

March 2026

FROM THE DESK OF THE Vice President for Research

Lobos,

We are halfway through the spring semester and as we know from our education researchers, learning is codified through reflection. Thus, it's essential for us as a university community to reflect on the journey we've undertaken together over the past year. The past 12 months have presented numerous challenges, yet it has also been filled with significant achievements. I can't think of a better moment than the upcoming 2026 State of Research for us to come together and recognize the hard work, innovation, and dedication of our research faculty, staff, and students.

I truly hope that everyone takes a break from their busy schedules to be part of this event as it's the perfect opportunity to engage with leadership from both sides of campus regarding UNM's research enterprise. Questions about what's happening now? Concerns about future research endeavors?

The State of Research offers a collaborative platform where we can engage in meaningful, transparent dialogue and foster innovative solutions. When we seek input from our research community, we create an environment conducive to addressing these inquiries and concerns. Your input and feedback, as it proved over this past year, are invaluable in shaping the direction of our research enterprise and ensuring we meet the evolving needs of our researchers and our communities.



Ellen Fisher, Ph.D.
Vice President for Research
Professor of Chemistry

Safety Spotlight & Compliance Corner

Did you know that behind every exciting biological discovery at UNM, there's a team quietly making sure it all happens safely and smoothly? That's the **Biosafety Office**! Located in the Health Sciences Center (HSC) on north campus, the BSO supports researchers working with both hazardous *and* nonhazardous biological materials.

UNM's BSO offers everything from biosafety and biological-materials shipping training to lab inspections, risk assessments, and guidance on complex regulatory questions. The BSO also manages UNM's campus-wide **biological inventory**, which helps keep our research compliant *and* ensures labs have the right safety practices in place for the agents and toxins they work with.

Because UNM receives NIH funding for recombinant and synthetic nucleic acid molecule research, we must follow **NIH Guidelines**, which is managed through our NIH-registered **Institutional Biosafety Committee (IBC)**. Our bioscience officers note that the thing that makes their work especially rewarding is the incredible diversity of research happening across campus. UNM's IBC gets to partner with faculty working in areas like basic biological science, field biology, neuroscience, public health, transgenic zebrafish models, vaccine development, cancer therapeutics, and even human clinical trials. It's always a front-row seat to innovation that will change New Mexico and the world.

So, whether you're launching a new project, leveling up your lab's (bio)safety practices, or dreaming up the next big breakthrough—know that the Biosafety Office is here to help make it safe, compliant, and successful.

Research News

2026 Legislative Updates

The 2026 New Mexico legislative session concluded a little less than two weeks ago. Members of the OVPR team spent many days in Santa Fe alongside our Government Relations team, helping to advance legislation in ecological studies, materials research, quantum information science, bioscience, artificial intelligence, and more. I am extremely grateful to members of the UNM Government & Community Relations team including Mike Puelle, Nathan Bush, and Lenaya Montoya for their tireless work ensuring UNM's interests are well represented. I also want to highlight the leadership of AVPR Dave Hanson and Bob Ledoux, director of QNM-I, for coordinating our quantum initiatives.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the exceptional support from our university leadership, including UNM President Garnett Stokes, Interim Provost and EVP for Academic Affairs Barbara Rodriguez, and Health Sciences EVP Mike Richards. Although we won't have results of the session until after the Governor acts on the proposed legislation, I look forward to seeing how these potentially transformative actions will strengthen the UNM research enterprise and shape the future of our state.

Annual Research Lectureship Awardee

Congratulations to longtime UNM Distinguished Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering, EdI Schamiloglu on being honored as the 2025 Annual Research Lectureship Awardee.

With more than three decades of dedication to the Lobo community, Schamiloglu's contributions to the field include co-authoring more than 170 journal papers, while being a PI on more than \$50M in contracts and grants at UNM. His commitment to excellence truly exemplifies the spirit of UNM research innovation and scholarship. Stay tuned as we look forward to Professor Schamiloglu's lecture later this spring.

Globally Engaged Research Awards

Lobo Researchers, the deadline has been extended to submit nominations for the [Globally-Engaged Research Awards](#) in **two** different categories that highlight the dynamic international research conducted by UNM graduate and undergraduate students.

- Graduate Student Award, \$1,500 cash prize
- Deborah Rifenburg Memorial Undergraduate Student Award, \$1,000 cash prize

Nominations are *now* due by Friday, March 6.

Research Events

2026 State of Research

We're less than a month away from this year's UNM State of Research, which is scheduled for Thursday, March 26 at 4 p.m., in SUB Ballrooms A&B. This year's event will follow a Q&A townhall format with the opportunity for researchers across campus to attend and engage with EVP Mike Richards, HSC VPR Hengameh Raissy, Interim Provost Barbara Rodriguez, and me.

Leading up to the townhall, we urge Lobos to submit, in advance, any questions they'd like us to answer regarding UNM's research enterprise at the 2026 State of Research. RSVP for this year's 2026 State of Research.

WICHE

Researchers, I hope some of you will be in attendance as The University of New Mexico hosts the 2026 Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Academic Leadership Forum 2026 Annual Meeting, scheduled April 1-3.

This year's theme is "Facing Complexity, Finding Solutions." Topics of the forum will range from the shifting policy landscape and workforce demands to addressing complex enrollment trends and technological disruptions. Many of UNM's leaders, including Assistant VPR Melissa Emery Thompson and me, will be contributing to this meeting and highlighting UNM's approach to the forum's theme.

2026 Lobo Hackathon

[Registration is now open](#) for the 2026 Lobo Hackathon. Please help us reach students who may be interested.

The program will run:

- Thursday, April 9 | 6-9 p.m.
- Friday, April 10 | 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

The [Lobo Hackathon](#) is an opportunity for people to come together to intensely focus and collaborate on improving or creating an idea. Teams (minimum of 2) can build or refine an idea that sets out to

address a problem, utilize a technology, or create something new. Collaborate on a team or join us for the final pitches where teams will present their ideas to a panel of judges for the chance to win cash prizes.

The Lobo Hackathon is open to students, faculty, staff, entrepreneurs, and others in the community.

Research Technology

Huron Suite Update

Within the next two years, UNM will fully transition to a new Electronic Research Administration (eRA) software called Huron Research Suite (HRS).

The Huron Employee Compensation and Compliance (ECC) program, replacing our current Banner Effort Certification process, will go-live **Monday, March 30**. This certification process allows UNM to meet all required federal regulations in verifying personnel effort on sponsored awards. Our new system will eliminate current on-going issues in Banner, while cutting certification submission times.

We'll share monthly updates via email, and key weekly communications leading up to our go-live for the ECC module. We've also launched a new webpage that will always have the latest updates for each module as information becomes available. Look for new information on trainings and resources coming soon.

For questions, please contact:

- Central/Branch Campuses: maineffortrptng@unm.edu
- HSC: HSC-Effort-Reporting@salud.unm.edu

Research Resources

AI Tools

Safety and guidelines around artificial intelligence (AI) seems to be a topic of discussion at so many of my meetings these days and here's what I've learned from our friends in IT. UNM provides access to a growing list of enterprise-grade AI tools, including:

- Microsoft Copilot
- Copilot for Office
- Zoom AI
- AI Assistant for Acrobat.

UNM's IT Department is developing a gateway platform that allows Lobos to run queries against multiple Large Language Models (LLMs). The platform will also allow departments to design AI-powered agents.

Some of these tools are available without additional charge to university students, faculty, and staff, whereas others are available for departmental purchase using UNM's [software store](#). Our institutional agreements with these AI service/tool providers may meet many of the technical requirements for

protecting sensitive information, including enterprise data protection and guarantees that UNM data will not be used to train public AI models. Nevertheless, it is critical that you check with the appropriate [UNM data steward](#) before using regulated data in any AI tool, to help ensure UNM data are always reasonably and appropriately protected, especially if Personally Identifiable Information (PII) or other highly regulated data will be used.

Research Radiates

This month's Research Radiates is UNM Associate Professor Jeremy Hogeveen, who is also one of the researchers within UNM's Psychology Clinical Neuroscience Center. I've seen Hogeveen give a few different lectures and I always leave fascinated with not only his work, but his commitment to mentoring graduate and undergraduate students.

My name is Jeremy Hogeveen, and I'm an associate professor of psychology at UNM. I study how the human brain makes decisions—both good and bad—across our entire lifespan.

By using a big donut-shaped magnet (an MRI scanner) to take pictures of the brain while people make choices, we can see how decision-making changes from adolescence to old age, and why individuals with a history of addiction or brain injury might struggle to make healthy choices.

I have always been inspired by the unsolved mysteries of how the human brain works and what drives our daily behaviors. I am constantly motivated by the opportunity to work at the forefront of this rapidly expanding field to uncover those secrets.

Ultimately, I hope our current work will shape the development of future treatments for patients dealing with complex mental and behavioral health challenges. Additionally, since joining UNM in 2018, I have had the opportunity to teach and mentor hundreds of students, and there is no greater honor than helping them on the path to achieving their goals.