

## Chancellor Weekly Brief | 8.17.2021

### Dr. James Malm

#### **WELCOME.**

Greetings to you on this first day of our professional development and convocation week where we will gather via Zoom over the next few days to fully prepare for the return of our students on campus next Monday, August 23rd. We have certainly come a long way as a campus community since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020—which was 523 days ago.

Many of us on this Zoom meeting have experienced the impact of this devastating pandemic personally. As we know all too well, our local community and Navajo Nation remain among the hardest hit areas of the nation by this virus. My heartfelt condolences go out to those among us who've lost loved ones or were stricken by COVID-19 over the course of this terrible pandemic. In just a few minutes, we'll turn to Dr. Dan Primožic, who will hold a moment of silence for those we've lost within our UNM-Gallup community.

I'd like to reassure you that we are well poised for a successful fall semester and beyond. In just a few days, we will gratefully welcome over 1,500 students who are themselves persisting with their educational and professional goals on our campus. This extraordinary moment in our history—the return of face-to-face instruction after so many days, weeks, and months apart—is truly made possible by all your good work and the extraordinary efforts of our local public health workers. You've had to endure tremendous challenges, and I'm so grateful to you all for your steadfast commitment each other and to our students.

#### **UNM-GALLUP COVID-SAFETY PROTOCOLS**

I'd like to briefly remind you of some important guidelines and safety protocols that are in place to ensure a safe start to the fall semester and continued normal operations as the Delta variant surges in parts of our nation:

- With revised CDC data, wearing a face mask indoors is required throughout campus. A mask is not required outdoors and on the fitness trail unless you are unvaccinated.
- All faculty, staff, and students are required to be vaccinated and upload proof of their vaccination on or before September 30, 2021. A request for accommodation for those with certain medical conditions or sincere religious beliefs that would prohibit them from getting a vaccine can be submitted prior to this deadline.
- Please work closely with your division chair or supervisor on other cleaning and safety guidelines.

We've published a return guide with important links, guidelines, and other campus information on our newsroom at [gallup.unm.edu/news](https://gallup.unm.edu/news).

It's also important to remember that our faculty and staff may be working under telecommuting agreements that have been formed over our July hybrid return to campus. We should remain patient and flexible with each other, but also remember that our students must be fully and conveniently served at all times without interruption. We are here to ensure their success.

**FACULTY / STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE**

This week's full schedule with Zoom links is posted for your convenience at [gallup.unm.edu/convocation](https://gallup.unm.edu/convocation). All are welcome to attend professional development week presentations, except for this morning's faculty union discussion which is by invitation only.

This promises to be an exciting year. Beyond the buzz of activity that will come with next week's return of students to our campus, we will soon begin renovations to our CTE building. And we will soon ask our state legislators to consider an \$8 million General Obligation Bond request to renovate the façade and interior lobby of Gurley Hall, which will be transformational to this flagship building on our campus if approved. We will welcome the return of events and gatherings, and we will enjoy the excitement of an as-normal-as-possible campus experience as this pandemic will allow.

I am confident in all of you to keep our UNM-Gallup community safe, healthy, and focused fully on our students' educational endeavors. We will succeed. We will remain strong. And we will persist through this fall semester and beyond.

Please stay safe and stay well.

Best Regards,



Dr. James R. Malm, Chancellor  
Professor of Business