

## Chancellor Weekly Brief | 4.9.2021

Dr. James Malm

### RESTART NEW MEXICO.

As we begin to emerge from this devastating global pandemic that has impacted the physical and financial health of so many New Mexicans, we will soon turn our focus to recovering from the economic devastation many of our local community members and small businesses continue to face. One indicator of just how devastating this pandemic has been to our state is, of course, unemployment data. New Mexico's [unemployment rate](#) sits today at over eight percent, representing nearly 80,000 New Mexicans out of work.

Brighter Days are ahead for New Mexico and our nation, and I believe that community colleges such as UNM-Gallup play a critical role in supporting the economic recovery of our region and state by preparing our students to enter the workforce and helping the unemployed either restart or retool their careers through our degree and certificate programs.

[A recent article published in Innovatus magazine](#) discussed the importance of community colleges to our state and nation's rebuilding efforts by providing "custom-designed workforce development centered on the needs of business and industry" while delivering critical short-term credit and noncredit programs "that lead to industry-recognized credentials, certifications, and licensures" for people who need a fast path to high-earning jobs.

Without a doubt, UNM-Gallup is an important contributor to our economy and provider of essential skills and education to our students. We are proud to join with other community colleges and all institutions within our state's higher education system in helping our local and state officials restart New Mexico. [Restart New Mexico](#) is a formal plan driven by the governor's office and the state's Higher Education Department to synthesize efforts to reopen New Mexico's colleges and universities as well as help workers displaced by the pandemic re-enter the workforce.

We will support these restart efforts in various ways, including continued management of our safe-return plan, investing in our CTE programs through a multi-million-dollar renovation of our teaching and learning laboratories, innovating our curriculum to prepare students for future workforce demands, and offering highly relevant degree and certificate programs that quickly lead our graduates into high-earning jobs—to name just a few of the ongoing efforts that fulfill our mission. With vigor, UNM-Gallup will continue to be a community college partner in restarting New Mexico and providing our community members with a high-quality and affordable education.

#### REGISTRATION WEEK

Registration week begins on Monday, April 12th, and I encourage all students to [connect](#) with one of our advisors to register for summer and fall courses. We continue to work toward a return to in-person instruction in the fall semester, so please stay close to your Lobo Mail for additional updates on our safe-return plans that will hopefully lead us back to campus this fall. I also encourage you to get your COVID-19 vaccine. All New Mexicans 16 years and older are now [eligible for the vaccine](#).

Please stay safe and stay well.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J. Malm'.

Dr. James R. Malm, Chancellor  
Professor of Business