



UNM-Gallup and Ecological Forecasting Initiative Student Research Scholars Program



The University of New Mexico Gallup is offering an undergraduate research experience during the Fall 2026 semester. , This program will introduce students to the research process and help them gain technical skills in data science with ecological forecasting and remote sensing.

Project Overview

Western New Mexico is experiencing long term impacts from global climate change, such as an ongoing megadrought to rapid changes in precipitation. The goal of this project is collecting environmental data at the UNM-G campus that will be used to monitor, forecast, and model environmental change. Some example topics that students will explore include:

- What are the impacts of extreme rain on the local ecosystem
- What factors contribute to Pinon tree die off and how can we conserve this culturally important resource
- How will vegetation and animal behavior shift in response to climate change in McKinley County?
- How does the response to climatic events vary between native vegetation versus non-native vegetation
- How can we communicate the impacts of environmental change through art and other creative means?

No prior experience needed!

Program Benefits

This program provides a stipend of \$1,500 paid in increments upon completion of milestones and tasks. Students who are funded are encouraged to develop their research into a poster presentation to be given at the Ecological Forecasting Initiative Meeting in Minneapolis, MN (May 24-27). Support for conference travel provided. Opportunity to continue research in Spring 2027.

Application and Eligibility

Eligibility is restricted to students who (1) are US citizens or permanent residents; (2) are undergraduates enrolled at UNMG; and (3) are in current good academic standing. Students interested in STEM (science technology engineering and mathematics), visual arts, or education are encouraged apply. Students who have faced social, educational, or economic barriers to success in education are encouraged to apply.

To apply, send your completed application by email to Dr. Antoinette Abeyta (abeytaant@unm.edu) with the subject line "EFI Research 'Your Last Name'" or drop off application at the Math, Business, Science & Technology office (Calvin Hall 270)

For best consideration, apply by October 15th, 2026.

This program is done in conjunction with the University of Notre Dame, Cal Poly Humboldt, University of Minnesota, and Salish Kootenai Tribal College, University of Colorado-Denver. Funding provided by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation.



UNM-Gallup and Ecological Forecasting Initiative Student Research Scholars Program Application



Name: _____ **Student ID:** _____

Local Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Cell Phone #: _____ UNMG Email: _____

Intended Major: _____ Expected Graduation Date: _____

GPA: _____

In the space below write a brief statement about what participating in the proposed research will mean to you and how you think it will enhance your academic and professional career in a STEM discipline (no more than 350 words).

In the space below write a brief statement about what your academic goals are at UNMG and your goals after graduation (no more than 350 words).

Mentorship and Student Expectations

Mentors Abeyta, Smith, O'Grady will provide mentorship based on student needs and schedules. Weekly meetings will be with all students as a community, and we will have individual meetings as needed. Mentors will also host office hours or create an optional meeting scheduling for student schedule flexibility which will provide a space for coworking or troubleshooting. Mentors will track progress with weekly deliverables and student feedback. Expectations for students include:

- meeting minimally once per week, schedule permitting
- communicating through messaging and emails
- collaborating on work with timely communication and sharing deliverables on time
- filling out surveys and reflections for feedback
- willingness to try new things!

Students who are funded through this project will submit a presentation in the format of abstract and a poster presentation describing the research activities completed, including figures and research highlights. Students are encouraged to develop their research from this project into a poster presentation to be given at the Ecological Forecasting Initiative Meeting May 24-27. The program will provide support for conference travel and registration.

Student Signature/Release

Please read the statement below and sign where indicated:

- (1) I agree to conduct my research under the supervision/support and/or in conjunction with Abeyta, Smith, and O'Grady and to complete the research activities outlined (acknowledging that sometimes project modifications may be necessary)
- (2) I agree to submit a presentation to research mentors following project completion by **January 15th, 2027**.
- (3) I agree to **develop my research findings into an presentation** that will be presented at the end of the program.

The information I have submitted in my application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I understand that to track the progress of the scholars and to evaluate program effectiveness, UNMG and EFI requires access to student information. Photographs and research abstracts may also be obtained for use by the program in program dissemination materials such as websites, newsletters, and reports.

I authorize release and use of personal information, as described above, to the UNMG and EFI. I understand that this information is to be used solely for evaluating the impact and effectiveness of the program and that individual student data will not be released to parties other than those directly involved with the program.

I have read and understand all of the statements above.

Printed Name of Applicant: _____

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

If applicant is under the age of 18 and/or a dual enrolled student

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Signature of Parent/Guardian : _____ Date: _____