

**ANNUAL
ACCOUNTABILITY
REPORT**



Council of University Presidents - November 2024



COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

Membership: Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, Northern New Mexico College, The University of New Mexico, and Western New Mexico University

Letter from the Presidents

On behalf of Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico State University, New Mexico Tech, Northern New Mexico College, The University of New Mexico, and Western New Mexico University, the New Mexico Council of University Presidents presents the twenty-seventh annual accountability report.

This report culminates a year-long process that began with careful attention to feedback from numerous constituencies including the Governor's Office, the Legislature, the Higher Education Department, university personnel and students, private sector business leaders, analysts, and others interested in university efforts. The report presents higher education's ongoing efforts to respond to the policies and needs of New Mexico in concert with meeting the extensive accreditation and professional standards required of public universities.

The contents of this report are compiled and formatted by a highly skilled institutional research work group. Great care is taken to assure the accuracy of data derived from consistently applied data definitions. Yet the Council's commitment extends beyond simply reporting data. This report responds to a public imperative for accountability and continuous improvement.

This report demonstrates the resolve of New Mexico's public universities to improve the educational environment in our state as well as the quality of life for all New Mexicans.

Sincerely,

Joseph Shepard, Ph.D.
Chair

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Higher Education in New Mexico

The Land of Enchantment is a state with stunning landscapes, fascinating history, rich culture, and several significant challenges:

- New Mexico is ranked last in child well-being by the national *2023 KIDS COUNT® Data Book*, a 50-state annual report released by the Annie E. Casey Foundation that analyzes how children and families are faring.
- Our state was ranked 50th in Education, 38th in Healthcare, 45th in Economy, 44th in Infrastructure, 36th in Opportunity, and 48th in Crime and Corrections. (<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/new-mexico>)
- The median household income in New Mexico in 2022 was \$58,722, which is 21.9% below the national median household income. The overall poverty rate in the state was 17.8% (U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NM>).
- Only 29.1% of New Mexico adults over the age of 24 have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher, compared to the national average of 34.3%.

These adverse conditions impact our ability to thrive and attract interest from the commercial sector to bring well-paying jobs to the state.

Higher education has a significant role to play in fighting against the various issues that New Mexico is facing. With its vast knowledge and human capital, higher education can help alleviate the state's societal, physical, and economic problems. The Council of University Presidents (CUP) comprises seven public universities in New Mexico. Its mission is to produce knowledge that benefits the state, country, and the planet through teaching, research, and service. The Council focuses on information sharing, collaboration, strategic planning, policy development, and community outreach. It represents university efforts based on

shared goals and a shared vision that supports each university's unique strengths. The Council prioritizes student success, economic development, research, public service, and the promotion of the exceptional efforts of university faculty and staff. CUP recognizes that the well-being of the institutions, their faculty, staff, and students, and the broader public of New Mexico are interconnected.

Among the seven CUP institutions, three are research institutions (New Mexico State University, New Mexico Tech, and University of New Mexico), and four are comprehensive institutions (Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, Northern New Mexico College, and Western New Mexico University). Programs at the seven CUP institutions include vocational-focused programs like plumbing and electrical technology; scientific programs of study in astrophysics, biotechnology, and minerals engineering; programs in the arts and humanities such as film, dance, and dramatic writing; and professional programs in law, medicine, and pharmacy.



In 2023, the UNM Basic Needs Project conducted a statewide study on basic needs insecurity in higher education, including faculty, staff, and students. The study had over 15,000 participants from across New Mexico, with a 20.5% response rate for faculty and staff and an 11.6% response rate for students.



The study included 27 institutions, of which 17 were two-year institutions, seven were four-year institutions, and three were tribal institutions. The study assessed food insecurity, housing insecurity, and homelessness.

The study revealed that individuals of certain ethnicities/races (especially Black and Native American respondents), students aged 25-44, and gender variant and LGBTQ+ individuals experienced significantly higher levels of basic needs insecurity. (<https://basicneeds.unm.edu/statewide-study/index.html>)

Despite these obstacles, the seven CUP institutions have managed to enroll an average of 51,192 students in the Fall term for the past six years. They have also awarded a total of 69,647 post-secondary credentials, including certificates, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees, during the same period. This is a testament to the unwavering commitment of our institutions to educate and serve the people of New Mexico. In the most recent academic year, CUP institutions granted a total of 12,289 degrees and certificates, out of which 2,057 were in the high-demand fields of nursing, social work, and education. These graduates will become future public servants who will dedicate their careers to improving the lives of New Mexicans by making them healthier and more fulfilling.

Achievements and Economic Development

The institutions of NM CUP have a strong dedication to teaching, public service, and ensuring the success of their students. Our Comprehensive Institutions provide a range of academic programs, including Certificates through Master's degrees, primarily to local students. These institutions also actively contribute to economic development. Our research institutions, on the other hand, provide top-quality graduate programs and research opportunities that support economic growth and development. Research institutions are also now accessing the Technology Enhancement Fund (TEF). This fund was established in 2003 by the State of New Mexico but remained inactive with a zero balance until the 2022 state legislative session, when it was allocated \$45 million (non-recurring) through HB 2 (2022).

The University of New Mexico (UNM) is the state's premier higher education research institution, operating also as the state's largest Hispanic Serving, Minority Serving, and Carnegie R1 institution, spanning fourteen colleges, 200+ degree programs, eleven multidisciplinary centers, six strategic Health Sciences centers, and four branch campuses.

Research *is* education, and discovery is part of UNM's core mission. In FY23, research expenditures exceeded \$348 million, further supporting UNM's historically high ranking in the most recent Higher



Education Research and Development Survey (HERD) compiled by the National Science Foundation (NSF) for FY22. Based on those national HERD data, UNM

is ranked 88th in the nation among all institutions of higher education, 60th among public institutions, and 6th among Hispanic Serving Institutions for total research and development expenditures. In FY23, UNM awarded 188 research PhDs, which represent the crowning achievement of a research-based education. UNM also generated 1,407 master's degrees, and dozens of undergraduates received research honors with their bachelor's degrees, both of which are major research accomplishments.

Major research successes from UNM in the past year include the establishment of two new university-wide research institutes. The first of those, the Accelerating Resilience Innovations in Drylands (ARID) Institute, seeks to enhance the resilience of communities, ecosystems, and the economy to climate change through inclusive and equitable research, education and collaborative partnerships in the state of New Mexico. The ARID Institute grew out of the UNM Grand Challenges initiative started by President Stokes in 2019, focused on Sustainable Water Resources. The second university-wide center established in 2023 is the Quantum New Mexico-Institute (QNM-I), which is a joint institute between UNM and Sandia National Laboratories (soon to add Los Alamos National Lab) that arose from over 30 years of New Mexico's leadership in Quantum Information Science and Engineering (QISE). The most significant achievement of QNM-I in the past year was its leadership as a major partner in the U.S. Economic Development Administration's regional (EDA) Technology Hub competition's \$40.5 million award, which includes access to an additional \$87 million in regional public and private partner commitments. Based on the success of preliminary proposals already submitted to NSF, the ARID Institute and QNM-I were the only entities in the state to be invited to submit a full application to the NSF Regional Innovation Engines program, each potentially worth \$160 million for UNM and its collaborative partners throughout the state and the Southwest.

UNM also launched three new university-wide Grand Challenges in the areas of Sustainable Space Research, Child Health, and Just Transitions to Green Energy, a team also involved in the NSF Engines effort.

UNM research generates significant intellectual property that is managed through its affiliated tech transfer organization, UNM Rainforest Innovations (UNMRI). In recognition of the combined efforts of UNM researchers and UNMRI, the Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities designated UNM an Innovation & Economic Prosperity (IEP) Innovation award in 2024. The University Economic Development Association announced UNM as the 2024 Awards of Excellence winner for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

New Mexico State University (NMSU) continues to rank well in the U.S. News & World Report's Best Colleges for 2025. NMSU placed on the social mobility list (106 tied) and ranked in the top public schools (135 tied). As for best undergraduate programs, NMSU ranked in engineering (139 tied), psychology (146 tied), nursing (149 tied), computer science (193 tied) and business (198 tied). NMSU Global Campus has been recognized by Forbes Advisor as the best online college in New Mexico for 2024.

According to Washington Monthly's list of America's Best and Worst Colleges for Women in STEM, NMSU ranked No. 16 for Best Chemical Engineering



undergraduate program; among public institutions, NMSU ranked second. NMSU ranked 27 among the top 50 Best Value Hispanic Serving Institutions for

International Students in a study generated by Study Abroad Aide, the largest and most comprehensive database of universities worldwide.

NMSU received a five-year extension on its Innovation and Economic Prosperity Program designation from the Association and Public Land-Grant Universities.

The university received a four-year, \$7 million grant from the National Science Foundation through the Established Program to Stimulate Competitive Research or EPSCoR, Research Incubators for STEM Excellence Research Infrastructure Improvement, or E-RISE RII, to boost the research competitiveness of the state of New Mexico, build partnerships across academic institutions and non-academic sectors, and create workforce development opportunities. The project funds the Research Center for Distributed Resilient and Emergent-Intelligence-Based Additive Manufacturing, or DREAM. It will enhance New Mexico's competitive edge in the global manufacturing sector by establishing the groundwork for an advanced distributed intelligent additive manufacturing infrastructure. It will contribute to fundamental knowledge in advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, and machine learning while contributing to small and medium enterprises-driven economic growth in New Mexico and national efforts to onshore manufacturing.

A planned \$15 million soundstage complex at NMSU's Arrowhead Park aims to attract film and television projects, bringing millions to the area and providing valuable experience for creative media students. The NMSU Board of Regents recently approved an agreement with the New Mexico Economic Development Department and Arrowhead Center Inc. to build the 36,400-square-foot facility, which will also offer paid internships for NMSU and Doña Ana Community College creative media students.

Five dozen middle and high school teachers from New Mexico and 12 other states are participating in a new professional development program at NMSU

that aims to sharpen skills in the culinary arts, hospitality management and sustainable agriculture. NMSU's School Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management and Arrowhead Center's Innoventure Program developed the professional development program for secondary education teachers through a \$500,000 grant from the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The free 18-month program features five online courses and an immersive summer workshop in Las Cruces designed to give teachers the skills to integrate food and agricultural science concepts into their classes.

New Mexico Tech is an innovator and leader in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics since its founding in 1889. Numerous achievements and positive economic impacts over the past year demonstrate how this tiny-but-mighty teaching and research institution continues to punch above its weight class.

NMT's annual economic impact to the State of New Mexico is \$276M. That breaks down as: alumni impact supporting 1,190 jobs at \$151.7M; research spending impact supporting 1,219 jobs at \$72.9M; operations spending impact supporting 1,021 jobs at \$47.5M; \$2.7M in visitor spending impact; and \$1.2M in student spending impact.



NMT raised over \$91M in its first comprehensive fundraising campaign, surpassing the goal of \$86M by a wide margin. Gifts, pledges, and planned

giving over the five-year *Launching Tech to New Heights* campaign expand academics, research, facilities, scholarships, and extracurricular activities.

The recent installation of a second telescope at the Magdalena Ridge Observatory (MRO) brings NMT one step closer to realizing the world's most advanced optical interferometer. This new \$5.5M telescope greatly enhances observational capacity, paving the way for NMT faculty and students to make breakthrough discoveries in astronomical research and solidifying MRO's role as a leader in exploring near-Earth objects and distant celestial phenomena.

Thanks to the state's support of the Geophysical Research Center and to philanthropic support, NMT has established the Hantush-Deju National Center for Hydrologic Innovation, an academic center that facilitates faculty and student pursuit of addressing critical water issues and how AI can assist with water management in the arid Southwest.

In April 2024, NMT broke ground on a \$28 million expansion of its Kelly Hall that houses the Petroleum Recovery Research Center (PRRC), a trailblazing scientific organization dedicated to solving problems related to the oil and gas industry while also providing experiential learning and related training to NMT undergraduate and graduate students. The construction, funded from General Obligation Bonds, legislative appropriations, donations, and NMT monies, will result in a two-story, 26,000 square-foot facility featuring numerous cutting-edge labs, a metal shop, office spaces, graduate student offices, and other state-of-the-art components.

PRRC won 20 competitive proposals in FY24, including "The Four Corners Carbon Storage Hub" worth \$51,800,913. That brings its research portfolio to 36 active projects valued at \$173,714,084. PRRC also supports 47 students and 6 faculty vis-à-vis NMT's academic mission.

NMT's Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources was awarded active contracts of over \$12.5M, including \$4.5M in critical minerals and \$1.1M in hydrology research. Bureau support of NMT's academic mission includes \$1.3M in high-end analytical instrumentation for research across the institute and over \$600K for 69 students.

NMT's Institute for Complex Additive Systems Analysis received \$21.5M in FY24 for national security initiatives in cyber defense, data analytics, and electronic warfare.

NMT also made recruitment and enrollment inroads. There was a 40% growth in the number of high school students who attended its Summer STEM Experience, with 191 registrants, of whom an estimated 30% will attend NMT in the future. Graduate student enrollment increased 24% between 2020 and the fall 2024 semester.

Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) is the largest regional comprehensive university in New Mexico. A federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, ENMU has been recognized nationally for the quality and impact of its academic programs, including being in the top 50% of universities in the social mobility category of the 2025 U.S. News & World's Report's college rankings. ENMU was also ranked in U.S. News & World Report as one of the top 50 public universities in the West and one of the top 100 regional universities in the West. ENMU provides a broad array of undergraduate and graduate programs and focuses on providing access to education through face-to-face, hybrid, and online education opportunities for students from the region, state, and nation. The University experienced significant growth in the 24-25

school year showing the most significant enrollment growth in over a decade. The first-time freshman class is up 18.9 percent, new graduate students are up 19.7%, and continuing students are up 6.1%.



Total graduate enrollment increased by 13.1%, resulting in a record number of graduate students (1487). Overall enrollment increased to 5,737, a 6.3% increase from last year.

ENMU focuses on meeting the workforce needs of New Mexico and the region. In 2023-2024, ENMU produced 1,316 graduates (associate's = 181, bachelor's = 740, graduate certificates = 76, and master's=319). This number includes 205 graduates in the healthcare fields such as Communicative Disorders (111), Counseling (6), Nursing (33), and Social Work (55). It also includes 200 graduates in Education Certifications & Licensures such as Alternative Licensure (105), Early Childhood (19), Elementary (28), Secondary (11), Special Education (35), and Physical Education (2). Additionally, ENMU added a new master's of Social Work that began its first cohort in Fall 2024 with 35 students. The University continues to leverage the placement of students in internships/practicums in all fields to enhance student training and connect students to employment.

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) continues to be the higher education destination of choice in northern New Mexico, serving both traditional and non-traditional students who are over 80% Hispanic and Indigenous.

In the past year, Northern President Hector Balderas completed his first full year of service to the college. Under new leadership, Northern has updated its Mission, Vision, and core values founded on the pillars of transformational student experience, academic excellence, organizational excellence, and strategic partnerships. Northern is now working toward the full development of its Soaring to New Heights Strategic Plan 2028.

Highlights at Northern over the last year include creating a One Stop for student services, addressing legacy physical and technological infrastructure needs at both the El Rito and Española campuses, and development of community engagement initiatives that bring arts and cultural events to the Northern campuses.



Northern is also expanding its strategic partnerships, entering into Los Alamos National Lab's mentor/protege program to develop a cybersecurity program at Northern. Other strategic partnership expansion includes renewed commitments with trade unions to provide state-of-the-art student experiences and strengthened career pathways in career technical education.

These strategic initiatives come with significantly increased enrollment, with Northern seeing 19% growth in student headcount in the spring 2024 semester, 31% in the summer 2024 semester, and 13% in the fall 2024 semester. Importantly, this growth is most prominent in Career Technical Education,

Teacher Education, Business, and Nursing, all areas of high need for the State of New Mexico.

Western New Mexico University (WNMU) is located in the shadows of the 3.3 million-acre Gila National Forest, overlooking the historic town of Silver City, founded by miners and Hispanics, now inclusive of a vibrant arts and outdoor community. Founded in 1893 as New Mexico’s premiere normal school, WNMU has been providing comprehensive and meaningful education and training to generations of students. As one of the nation's original Hispanic Serving Institutions and the state’s only Applied Liberal Arts and Sciences university, WNMU maintains shared designations as a traditional university, community college, and southwest New Mexico’s workforce training hub, providing access to education and advanced training for traditional and nontraditional students. Home to New Mexico’s only forestry/wildlife degree and the southwest region’s sole zoology degree, students at WNMU gain the tools for success in and outside of the classroom.

First year student enrollment for fall 2024 has increased by 5%, reflecting both the continued interest in higher education overall and the positive impact of the NM Opportunity Scholarship. Additionally,



as the university continues its commitment to increasing cross-border opportunities through dual-degree offerings with partner universities throughout Mexico, the international student body continues to increase across the board. As southwest New Mexico’s workforce training hub, WNMU is providing increased opportunities for working adults to earn skills they can take directly

into the workforce through meaningful workforce development training and certificate programs. Through vocational technologies including welding and construction, to health care programs such as the university's certified nursing assistant, pharmacy technician and phlebotomy programs, WNMU is committed to being responsive to the region and state's growing and ever-changing workforce needs. With locations in Deming and Gallup, NM, and a robust online presence,

Home to the only NM Center of Excellence for Early Childhood Education, WNMU is setting the bar for early childhood education and care strategies for educators in and outside of the classroom throughout the state. WNMU's School of Nursing is one of the southwest's few programs focused on rural and frontier care. The WNMU Master of Social Work program received top marks as one of the top programs in the southwest by EduMed, while the School of Business has been awarded the 2024 Most Valuable Business Degree by Best College Reviews.

WNMU recently launched a Food Security & Sustainability initiative aimed at addressing the challenges of food insecurity within the WNMU campus community. This initiative will include an on-campus greenhouse that will provide fresh produce to the campus dining hall and the university's One Stop food pantry, which has already experienced more than 5,000 visits between 2023 and October 2024.

WNMU is leading the charge toward carbon neutrality by 2030. The university has installed photovoltaic parking structures and, through its partnership with PNM's Solar Direct program, now sources 50% of campus power from clean, renewable energy. Additionally, through a community partnership with Freeport-McMoRan, WNMU has installed six electric vehicle charging stations on campus, which have delivered clean energy, free of charge.

New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU) provides tremendous higher education value to its students. College Consensus ranked it No. 86 in the 100 Most Affordable Colleges and Universities in the nation and No. 28 nationally among the 100 Most Affordable Online Colleges for 2024. NMHU is the only higher education institution in New Mexico ranked in the 100 Most Affordable Online Colleges and the 100 Most Affordable Colleges and Universities for 2024.

NMHU is a federally designated Hispanic-serving institution that strives to be a Native American-serving

institution. Native American students comprise nearly nine percent of enrollment.



NMHU welcomed its 19th president, Dr. Neil Woolf, in July 2024. As a long-time advocate for public education, Dr. Woolf comes to NMHU after spending much of his career advancing student success initiatives and expanding access to the many benefits provided by higher education. Dr. Woolf's top priority at NMHU is to enhance student success. He feels privileged to have the opportunity to expand the university's mission of providing opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students within our diverse community throughout Northern New Mexico and its surrounding regions.

NMHU's College of Arts and Sciences is expanding its degree programs to meet workforce demands and improve student education, resulting in

increased enrollment. New programs include a Master of Science in Nursing, a B.S. in Wildlife Biology and Conservation, a minor in Social Justice, Master's degrees in Criminology and Cultural Resource Management, and business degrees in a Bachelor of Applied Science and a B.A. in Organizational Leadership and Public Safety. These programs are designed to lead graduates directly to professions, providing career growth opportunities and keeping them in New Mexico.

NMHU is also increasing its Dual Credit program and is working with local high schools, including West Las Vegas, Robertson, Mora, Wagon Mound, and Santa Rosa, to offer classes. The university is also actively searching for a coordinator of dual credit.

In addition, NMHU has been successful in obtaining grants and external funding to enhance student learning and research. Through these grants, NMHU has purchased over \$450,000 in new equipment for Biology and Geology students and over \$200,000 in new computers for the Computer Science department. The university has also received grants for the ARMAS tutoring center and STEM education. Moreover, the university has integrated complex research projects into introductory classes.

NMHU's Department of Forestry offers New Mexico's only four-year Bachelor of Science degree program in Forestry with concentrations in forest management and wildland fire, accredited by the Society of American Foresters. The department houses a National Science Foundation Center of Research Excellence in Science and Technology, conducting research on forest restoration in the Southwest. NMHU also co-founded the New Mexico Reforestation Center and is building a new facility this year.

Results from surveying the 2022 NMHU graduating class showed that 75% of undergraduate students and 89% of graduate students were employed within six months of graduation.

Student Success: Completion Rates Continue to Improve

The seven CUP institutions have made great strides in recent years in reducing the time to degree completion. More students are graduating in significantly less time than they were a decade ago. This increase in graduation rates is a direct effect of the resources and efforts invested in our students. Graduation rates are generally reported on a four-, five-, and six-year basis, consistent with many national and federal reporting standards. Four-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate with a baccalaureate degree in four years or less; five-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate in five years or less and includes those students who graduated within four years; and six-year rates reflect the percentage of students who graduate in six years or less and includes students who graduated in less than five years. Standard graduation rates reflect only those students who began at their institutions as first-time, full-time freshmen. Although institutions experienced large enrollments with Lottery Scholarships the outcomes included low retention. Institutions responded with several wrap around services to support students. Similarly, we saw the same increase with the NM Opportunity Scholarships. However, these are returning, sometimes older (24+) and often more serious students. Furthermore, student support services and efforts are well underway. CUP has experienced legislature and governor support of student services such as mental health, student advisement, and basic needs access. CUP expects improved retention and completion as a result of this welcome support.

Council of University Presidents (CUP)
2024 Annual Accountability Report to the State of New Mexico Universities

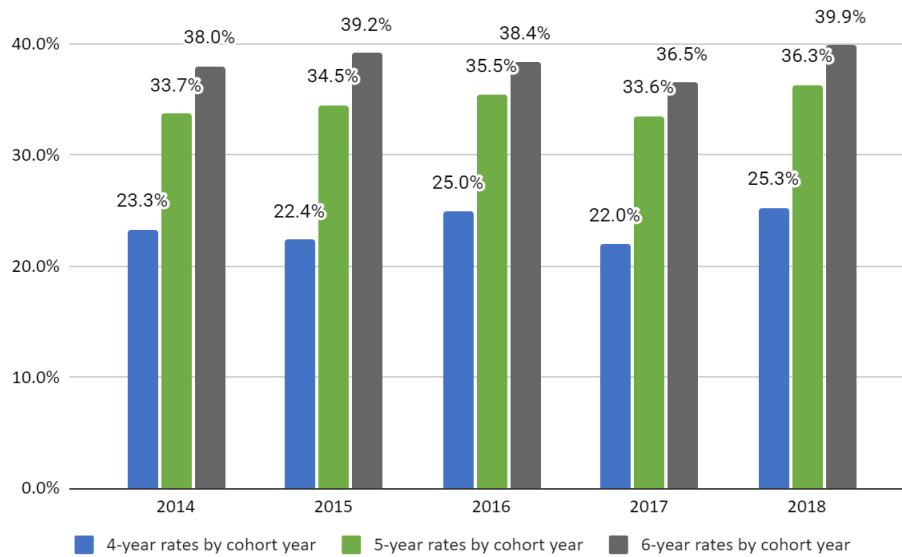


Figure 1: Graduation rates of first-time, full-time freshmen by cohort year.

Degrees in High-Demand Fields

New Mexico has endured chronic shortages of K- 12 teachers in public schools, and our aging population puts strain on our already short-staffed healthcare infrastructure. Issues such as poverty, substance abuse, and violence have adversely impacted the well-being of many New Mexicans, especially our children. The CUP institutions recognize that higher education has a critical role in training students to work in these fields to help move our state forward.

In the past several years, higher education in New Mexico has increased the numbers of high-demand degrees awarded, as shown in Figure 2. Each institution has responded to the needs of New Mexicans.

High-Demand Degree Programs	Degrees Awarded 2020-21	Degrees Awarded 2021-22	Degrees Awarded 2022-23	Degrees Awarded 2023-24
<i>Preschool Educators</i> -Associate's Degree	22	20	23	40
<i>Elementary/Secondary Education</i> -Bachelor's Degree or Alternative Licensure	318	334	452	581
<i>Education Administration</i> - Master's Degree	75	83	129	129
<i>Social Work</i> -Bachelor's Degree	186	210	198	187
<i>Social Work</i> -Master's Degree	335	350	424	400
<i>Nursing</i> -Associate's Degree	14	12	11	12

High-Demand Degree Programs	Degrees Awarded 2020-21	Degrees Awarded 2021-22	Degrees Awarded 2022-23	Degrees Awarded 2023-24
<i>Nursing</i> -Bachelor's Degree	639	674	684	638
<i>Nursing</i> -Master's Degree	66	81	88	70
Total	1,655	1,764	2,009	2,057

Figure 2: Certificates and degrees awarded in high-demand fields

Figure 3 below examines the number of degrees awarded over the past five academic years. The last two columns provide the percent change in degrees awarded during COVID and after COVID. We expect graduation numbers to continue to improve.

All Degrees Awarded	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	% Change 2019-2021 (During COVID)	% Change 2021-2024 (Post-COVID)
UG Certificate (credit-bearing, Title IV eligible)	120	95	122	92	153	-20.83%	25.41%
Associate's Degree	429	464	425	432	449	8.16%	5.65%
Baccalaureate Degree	7,923	7,662	7,487	7,297	7,427	-3.29%	-0.80%
Master's Degree	2,810	2,465	2,897	3,256	3,007	-12.28%	3.80%
Graduate Certificate	241	280	407	356	459	16.18%	12.78%
Education Specialist	29	17	18	28	22	-41.38%	22.22%
PhD	255	310	395	338	477	21.57%	20.76%
Professional Doctorate	266	328	255	262	295	23.31%	15.69%

Figure 3: Sum of degrees awarded by CUP institutions over the past five years

Student Retention

Fall-to-fall retention of first-time, full-time freshmen is a crucial metric for measuring student success. Poor retention rates can signify that students are facing difficulties and may not complete their studies on time. Several factors can impact retention, including economic conditions, academic readiness, family support, adequate financial aid, and access to student support services.

Fall 2018- Fall 2019	Fall 2019- Fall 2020	Fall 2020- Fall 2021	Fall 2021- Fall 2022	Fall 2022- Fall 2023	Fall 2023- Fall 2024	5-year change	1-year change
65.7	66.6	61.3	64.8	64.2	63.9	-2.8%	-0.5%

Figure 4: Average Fall-to-Fall retention rates across all CUP institutions. Data represents the percentage of first-time, full-time freshmen who returned for the fall semester of their second year.

Wrap-Around Services Offered (Students Services, Basic Needs Services)

Our institutions serve a significant number of low-income, first-generation, and academically underprepared students, so we recognize the importance of providing individualized student support to help improve their retention rates. To achieve this goal, our institutions have implemented various integrated student retention initiatives:

- Campus-wide student advisement that involves professional staff and faculty in supporting students through their first year,
- Expanded New Student Orientation programs based on best practices in campus engagement and student development,
- Strategic enrollment management committees and plans,
- Advising assistance from the Financial Aid and Scholarship offices,
- Various forms of academic, financial, and mentoring support,
- Development and use of Student Coaching Models,
- Opportunity Scholarships impact on housing relief, and
- Food Pantries that provide access to healthy food and nutrition services.

Further, institutions have engaged in programs and strategies to ensure continuity throughout the student experience, from inquiry of a prospective student to admission to retention to graduation. Freshman Experience courses are offered both as stand-alone courses and in integrated learning communities. Many of these courses include modules on financial literacy, health and

wellness, and college acclimation. Faculty use early alert notifications that quickly connect students to support services. At-risk students are actively engaged by advisors to identify options and solutions for success. Supplemental instruction and peer mentoring are available for many freshmen gateway courses, and many students take advantage of free tutoring on campus. Campuses also provide freshman on-campus residency requirements and living-learning communities to further support retention.

Last year, NMHED and the UNM Basic Needs Project also established the New Mexico Basic Needs Consortium, a collaboration between all public and tribal colleges and universities to continue to study and address campus food insecurity. The Consortium was one of two New Mexico organizations this year to join the White House’s Challenge to End Hunger by 2030. In Fall 2024, the founder of UNM’s Basic Needs Project, and the deputy secretary of the state’s Higher Education Department, toured campuses to have discussions around solutions and efforts on various campuses and to see the projects that have developed as a result of the initiative.

<https://www.newmexicopbs.org/productions/newmexicoinfofocus/half-of-nm-college-students-struggle-with-food-and-housing-insecurity/>

Institutions were given an opportunity to present student food pantries (often open to staff as well), SNAP application assistance programs, student gardens, housing initiatives, and much more.

Enrollment

CUP Institutions experienced a 2.9% increase in enrollment from Fall 2023 to Fall 2024.

Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	5-year % change	1-year % change
50,265	49,049	50,256	52,134	53,646	6.7%	2.9%

Figure 5: Total headcount across all CUP institutions by fall semester

Based on the most recent data available (Appendix A), New Mexico's fall undergraduate enrollment in 2023 grew 3.9 percent among all (2-year and 4-year) institutions over the prior academic year, with roughly 37,000 students receiving the Opportunity Scholarship; this continued a trend of growing statewide enrollment, building on top of a 3.5 percent increase in 2022 fall undergraduate enrollment.

This increase in statewide enrollment marks a significant reversal from the period between 2012 and 2019, during which enrollment declined by 18 percent overall in the state.

The Opportunity Scholarship funds tuition and course fees for New Mexicans pursuing certificates, associates degrees and bachelor's degrees (both part time or full time) at New Mexico's public colleges and universities. Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham earlier this year authorized a \$959 million Higher Education Trust Fund, which will provide ongoing state support for tuition-free education and state financial aid. This fund is expected to generate \$40M per year to support opportunity scholarships.

The institutions that are part of NM CUP have also been quite successful in helping their students graduate in a shorter period of time. This is evident from the significant improvements in the four-year graduation rate. Students are making good progress toward earning their degrees, which is a positive sign. Graduating within four years means that students won't have to continue attending classes for five or six years after they first enroll, as was the case some ten years ago. These students are able to complete their studies within eight semesters and can then start working or pursuing higher studies.

Continued enrollment growth requires that we be competitive on a regional and national level in higher education. We must engage in strategic growth of

academic programs and offerings including variety, quality, and modality. Existing initiatives and achievements to this end are noted in the institutional profiles above. Funding availability and strategic planning at CUP institutions can impact these efforts, but other factors present recruitment challenges more difficult to address directly. Job availability, especially in STEM fields and higher-paying industries, can draw students out of state after graduation. Despite hosting two federal research laboratories within our state, our lack of industry and commercial development means that there are not enough well-paying jobs to keep more of our graduates in the state and recruit students from out of state. We must continue to serve the citizens of New Mexico, while also providing opportunities that keep us competitive with our peers. (See attached Press Release Appendix A for the most recent enrollment update from the Governor's Office. 17 Jun, 2024)

Student Diversity

In the 2020 U.S. Census, 47.7% of New Mexico residents identified as Hispanic, and 12.4% as American Indian. The seven CUP institutions strive to recruit and serve a student body that resembles the state we serve. Some of our institutions, owing to their proximity to Pueblos or to specialized academic programs, are renowned for serving an extraordinarily diverse student population. One example of this is the School of Law at the University of New Mexico, which enrolls the greatest percentage of American Indian Juris Doctor students of any law school in the U.S. and is 8th in the country for the percentage of Hispanic Juris Doctor students enrolled. UNM's law school also houses one of the few Indian Law clinical training programs in the country.

New Mexico's higher education is a leader in promoting diversity for academic and public service excellence. For example, Northern NM College's American Indian Student Center (AISC) serves Native American students by collaborating with the community to ensure cultural sensitivity, seeking external resources for

student benefit, and providing on-campus services to aid students in their college education and future careers.

While diversity is often considered through the lens of race and ethnicity, higher education institutions also recognize the importance of socioeconomic diversity in their student body. We are working hard to increase social mobility and broaden opportunities for all New Mexicans, regardless of family income and resources.

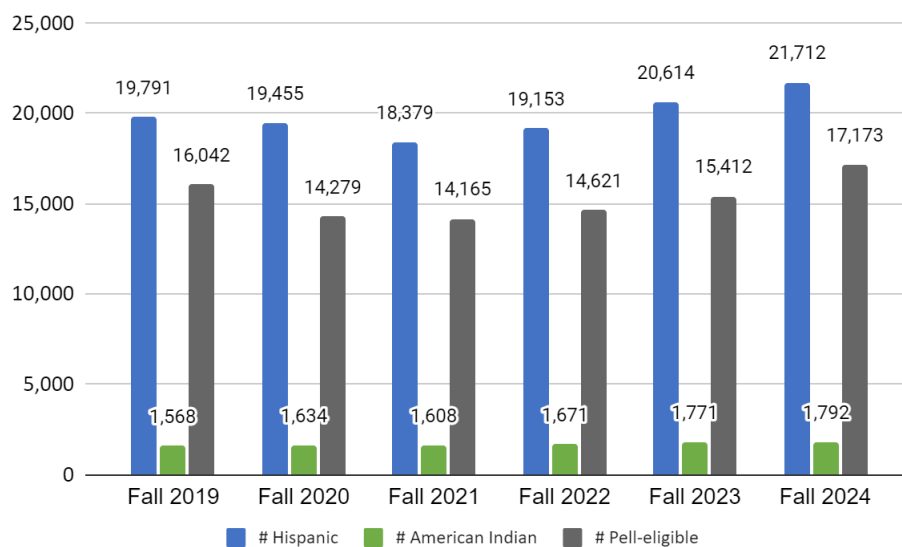


Figure 6: Number of degree seeking undergraduate students identified as Hispanic, American Indian, and Pell-Eligible students enrolled in all CUP institutions

One measure of how accessible an institution is to low-income students is the percentage of their students who receive federal Pell Grants. The Pell Grant program awards up to \$7,395 annually to low-income students who are pursuing their first associate’s or bachelor’s degree and whose family income is below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines. Over the past ten years, there has been a nationwide decline in both Pell Grant allocations and the number of students receiving Pell Grants. This is explained in part by changes in federal regulations, as well as a rebounding economy post-Great Recession. It’s worth noting here that Pell Grants do not cover the full cost of college, and sadly, even some students who are Pell-eligible decide not to attend college because of wage

stagnation and cost increases in higher education that make college seem financially out of reach, even with a Pell Grant.

In NM, at-risk students are currently identified as students who are financially at-risk based on federal Pell standards. First generation students are self-reported via FAFSA or admission applications when neither parent has received a college degree. CUP institutions are interested in providing greater access to these populations in particular by providing support services to address the specific needs of these students.

Transfer Student Success

According to [Student Clearinghouse Transfer and Progress Report](#), college transfer enrollment grew in the fall of 2023 by 5.3 percent compared to fall 2022 (+62,600), according to the latest report from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Transfer enrollment represents 13.2 percent of all continuing and returning undergraduates, up from 12.5 percent last year and 12.3 percent in fall 2021. Upward transfers from two-year to four-year institutions drove the growth, increasing by 7.7 percent, while lateral transfers grew 4.3 percent.

- Disadvantaged students, including those from lower income backgrounds, Black and Hispanic groups, and from rural community colleges saw larger increases in transfer enrollment.
- Two-year college students from middle and low neighborhood income backgrounds made large gains in transfer enrollment to more selective four-year colleges.

Students transfer for a variety of reasons, which may include geographic, time, and financial constraints that keep them from continued attendance at their initial school. Students also frequently transfer from New Mexico's two-year junior colleges to CUP institutions, as shown by Figure 7 below.

Council of University Presidents (CUP)
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	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
All Transferring In	5,298	4,389	4,545	5,344	5,784
From 2-year NM Institutions	2,620	2,341	2,300	2,790	2,984
Percent who transferred from 2-year NM institutions	49%	53%	51%	52%	51%

Figure 7: Transfer student enrollment across CUP institutions

New Mexico higher education provides opportunities and support to all students, regardless of background. Access to a college education is life-long, and multiple institutions can advance a student’s coursework across time and geographic locations. We remain committed to serving all students who transfer to our institutions so that they can be successful in their quest for a bachelor’s degree. We have worked hard to develop and implement similar general education requirements across institutions to help students with the transition into baccalaureate-level study and to ensure transfer students are successfully able to earn bachelor’s degrees at our institutions. In the most recent academic year, transfer students constituted 42% of all bachelor’s degree recipients at CUP institutions, as shown in Figure 8 below.

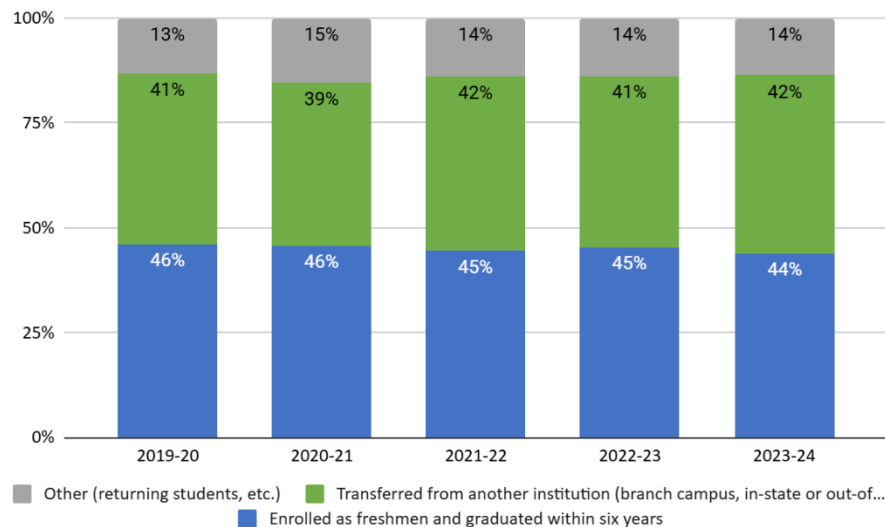


Figure 8: Status of bachelor's degree recipients at entry to graduating institution

Online Learning

The demand for online, flexible learning options has skyrocketed since the pandemic. The table below is based on the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) definition of Distance education (DE). DE is education that uses one or more types of technology to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously. The following types of technology may be used for distance instruction: Internet; Satellite or wireless communication; and Audio and video conferencing.

Courses and programs are considered DE if ALL of their instructional portions can be completed remotely. NM HED reports distinguish **Hybrid** courses separately. It is important to note that Hybrid has grown after the Covid years. Almost half of NM UG Degree/certificate seeking students are enrolled in at least one Distance Education course while over 40% of NM Graduate students are enrolled exclusively in distance education courses. Almost a quarter of non-degree students are enrolled exclusively in distance education courses.

	UG Degree/certificate seeking	UG Non-degree/certificate seeking	Graduate Students
Enrolled Exclusively in distance education courses	21.5%	24.9%	40.4%
Enrolled in at least one but not all distance education courses	47.8%	15.0%	19.8%
Not enrolled in any distance education courses	30.7%	60.1%	39.8%

Figure 9: Aggregate enrollment as of the official fall reporting date or as of October 15, 2023

While online learning continues to grow in NM, our CUP institutions continue to invest in the infrastructure to support it. These include Learning Management Systems (LMS), electronic devices, communication applications, and dependable internet access. Faculty training and quality course development are also a priority investment.

College Affordability and Financial Aid

According to College Board data, New Mexico's average tuition costs for in-state residents are among the lowest in the country. This represents a long-standing commitment of higher education institutions in the state to remain accessible to all New Mexicans. Thanks to low tuition combined with generous financial aid packages, NM ranks as one of the lowest states for student debt.

(<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/student-loans/average-student-loan-statistics/>)

Figure 10 below shows the minimal increase in the average tuition and fees for CUP institutions in New Mexico over the past 6 years, and how CUP institutions' tuition and fees compare to our peers in nearby states.

	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023	Fall 2024	Compared to peers
Research	\$7,706	\$7,941	\$8,080	\$8,927	\$9,007	\$9,463	83.6%
Comprehensives	\$6,007	\$6,153	\$6,229	\$6,650	\$7,067	\$7,353	86.7%
<i>Overall Average</i>	\$6,735	\$6,919	\$7,022	\$7,626	\$7,898	\$8,257	73.7%

Figure 10: Average tuition and fees at CUP institutions, in comparison to peer institutions in other states.

A wide variety of financial aid is available at each CUP institution to help students meet college costs. Grants and scholarships from the institution or the state (such as the NM Opportunity Scholarship) are crucial to many students, as is "Self-Help" aid such as Work-Study and student loans, both federal and private. Note that grants, scholarships, and work-study do not need to be paid back, while student loans do.

The average amount of financial aid awarded to students at CUP institutions has risen over the past six years commensurate with rising costs. Figure 11 shows the average financial aid awarded to students attending NM 4-year institutions between 2018-19 and 2023-24, by institutional type.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Research Institutions	\$10,453.67	\$10,872.00	\$10,768.33	\$11,928.67	\$13,836.67	\$14,206.33
Comprehensive Institutions	\$8,901.00	\$8,778.15	\$8,312.94	\$8,437.01	\$9,612.58	\$10,057.07
Average Award per Recipient	\$9,566.43	\$9,675.51	\$9,365.25	\$9,933.43	\$11,422.90	\$11,835.32

Figure 11: Average financial aid award for undergraduates at CUP institutions

In the academic year 2023-24, almost 83% of all undergraduates at CUP institutions received some type of financial aid. Seventy-nine percent of these undergraduates received grants and scholarships, while loans and work-study go to 29.5% of undergraduates.

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Grant and Scholarship Aid (not paid back)	76.3	77.3	79.1	78.1	79.1	79.1
Work Study (must work to earn)	9.2	9.7	8.4	6.8	8.3	7.5
Loans (must be paid back)	35.4	38.3	32.4	28.3	23.7	22.0
Opportunity Scholarships						57.2
NM Legislative Lottery Scholarships	23.8	25.1	25.4	26.6	22.8	23.1
Pell Grants	47.4	50.0	42.9	42.3	45.1	41.5
Any Financial Aid	78.3	82.8	84.6	85.3	87.1	82.7

Figure 12: Percentages of undergraduates receiving financial aid by type of aid. The aid percentages displayed in this table are not mutually exclusive, meaning that students can (and often do) receive a variety of different financial aid types. The last row labeled “Any Aid” is the percentage of students receiving any combination of financial aid (including loans).

The NM Legislative Lottery Scholarship helps 23.1% of New Mexico undergraduates at CUP institutions. Because the Lottery Scholarship is not need-based, it can be used to supplement the other types of financial aid that students may receive, and the data in the chart below suggests that students who receive both Pell Grants and the Lottery Scholarship have far better Six-Year Graduation Rates than students who receive only Pell Grants. The Opportunity Scholarship has also become an important part of the financial aid landscape in New Mexico, and provided support for almost 60% of NM university undergraduate students.

Finally, a word about Pell grants: The NM Higher Education Department (NMHED) considers Pell grant recipients to be “at-risk” students. In the most recent aid year, 50% of all undergraduates who were awarded financial aid at CUP institutions received Pell grants. The NM Opportunity scholarship covers gaps such as cost for books, supplies, food, housing, and other necessary expenses for NM students who qualify.

Nationwide, students with Pell Grants often have lower graduation rates than students who are not Pell-eligible, as they have often struggled with inadequate academic preparation, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and financial stress. Data from CUP institutions reflect this trend for New Mexico's Pell grant students, but it's important to note that the Lottery Scholarship does have a positive impact on these students' six-year graduation rates, as shown in Figure 13. CUP expects the same positive impact from the Opportunity Scholarship when the first eligible cohort is available.

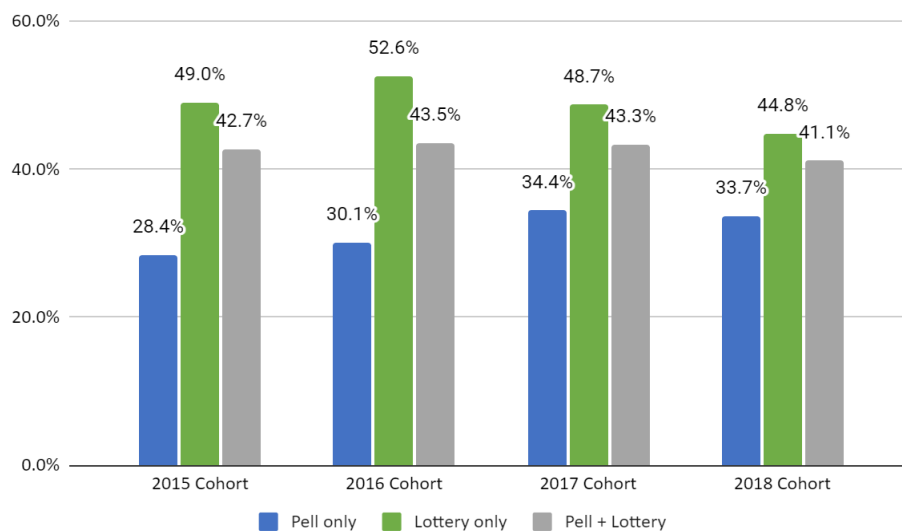


Figure 13: Six-year graduation rates for students receiving Pell, Lottery, and Pell + Lottery aid.

Faculty Headcounts and Salaries

Faculty at our public universities in New Mexico are a committed and diverse group of teachers and researchers who believe in the power of higher education to improve lives. Among our regional peers, the average university has a faculty that is 39.7% female and 6.8% Hispanic. In Fall 2023, the faculty at CUP institutions was 48.3% female and 16.9% Hispanic. Research shows that students at all levels are more successful when they have teachers and mentors who more closely resemble them and understand their backgrounds.

When serving a diverse student body, it is especially important that students have sufficient access to faculty members for teaching, mentorship, and

undergraduate research opportunities. These kinds of high-impact practices are known to be crucial for student success in college, particularly for students who are first-generation, from under-represented minority groups, or from low-income families. Lower student-faculty ratios provide more individualized attention to students and facilitate greater in-class student participation. CUP institutions have maintained a lower student-faculty ratio over the past five years, and this has resulted in better student outcomes for students in NM.

Furthermore, CUP institutions recently experienced a small increase in the number of full-time faculty, as shown in Figure 14.

Fall 2018	Fall 2019	Fall 2020	Fall 2021	Fall 2022	Fall 2023
3,197	3,190	3,216	3,186	3,170	3,340

Figure 13: Total full-time faculty headcounts at CUP institutions

A decrease in full-time faculty in prior years presented challenges such as students having fewer opportunities to be mentored by top-tier scholars and teachers and having fewer avenues for engaging in research and service-learning activities. This increase is both hopeful and appreciated. Many successful people can point to a particular college professor who invested countless hours to develop them as scholars and professionals, and who saw the extent of their great potential when they were undergraduates. All New Mexico students deserve access to these meaningful and enriching opportunities.

The average increase in faculty salaries across all sectors within the seven CUP institutions from 2019-2023 was 17.1%. This is just below the nationwide rate of inflation over the same timeframe, which was 18%. When presented with the opportunity to earn a higher salary and receive more support for research, scholarship, and creative activities, many faculty opt to leave for better opportunities.

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	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Research	\$80,286	\$80,094	\$81,788	\$84,851	\$91,656
Comprehensive	\$62,175	\$64,257	\$64,915	\$70,533	\$74,622
All (average)	\$69,936	\$71,044	\$72,146	\$76,669	\$81,922

Figure 15: Average salaries of full-time faculty at CUP institutions by institution type

Resource constraints continue to make New Mexico universities a less enticing prospect for these teachers and researchers, and we increase our disadvantage in the higher education market with each faculty departure. Recent across-the-board salary increases given by the New Mexico Legislature have put us in a more competitive position, but there is still more that we can do to enhance our profile. Many of our institutions are also actively competing with industry and national labs for highly educated talent, which makes it even more important that we enhance our ability to attract and retain excellent teachers and researchers.

Finance

Like everything else, it costs money to run universities. In the wake of numerous budget constraints over the years, higher education in New Mexico has found many ways to innovate and be resourceful. This is exemplified best by the improvements in student success outcomes seen across all CUP institutions over the past five years. We find ways to serve our students with excellence while also being mindful of our resource constraints and obligations to the taxpaying public.

It is important to acknowledge that colleges and universities attract external funding from private foundations, federal agencies, and industry to perform research and development projects which can help support programs that drive innovation and enhance the lives of many in New Mexico and beyond. These non-appropriation funds can be used to hire new employees, buy scientific and other equipment, support graduate students with assistantships, purchase supplies from local vendors, and to develop new products and services for the

benefit of the state. However, it should be noted that research funding does not completely support the academic side of our universities, nor does it completely compensate for the reductions that New Mexico universities have continued to experience in their state appropriations since 2008.

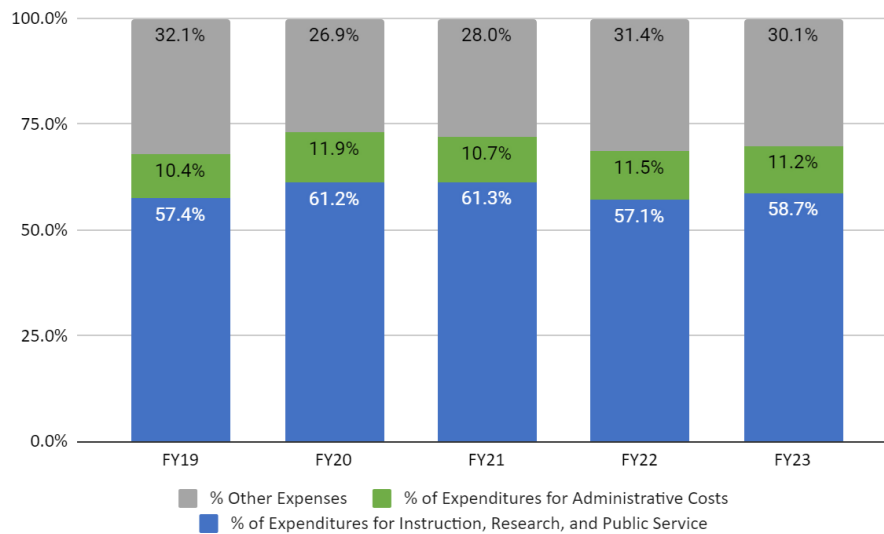


Figure 16: Institutional expenses by type

Administrative costs, such as the costs of personnel and supplies that are administrative in nature and do not have a direct relationship to support students in the program, remain a small percentage of all CUP institutions' budgets. As shown in Figure 16, Instruction, Research, and Public Service costs (frequently referred to as I&G) comprise the largest percentage of expenditures.

Conclusion

Every CUP institution has its own unique mission, student demographics, and history. Our campuses are diverse, ranging from urban to rural, small to large, and focused on research or teaching. What brings us together is our belief in the immense potential of New Mexico and our commitment to help unlock it. Every year, we are proud to see more and more graduates who are eager to utilize their education to give back to their communities and contribute to the state's workforce. We promise to support them every step of the way, and we are grateful to the Legislature for their continued support of our efforts.

New Mexico Universities

Research Universities

New Mexico Institute of Mining & Technology	Socorro
New Mexico State University	Las Cruces
University of New Mexico	Albuquerque

Comprehensive Universities

Eastern New Mexico University	Portales
New Mexico Highlands University	Las Vegas
Northern New Mexico College	Española
Western New Mexico University	Silver City

Council of University Presidents

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Valerio Ferme	New Mexico State University
Garnett S. Stokes	University of New Mexico
James Johnston	Eastern New Mexico University
Neil Woolf	New Mexico Highlands University
Hector Balderas	Northern New Mexico College
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New Mexico enrollment growth and student investment continue to outperform national averages

📅 17 Jun, 2024 🗣️ [Anne Maclachlan](#)

SANTA FE — Statewide higher education enrollment in New Mexico continued to grow and was among the best in the United States, according to a national financial analysis of the 2022-2023 academic year, which highlighted the state's Opportunity Scholarship as driving New Mexico's higher education rebound.

The State Higher Education Executive Officers Association report also identified New Mexico as a national leader in reducing college students' out-of-pocket costs.

"Our efforts to create more opportunity in higher education are paying off," said Higher Education Secretary **Stephanie M. Rodriguez**. "This report clearly shows that we are making college and career training more accessible for more types of people. Helping more New Mexicans train for and find fulfilling careers right here in their home state will continue to be a top-line priority of this administration."

Even as college enrollment rates decline nationally and in most states, the [report shows](#), New Mexico's total enrollment increased for the second consecutive academic year, and enrollment growth in New Mexico for the 2022-2023 academic year was the fourth-highest of any state in the United States.

The Colorado-based organization's State Higher Education Finance Report identified New Mexico as having the largest year-over-year decrease of any state in out-of-pocket costs for full-time students, and as providing the second-most financial aid per full-time student, trailing only Tennessee.

In all, New Mexico's net tuition revenue as a share of total public higher education revenue was, according to the report, the lowest of any state (13.4 percent as compared to the national average of 40.2 percent), meaning college students in New Mexico contribute less to their higher education costs than students in any other state in the country.

"The Opportunity Scholarship and financial aid programs designed to reduce cost burdens for students are helping thousands more students pursue higher education here in New Mexico," said Higher Education Deputy Secretary **Patricia Trujillo, Ph.D.** "The Opportunity Scholarship is the most inclusive free-tuition program in the United States, and we encourage all prospective and potential returning students to [learn about how](#) we can help connect New Mexicans to a degree or training program."

New Mexico's fall undergraduate enrollment in 2023 grew 3.9 percent over the prior academic year, with roughly 37,000 students receiving the Opportunity Scholarship; this continued a trend of growing statewide enrollment, building on top of a 3.5 percent increase in 2022 fall undergraduate enrollment.

This rebound in statewide enrollment represents a stark turnaround from the years 2012 to 2019, when enrollment decreased 18 percent overall in the state.

The [Opportunity Scholarship](#) fully covers tuition and course fees for New Mexicans pursuing high-demand career training certificates, associates degrees and bachelor's degrees part time or full time at New Mexico's public colleges and universities.

Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham earlier this year authorized a \$959 million Higher Education Trust Fund, which will provide ongoing state support for tuition-free education and state financial aid.

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