



# HIGHER LEARNING COMMISSION

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October 18, 2018

Dr. Garnett Stokes  
President  
University of New Mexico  
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MSC05 3300  
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

Dear President Stokes:

Attached is the Quality Initiative Report (QIR) Review evaluation information - University of New Mexico's QIR showed genuine effort and has been accepted by the Commission. The attached reviewer evaluation contains a rationale for this outcome.

Peer reviewers evaluate all the QIRs based on the genuine effort of the institution, the seriousness of the undertaking, the significance of scope and impact of the work, the genuineness of the commitment to the initiative, and adequate resource provision.

If you have questions about the QIR reviewer information, please contact either Kathy Bijak ([kbijak@hlcommission.org](mailto:kbijak@hlcommission.org)) or Pat Newton-Curran ([pnewton@hlcommission.org](mailto:pnewton@hlcommission.org)).

***Higher Learning Commission***



FORM

## Open Pathway Quality Initiative Report

### *Panel Review and Recommendation Form*

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The Quality Initiative panel review process confirms or questions the institution's effort in undertaking the Quality Initiative proposal approved by the Commission. As indicated in the explication of the review, the Quality Initiative process encourages institutions to take risks, innovate, take on a tough challenge, or pursue a yet unproven strategy or hypothesis. Thus failure of an initiative to achieve its goals is acceptable. An institution may learn much from such failure. What is not acceptable is failure of the institution to pursue the initiative with genuine effort. Genuineness of effort, not success of the initiative, constitutes the focus of the Quality Initiative review and serves as its sole point of evaluation.

Name of Institution: University of New Mexico

State: NM

Institutional ID: 1511

Reviewers (names, titles, institutions): Dr. George C. Knox, Executive Director, Council on the Accreditation of Two-Year Colleges and Dr. Rita Kottmeyer

Date: October 16, 2018

### **I. Quality Initiative Review**

- ☒ The institution demonstrated its seriousness of the undertaking.
- ☒ The institution demonstrated that the initiative had scope and impact.
- ☒ The institution demonstrated a commitment to and engagement in the initiative.
- ☒ The institution demonstrated adequate resource provision.

### **II. Recommendation**

- ☒ The panel confirms genuine effort on the part of the institution.
- ☐ The panel cannot confirm genuine effort on the part of the institution.

### III. Rationale (required)

The John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education is a national, non-profit organization leader in efforts to improve undergraduate learning and retention at institutional, regional, and national levels. One of its works is a comprehensive, voluntary, self-study process known as Foundations of Excellence (FoE) in the First College Year. As of 2018, over 300 campuses have participated in FoE. UNM is one of those campuses, and their Quality Initiative is based on that self-study. UNM's self-study took place in 2012-13, and it has been implementing and adapting their plan since 2013.

- o How to serve both under-prepared and well-prepared incoming students
- o First year curriculum
- o Student support
- o Faculty and teaching assistant support
- o Out-of-classroom experiences
- o Data and assessment

The focus areas include registration processes, progress toward the degree, advising, mentoring, course updates, curriculum review, faculty and staff training, technology updates, and essential services.

- The impact has included improved retention, persistence and student satisfaction.
- While the institution improves the first year experience, the models it develops and the new academic resources profit the full four year programs.

This commitment and engagement is evidenced by the number of changes, additions, and redesigns implemented by UNM

- Redesign of New Student Orientation
- Use of COMPASS to challenge placement, followed by an improvement in 2017 of switching to ACCUPLACER
- Change from not for credit remedial classes to for credit transitional gateway courses
- Math Learning Lab utilizing interactive software as well as tutors
- Introduction of Critical Text Analysis (CTA) course (2015)
- English Stretch & Studio which allow less prepared students to have more time in entry level English
- Freshman Learning Communities (FLCs) linking required general education courses with small enrollment seminars
- Student Affairs Peer Mentor (PMT) program embedding mentors in Foundations Math and Critical Text Analysis courses
- Center for Academic Program Support (CAPS) providing peer learning facilitators in all subjects
- Restructuring of advising to lower advisor-student ratios

- New Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) a teaching enhancement for faculty, staff, and graduate teaching assistants
- UNM Teaching Fellows Program (2014, restructured in 2016-17) focusing on courses that historically have high failure rates
- Increased communications with students
- The report outlines the one time and the recurring expenses for the improvements, a total of roughly \$3,000,000. The recurring expenses are largely due to additional salaries. That could be a challenge if enrollment does not remain steady.
- Internal indicators show an increase in retention.
- Sufficient numbers of faculty have volunteered for the redesign tasks to keep development costs down.