

Academic Dispatch

Communication from the Office of Academic Affairs



University Communication and Marketing photo

January 23, 2025

Hitting the refresh button

Welcome to 2025! We are now two days into the spring semester, and although it is difficult to return from a long and hopefully relaxing break, I hope that you have returned refreshed and with a renewed sense of why we are all here. The pause between the terms allows us to forsake the stress of the fall and return with a sense of optimism for our work this spring. Each of us in our roles — whether it is as staff, student, or faculty — contributes to the community that is UNM, and collectively we make this city of knowledge, art, service, and expression the joyful learning environment that it should be.

As we come back together, I want to introduce you to some new members of our academic leadership. First up, in the Office of Academic Affairs, [we welcome our inaugural assistant vice provost for faculty affairs, Christopher Lyons](#). Dr. Lyons, a professor in the Department of Sociology and Criminology, is hitting the ground running, working closely with Senior Vice Provost Barbara Rodriguez to develop workshops, panels, and a variety of other events and professional development opportunities for faculty. As a longtime UNM faculty member himself, he is eager to apply his experience to help ensure that our faculty have the support they need to thrive, whether they are embarking on the tenure and promotion process or moving into a department chair or associate dean role. Supporting our faculty is extremely important for the strength of the University and its missions in research, teaching, student success, outreach, and patient care, and we are thrilled to have Dr. Lyons leading our efforts in the area.





This month, [we also welcomed Charla Orozco as director of the Office of Institutional Analytics \(OIA\)](#). Since July, she has been in the interim role following the departure of former director Heather Mechler, who moved to another position at Duke University. Charla first joined OIA in 2021, bringing a varied background and a passion for data analytics to the job. In addition to mandatory data reporting, she is interested in working with stakeholders around campus to make sure that institutional data being collected is meeting the needs of the data community. I am excited to welcome her to this director role.

Finally, [I am thrilled to welcome Naomi Yavneh Klos as the next dean of the Honors College](#), effective July 1, 2025. Dr. Yavneh Klos is the Reverend Emmett M. Bienvenu, SJ, Distinguished Chair in Humanities and Professor of Languages and Cultures at Loyola University New Orleans. She is a former director of Loyola's Honors Program, where she been committed to access, equity, and inclusive excellence in higher education. She brings extensive experience with honors programs, as well as enthusiasm, energy, and new ideas about the power and potential of UNM's Honors College. She is looking forward to getting to know Honors College faculty and staff and building on its established history to build a strong path forward as the College embarks on its strategic planning process to align its vision with UNM 2040. I can't wait to introduce Dr. Yavneh Klos to UNM this summer!



A new (virtual) front door to Academic Affairs

Earlier this month, the Office of Academic Affairs launched a [revamped website](#). Thanks to the assistance of the web team of University Communications and Marketing, the new website offers a variety of features, including easier-to-find resources for faculty, information about tenure and promotion, career development, teaching, and our strategies on student success. You can also find information on finance and facilities, accreditation, our UNM 2040 initiatives and progress, an archive of various resources and reports we have developed over the years, and information on the provost office team. As we continue to improve the information on the site, I encourage you to check it out.

A couple of timely reminders ...

If you haven't yet completed your mandatory annual training, the good news is that the deadline is extended until Jan. 31 (but that's just a few days away!). These trainings take a bit of your time, but in return, they impart critical information to ensure our campus is safe and welcoming for all. Also, looking ahead to next month, save the date of Feb. 12, which is the [UNM Big Give](#) — 24 hours of giving back. Any college, department, or program can benefit, and every gift makes a difference. There are a lot of choices, and all are equally worthy. I encourage you to think about how you can support this effort.



Have a productive semester!

James Paul Holloway

Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

Professor of Nuclear Engineering