-of-its-kind space at UNM, designed to serve the thousands of Lobos who enter UNM from another higher education institution. I was pleased to help open this space this week, along with President Stokes and Secretary of Higher Education Stephanie Rodriguez. Located within the University Advisement and Enrichment Center, this facility features a student lounge, provision for in-person and virtual drop-in hours to meet with advising staff, and support for study groups for transfer students. It will serve the thousands of students who make the leap to join the Pack each year.



Ground is broken on the Center for Collaborative Arts and Technology.

Center for Collaborative Arts and Technology (CCAT) along Central Avenue will support performing arts students in the College of Fine Arts, and last week we formally broke ground on this facility. CCAT’s bold vision is to be a catalyst for creativity, innovation, and collaboration among students, faculty, and the arts community in New Mexico. When completed, features will include spaces for performance, exhibition, and rehearsal; a large concert hall; and areas for multidisciplinary collaboration, including serving as the new home for ARTS Lab. The facility will play a major role in cultivating the future creative workforce to boost New Mexico’s economy.

These are only some of the projects we are pursuing to improve the physical spaces of our campuses across New Mexico. There is no doubt that it is an exciting time at UNM, and more space transformations will be coming in 2025.

Make your voice heard: Vote!

As you know, Election Day is Nov. 5, and early voting is already under way in New Mexico. In addition to choosing a U.S. president and selecting many other national and state leaders, there are also several measures on the New Mexico ballot that will directly impact UNM:



General Obligation Bond 3 for Student Success: GO Bond 3 will provide more than \$230 million in higher education funding statewide, including \$94.5 million for UNM and its branch campuses. GO Bond projects this year include a new humanities and social sciences complex and a renovation for the College of Pharmacy building. Each of UNM's four branch campuses in Gallup, Los Alamos, Taos, and Valencia also have projects that would be funded by the GO Bond.

General Obligation Bond 2 for Public Libraries: GO Bond 2 would provide support to UNM libraries, including University Libraries, and libraries in the School of Law, the College of Nursing, and libraries for health professionals throughout the UNM Health system.

Mill levy to support UNM Hospital: The mill levy represents about 10% of UNM Hospital's overall budget, supporting areas like housekeeping, dietary services, facilities, security, parking services and information technology. The mill levy is on the ballot every eight years to support the hospital's critical operational and maintenance needs.

New Mexico Constitutional Amendment 3: Currently, the School of Law dean is required to chair the state judicial nominating commission. This amendment would allow the dean the flexibility to appoint a qualified designee to serve when necessary, in her stead.



Also on the ballot (albeit a different one) ... Halloween! Halloween is just around the corner. This means there is something else to vote for: best-decorated Scholes Hall office! On Oct. 31, stop by Scholes Hall for a scary good time: treats, costumes, and some out-of-this-world decorating that will transport you to another reality (check out the Office of Academic Affairs in the 2023 photo above). The theme is top secret, so you will have to visit us to see what we've been up to! And while you are here, don't forget to bring a donation to benefit the Lobo Food Pantry. When you come by Scholes, scan the QR code to vote for your favorite decorated office.

Have a safe and fun Halloween, and be sure to vote on (or before) Nov. 5.

James Paul Holloway

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs
Professor of Nuclear Engineering