

## Chancellor Weekly Brief – 7.31.2020

Dr. James Malm

### DECISIVE LEADERSHIP.

Yesterday, we witnessed the funeral of Congressman John Lewis, who was a hero of our times and a Civil Rights icon. He dedicated his life to decisive leadership and securing equality for all Americans by getting into what he famously called “Good Trouble.” He believed that “ordinary people with extraordinary vision can redeem the soul of America,” which are words that he wrote in his final editorial published in the New York Times on the same day as his burial.

The legacy of John Lewis will be his lifelong work of forming a more perfect Union, where the “heavy burdens of hate” will finally cease to make way for a peace that triumphs over “violence, aggression, and war.” These final words of his to our country truly inspire us all to find our way to decisive leadership during this difficult time in our nation’s history.

When I look at the work we do at UNM-Gallup, I can see that leadership in our faculty, personnel, and students.

For example, we have eight geoscience students who continue to pursue and finish their research projects despite all that is going on around us. These students—led by Dr. Antoinette Abeyta—traveled prior to the beginning of this pandemic to the Bonnet Carre Spillway in New Orleans to [participate in an undergraduate research opportunity](#) that taught them about the region’s environmental issues and provided them with other valuable STEM skills. Each of these eight UNM-Gallup students are now finishing their individual research projects and preparing their conference poster presentations.

“The students are amazing,” says Dr. Abeyta. “I’m grateful to be in a position to provide them with support and career opportunities in this uncertain time. While we are limited to digital work—lab work remains inaccessible due to COVID—the students have done terrific jobs and have accomplished a great deal in this time.”

We can also find decisive leadership in the work of Jon Saatvedt and others to finalize the proposal for our new Process Technology Program, which recently received preliminary approval. [As Jon says](#): “The demand from the local community is greater than it’s ever been, and we are all excited for students to have a program like this to help what will inevitably benefit the workforce here in the state.”

As we begin our fall semester in just a couple of weeks, we do so with leadership for our local community and state in mind. In this challenging environment caused by this pandemic and the increasingly difficult budget conditions we face, remaining a leader in higher education here in Gallup is crucial to fulfilling our core mission and continued service to our community.

We are on the right course, and if we look at some of the data over the past five years that [we are sharing](#) with statewide educational and government leaders, we can see that UNM-Gallup is a vibrant college that serves our students and communities with excellence.

Office of the Chancellor

- Last year, we offered 19 associate degrees, 17 certificates, and 1 bachelor degree programs—which is in line with our program offerings during the previous four years.
- We have created 7 new programs—not including Process Technology—ranging from Secondary Teacher Education, Welding Technology, and Emergency Medical Services.
- And, we also discontinued or eliminated 12 programs over the past five years.

We are focused on leadership and stewardship of our campus. We are here to serve our community by teaching the critical skills that will lead our students into jobs or future educational opportunities that support their vibrant and productive lives. Thank you, as always, for your continued service to UNM-Gallup, and I look forward to working with each of you to finalize our preparations for the fall semester that begins on August 17th.

To our students: I very much look forward to your return to class—even though most of us will remain off campus until we can fully reopen. Please stay close to your email, and we will communicate updates to you often as we navigate our way through this pandemic together.

Please stay safe and be well!

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'J. Malm'.

Dr. James R. Malm, Chancellor  
Professor of Business