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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 03/17/09

SPONSOR Jeff LAST UPDATED \_\_\_\_\_ HM 110

SHORT TITLE Expand UNM Native American Studies SB \_\_\_\_\_

ANALYST Williams

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY09	FY10		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to Appropriation in the General Appropriation Act to University of New Mexico (UNM) for the Navajo language research and teaching program, Native American intervention program, Southwest Indian law clinic and Center for Native American Health

Relates to House Bill 50 and House Memorial 59

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)

Public Education Department (PED)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of Bill

House Memorial 110 requests the University of New Mexico and the Higher Education Department recognize the importance and need for expansion of the UNM Native American studies program to include a Master's degree program.

The memorial discusses the need for college-education for Native American students to assist in the positive educational, economic and social development and maintenance of their communities and state. The UNM Native American studies program is interdisciplinary and "explores the richness of American Indian cultures, examines the nature of historic and contemporary issues and prepares students to engage in careers and service to New Mexico Indian communities." The UNM Board of Regents approved a major in Native American studies for the 2004-2005 academic year, and four areas of concentration are offered: Building Native nations, leadership and community-based research and development. There have been four

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graduating classes. Over 100 majors and minors have been awarded. Enrollment has grown from seven minors in the 2001-2002 academic year to over 130 majors and minors in the 2008-2009 academic year. The program offers an average of 26 courses per semester. Courses are offered via UNM extended university at UNM branch campuses in Gallup, Taos, Valencia, Los Alamos, Bernalillo, Santa Fe and Farmington. Combined enrollments are over 3,000 Native American students.

The memorial states the UNM Native American studies program “compares and even surpasses program offerings at other peer Southwest institutions, such as the University of Arizona, Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Oklahoma.”

The proposed master’s degree in Native American studies will emphasize indigenous leadership, self-determination and sustainable community development. The program would also facilitate the proposed doctorate degree in indigenous sustainable community development.

Additional funding is needed to develop the master’s and doctorate degree programs to augment faculty, staff and program development. The memorial requests the UNM Board of Regents and the Higher Education Department to recognize the need for continued support and funding along with expansion funding for a master’s degree program.

## **FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

The memorial does not contain an appropriation.

## **SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

HED notes the memorial is consistent with the agency’s strategic priority to “increase student access to postsecondary education by raising the minority representation to be reflective of the state’s population and to improve participation and graduation rates in graduate and professional degrees. “

HED “encourages campuses to self-fund expansion of new academic programs through enrollment growth or through re-allocation of existing resources.”

PED discusses the Indian Education Act requires the agency to:

- Coordinate with HED to facilitate the successful and seamless transition of Native American students into postsecondary education and training, and
- Seek funds to establish, develop and implement culturally relevant support services to increase the number of tribal teachers, administrators and principals and provide continued professional development of educational assistants, teachers and principals serving tribal students in conjunction with the Indian education advisory council.

Under the Indian Education Act, the assistant secretary of PED “shall also coordinate transition efforts for tribal students in public schools with HED and work to expand appropriate Indian education for tribal students in preschool through grade 20.”

According to PED and HED, House Bill 50 to create a new American Indian Postsecondary Education division at HED could provide opportunities for collaboration to promote success for Native American students.

PED notes Northern New Mexico College has an associate’s degree program for pueblo studies, the only one of its kind in the United States.

### OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The IAD has noted that “New Mexicans of American Indian ancestry participate less often and less successfully in higher education than do other groups.”<sup>1</sup> Even when American Indians do enroll in higher education, “many first-time American Indian college students are placed in remedial courses that offer no credit.”<sup>2</sup> According to a 2004 study conducted by the Department of Finance and Office of Education Accountability, “public high school graduates readiness for college level work by ethnicity shows that sixty-six percent of American Indian public high school graduates place in remedial classes in their first year of college.”<sup>3</sup> A 2007 report conducted by the Higher Education Department indicated that Native American Indian enrollment in higher education institutions in New Mexico is 11,613.<sup>4</sup> However, only forty percent (40%) of those Native Americans are graduating from those institutions.<sup>5</sup> “Statistics indicate that American Indian students who enroll in Tribal colleges are more likely to graduate than those who attend public college and universities. This is due to the support of family, extended family, and a college student population that reflects their culture and identity.”<sup>6</sup>

The Indian Education Act, passed in 2003 and amended in 2007, sought “to ensure equitable and culturally relevant learning environments, educational opportunities and culturally relevant instructional materials for American Indian students enrolled in public schools”. This Act created an Indian Education Division at PED as well as the Indian Education Advisory Council. In Sections 1 and 3 of the Act, the Act calls for “the successful and seamless transition of American Indian students into post-secondary education and training.” The Act directs PED to “develop a plan to establish a post-secondary investment system for tribal students”.

Indian Affairs Department (IAD) notes a 2004 study by the Office of Education Accountability which found “public high school graduate readiness for college level work by ethnicity shows that sixty-six percent of American Indian public high school graduates place in remedial classes in their first year of college.” The agency also notes American Indian students who enroll in tribal colleges are more likely to graduate than those who attend public colleges and universities.

HED notes American Indian share of UNM enrollment in fall 2007 was about 6 percent. At the bachelor’s level, American Indian students account for roughly four percent of degrees awarded.

According to HED, the following recommendations were made by the 2006 UNM American Indian Task Force. Many of these recommendations have not yet been implemented.

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<sup>1</sup> See, “State of New Mexico Tribal-State Indian Education Summit Report,” Released June 21, 2006, <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/indian.ed/IndianEdSummit%20%2062106.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> See, “American Indian Students in Higher Education and the Indian Education Act,” <http://hed.state.nm.us/cms/kunde/rts/hedstatenmus/docs/799100768-11-08-2007-11-03-02.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> See, “State of New Mexico Tribal-State Indian Education Summit Report,” Released June 21, 2006, <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/indian.ed/IndianEdSummit%20%2062106.pdf>.

- Maintaining a directory of Native American programs that would be a guide to Native American programs, projects, and initiatives offered at the university to better serve Native American students;
- Agreeing to a long-term commitment on the part of the University to improve its service to Native American students, faculty, staff and New Mexico Indian communities;
- Establishing a centralized location to track and disburse funds coming to Native American students in the form of tribal scholarships and financial assistance programs and to house a financial aid advisor knowledgeable about scholarship programs available to tribal members and processes to gain access to that aid; and
- Designating an advisor for freshmen and transfer students and creating a mandatory Native American orientation program for incoming freshmen and transfer students to better acquaint them with the University of New Mexico main campus and Native American programs, scholarships, and organizations.

## **ALTERNATIVES**

According to HED:

Federal or private grants may be available. For example, “federal legislation aimed at supporting indigenous language initiatives such as the Esther Martinez Native Languages Preservation Act that was signed into law in December 2006. The Act establishes grants for governments, colleges and other Indian educational organizations working to preserve native cultures and language. The University of New Mexico could pursue such federal grants and private foundation support aimed at preservation of native languages, which is a key component to the field of Native American Studies. An alternative would be for the UNM administration to re-allocate existing funds to support such a program.”

AW/mc