



RELEASE: Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025

Lobo Researchers,

The past couple of weeks have brought a range of news and revised guidance from the federal government.

Political Activity Guidance: An [executive order](#) (EO) released late last month directs the attorney general (AG) to investigate whether federal grant dollars are being used for lobbying or partisan political activities. The AG must provide a report within 180 days on the progress of the investigation. As long as University grant funds are not being used for lobbying or partisan political activities, which would be against the terms of our existing grant agreements and requires disclosure under UAP 2050, this EO does not create additional requirements on UNM at this time.

Indirect Cost News: The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) has created a [list](#) of indirect costs (IDC; also known as F&A) related prohibitions that have been drafted into FY26 appropriations bills, with those broader agency spending bills still under final consideration in Congress. These bills include specific prohibitions against unilateral caps on IDC (F&A) and other language that is designed to protect grantees from capricious changes to the current system of negotiated F&A rates. In the meantime, it appears the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has begun to draft new rules on IDC that may also include a shift in what can be considered allowable direct costs on grants, nominally on the basis of the directive given in [this EO](#). We continue to monitor these initial steps by the federal legislative and executive branches closely.

Department of Education (DoEd) News: Last week, the [DoEd announced](#) it was ending discretionary funding to designated minority-serving institutions (MSIs), including Hispanic-serving institutions like UNM. Specifically, the discretionary grant programs that DoEd will cease to fund include both 2025 new awards and non-competing continuations, and DoED has announced its intentions to reprogram funding from the following:

- Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Asian American- and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Strengthening Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions (Title III Part A);
- Minority Science and Engineering Improvement (Title III Part E);
- Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Title V Part A); and
- Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (Title V Part B).



UNM has been affected by these cuts as we received notices of termination and notices of non-continuation last week for programs on central campus and at two of our branch campuses. We are actively working to analyze the full impact of and appeal these decisions.

NIH Update: Earlier this month, the U.S Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) posted revisions to the [HHS Grants Policy Statement](#) (GPS), effective Oct. 1. This updated version of the GPS conforms to the movement of all HHS grants from the old 45 C.F.R. Part 75 (the HHS version of the Uniform Guidance) to full Uniform Guidance treatment (found at 2 C.F.R. Part 200). In addition to changing all the citations to Part 200 and a new numbering system, the new HHS GPS adds several substantive updates, including:

- *Civil Rights Assurances* (2.5.4.3). The last version, posted on July 24, greatly streamlined the requirements. The new version adds mandatory certification language tied to, among other provisions, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, language already appearing in certain client awards.
- *Significant Budget Changes* (3.1.2.2). Prior approval is now required for cumulative budget revisions “expected to be more than 10% of the total budget amount approved by the agency, including cost share,” replacing the prior 25% threshold of total approved direct costs.
- *No-Cost Extensions* (3.1.4.1). Grantees will be required to request no-cost extensions at least 10 days “prior to the end of the budget period in the last year of the period of performance.”
- *Lease Improvements* (3.4.9). Added in last year’s changes, which finally makes “official” the longstanding practice of requiring a landlord letter of consent.
- *Termination for Convenience* (3.6.4). Explicitly grants HHS the right to terminate awards for its own convenience, with no appeal rights available.

Student & Exchange Scholar Visa Rules: The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has proposed [new rules](#) regarding student and exchange scholar visas. Specifically, DHS proposes to amend its regulations by changing the admission period in the F, J, and I classifications from duration of status to an admission for a fixed time period. The rules are open for public comment until Sept. 29. Our [Global Education Office](#) has submitted comments on the negative impact of the proposed changes. As we approach the end of the Federal Fiscal Year (Sept. 30), we continue to monitor federal policymaking activity to understand what the impacts of the congressional FY26 appropriations conversations may have for UNM. Our website on [partial federal shutdown guidance](#) provides information on what you need to know as a researcher. Continue to monitor this site for updated information over the next couple of weeks.

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