

ANNUAL
ACCOUNTABILITY
REPORT



Council of University Presidents - November 2022



COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS

Membership: Eastern New Mexico University, New Mexico Highlands University, New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology, New Mexico State University, 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-fifth 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 ranks 50th in the nation for child well-being for 2022, according to the Annie E Casey Foundation. Our state was ranked 50th in Education, 33rd in Healthcare, 44th in Economy, 45th in Infrastructure, 49th in Opportunity, and 47th in Crime and Corrections by US News and World Report. (<https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/new-mexico>)
- The median household income in New Mexico in 2019 was **\$51,945**, which is **21% below** the national median household income. The overall poverty rate in the state was **18.2%** according to the QuickFacts published by the U.S. Census Bureau. (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/NM>)
- Only **27.1%** of New Mexico adults over the age of 24 have earned a baccalaureate degree or higher, compared to the national average of **36%**. Eighteen of the 33 counties in New Mexico have adult higher education attainment rates below **20%**, with some as low as **10%** according to the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey 2019. (<https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data.html>)

All of these factors present significant obstacles to New Mexico's ability to thrive economically and attract interest from the commercial sector to bring well-paying jobs to the state. Thus, higher education's role in New Mexico is to leverage its incredible knowledge base and human capital to mitigate the societal, physical, and economic ills faced by the state.

The Council of University Presidents (CUP) is responsible for leveraging all aspects of university life (student success, economic development, research, public service and promoting the outstanding efforts of university faculty and staff) to promote shared goals and a shared vision while also fully recognizing and supporting the unique strengths of each university.

Seven New Mexico institutions of higher education belong to CUP and they are divided into two sectors: Research Universities, whose primary mission is scientific and engineering research; and Comprehensive Institutions, which are "public institutions established to foster college access and support civic and economic life across an entire region." (<https://admissions.uni.edu/whats-it-mean-be-regional-comprehensive-university>) The list of CUP institutions is shown in the conclusion of this report.

The seven member institutions of the Council of University Presidents produce a wide variety of knowledge that benefits our state, our country, and our planet through information sharing, collaboration, strategic planning, policy development, and community outreach.

The NM CUP institutions are committed to teaching, public service and student success. Our Comprehensive Institutions offer Certificates through Master's degrees, serve mostly local students and support economic development. Research and quality graduate programs make our Research Universities engines of economic opportunity and development.

Over the past five years, many events have shaped the higher education landscape at the local and national levels. Changes to federal immigration policies and ongoing litigation of the Consideration of Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program directly and significantly affected international and undocumented student enrollments. Drastic budget cuts at the state level resulted in disruptive hiring freezes, curtailed student services, and decreased the New Mexico Legislative Lottery Scholarship by 33%, all of which have had a negative impact on Mexico's college students. The COVID-19 pandemic has also had an adverse impact on every aspect of higher education since the middle of March 2020, and it will continue to challenge us for many years to come.

Despite these obstacles, CUP institutions have collectively enrolled an average of 50,977 students per year in each of the past five years and have conferred nearly 61,500 post-secondary credentials (certificates, bachelor's degrees, and graduate degrees) during that same five-year period. This is truly a testament to the commitment our institutions have to educating and serving our fellow New Mexicans. In just the most recent academic year, CUP institutions awarded a total of 11,985 degrees and certificates, of which 1,766 were in the high-need fields of nursing, social work, and education. We are educating the next generation of public servants who will dedicate their careers to making the lives of New Mexicans healthier and more fulfilling.

Achievements and Economic Development

Each of the CUP institutions make important contributions to economic development here in the state of New Mexico. This section summarizes each school's most significant contributions in the past year.

The University of New Mexico is one of the top 100 worldwide universities, with the largest number of issued US patents for the seventh year in a row (recognized by National Academy of Inventors (NAI) and the Intellectual Property Owners Association (IPO)). The Association of Public & Land-Grant Universities designated UNM an Innovation & Economic Prosperity (IEP) University and named UNM with an IEP Place award.



UNM supports state-wide entrepreneurship through two Economic Development Administration grants; the first by providing technical assistance, e-commerce training, and mentoring through an EDA University Center Program, and the second (supporting tribal entrepreneurship through an EDA ARPA grant) by providing mentoring, entrepreneurial training opportunities and resources to Native American entrepreneurs across the state. Innovate ABQ® is an initiative from the University of New Mexico to take a more prominent role in local and state economic development by developing innovation districts that will be catalysts for substantially growing the innovation economy in New Mexico. Partners of Innovate ABQ include UNM, the City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, Nusenda Credit Union and other partners. UNM sponsors Innovate New Mexico®, a network among the leading technology-transfer institutions in the state of New Mexico that promotes research and technology opportunities, startup companies, and economic development resources. UNM also holds annual technology showcases for industry, entrepreneurs, and investors.

New Mexico State University leads many national rankings as one of America's top colleges for traditional and non-traditional students. For a decade, NMSU has been recognized as a top tier university on the *U.S. News & World Report* Best Colleges rankings. On the 2023 list, NMSU was recognized as one of the top performers on social mobility ranking (tied for 105), top public schools ranking (tied for 132), and national universities ranking (tied for 263). NMSU's rankings improved in both the undergraduate nursing programs (tied for 112) and undergraduate engineering programs (tied for 123). NMSU's undergraduate computer science programs tied for 172 and its undergraduate business programs tied for 247.



NMSU was also listed as one of Forbes' America's Top Colleges in 2022 at 458. NMSU ranked 102nd in the west, 212th in public colleges, and 232nd in research universities on additional Forbes lists. In November 2021, Forbes recognized NMSU as one of America's Best Employers

for Veterans 2021 and ranked NMSU 93rd on the list of the top 200 businesses and organizations in the country.

Numerous NMSU programs were ranked on the 2022 *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Online Education Programs list offered by U.S. National Universities: NMSU's criminal justice online master's programs tied for 37th improving 13 spots from the previous year. NMSU's business online bachelor's programs tied for 51st; online master's programs in engineering ranged from 79th to 104th ; master's in business administration online programs tied for 121st ; and nursing master's online programs ranged from 135th to 179th.

Several NMSU graduate programs were also recognized on the *U.S. News & World Report's* Best Graduate Schools 2023 rankings. A total of 15 NMSU graduate programs ranked in the top 200. These included graduate programs in the College of Arts and Sciences, College of Business, College of Engineering and College of Health, Education and Social Transformation.

NMSU was recognized on the Top 100 Colleges and Universities for Hispanics list published in the October issue of the *Hispanic Outlook on Education*. NMSU ranked 50th in total bachelor's degrees granted, 78th in total master's degrees granted, 68th in total enrollment for four-year schools, and in the top 10 schools by majors in agricultural/animal/plant/veterinary science and related fields degrees (10th).

New Mexico Tech is New Mexico's premiere STEM University and is considered among the best in the nation. New Mexico Tech was once again acknowledged by Niche.com's 2023 College Rankings as New Mexico's Top College, College with the Best Academics, Best Value College, College with the Best Professors, and New Mexico's Top Public University. NMT is one of the best Hispanic Serving Universities in the nation, ranking 9th out of 378 universities by Niche.com. Furthermore, a National Science Foundation study showed that NMT ranks 1st among public universities, and 18th nationwide, in the percentage of bachelor's recipients who go on to earn STEM PhDs.



The CollegeFactual.com states: “The New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology ranks among the nation’s elite universities in academic value and quality of education.”

NMT also performs the kind of research critical to our state’s economic future and prides itself on developing New Mexico’s future leaders in STEM fields and economic development. A point of particular pride is that NMT currently has five faculty members who hold National Science Foundation “CAREER” awards, in topics including critical minerals, biology, astrophysics, mechanical engineering and materials engineering. CAREER awards are the most prestigious given by NSF, and support early career researchers who have shown exceptional potential to be academic role models in research and education.

New Mexico Tech and Navajo Technological University (NTU) continue to collaborate on a project to help Navajo communities procure clean water for human consumption, livestock usage, and agricultural usage by implementing water purification technologies developed at NMT's Petroleum Recovery Research Center. In addition to scientific collaboration, a Sloan Foundation Grant is allowing NMT faculty and researchers from the NM Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources to work with NTU partners to develop pathways for NTU students to attend graduate school at NMT.

Finally, NMT continues to carry out a range of environmentally focused research projects. Carbon storage research performed at NMT benefits both New Mexico and the entire Western US, with a portfolio of nearly \$140 million in funded research since 2003 and 21 storage projects completed or in progress, representing millions of tons of CO₂ diverted from the atmosphere. NMT also recently produced a consensus study regarding climate change and its potential impact on New Mexico's water resources, to serve as the scientific foundation for Governor Lujan Grisham's 50-Year Water Plan. And the NM Bureau of Geology and Mineral Resources recently received the largest single award ever made for geological mapping by the National Cooperative Geological Mapping program, also making New Mexico the top-awarded state in this program's 30-year history.



Eastern New Mexico University placed 206 students in internship positions, 32 in student teaching, and 101 in social work practicums during 2021-22, in placements ranging from agriculture, business, communication, criminal justice, finance, health and physical education to nursing and communicative disorders. These opportunities provide businesses, schools, and organizations with talented students at relatively low salaries or as unpaid workers. These positions frequently result in an employment offer to the student once the semester concludes. One-third of social work graduates and 82% of BSN/MSN graduates report they are working or have accepted jobs in New Mexico.



ENMU received \$5,173,295 in external grants in 2021-22 from NSF, the New Mexico Humanities Council, and other federal agencies and private foundations. These grants support additional outreach, research, and various opportunities for ENMU students.

ENMU's Blackwater Draw archeological site welcomed 1,170 visitors and the affiliated museum hosted 2,001 visitors in 2021-22. The site and museum both sponsor educational events that attract researchers, students, and visitors from around the state and the region, particularly for the annual Atlatl (pre-historic spear-throwing) Contest at Blackwater Draw.

Northern New Mexico College implemented a Student Success Academy as its quality initiative to use data-driven approaches to identify inhibitors to student success and to develop strategies to promote and drive success. Enhancing student success will directly impact the ability to add more graduates to the local economy in strategic areas of high demand.



Similarly, NNMC established strategic partnerships with leading employers and other communities that will strengthen the school-to-work pipeline in technical trades (plumbing, electrician, carpentry, etc.) and project management, and promote equitable access to the trades for more Hispanic and Native American students. Partnerships include the signing of the first Mentor- Protégé Agreement between a minority-serving institution and TRIAD; a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to provide a remote NNMC site in the Jemez School District in collaboration with Jemez Pueblo; exploration of an additional NNMC remote site at Pojoaque High School to teach technical trades; and a collaboration with the NM United Brotherhood of Carpenters to develop programs in carpentry as a stackable credential for a potential bachelor's degree in construction management. Finally, NNMC continues to participate with five other NM community colleges in the Collaborative for Higher Education Shared Services (CHESS), a team effort among institutions to establish a joint Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) that will incentivize collaboration and reduce costs.

Western New Mexico University is nestled in the shadows of the 3.3 million-acre Gila National Forest for nearly 130 years and overlooks the historic town of Silver City. WNMU is one of New Mexico's premiere Hispanic Serving Institutions and the state's only Applied Liberal Arts and Sciences university.



Home to New Mexico's only forestry/wildlife degree and the southwest region's sole zoology degree, WNMU is working to prepare graduates with the knowledge and skills to enter the workforce with confidence.

Fall enrollment at WNMU is up by 5.77% over last fall's enrollment. Since the Spring registration period started in October 2022, WNMU has registered 861 students for Spring 2023 classes. And with the university being more responsive to the state's economic needs, WNMU is providing increased opportunities to working adults to earn skills they can take directly into the workforce, such as a commercial driver's license training program. WNMU will be rolling out a greater selection of online programs designed to allow the working adult the ability to build stackable credentials, providing greater career mobility on their own time.

With its recent designation as the state's Early Childhood Education Center of Excellence,

WNMU is setting the bar for early childhood education throughout the state, working to ensure every child has the opportunity to succeed regardless of their economic or cultural background.

WNMU also recently received a Title V grant for \$2.98M to better serve Hispanic learners in communities in ways that would not be possible otherwise.

From its School of Nursing that has been working to train passionate and quality healthcare professionals for more than 80 years, to its nationally recognized School of Business and Social Work programs, WNMU works to provide a world-class education designed to meet the needs of its students and an ever-evolving economy. Best Value Schools ranked WNMU as the Number One Best Value Online Bachelor's in Marketing, and the Masters in Social Work (MSW) program was also ranked number one by Best College Reviews. Finally, WNMU was ranked the Number One Best Affordable Marketing Major in the U.S.

New Mexico Highlands University is a federally designated Hispanic-Serving Institution, and strives to be a Native American-Serving Institution, with Native American students comprising nearly nine percent of enrollment.



NMHU was named one of the most diverse regional universities in the west, a Top-100 best regional university in the west, and one of the Top 60 Public Universities in the West by U.S. News & World Report. NMHU is also ranked in the Top 100 (76th) among all universities nationwide on U.S. News & World Report's Top Performers on Social Mobility list and was recognized as one of the Top 100 College and University for Hispanics list published in the Hispanic Outlook for Higher Education's October 2021 issue.

NMHU continues to demonstrate diversity as an institutional value through partnerships with NM's fellow higher-education institutions, including working in tandem with NMSU, ENMU, and NM's Developmental Disabilities Council in designing an adult guardianship court visitor program to support the NM court system and to enhance the training and professional development of students in social work.

NMHU also received \$1 million from the federal government to support the NM Reforestation Center's seed bank and seed collection efforts. The NM Reforestation Center is a partnership established between NMHU, NMSU, UNM, and the NM Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department's Forestry Division to meet New Mexico's current and future reforestation needs, which will become even more critical as climate change continues to affect the state.

The NMHU Native American Institute in Social Work includes a variety of programs and initiatives to serve the needs of Native American people. NMHU continues to achieve success in the Alternative Teaching Program, expanded the Professional Development School model in teacher education, and launched a new distance-education partnership designed to increase

student enrollment. Also, the Success Coach student-mentoring program model has contributed to a university-record retention rate in 2022.

NMHU recently developed three new degree programs; a Master's of Arts (MA) in Criminology; an MA in Cultural Resource Management; and a Bachelor's of Science in Wildlife Biology and Conservation. New programs in biology, entrepreneurship, cultural resource management, and criminal justice were also added. In turn, NMHU has been awarded \$20.5 million in endowment funding from New Mexico's Higher Education Department (HED) to bolster its education, social work, and nursing degree programs, which will allow the university to hire more faculty and staff to support program expansion and to serve more students.

NMHU's School of Education received \$10 million to support a new Institute for Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Learning and Teaching (ICLRLT). New faculty and staff to support the institute will be hired, and new professors will include researchers in culturally sustaining pedagogy, indigenous knowledges, inclusive education, and bilingual education among other focus areas.

Annually, NMHU's Facundo Valdez School of Social Work receives \$1.6 million in federal funding through Title IV-E, and this funding is earmarked for training social workers in NM to work in child welfare. Both undergraduate and graduate students pursuing a social work degree can participate in the Children, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD) stipend program, to help cover students' educational costs in exchange for an agreement to work for CYFD following graduation.

NMHU is piloting a new Student Mental Health Initiative to support student wellness with funding from NMHED. Funding will be used to assess the impact of a new model of care, which utilizes health and wellness coaching to assist students in navigating their college experience.

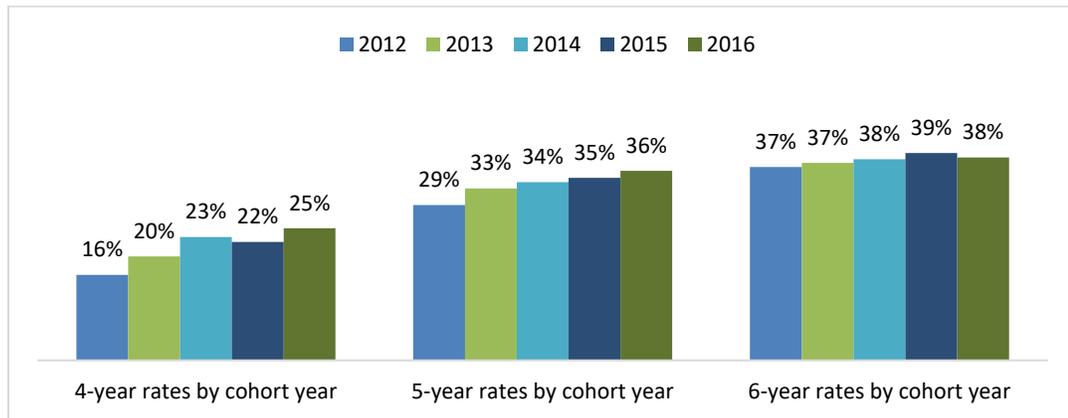
Student Success

Student outcomes are everything in higher education, and the seven CUP institutions have made great strides in recent years in decreasing the time needed for students to complete an undergraduate degree. More students are graduating in significantly less time than they were a decade ago.

Graduation rates are conventionally determined by defining a cohort of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who enter a college or university in the fall semester and then determining how many students in that cohort graduate with an undergraduate degree within six years.

Graduation rates are reported cumulatively, in that the four-year rate shows the percentage of students from the initial cohort who graduated with a baccalaureate degree in four years or less, while the five-year rate includes the percentage of students graduating in five years or less plus the four-year graduates. The six-year rate includes the percentage of students from the initial cohort who graduated in six years or less, plus the four- and five-year graduates.

Chart 1: Graduation Rates of First-time, Full-time freshmen by Institution and Cohort Year



Degrees in High-Demand Fields

High-demand fields include primary and secondary education, education administration, nursing, and social work. New Mexico chronically suffers from shortages of K- 12 teachers in public schools, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and associated hospitalizations along with an aging population have put major strains on NM’s already short-staffed healthcare infrastructure, emphasizing the need to grow a well-trained healthcare workforce. Other endemic issues such as poverty, substance abuse, and violence also adversely affect 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 while also taking into account complicated safety regulations and state and federal licensing requirements.

Table 1: Certificates and Degrees Awarded in High-Demand Fields

High-Demand Degrees	Degrees awarded 2019-20	Degrees awarded 2020-21	Degrees awarded 2021-22
Associate's Degree-Preschool Educators	20	22	20
Bacc. Degree / Alternative Licensure-Elementary/Secondary Ed	259	318	334
Master's Degree-Education Administration	167	75	83
Baccalaureate Degree-Social Work	204	186	210
Master's Degree-Social Work	348	335	350
Associate's Degree-Nursing	16	14	12
Baccalaureate Degree-Nursing	668	639	674
Master's Degree-Nursing	65	66	81
Total	1,747	1,655	1764

Table 2 shows the number of degrees awarded over the past five academic years. The last three columns provide the percentage change in degrees awarded before COVID, during COVID, and after COVID. It is also important to note that the number of degrees awarded peaked during the recession. We expect graduation numbers to continue to improve.

Table 2: Degrees Awarded by CUP Institutions

	2017 -18	2018 -19	2019 -20	2020 -21	2021 -22	%Change 2017-2019 (Pre- COVID)	%Change 2017-2021 (COVID)	%Change 2021-2022 (Post- COVID)
UG Certificate (credit-bearing, Title IV eligible)	112	78	120	95	122	-30.40%	-15.20%	28.42%
Associate's Degree	472	509	429	464	425	7.80%	-1.70%	-8.41%
Baccalaureate Degree	8,576	8,234	7,923	7,662	7,487	-4.00%	-10.70%	-2.28%
Master's Degree	2,915	2,983	2,810	2,465	2,897	2.30%	-15.40%	17.53%
Graduate Certificate	189	198	241	280	407	4.80%	48.10%	45.36%
Education Specialist	74	65	29	17	18	-12.20%	-77.00%	5.88%
PhD	351	362	329	260	301	3.10%	-25.90%	15.77%
Professional Doctorates	321	320	325	266	328	-0.30%	-17.10%	23.31%

Student Retention

Fall-to-fall student retention rates are a primary indicator of student success. Like graduation rates, retention rates are conventionally calculated by defining a cohort of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who enter a college or university in the fall semester and then determining how many of those students remain enrolled in the same institution for the subsequent fall semester. Poor retention rates can indicate that students are struggling and not likely to graduate in a timely fashion. Retention depends on many factors, including economic conditions, academic preparedness, support of family, access to sufficient financial aid, and availability of student support services.

Table 3: Third Semester Retention Rates at CUP Institutions*

Fall17- Fall18	Fall18- Fall19	Fall19- Fall20	Fall20- Fall21	Fall21- Fall22	%Change 2017-2019 (Pre- COVID)	%Change 2017-2021 (COVID)	%Change 2021-2022 (Post- COVID)
64.7	65.7	66.6	61.3	64.8	2%	-7%	6%

**Represents the percentage of first-time, full-time freshmen who returned for the fall semester of their second year.*

Wrap-Around Services to increase student retention

The COVID-19 pandemic has continued to affect students' plans for higher education, as students and their families experienced financial difficulties from lost jobs and business shutdowns. Some students paused their collegiate careers until schools can return to normal, in-person classes with a reasonable assurance of safety. CUP institutions have implemented many strategies to support student success during these difficult times, such as offering laptops to needy students, providing emergency loans and grants, conducting student needs assessments, and increasing flexibility with grading and scheduling.

Because we serve a significant number of low-income, first generation, and academically underprepared students, CUP institutions also recognize that many students may require more individualized support to stay in college. Cup institutions have implemented numerous, integrated student retention initiatives, including:

- Expanding campus-wide student advisement involving both professional staff and faculty to support students through their first year
- Expanding New Student Orientation programs based on best practices in campus engagement and student development
- Developing Strategic enrollment management committees and plans
- Providing advising assistance from the Financial Aid and Scholarship offices
- Providing other forms of academic, financial, and mentoring support
- Developing and using new Student Coaching Models.

Further, CUP 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. Campuses make use of freshman on-campus residency requirements and Living-Learning Communities to further support retention. Freshman Experience 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.

Enrollment

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the state of New Mexico has seen a net population loss over the last decade, driven in part by economic factors. The decline in higher education enrollments follows a 7% decline in residents ages 1-14 and a 5% decline in residents ages 15-24 since 2012. This represents an overall loss of 40,000 potential new students at New Mexico higher education institutions between 2012 and 2030.

Table 4: Total Headcount at CUP Institutions

Fall18	Fall19	Fall20	Fall21	Fall22	%Change 2018- 2019 (Pre- COVID)	%Change 2018- 2021 (COVID)	%Change 2021- 2022 (Post- COVID)
54,118	51,544	49,917	49,049	50,256	5%	-9%	2%

A somewhat paradoxical factor in higher education’s enrollment decline is our success in graduating a larger percentage of our students in a shorter time period: Facilitating students’ progress toward earning their degrees in four years or less means that they will no longer be enrolled in classes five or six years after they enroll at a CUP institution. The reduction in enrollment headcounts reflects this time-to-degree reduction.

Recruiting out-of-state students offers one path to increasing our enrollments. However, one impediment to this kind of recruiting is that New Mexico offers substantially fewer degree programs than our neighboring states of Arizona, Texas, and Colorado. Having fewer degree programs locally also has the unfortunate effect of causing many New Mexico students to leave the state to enroll in universities in adjacent states that do provide a wider variety of degree programs and career options. Despite hosting two federal research laboratories, New Mexico lacks sufficient STEM-focused and higher-paying industry jobs and commercial development that could keep more of our students in the state. This lack of jobs and investment also detracts from our ability to recruit students from out of state.

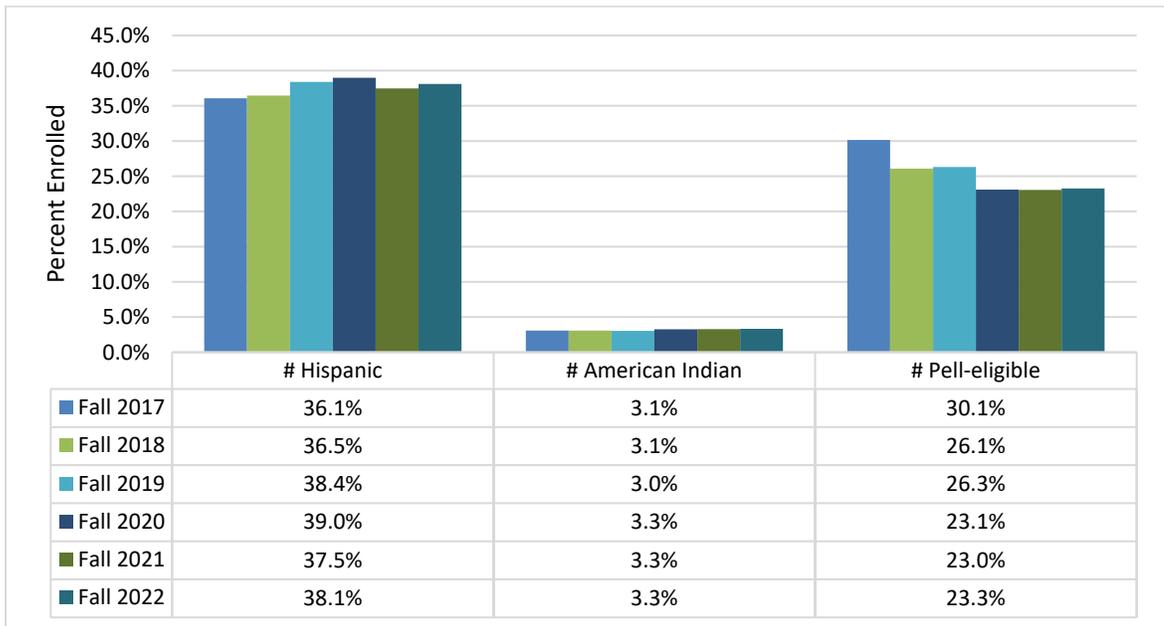
As we continue to serve the citizens of New Mexico, we are also working to become more competitive on a regional and national level in higher education. To facilitate this strategic growth in programs and offerings, the New Mexico Higher Education Department and NM's colleges and universities recently worked together to develop new state-wide enrollment strategies. These strategies are described in the letter attached as Appendix A to this report.

Student Diversity

Higher education in New Mexico leads the way in showing how diversity can promote excellence in academics, innovation, and public service. The 2020 U.S. Census showed that 47.7% of New Mexico residents are Hispanic, and 12.4% are 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 highest percentage of American Indian Juris Doctor (J.D.) students of any law school in the nation, as well as housing one of the few Indian Law clinical training programs in the country. UNM Law is also 8th in the country for its percentage of Hispanic J.D. students enrolled.

Native American students at NNMC now have their own space dedicated to their unique needs. The American Indian Student Center reopened in late August 2022 after being closed for more than five years. The center aims to provide academic and personal support to help Native American students graduate from college.

Chart 2: Diversity of Undergraduate Students at CUP Institutions



While diversity is often perceived to relate only to issues of race and ethnicity, higher education institutions also recognize the importance of socioeconomic diversity in our student populations. Access to higher education can increase social mobility and broaden opportunities for all New Mexicans, regardless of family income and resources.

One measure of how accessible an institution is to low-income students is the percentage of students who receive federal Pell Grants. The Pell Grant program awards \$6,495 annually to low-income students whose family income is below 150% of the federal poverty guidelines and who are enrolling in college to pursue their first associate’s or bachelor’s degree. 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 decrease is explained in part by changes to federal regulations, as well as a rebounding economy post-Great Recession.

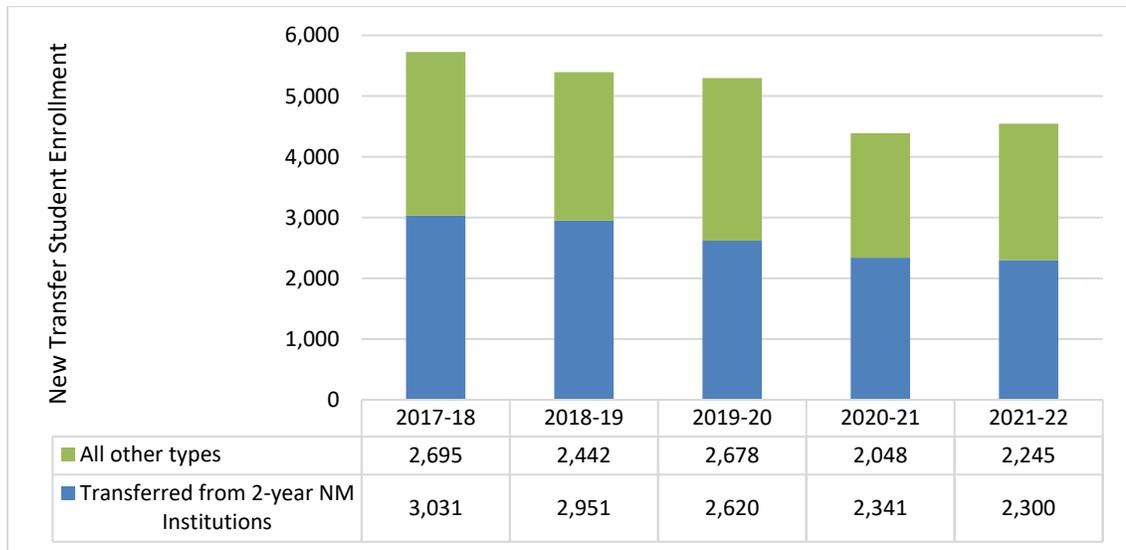
The NM Higher Education Department considers Pell Grant recipients to be “at-risk” students, in that they may have struggled with inadequate academic preparation, food insecurity, housing insecurity, and financial stress. College affordability remains an issue for many Pell Grant recipients even if tuition expenses are low, because students still must pay for books, supplies, food, housing, and other necessary expenses.

Transfer Student Success

In today’s higher education landscape, 38% of all college students are transfer students, meaning that they initially enrolled at one institution but decided to leave and subsequently enroll at another higher education institution. Students transfer for a variety of reasons, which may include geographic, time, familial, and financial constraints that keep them from continued attendance at their initial school. New Mexico’s higher education system provides opportunities and support to all students, regardless of background or location.

The number of students from New Mexico’s two-year colleges who transferred to CUP four-year institutions has declined by 24% in the past five years (from 3,031 students in the 2017-18 academic year to 2,300 students in the 2021-22 academic year). However, enrollment also declined at New Mexico’s two-year colleges over this same period. With significantly fewer students enrolling in the two-year system in our state, it follows that there will be fewer students who ultimately transfer to four-year institutions.

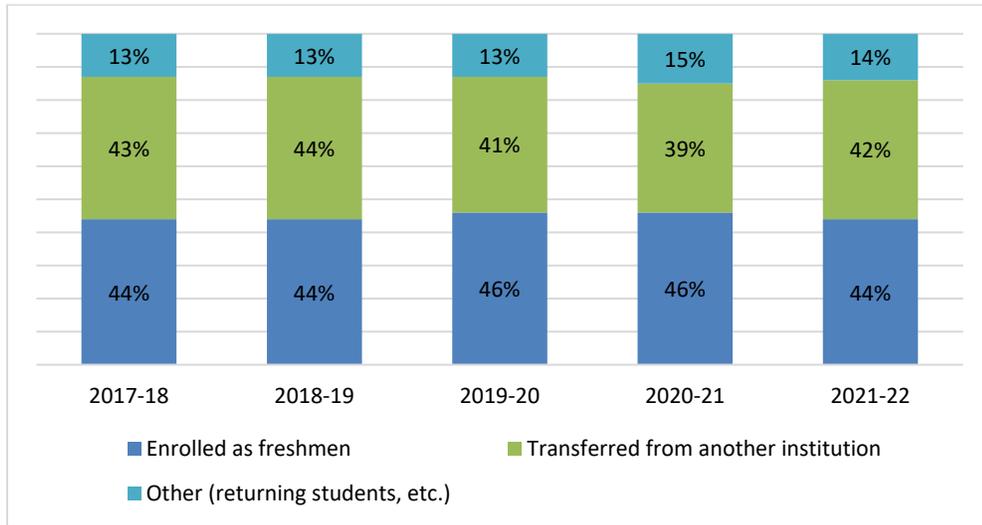
Chart 3: New Transfer Student Enrollment



The past two years of the pandemic have affected transfer numbers nationwide, as data from the National Student Clearinghouse show that higher education experienced a total two-year loss of 296,200 transfer students, or 13.5 percent (nearly 200,000 fewer, or -9.1%, in year 1 and an additional -97,200, or -4.9%, in year 2). (<https://nscresearchcenter.org/transfer-mobility-and-progress>)

Despite these reduced numbers, CUP institutions remain committed to recruiting and serving **all** students who transfer to our institutions so that they can be successful in their quest for a bachelor’s degree. Articulation Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding between the two-year and four-year schools help ensure that credits earned at one school transfer readily to another and students are successfully able to earn bachelor’s degrees at our institutions. Chart 4 shows baccalaureate recipients in the past five years and how they first enrolled in their alma mater. An average of nearly 40% of students who graduated from CUP institutions started their academic careers as transfer students at the institution from which they received their degree.

Chart 4: Entry Status of Baccalaureate Degree Recipients at CUP Institutions



College Affordability

According to College Board data, New Mexico is one of the **top five** states with the lowest average in-state tuition. 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 top states for lowest student debt according to Forbes.com (<https://www.forbes.com/advisor/student-loans/average-student-loan-statistics/>) Furthermore, when compared to workers without a college degree, college graduates in New Mexico earn an average of \$17,000 more in annual salaries.

Chart 5 shows that while average tuition and fees for CUP Institutions in New Mexico has increased over the past six years, that increase has been relatively low .

Chart 5: Tuition & Fees for Undergraduates



Financial aid of various kinds are available at every CUP institution to help students pay for college. Federal Pell grants and scholarships from the institution or the state (such as the NM Legislative Lottery Scholarship) are crucial to many students, as is “Self-Help” aid such as federal College Work-Study and student loans, both federal and private. It is important to note that grants, scholarships, and work-study do not require repayment, while student loans do. Just over 85% of all undergraduates at CUP institutions receive some type of financial aid. Seventy-eight percent of these undergraduates receive grants and scholarships, while loans and work-study go to 35.1% of undergraduates.

Chart 6 shows the average amount of financial aid awarded to students attending NM 4-year institutions between 2016-17 and 2021-22, while Chart 7 shows the types of financial aid awarded to students.

Chart 6: Average Financial Aid Award for Undergraduates

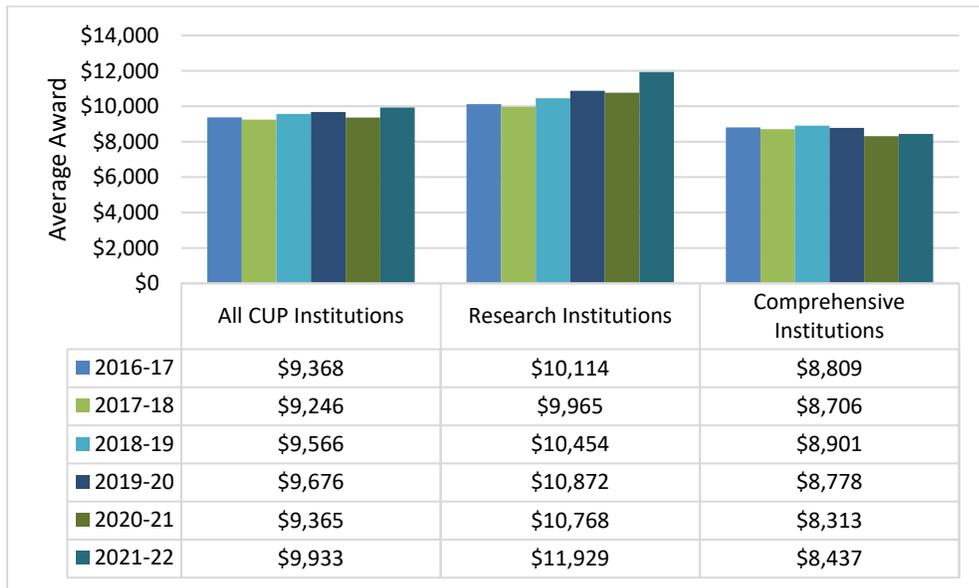
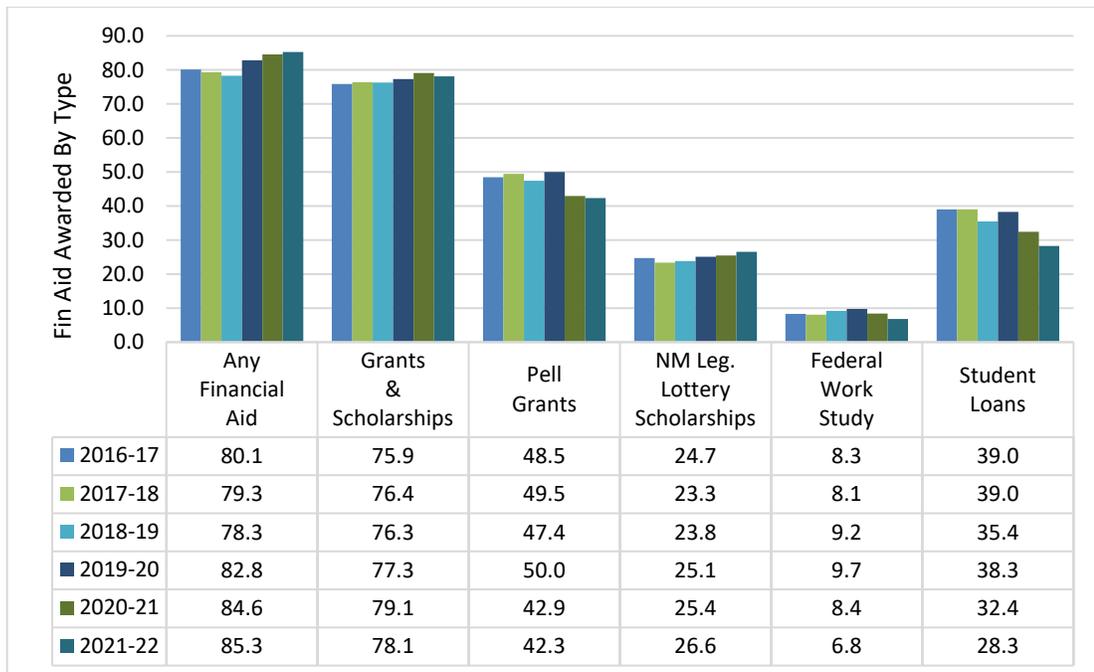


Chart 7: Percent of Undergraduates Receiving Financial Aid by Type of Aid

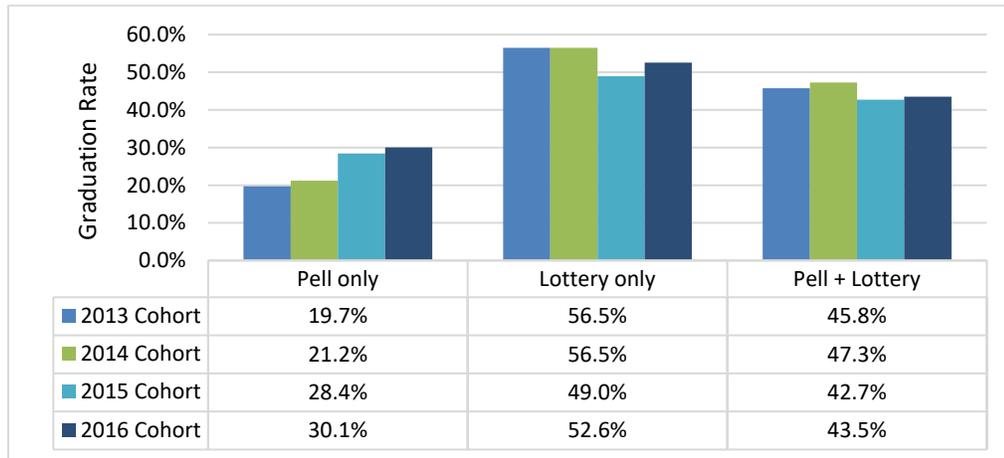


Approximately 80 percent of undergraduates on average receive some sort of financial aid at CUP institutions in any given year. And financial aid awards can be stacked; that is, students can receive multiple types of financial aid simultaneously.

Currently, over 25% of New Mexico undergraduates on average at CUP institutions receive the NM Legislative Lottery Scholarship. Because it is not need-based, the Lottery Scholarship can 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 Lottery Scholarship has become an important part of the financial aid landscape in New Mexico, and it should continue to be available to all who qualify.

Chart 8: Six-Year Graduation Rates by Lottery and Pell Recipient Status



Faculty

When serving a diverse student body, it is especially important that students have sufficient access to faculty members for advising, 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. A lower ratio of students to faculty members means that faculty members can provide more individualized attention to students and facilitate greater in-class student participation. CUP institutions have lowered their student-faculty ratio over the past five years, resulting in better student outcomes for students at public universities in NM.

Table 5: Average Student-to-Faculty Ratios at CUP Institutions

Fall16	Fall17	Fall18	Fall19	Fall20	Fall21	5-year % Change
15:1	16:1	14:1	15:1	13:1	13:1	-13.3%

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. However, full-time faculty numbers at CUP institutions continue to decline as shown in Table 7 below. This decline has serious implications for the future success of New Mexico’s college students. A decrease in full-time faculty means that students have fewer opportunities to be mentored by top-tier scholars and teachers and have fewer avenues for engaging in research and service-learning activities. Many successful college graduates can point to a particular 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 such meaningful and enriching opportunities.

Table 6: Total Full-Time Instructional Faculty at CUP Institutions

Fall16	Fall17	Fall18	Fall19	Fall20	Fall21	5 year % change
3,283	3,282	3,201	3,197	3,216	3,186	-3.0%

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. Among our regional peers, the average university has a faculty that is 39.7% female and 6.8% Hispanic. In Fall 2021, the faculty at CUP institutions was **49.7% female** and **15.4% Hispanic**.

Table 7: Average Salaries of Full-time Faculty at CUP Institutions by Sector

Sector	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	5 year % change
Research	\$78,744	\$80,287	\$81,331	\$82,091	\$83,985	7.0%
Comprehensive	\$61,400	\$60,356	\$62,175	\$64,257	\$64,915	13.9%
All (average)	\$68,833	\$68,898	\$70,385	\$71,900	\$73,088	10.4%

Faculty salaries continue to be an issue at CUP institutions. The average increase in faculty salaries across all sectors within the seven CUP institutions from 2017-2021 was 10.4%. This is below the nationwide rate of inflation (14.3%) over the same time frame. Thus, 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 greener pastures.

The added pressures of hiring freezes and resource constraints have made 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 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.

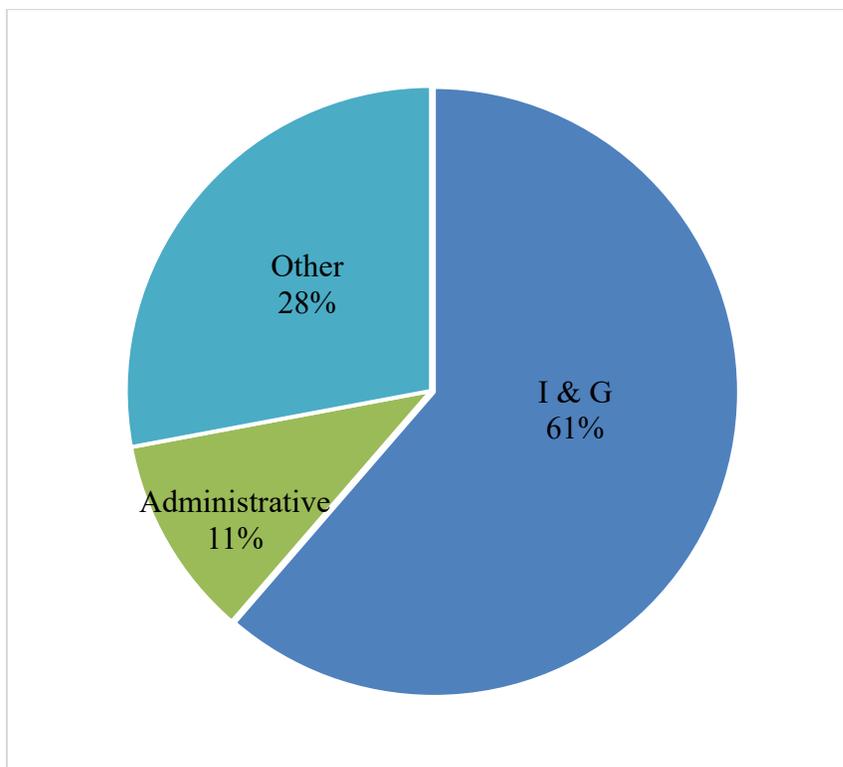
Finance

In the wake of numerous budget constraints over the years, higher education in New Mexico has had to innovate and be resourceful. This is exemplified best by the improvements in successful student 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. According to data from the most recently available IPEDS Finance survey, **CUP institutions spend about \$1,500 less per full-time student** compared to other universities in the Southwest and Rocky Mountain regions. (IPEDS, National Center for Educational Statistics, FY19)

It is important to acknowledge that colleges and universities engage in many research and development projects that attract external funding from private foundations, federal agencies, and industry. In Fiscal Year 2019, the seven CUP institutions received a total of **\$572,664,085 in federal contracts and grants**. These funds help hire new employees, support graduate students with assistantships, purchase supplies from local vendors, and develop new products and services for the benefit of the state. However, it must be noted that research funding does not completely support the academic side of our institutions, nor does it completely compensate for the reductions in state appropriations that New Mexico higher education has continued to experience since 2008.

Based on data from the IPEDS Finance Survey submitted annually to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), CUP institutions allocate 61.4% of their expenditures to instruction, research, and public service (which are typically lumped together under the term “I&G”), and 10.7% to administrative costs. While they may not have a direct relationship to student support, funds devoted to administrative costs (such as personnel salaries, facilities management, procurement, and various other costs) are necessary to keep CUP institutions up and running.

Chart 9: CUP Institutions Expenditures by Function in FY21



Conclusion

All CUP institutions have unique missions, student populations, and histories. Our campuses range from urban to rural, very small to very large, research-focused to teaching-focused. What unites us is our belief in New Mexico's great potential and our desire to help unlock that potential. With each passing year, we have graduated more students who seek to use what they have learned to give back to New Mexico's workforce and their communities. We are committed to supporting them every step of the way, and we are grateful for the Legislature's support of these 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

Stephen G. Wells	New Mexico Inst of Mining & Technology
Dan Arvizu	New Mexico State University
Garnett S. Stokes	University of New Mexico
Patrice Caldwell	Eastern New Mexico University
Samuel Minner	New Mexico Highlands University
Barbara Medina	Northern New Mexico College
Joseph Shepard (Chair)	Western New Mexico University

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CUP Accountability Work Group

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Northern New Mexico College

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Western New Mexico University

Adele Springer

Liaison Members

Stephanie Rodriguez, Higher Education Department
Nicole Macias, Department of Finance and Administration
Conner Jorgensen, Legislative Finance Committee



May 19, 2022

Higher Education Subcommittee
Legislative Finance Committee
New Mexico State Capitol
490 Old Santa Fe Trail
Santa Fe, NM 87501

Dear Madam Chair Lundstrom and LFC Higher Education Subcommittee Members:

Thank you for addressing the importance of enrollment management today. We truly appreciate all the hard work and outcomes from LFC's Higher Education Subcommittee last year and this past session. Higher Education probably experienced the best legislative session in the last 13 years. We look forward to continue working with the subcommittee this interim, and making collaborative issues a priority of the committee's work plan.

Attached is a document that was introduced to the committee last summer and most recently with the LFC staff. It contains CUP's thoughts regarding key enrollment/retention strategies and related considerations. This document has evolved from discussions starting in 2020 and subsequent LFC and Higher Ed Subcommittee meetings. The document outlines statewide enrollment trends, contributing factors, retention challenges, tools and strategies to address enrollment and retention issues, and specific areas that may require legislative and executive support.

Hopefully this document can be used as a tool to allow the LFC, HED, PED, and other interested groups to work together to address the items in the letter and help improve higher education enrollment in New Mexico. This has to be a team effort to accomplish this goal.

Finally, we look forward to continuing to work with the subcommittee and LFC analyst Connor Jorgenson to advance this vital effort.

Sincerely

Marc H. Saavedra Executive Director,
NM Council of University Presidents

ENROLLMENT STRATEGIES

I. HIGHER ED ENROLLMENT TRENDS

National Trends:

- Declining enrollments are a concern for Higher Ed institutions across the country.
 - The declines stem, in part, from demographics, economic pressures, the COVID pandemic, changes in instructional delivery, and a host of other market factors.
 - Nationally, total post-secondary enrollment increased from 17.2 million students in 2005 to 20.4 million in 2012, but by 2015 it had dropped to 19.1 million. (*US Census Bureau*)
 - Enrollment growth during the Great Recession was largely fueled by a 30% increase in students who had not attended any school in the prior year.
- The pandemic has further depressed enrollment numbers.
 - Fall 2020 reports continued to show downward trajectories nearly across the board in Higher Ed and by late September enrollment was 4% lower than the previous fall.
 - The largest enrollment declines were among first-year students, with 16% fewer freshmen attending college this year.
 - Four-year for-profit colleges were the only group that beat the national trends. (*National Student Clearinghouse Research Center*)

New Mexico Trends:

- The massive influx of students enrolling in NM public Higher Ed institutions (HEIs) during the Great Recession caused degree numbers to skyrocket, beginning 4-5 years after the first Recession cohort enrolled. After six years passed, the number of students declined.
- From 2010-11 to 2019-20, total enrollment at NM public HEIs declined by nearly 23%.

II. CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- Demographic Changes
 - The decline in Higher Ed enrollment tracks with a 7% decline in NM residents ages 1-14 since 2012 along with a 5% decline in residents ages 15-24. This represents an overall loss of 40,000 potential new students for NM HEIs between 2012 and 2030. (*PEP Report*)
- Transfer Student Numbers
 - In today's environment, 38% of all college students are transfer students.
 - From 2016-2020 transfer students received more than 40% of all baccalaureate degrees granted by NM public HE institutions.
 - Enrollment at NM's two-year colleges has decreased by more than 9% since 2015, and has fallen by nearly 23% since 2009.

- With fewer students in the system, transfers from NM two-year colleges to four-year institutions have declined by more than 15% in the past five years. (PEP)
- Improved Time-to-Degree
 - A paradoxical factor in the enrollment decline is institutions' success in graduating much larger numbers of students in a shorter period of time (PEP) through improved advising, student support, and reducing requirements for many baccalaureate degrees from up to 150 credit hours to 120.
 - Eight years ago, 15% of UNM's students graduated in four years; now more than 35% do so. This means that 20 of every 100 UNM graduates who would have enrolled for a fifth and possibly a sixth year no longer need to do so.
 - Similarly, UNM, NMSU and Tech discontinued offering remedial Introductory Studies (IS) courses in 2015, in an effort to transform the first-year experience. This resulted in placing incoming students in college-level courses more quickly, shortened time to degree, and reductions in the financial burden on families.
 - Tech graduated its four largest-ever classes (2017-20) after this change.
- Student Retention and Loss of Financial Aid
 - Increasing the Lottery Scholarship's credit hour requirement from 12 to 15 SCH, in 2014-15, has become the principal reason Lottery recipients lose their scholarship eligibility.
 - Decreasing the percentage of tuition covered by the Lottery Scholarship (to as low as 60% in 2017-18) also contributed to declines in Higher Ed enrollment.
- Commitment: NM Higher Ed institutions are committed to improving recruiting, retention, completion, and time-to-degree.

III. THE HIGH-SCHOOL-TO-COLLEGE CONNECTION

- Need for Data Collection & Analysis
 - The NM Legislature recently appropriated funds to improve HED's data collection/analysis capabilities including \$100,000 to purchase national student clearinghouse data, \$401,000 for a longitudinal data system, and \$250,000 to report statewide performance metrics.
- Data Requests re: NM High School Graduates

As noted in our presentations to LFC in October and December 2020, we are seeking some definitive answers about NM's high school (HS) graduates.

 - We know the number of English learners increased from 26.7% of the cohort that graduated in 2016 to 32.3% of the cohort that graduated in 2020, but we need to know what % of those who graduated are English learners.
 - We know the number of economically disadvantaged students increased from 60.6% of the cohort that graduated in 2016 to 64.4% of the 2020 cohort, but we need to know what % of NM HS graduates are economically disadvantaged.
 - We need to know what % of NM HS grads are considered part of the "at-risk" population with respect to the Yazzie/Martinez decision.

- We need to know where NM HS graduates go after graduation (i.e., community college/university, in-state/out-of-state institutions, public/private colleges, Gap Year, religious mission, military, employment/unemployment).
 - We need to know how many NM dual credit students graduate high school and enter college as sophomores and above.
 - We need to know what % of NM HS graduates arrive at our Higher Ed institutions prepared for college-level work in their chosen field.
 - We need to know if NM's four-year public Higher Ed institutions have lost market share – or if they have simply right-sized enrollment after the Great Recession.
- Data requests re: Community College graduates and transfers
We also seek some definitive answers about our 2-year college graduates.
 - How have two-year colleges' associates' degree numbers, and their transfer missions, been affected by the increasing emphasis on awarding certificates?
 - What percent of two-year college graduates go on to baccalaureate institutions and where do they go? (In-state/out-of-state, public/private)
 - What percent of NM community college graduates arrive at their baccalaureate institutions prepared for university-level work in their chosen field?
 - Other Key Questions
These questions must also be addressed in formulating enrollment targets & strategies.
 - How much time do NM High School counselors spend helping their students plan, prepare and apply for college?
 - Is there a mis-alignment of NM High School curricula and college requirements?
 - If a mis-alignment exists, how does it affect NM HS graduates' decisions as to whether or where to attend college and their ability to attain educational goals?

IV. SETTING GOALS / DEVELOPING WORK PLANS

- New Mexico needs to set its direction so Higher Ed can follow its lead
 - Develop a consensus-based, long-term state economic plan focused on the professions and industries of the future.
 - Establish an advanced workforce to complement NM's existing workforce.
 - Tie education to this strategy – and let Higher Ed focus on fields that prepare workforce for emerging industries and professions. Higher Ed to align students' educational paths and award attainment to NM's workforce needs
 - Build upon Higher Ed institutions' RPSPs and link this strategy to core research areas, and innovation/commercialization activities.
- Higher Ed's Role in Building NM's economy
 - Research universities can lead in creating an ecosystem that supports an innovation-based economy.
 - An innovation-based economy will offer more opportunities to students graduating from NM HEIs – this creates positive feedback in system.

- Universities and colleges must examine how their courses offer real-world experience to students to remain competitive and do their part to prepare graduates for the labor market.
- Focus on keeping students in NM/give them a reason to stay. Consider incentivizing career-focused internships that develop applicable skills.
- Work to expand and strengthen NM's entrepreneurial culture.
- Graduate students who create jobs, not just fill them
- Establishing Goals for Higher Ed
 - Need LFC, HED & institutions to establish the direction and set appropriate goals for Higher Education.
 - Enrollment increases will not boost state's economy unless we can get more graduates into the workplace faster – and keep them in NM.
 - Institutions will need to increase the number of college graduates in defined areas to facilitate economic development.
- Role for Out-of-State and International Students
 - Important for NM HEIs to reach/recruit/educate a reasonable share of college-bound population, but NM's lack of growth and aging population may make true long-term growth difficult to achieve.
 - Consider what role we want out-of-state and international students to play in bringing new dollars into the state, developing an educated workforce, and enhancing tuition revenues.
- Role of Research
 - An advanced workforce is built upon attracting and retaining students through leading research endeavors; promote HEI research institutions' productivity to attract students to HEIs.
- Degree Alignment, Articulation & Transfer
 - Continue working with HED on degree alignment, articulation and transfer.
 - Given that NM has multiple colleges of education, etc., better alignment of degrees in name and licensure would help. (Example: UNM does not offer a degree titled Early Childhood and Multicultural Education, but this specialty is a key component of its Family and Child Studies baccalaureate program.)

V. TOOLS / STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE ENROLLMENT, RETENTION & COMPLETION

- Improving Student Success
 - Wraparound Student Support Services: Data mining to improve support for students, increase graduation rates (text alerts, etc.)
 - Guided Pathways (like meta-majors) to reduce excess credit & time-to-degree
 - High-engagement teaching and learning practices increase student success
- Facilitating Transfer
 - Common Course Numbering

- Ensure all Gen Ed credits transfer; use shared student learning outcomes (SLOs)
- Articulation Agreements, establishing (non-Gen Ed) course equivalencies with partner institutions
- Transfer Center with guides assigned to help transfer students navigate system
- Reverse Transfer – allowing CC students to transfer to university, which awards them Associates’ upon completion of 60 SCH
- Commonalities in training and credentialing of advisors – UNM is hosting Advisor Transfer Summit/Institute, Sept. 29-30, 2021.
- Greater collaboration between 2-year & 4-year schools, like TX Transfer Alliance
- Handling “Swirlers” (students who attend multiple schools simultaneously)
 - Swirling requires coordination and complicates advising – and issues have increased with the increased availability of virtual class offerings.
 - Doing warm hand-offs with virtual classes requires that advice from both institutions align.
 - NM Institutions must keep up with navigation issues, aligning processes, credit transfer, transcript delivery, etc.

VI. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- Legislative Lottery Scholarship
 - Number of recipients losing scholarship because of 15 SCH requirement
 - Unpredictable funding
- Transfer Students
 - Limited Financial Aid Opportunities
- High School & College Curriculum Alignment

