

Dear Colleagues,

We cannot predict the status of public health in New Mexico in Fall 2021. We can say that, if vaccination rates continue as projected and if the decline in COVID-19 cases also persists, we should be able to offer a heavily face-to-face UNM experience in Fall 2021. We are therefore planning the Fall 2021 term in this way, with the understanding that if we must switch to a different form, we will.

Depending on health conditions by late summer and state health orders in place at that time, the Fall 2021 face-to-face experience might still involve some ongoing precautions such as mask wearing, directional signage, symptom checking, and continued disinfection in classrooms and other university spaces such as research laboratories, offices, and libraries. As needed, we will continue rapid response assessment and communication around necessary testing and quarantining. As a reminder, the New Mexico Department of Health manages COVID-19 vaccination eligibility and distribution. Please do register in the NM DoH system: <https://cvvaccine.nmhealth.org/>. UNM faculty outside of clinical delivery settings are categorized as priority “1B” under essential workers in the [NM DoH system](#), and based on the current DoH vaccination calendar, individuals in category 1B are projected to have access to COVID-19 vaccination before the Fall 2021 semester begins. DoH informs us that when you are scheduled by DoH for a vaccination in phase 1B, you may need documentation of either your health condition or your Lobo card to document your role in education.

For faculty in the non-HSC units on the Albuquerque campus:

Many of you have questions about your options for the delivery of Fall 2021 courses. As we design the Fall schedule, we need to balance health, learning, and time commitments:

1. Instructors with documented health conditions who are at greater risk for severe illness according to the [Centers for Disease Control](#) will not be required to teach face-to-face. We are in consultation with the [UNM Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) Coordinator about the best way to document and protect individuals in this situation, but, in the meantime, these instructors can plan to teach asynchronous courses developed for UNM Online (see below) or fully remote synchronous courses scheduled as hybrid (see below).
2. Our students are invested in a return to an in-person college experience and we have learned that many students are more successful with in-person learning.
3. We need to be transparent with students about what to expect in the Fall schedule so that students know when they need to be on campus and can make time and financial commitments (including housing) accordingly. If we create schedules without times/days or with built-in time conflicts, we will make it impossible for our students to attend classes at all.

Departmental schedulers will receive an extension of time for submission of Fall schedules until Friday, March 5. Here are more clarifications about the delivery categories available for Fall 2021:

1. UNM Online, Online Max, and Accelerated Online Programs (formerly MOPs): the only scheduling modality for fully asynchronous sections.
 - Each section must be formally approved for inclusion in UNM Online (main campus), or the relevant online program at a branch campus.
 - The instructor has preferably received training via EBPTO, or the relevant training at a branch campus.
 - The section has preferably received course design assistance and review.
 - Courses created Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 as emergency remote arranged courses do not automatically qualify, but they can be proposed for development as UNM Online by March 12, 2021 (extended deadline).
2. Face-to-Face: the only scheduling modality for synchronous in-person sections.

- Sections should be scheduled for established on-pattern days and times so that students aren't put in the difficult position of having multiple time conflicts caused by off-pattern courses, and should be distributed in a balanced way across day/time patterns rather than clustered on T Th 10-2. Rare exceptions to on-pattern days and times may be requested for unique program requirements (such as programs that must coordinate with experiential course elements or clinical schedules).
- Only those sections involving instructor supervision of a single student, such as honors thesis, thesis, dissertation, arranged internship, or problems may be scheduled as time to be "arranged," so that students can know their options and organize a successful schedule.

3. Hybrid: We hope to maximize the face-to-face learning experiences of our students in the fall, but there may be occasional sound reasons to deploy a hybrid course. "Hybrid" is the only scheduling modality for courses that are face-to-face plus remote synchronous, or face-to-face plus remote arranged, or, in exceptional cases, fully remote synchronous. (These courses do not need to be submitted to and approved by UNM Online). Note: many UNM classrooms are now [remote hybrid classrooms](#), fitted with technology to support teaching with both in-person and remote participants.

- Instructors teaching Fall 2021 courses scheduled as "hybrid" must complete a Learning Central course (2-3 hours) on remote teaching prior to the beginning of the Fall 2021 semester. If the instructor has completed EBPTO training or relevant and documented training at a branch campus, the Learning Central course is not required. UNM must require this training to be compliant with state, federal, and accreditation policies on remote or distance learning. Information about the mandatory Learning Central course will be forthcoming in mid-April.
- Meeting times for the F2F and synchronous portions of these sections should be scheduled for established on-pattern days and times so that students aren't put in the difficult position of having multiple time conflicts caused by off-pattern courses, and should be distributed in a balanced way across day-time patterns rather than clustered on T Th 10-2.
- There should be no Hybrid courses scheduled as time to be "arranged."
- Fully remote synchronous courses scheduled as "hybrid" should generally be reserved for situations in which 1) the instructor has a qualifying medical condition, per the UNM ADA Coordinator, preventing them from returning to the face-to-face classroom; 2) the instructor has a contractual employment agreement already in place that provides for fully remote synchronous teaching; 3) students enrolled at another campus or institution are joining the UNM main campus section on a regular basis as enrolled students in a specific joint campus or joint institution program.
- Finally, we note that hybrid poses special challenges for students who are deaf or hard of hearing who can sometimes successfully follow spoken delivery in a classroom setting but have extra difficulty in a zoom session.

It's hard to have to say thank you, once again, via an impersonal e-mail. We so wish that we could be thanking you for your work as we dash across campus or run into you on the way to class. We hope that that deep pleasure of saying thank you in person for all your work teaching, and scheduling, and holding up the sky can happen in our face-to-face Fall 2021. In the meantime, though, all too remotely, Thank you.

Best wishes from the Team in Academic Affairs:
James, Barbara, Bill, Pamela

