

## Chancellor Weekly Brief – 7.17.2020

Dr. James Malm

### TASK ORIENTED.

We are anticipating the start of our hybrid fall semester in just one month. Of course, this is taking much work from all of us to prepare our campus for the safe return of students even in a very limited fashion on August 17th. I want to acknowledge and give my gratitude to you for the good work you do in helping UNM-Gallup fulfill its mission even during these challenging times.

The next month will come and go very quickly, so we must be incredibly task-oriented, precise in our areas of responsibility, and productive each workday. As expressed in last week's brief, I also ask that you come to the daily Chancellor's Open Office Hour at 4 p.m. to participate in the collaborative work that we need to accomplish now and into the fall. Communication is a priority; especially as we get into the details of our reopening plan. My commitment to you remains that we will maintain our various forums to participate in a collegial conversation that produces results for our campus. Though, it is up to you to participate in these conversations, read the material that is distributed almost daily, and provide your productive feedback.

In that spirit, I would like to summarize below a few areas of discussion that have occurred over the past week—and areas that will continue to be a focus for us all.

#### UNMG MANAGEMENT & FACULTY OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

[This past Wednesday, UNM-Gallup leadership and faculty assembly president John Zimmerman met to address concerns](#) provided by the Faculty Assembly Operations Committee. These concerns range from cleaning and social distancing protocols to teaching modality, technology concerns, and other instructional issues. The group worked through this list of concerns that will definitely help us better prepare for the fall. Most importantly, we need to keep a few things in mind:

- A face mask or covering will be required at all times (inside and outside) if you are on campus.
- Cleaning and safety protocols are listed in our reopen plan posted at [gallup.unm.edu/safe-return](http://gallup.unm.edu/safe-return). UNM main campus has also recently published new materials and guidelines that pertain to campus cleaning procedures, so we will update our plan with that updated material—and provide links to other relevant documents.
- Gathering on campus will be strongly discouraged.
- Human Resource and Student Conduct policies have been updated to include ongoing public health requirements, including the wearing of masks on campus.

We will continue to address the concerns outlined by our Faculty Assembly, and I appreciate their good work in helping us think through these details and procedures as we approach the fall.

## SHARED GOVERNANCE

The reality of state budget cuts and a decline in enrollment looms over us as well—with a 25 percent enrollment forecast decrease and required state budget sanding. On Tuesday, UNM put forward a revised budget to the Board of Regents. While no specific details of budget changes have yet to be published publicly, procedures for making essential cuts to the budget were outlined in the Regents' 165-page board packet [posted here](#) for your review.

The draft budget has a few [principles and strategies](#):

- **Protect the critical core missions** of providing education, creating new knowledge, developing creative works, and public service.
- **Protect core initiatives** surrounding enrollment, student services, critical infrastructure, and compliance and safety.
- **Recognize that this crisis may exacerbate inequality**, and we will make decisions to protect our most vulnerable students, staff, and faculty to ensure social mobility for students.
- **Develop budget reduction and cost containment strategies** that are fair, equitable, and responsible.

There are a few other important principles outlined in the linked document above, and I invite you to read through these to understand UNM's approach to our required budget sanding.

At UNM-Gallup, we addressed some of our ongoing budget details as well during our [Local Advisory Board](#) meeting on July 9th. And, we will continue to share the work on these budget issues with our Faculty Assembly leadership and the UNM-Gallup leadership team.

We have also formed the Ad Hoc Committee on Program Review and Prioritization, which is comprised of Dr. Dan Primožic and chairs John Zimmerman, Carolyn Kuchera, and Bruce Gjeltema. This committee is charged with finding programmatic cost savings in academic affairs for the short and long-term. The discovery work conducted by this committee will yield recommendations that will go forward to our senior management team for further discussion and action. This group will also generate further budgetary adjustment recommendations that will be presented to the Faculty Assembly upon its return in August.

Again, these are challenges that we face together, and we are fortunate to have the leadership and teams in place to work through these budget issues that will ultimately provide good stewardship to our campus community.

## NEW MEXICO HIGHER EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

The New Mexico Higher Education Department—under the new management of Ricky Serna and Stephanie Rodriguez—issued its [final reopening plan](#) on Wednesday. And, our own reopening plan has been published and [posted on our Website](#) for your review and input. These are living plans that will be routinely updated as conditions change, and new data and information comes to us. Read these documents and understand their contents. These plans are critically important to us as we work toward our hybrid fall semester.

## NEW MEXICO LEGISLATIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee met on Thursday in Cloudcroft to conduct a series of important meetings that certainly will help us forecast public sentiment on the direction of Higher Education funding in New Mexico in advance of the 2021 legislative session in January.

Outlined in the committee's [hearing brief](#) are a series of important topics that will be important to us in the coming months. I invite you to read this brief, but I've outlined some of its contents here for your convenience:

### *POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION UNDER COVID-19*

Managing the expectations of consumer-conscious students, parents, and other stakeholders will certainly be a balancing act as college administrators work to reopen campuses to students, faculty, and personnel. A return to normalcy is critical for all, but there are such high hurdles that remain as this pandemic persists.

#### *Managing Risk on Open Campus*

College campuses are open systems, providing additional challenges in managing risk and mitigating virus transmission among their communities. Campus complexities and the challenges of an open system must be considered in reopening plans.

#### *Measures to Protect Students*

All of the 24 public colleges and universities in New Mexico have developed reopening plans and have defined the manner by which campuses will open. Most of these institutions are taking a hybrid approach to the fall semester with in-person course offerings that follow strict adherence to public safety guidelines.

#### *Rightsizing Institutions*

Much conversation was given to the area of resource sharing or rightsizing institutions within the state, where views were expressed that leadership at institutions must adjust academic programs to meet financial constraints. This led into further discussion of overall college enrollment and the perceived need to reconstruct business models to meet a different emerging demand.

As you can imagine, these important discussions will continue and have a profound impact on Higher Education in our state in the months and years ahead. I encourage you to take the time to read through the hearing brief—including the committee's input on college sports in the fall—to gain some statewide perspective on the challenges we encounter.

I will repeat what I said last week because it's important for you to consider: Be a part of the work that ensures our future. Collaborate and be a partner in solving the many crises that we face. While this can be overwhelming, we will persevere. And, we will protect UNM-Gallup for generations of students to come.



Office of the Chancellor

Please stay safe and be well!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J. Malm'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial 'J'.

Dr. James R. Malm, Chancellor  
Professor of Business