

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of
The Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico
December 19, 2024
9:00 AM Open Session-UNM Student Union Building Ballroom B
Executive Sessions- 8:00 am and immediately following
Open Session in UNM Student Union Building Cherry Silver Room

Members Present

Paul Blanchard
William H. Payne
Kim Sanchez Rael, Chair
Victor Reyes
Robert L. Schwartz, Secretary-Treasurer
Paula Tackett

Members Not Present Jack
Fortner, Vice-Chair

Administration Present

Garnett S. Stokes, President; James Holloway, Provost and EVP for Academic Affairs; Teresa Costantinidis, EVP for Finance and Administration; Mike Richards, Interim EVP for Health Sciences and CEO of the Health System; Rebecca Napier, VP Finance & Administration, HSC; Fern Lovo, VP Athletics; Assata Zerai, VP Equity and Inclusion; Eric Scott, VP Student Affairs, Dan Garcia, VP Enrollment Management; Scot Sauder, Interim General Counsel; Francie Cordova, Chief Compliance Officer; Kevin Stevenson, VP HR; Terry Babbitt, President's Chief of Staff; Cinnamon Blair, Chief University Marketing and Communications Officer; deans and others

Advisors Present

Anthony Tomaziefski, ASUNM President; Michel Rivera Ramirez, GPSA President; Ivan Olay, Staff Council President; Cris Elder, Faculty Senate, President

Presenters

Norma Allen, University Controller
Representatives from KPMG, Moss Adams and Carr, Riggs & Ingram

CALL TO ORDER AND CONFIRMATION OF A QUORUM

Regent Chair Kim Sanchez Rael called the meeting to order at 8:10 am in the UNM Student Union Building, Cherry Silver Room, and confirmed a quorum with 6 members present in person (Sanchez Rael, Payne, Blanchard, Reyes, Schwartz and Tackett).

VOTE TO ADOPT THE AGENDA

- **The motion to adopt the agenda passed unanimously with six regents present and voting (1st Reyes; 2nd Payne).**

VOTE TO CLOSE THE MEETING AND PROCEED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION (Roll-Call Vote)

(1st Reyes; 2nd Schwartz; roll call vote – all members voted yes)

The meeting closed at 8:10 AM. *[The doors to the Cherry Silver Room were closed.]*

Executive Session agenda:

- Discussions of limited personnel matters as defined in and permitted by Section 10-15- 1(H)(2), NMSA (1978);

VOTE TO RE-OPEN THE MEETING

(1st Tackett; 2nd Schwartz; roll call vote – all members voted yes)

The meeting re-opened at 8:55 AM.

[The doors to the Cherry Silver Room were opened; Regents proceeded to Ballroom C.]

CONVENE OPEN SESSION AND CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED SESSION

Regent Rael convened open session at 9:11 AM in Ballroom B of the Student Union Building and certified that the Board's closed session discussions were limited only to items on the morning executive session agenda.

Land Acknowledgement Statement of the University of New Mexico

Regent Rael affirmed UNM's Land Acknowledgement Statement by reading it aloud:

Founded in 1889, The University of New Mexico sits on the traditional homelands of the Pueblo of Sandia. The original peoples of New Mexico – Pueblo, Navajo, and Apache – since time immemorial, have deep connections to the land and have made significant contributions to the broader community statewide. We honor the land itself and those who remain stewards of this land throughout the generations and also acknowledge our committed relationship to Indigenous peoples. We gratefully recognize our history.

VOTE TO CONFIRM THE APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **The motion to approve the minutes of the August 22, 2024 regular meeting passed unanimously with a vote of 4-0 (1st Payne; 2nd Tackett).**

PUBLIC COMMENT RELATED TO AGENDA ACTION ITEMS

There were no public comments related to action items on the agenda.

ADVISORS COMMENTS RELATED TO AGENDA ITEMS

There were no advisor comments related to agenda items.

PRESIDENT'S ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

President Stokes presented her administrative report (Attachment A).

REGENTS' COMMENTS

Regent Reyes requested to hold a moment of silence for two legislators who passed away in 2024 and who were critically important to the advancement of the University, New Mexico State Senator John Arthur Smith and US Senator Fred Harris. He expressed his gratitude personally for their mentorship, guidance and support in own his career, and also as a regent for their dedication to the students at University of New Mexico and the state of New Mexico.

Regent Rael commented on the establishment of a new, formalized procedure for public comment after conducting a study of how other public entities and universities manage public comment at public meetings. She read partially the published guidelines, procedures and expectations for public decorum aloud. She also stated that there is a time and place for public rallies, but that the board meeting is the time and place for university governance and governance decorum. She acknowledged her regent colleagues as volunteers serving the state under the constitutional obligation to advance the missions of the University. She provided context for the iterations of how public comment has been handled in the past six months and the establishment of reasonable and clear guidelines in a forum where decorum is expected.

Regent Rael also addressed a previous public comment that was repeated in local media regarding the moving of two board meetings from Main Campus to Valencia Campus and to the UNM Science & Technology Park (South Campus). It was falsely stated that the regents relocated these meetings in order to avoid public comment, when in fact, the meetings were moved because the regents have a desire to have a presence on other campuses and also because there were logistics conflicts with the regular meeting room in the SUB. She expressed her disappointment about hearing false statements perpetuated.

VOTE TO CONFIRM THE APPOINTMENT OF GENERAL COUNSEL PURSUANT TO RPM SECTION 2.6

- **The motion to approve the appointment of as General Counsel passed unanimously (1st Payne; 2nd Schwartz).**

Regent Schwartz thanked Scot Sauder for his service as Interim General Counsel and his many years of service to UNM. Regent Rael echoed the sentiments and pointed out that Mr. Sauder would still be Interim General Counsel until the latter part of February 2025.

COMMITTEE REPORTS**CONSENT DOCKET**

1. Domenici Hall 3T MRI Vault & Equip. Renovation \$5,800,000
2. UNMCCC Radiation Oncology – Linear Accelerator Vault 1 & 2 Renovations \$6,018,638
3. Health Sciences Library & Informatics Center Cabling Replacement \$700K
4. Construction of Center for Reproductive Health
5. UNMH Sandoval Campus First Amended and Restated Bylaws of the Board of Advisors
6. UNMH Sandoval Campus Bd of Advisors Medical Staff Ops Comm. Chair, Dr. Sara Assaf
7. 1131 University Blvd. NE – Roof Replacement nte \$1,100,000
8. Children's Psychiatric Center (CPC) Fire Alarm Replacement – nte \$500,000
9. UNMH Main Computer Room Air Conditioning (CRAC) Unit Replacement – nte \$380,000C
10. UNMH Main Exterior Paint – nte \$385,000.00
11. UH Main – Radiology Remodel – OR Backfill Enabling Project – nte \$7,000,000
12. UNMH Exterior Signage Replacement – nte \$1,700,000
13. BA – Landscape Architecture (New)
14. AS – Dental Health (New-Gallup)
15. Project Construction Approvals/Re-Approvals (all items below \$2 Million):
 - a. UNM Los Alamos: Open Space Infrastructure Improvements
16. President Emeritus Status for former UNM President Robert D. Frank
17. New Mexico Higher Education Department, Institutional Finance Division, 1st Quarter Financial Actions Report and Certification through September 30, 2024
18. Ground Lease for 1705 Mesa Vista for Phi Delta Theta Fraternity
19. Real Property Acquisition of 1020 Avenida Cesar Chavez
20. Project Construction Approval or Re-Approval (all items above \$2 Million):
 - a. NM Police Department Headquarters b) McKinley Academy - UNM Gallup
21. Establish the Donald Caughran Memorial Endowment in Biology
22. Board Resolution Approving Modification of Authority Delegated to the Governing Board of the Harwood Foundation of the UNM (aka The Harwood Board) and the Director of the Harwood Foundation of UNM (aka The Harwood Museum)
23. Real Property Disposition 425 North 7th Street, Gallup, NM
24. Regents' Policies 2.1, 2.2, 2.8, 7.4 and 8.1 Revisions
25. Regents Policies 7.3 Revisions

*Docket Note: Number(s) 1-12 moved from Health Sciences Center Committee;13-14 from Student Success, Teaching and Research [SSTAR] Committee; Numbers 15-23 moved from Finance & Facilities [F&F] Committee; and Numbers 24-25 moved from Governance.

- **The motion to approve all items listed on the consent docket passed unanimously (1st Payne; 2nd Tackett)**

AUDIT & COMPLIANCE COMMITTEE, Regent Fortner, Chair
Information Item

External Financial Statement Audit Presentation, Norma Allen, University Controller presented the External Financial Statement Audit along with representatives from KPMG, Moss Adams and Carr, Riggs & Ingram.

STUDENT SUCCESS, TEACHING AND RESEARCH COMMITTEE [SSTAR]. Paula Tackett, Chair

Regent Tackett requested that Cris Elder, Faculty Senate President, present the 2024 Fall Degree Graduates.

VOTE TO APPROVE THE FALL 2024 FALL DEGREE CANDIDATES

- **The motion to approve the 2024 Fall Degree Candidates passed unanimously (1st Reyes; 2nd Tackett)**

ADVISORS COMMENTS NOT RELATED TO AGENDA

Anthony Tomaziefski President, ASUNM, updated the board on the recent ASUNM senate elections, which saw a 400% increase in turnout from the previous year. ASUNM hosted the Lobos Got Talent event and the Arts & Crafts Fair. ASUNM is now planning for the extended legislative session and next semester's activities. April is shaping up to be busy with Spring Storm, a Film Festival and Fiestas. He wished the board happy holidays.

Ivan Olay, President, Staff Council shared highlights from Staff Council during the year, including the bereavement leave resolution and neurodiversity resolution to create a more inclusive and understanding workplace, and the Staff Council Star Awards for 23 recipients. He noted that the council hosted legislators recently and shared that staff face food and housing insecurities, and discussed salary increases and the impacts of parking an insurance cost increases. He also requested the regents advocate for a minimum 4% compensation increase in the upcoming legislative session. He wished the board the happiest of holidays.

Cris Elder, President, Faculty Senate, discussed the oncoming need for the administration to actively support and further protect the highly vulnerable population of undocumented and DACA students and patients due to the coming federal administration and the plan for mass deportations.

PUBLIC COMMENT NOT RELATED TO AGENDA

Jennifer Jordan, faculty, spoke against the bookstore's new flat fee for students for textbooks.

Katie Slack, graduate student, demanded on behalf of 604 students who signed a petition that UNM fix systems that continually revert to legal names and binary genders for students.

Sara Koplik, staff, spokes against divestment from Israel and certain companies.

Mitchell Freedman, Paul Afek, Rae Stringfield, Ceryn Schoel, Hinde Sahmoud and Mathilde Walker, students, spoke in favor of divestment from Israel.

Justin Bendell, faculty, and Jennifer Tucker, faculty, presented on divestment from Israel. Time was ceded from other registrants to allow for a longer presentation.

The regents also received written comment from Jennifer Jordan, Ashley Bernardo, Justin Bendell and Jennifer Tucker. (ATTACHMENT B).

Regent Schwartz made lengthy commentary against divestment from Israel, outlining the extensive work by the UNM Foundation, in which he took part, regarding its divestment policy.

VOTE TO CLOSE THE MEETING AND PROCEED IN EXECUTIVE SESSION

- **The motion to close the meeting and proceed in executive session passed unanimously with five regents present and voting (1st Tackett; 2nd Payne; roll call vote – all members voted yes)**

[The regents proceeded upstairs to the Cherry Silver Room.]

Executive Session agenda:

- Discussion of advancing potential candidates for an Honorary Degree as permitted per the Honorary Degree Committee charge.
- Discussion and/or determination of matters subject to the attorney-client privilege pertaining to threatened or pending litigation in which the University is or may become a participant pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 10-15-1H(7);
- Discussion and/or determination of bargaining strategy relative to collective bargaining negotiations between the University and a bargaining unit pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 10-15-1H(5); and

- Discussion of the purchase, acquisition, or disposal of real property by the University pursuant to NMSA 1978, § 10-15-1H(8).

VOTE TO RE-OPEN THE MEETING

- **The motion to re-open the meeting passed unanimously with seven regents present and voting (1st Payne; 2nd Tackett; roll call vote – all members voted yes).**

Regent Rael reconvened open session at 12:35 pm and certified that only those matters described in the Executive Session Agenda were discussed in the closed session; Final action was taken with regard to the following matter in Open Session.

VOTE TO APPROVE ADVANCING CANDIDATES FOR AN HONORARY DEGREE

- **The motion to approve advancing candidates for an Honorary Degree as permitted per the Honorary Degree Committee charge passed unanimously (1st Tackett; 2nd Rael)**

ADJOURN

There being no further business, Regent Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting, Regent Tackett seconded; all were in favor; the meeting adjourned at 12:36 pm.

Approved:



Jack Fortner, Vice Chair (Acting Chair)

Attest:



Acting Secretary-Treasurer

Minutes originated and finalized by Emily Morelli

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Board of Regents
MSC05 3200
1 University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001

December 16th, 2024

Dear University of New Mexico Regents,

I am writing to request an appeal of UNM's decision to move forward with Equitable Access, a flat-fee, automatic textbook charge of \$296.46 that will be imposed upon all undergraduate students' bursar's accounts, UNLESS THEY OPT OUT. I was recruited to join the faculty of the College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences (CULLS) as the inaugural OER Librarian in 2022. I am also the principal investigator on a Department of Education grant¹ for nearly 2.125 million dollars in which UNM is working with two community colleges to create an OER consortium in the state of New Mexico. I work with faculty by providing training, licensing guidance, and support to find OER materials. I have also developed and administered grant programs that fund faculty to create open materials.

I first found out about Equitable Access at a meeting on Tuesday, November 19, 2024 with the bookstore director, Lisa Walden; my dean, Leo S. Lo; my Co-PI on the grant, Elisha Allen; and Alicia Solano, assistant vice president for Business Services in attendance. The bookstore director and the assistant vice president shared a presentation that they had given a week prior during [UNM's Dean's Council](#) before they voted unanimously to move forward with Equitable Access, a program that decreases students' choices. More regulated and controlled technology offered through a for-profit platform, while at first might seem flexible, but it can reinforce social inequality.²

Student Cost Impact

Two hundred and ninety six dollars is more than [double what the bookstore industry claims students spend per year on course materials](#).³ The National Association of College Stores' (NACS) 2023 annual survey of college students found that students were spending \$285 a year on course materials. The price proposed for UNM undergraduates isn't based on what students are spending at bookstores and it isn't even based on what the majority of students are paying at UNM. The enclosed PowerPoint presentation references a survey the UNM bookstore sent out in the spring of 2024, where students were asked how much they currently spend on required course materials in a single semester. They found that 42.2% spent more than \$300 a semester. This means 57.8% of students spent less than \$300 a semester, so the price point of \$296 a semester is based on what a minority of students are budgeting and paying for in a semester.

The Equitable Access program at UNM will disproportionately help students in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, math) whose books and materials are more expensive. For example, UNM's School of Engineering has 2978 students (715 graduate and 2,263 undergraduate) enrolled for the fall

¹ <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SI700JG-VTckFtn0cU9fg-8pkmBsOyVjTj8KmSJ5ebk/edit?usp=sharing>

² Houlden, S. & Veletsianos, G. (2020). The problem with flexible learning: Neoliberalism, freedom, and learning subjectivities. *Learning, Media, and Technology*, 46(2), 144-155.

³ NACS. 2023. NACS Student Watch Report: Course Materials Spending Dropped, Increase in Digital Preference." NACS. June 12. <https://www.nacs.org/nacs-student-watch-report-course-materials-spending-dropped-increase-in-digital-preference#>.

2024 semester. Of those 2978, 688 are women (185 graduate and 503 undergraduate), 2288 are men (530 graduate and 1758 undergraduate), and 2 are unknown. This means that 23% of the students at the school of Engineering are women and 22% of the undergraduate students are women. In other words, the College that most benefits from this program, Engineering, is almost 80% men. This means that students in other majors and colleges will be subsidizing the education of STEM majors.

Another concern related to cost is that the tuition for a UNM undergraduate student is roughly \$10,000 a year.⁴ Tacking on \$600 of book fees represents a 6% increase in students' tuition, yet Equitable Access is being classified as a Cost of Attendance. The Board of Regents approves the price of tuition and fees⁵, but is your approval needed for a Cost of Attendance? And if the Board of Regents' approval is not needed to implement a Cost of Attendance, who can weigh in on the program and how much it costs? Students are being tied to a contract that is subject to the whims of a for-profit industry. And the Opportunity Scholarship cannot be used to cover this cost.

Working with the Bookstore

One of the UNM Bookstore's claims is that they will assist with integrating OER into Canvas, but OER is always free and open. A for-profit platform is not necessary to integrate OER into Canvas. Through our Department of Education grant and a partnership between the University Libraries and Information Technology, we have been working on integrating our OER platform into Canvas to enable formative assessments to be recorded in the Canvas gradebook. My CoPI on the grant, Elisha Allen, has hired a technical analyst to help integrate our e-book platform, Pressbooks, and Canvas. Why is the Bookstore saying, without any input from the OER program, that they are working with us if they haven't? The bookstore director, Lisa Walden, is a member of the OER Working Group, but she hasn't been to any meeting this fall 2024 semester. She didn't ask anyone working on OER if we needed the Bookstore's help disseminating OER, and for them to put that explicitly in their presentation to the Dean's Council was disingenuous at best, but also misleading.

Pairing OER with RedShelf doesn't address any of the outcomes of our DOE grant. RedShelf is a closed, pay-for-access platform that is not developed to meet the diverse needs of faculty who are adapting and generating open access materials. Additionally, not all of the other schools in the NMOER Consortium have access to RedShelf, so relying on RedShelf to disseminate OER is not a solution to any obstacles the OER initiative faces. Pressbooks was created specifically for the purpose of adopting, adapting and creating OER materials. Any faculty member can import a Pressbook into their own book shell and adapt the book for their students. This platform was created specifically for sharing materials out in the open. RedShelf is offering to give students access to their OER materials through their for-profit platform. As an OER expert, I recommend that the university and the publisher investigate whether their plan to offer OER through a publisher's platform violates the terms of Creative Commons licensing, specifically the non-commercial designation, which prohibits making money off this content.

⁴ The University of New Mexico. 2024. "Tuition and Fee Rates."
<https://bursar.unm.edu/documents/2024falltuitionandfees1.pdf>

⁵ The University of New Mexico. 2024. "Administrative Policies and Procedures Manual - Policy 8210: Tuition and Related Fees" <https://policy.unm.edu/university-policies/8000/8210.html>

The Broken Textbook Market

Between the 1980's and early 2000's, textbook prices increased at 3-4 times the rate of inflation, creating the affordability crisis students face today.⁶ Faculty were assigning publisher's textbooks and students would foot the bill. What makes the market broken is that publishers have disproportionate power to set prices, and with Equitable Access, students will be automatically billed to their Bursar Account, therefore denying them the ability to shop around for more affordable options.

Federal regulations that govern how student financial aid should be used. If students are automatically billed for textbooks, institutions are required to demonstrate below-market-value prices. But the publishers often inflated the value of their materials, so by giving students discounted access to already inflated materials, publishers create the appearance of savings. Publishers would never make a deal that actually undercuts their profits. Our students are being made to keep the publishing industry afloat as it grapples with the fact that it is a dying industry.⁷

This "broken market" gives publishers disproportionate power to set prices. The regulations that require institutions to demonstrate below-market-value prices in order to automatically bill students for their textbooks created an unintentional incentive to further inflate those prices in order to create the appearance of savings, without actually reducing costs in a way that undercuts their profit.⁸ Textbook publishers capitalize on their print prices to make their estimates. They inflate the value of Equitable Access, making it look better for students than they are.

Publishers are in full control of changing their prices at any moment. The Public Interest Research Group has also voiced concern over unclear pricing terms from publishers; these terms are often carefully guarded as trade secrets. There is also worry that prices and quotas could increase drastically over time.⁹ Rising textbook prices also have placed increasing demands on stakeholders like the federal government and colleges and universities that provide need-based financial aid to students. Since federal financial aid formulas typically include some measure of the cost of textbooks, textbook price increases have forced Congress either to appropriate more money to financial aid and/or to ration scarce available financial aid funds among an increasing large number of students.¹⁰

In 2024, the Department of Education proposed changes that would shift the Equitable Access "opt-out" model that automatically bills students to an "opt-in" model where students get to choose if their financial aid is used on these materials or not. This past year, they tabled their proposal to spend more

⁶ Morales, J., Blaney, E., and Haycock-Lohmann. 2024. "[Savings" Under Inclusive Access Programs](#). Memo to the Program Integrity and Institution Quality Negotiating Rulemaking Committee. Department of Education.

⁷ Morales, J., Blaney, E., and Haycock-Lohmann. 2024. "[Savings" Under Inclusive Access Programs](#). Memo to the Program Integrity and Institution Quality Negotiating Rulemaking Committee. Department of Education.

⁸ Morales, J., Blaney, E., and Haycock-Lohmann. 2024. "[Savings" Under Inclusive Access Programs](#). Memo to the Program Integrity and Institution Quality Negotiating Rulemaking Committee. Department of Education.

⁹ Vitez, K. (2020). "Automatic textbook billing: An offer students can't refuse." USPIRG. Retrieved from https://uspirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/Automatic-Textbook-Billing/USPIRG_Textbook-AutomaticBilling_Feb2020_v3.pdf

¹⁰ Morales, J., Blaney, E., and Haycock-Lohmann. 2024. "[Savings" Under Inclusive Access Programs](#). Memo to the Program Integrity and Institution Quality Negotiating Rulemaking Committee. Department of Education.

time researching and studying the issues surrounding Equitable and Inclusive Access,¹¹ but the White House supported the DOE's proposal in a fact sheet on junk fees in higher education.¹²

I would like to propose that instead of moving forward with Equitable Access that the University of New Mexico move in the complete opposite direction. Instead of an automatic textbook charge, UNM should move toward becoming a Zero-Textbook Cost (ZTC) campus. A ZTC program is a set of courses that allows students to earn a degree or certificate while spending no money on textbooks. These programs are created by way of using Open Educational Resources and library materials. California's community colleges have been implementing degree pathways with no textbook costs with much success.¹³ And students at the City University of New York report that in their ZTC courses, they are saving money, easily accessing their materials, and experiencing positive educational outcomes with Open Educational Resources.¹⁴

As a result of Equitable Access at UNM, I am rethinking how to move OER forward. My whole mission has suddenly changed. I am accountable to the Department of Education to meet the outcomes of my grant which stipulate a very specific return on investment for student savings. And the only way to illustrate the return on investment I previously projected would be to use inflated numbers from a dying industry to calculate student savings. The benefits to OER at UNM used to be clear and tangible: faculty could save their students X amount of money, faculty had more control of how their work would impact their students, and students had more autonomy to decide for themselves how to use their federal financial aid. Let's move even further in the direction of Open Access instead of being swept up in the textbook industry's latest plan to cash in on our students.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Jordan, MFA

(she/her/ella)

OER Librarian / Assistant Professor

College of University Libraries and Learning Sciences

University of New Mexico

(505) 615-4805

jschall1@unm.edu

¹¹ Milliot, J. 2024. [DOE Tables Proposed Rule Changes to Equitable Access Programs](#). *Publisher's Weekly*.

¹² White House. 2024. "Fact Sheet: Biden-Harris Administration Takes New Action to Crack down on Junk Fees in Higher Education." March 15. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/03/15/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-takes-new-action-to-crack-down-on-junk-fees-in-higher-education/>.

¹³ Burke, L. 2019. "OER Embraced." *Inside Higher Ed*. <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/article/2019/09/19/california-community-colleges-implement-zero-textbook-cost>

¹⁴ Brandle, Shawna, Stacy Katz, Anne Hays, Amy Beth, Cailean Cooney, Jacqueline DiSanto, Linda Miles, and Abigail Morrison. 2019. "But What Do the Students Think: Results of the CUNY Cross-campus Zero-textbook Cost Student Survey". *Open Praxis* 11 (1): 85-101. <https://doi.org/10.5944/openpraxis.11.1.932>.

To: UNM Board of Regents
From: Katie Slack, Ashley Bernardo, on Behalf of United Graduate Workers
Re: December 19th Board of Regents Public Comment
Date: 12/19/2024

My name is Katie Slack, and I am a graduate student and a TA in the Geography department, and a steward of United Graduate Workers. I am here today to discuss with you significant problems with University programs and software.

Although my United States passport lists my gender as "X", a legal gender option recognized in the United States and New Mexico, my UNM personal information still lists my legal sex as female. There is no way in LoboWeb for me to change this. Not having a way to update this easily and independently leads to seeing the F gender marking multiple times a semester, which is not affirming and can cause gender dysphoria.

I have friends, colleagues, and students at this University who are forcibly outed every semester because their "legal name" appears on student rosters, lab group descriptions, and as the instructor of record for a class. Attempts to fix this problem by the University have only resulted in semester-long solutions; instead of being a permanent fix, folks have to resubmit their requests to change their name every semester. Even our emails are subject to arbitrary reversal from our preferred names to legal names, as was the case for a number of my colleagues this past semester alone.

We understand that this board may be unaware of the amount of time that has already gone by in the effort to fix these university systems; United Graduate Workers have been working with our members to resolve this problem since our formal recognition in 2022, but we know that other organizations on campus, such as the LGBTQ Resource Center, have been working to resolve this issue for much longer. In UGW's case, all we have gotten in response is: "we are working on it."

Our students, faculty, and staff deserve a safe environment to study, research, and work within. We deserve to exist free of the fear of being involuntarily outed to our students and colleagues. We deserve to have our legal sex markers used in our university documentation. We deserve to be represented as ourselves without antiquated data systems forcing us into boxes we already know don't fit us.

I do not come here today to ask this board to fix this problem; we have been asking for years.

Instead, I come to you all today on behalf of myself, and on behalf of the 604 people who signed UGW's petition, to demand that UNM immediately alters administrative software to a simple, direct process that changes the name displayed across University systems and does not expire every semester. We demand that all of these systems are also altered to include all legal sex options, and that the process for changing this marker is simple and straightforward for the system users.

Please see our full petition below:

United Graduate Workers (UGW) of UNM are launching this petition on Trans Day of Remembrance in response to University administration's continued stalling around fixing

University systems to accurately reflect student, worker, and faculty chosen names and gender identification.

In University systems, such as our email accounts and the course registration website, trans students and workers are being systematically denied the ability to use their chosen names. This is happening in contradiction to University Administrative Policy 2720 'Equal Opportunity and Prohibited Discrimination and Related Misconduct.' This deadnaming is happening despite trans students and workers following UNM procedures to change their names in UNM systems.

In 2019, the state of New Mexico passed a law (2019 Regular Session-SB 20) that allowed NM residents to designate an "X" gender marker on state documents for those who are nonbinary or prefer not to disclose their gender. However, in the five years since the law was passed, the University of New Mexico has not updated their internal systems to allow for an "X" gender marker for students and employees.

Up until this point, leaders of UGW have been meeting with University administration to resolve this problem. Despite this effort, the University representatives have offered no concrete actions or deadlines for resolving the issue. The University of New Mexico administration continues to drag their feet in creating a safe, inclusive environment for transgender and non-binary students and workers on campus.

On this Trans Day of Remembrance, a globally recognized day to honor transgender people who have been murdered in the last year, UNM students and workers demand that the UNM Administration comply with *their own stated policies* and treat their transgender students and employees with basic dignity and respect by allowing us to use our chosen, lived names.

We, the undersigned, demand that UNM administration satisfactorily address the systemic misgendering and deadnaming across their various administrative programs and systems before the upcoming Spring semester:

Ramona Malczynski, UGW-UNM President; Ashley Bernardo, *UGW-UNM Communications Chair*; **Max Pagano, UGW-UNM Area Steward;** Dominic Oddo, *UGW-UNM Director of Organizing*; **Alexander Baten, UGW-UNM Area Steward;** Jadin Moore, *UGW-UNM Steward*; **Sean Lundergan, UGW-UNM Steward;** Duncan McGraw; **Alicia Esquivel, UGW-UNM Area Steward;** Abigail Granath, *UGW-UNM Steward*; **Nicholas Chavez, UGW-UNM Steward;** Lexi Kenis, *UGW-UNM Clerical Director*; **Zach Strasberg, UGW-UNM Data Chair;** Jove H Kohl; **Mia del Rosario; Fatima Holguin;** Kelly Knupp; **Anupam Mitra;** Sydney E. Shaner; **Katie Goss;** Patricia Morrison; **Matthew Nellessen;** Mak Rui Teng, Phoebe; **Anita C. Reta, MD;** Caitlyn Oliver Brown; **Jessie Marlenee;** Carmen Padilla; **Iphigenia Carey;** Sallie Scheufler; **Aida Revilla;** Katie Slack, *UGW-UNM Steward*; **Érick Pineda;** Scarlett Williams; **Sarah Stamer;** Bren Williams; **Andre Montoya-Barthelemy, MD MPH;** Daisy Atterbury; **Emerson Armstrong;** Alyssa-Marie Sanchez; **Nadia Fuentes;** Lee S. Ferrin; **Shannon McKenna;** Rae Wilson; **Michelle Gurule;** Noelia Mann; **Maxwell Dillon;** Ira Newman; **Rj Wills;** Samantha Cooney; **Oona Takano, UGW-UNM Treasurer;** Libby Vigil; **Maggie Branch;** Hannah Edgel; **Andie S. Grobler;** Sarah Honaberger; **Laurence Case;** Jessalyn Atars; **Kylie Hanson;** Alejandro Tovar; **Ivy Gunther;** Luca Burns; **Marisa Cedilla;** Bee Cragun; **Solomon Ehlers;** Scarlet Sekellick; **Jett Bullock;** Anna Word; **Lito Appell;** Hannah Wood; **John Houghteling;** Milla Nicholson; **Erin Brown;** Heather Freeman; **Maia Henny;** Joseph Jasnoch; **Megan Hoffman;** Emily Kondo; **Rhonda Hall;** Lex Ortiz, *PharmD Candidate*; **Eve Tipps, UGW-UNM Steward;** James Hernandez; **Cloe Knutson;** Nicholas Underwood; **Carly Adams;** Katherine Rickers; **Melody**

Ortiz; Ash Boydston-Schmidt; **Luke Sheppard**; Andi Bencomo; **Fiona Deutsch**; Iyanna Ramirez; **Grey Snook**; Nathan Hutchings; **Sophia Martinez**; Sela Noe; **Rachel Cochran**; Richard Romero; **Kaytlyn Bursas**; Candra Lowery; **Marina Gonzales**; Carla Lopez; **Jaqueline Martinez**; Cass Bow; **Vittoria Totaro**; Michelle Johnson; **Bianca Ruiz-Negrón**; Katie Dalton; **Alejandra G. Lemus**; Jared Justice; **Brittany Huddleston**; Serenity Snider; **Rosemary White**; Jason Wilby; **Emma Trenton**; Aelyn Gatsch; **Nina Katz**; Cam Chavez Reed; **Blake Smith**; Megan Faulkner, *UNM PhD Student/RA*; **Percy Huffman**; Eric Lindsey; **Leticia Gallardo**; Caroline Keller-Gober; **Alex Webster**; Gary Weissmann; **Carl Fleck**; Caitlin Curry; **Thomas Lee**; Adrian Ricca Lucci; **Rae Marquez**; Lacey Hites; **Sarah Rysanek**; Rhiannon Nolan; **Ezekiel Acosta**; Mattie Ruminer; **Anthony Duran**; Shalom A. White; **Caroline Klockslem**; Ivette Acevedo Weatherholtz; **Addy López**; Jason Santos; **Yooko Peters**; West U'Ren; **Darian Kapelianis-Donado**; Bruce Nguyen; **Zhong Reu**; Valerie Barker; **Kade Bennett**; Kristen Valero; **Claire Eiting**; Marie Walper; **Madison Pinnere**; Demetrius Jones; **Lydia**; Stephen L. Bishop; **Grant Block**; Leah Epstein; **Sebastian Griego**; Elizabeth Tilly; **Max Gardner**; Kenyan Phlieger, *UGW-UNM Steward*; **Jay Edwards**; Alyssa Sanchez; **Alex Stevenson**; Dean Shelton; **Paz Durate**; Cynthia Rodriguez; **John Oddo**; Donovan Glasgow; **Ian Birdwell**; Katherine Bernhardt; **Patricia K. Hale**; Jaqueline Arevalo; **Sawyer Merrell**; ArwenRose Rocha; **Carlos Vasquez**; Lily Thompson; **Margot Alva**; Hana Milani; **Corrine Myers, Associate Professor in Earth and Planetary Sciences**; Attiya White; **Sarah Morgan-Smith Myers**; Melissa Hamblin; **Tommy Oddo**; Alexander Allison; **Piper Wysocki**; Ryder Hobbs; **Brenna Giannini**; Marin Aleman Ortiz; **D H Coca**; Drew Gibson; **Kimberly Ranchor**; Carter Despain; **Emma Williams**; Evan Sheldahl; **Charlie Siders**; Manetter Fisher; **Garrett Shields, UGW-UNM Steward**; Bridget Reinhard; **Peter Long, Bard College at Simon's Rock**; Violet Hesley; **Christopher O'Connor**; Rue; **Kevin Branaum**; Elliot Jackson; **Ellery Wuest**; Bex Hampton; **Abigail Parker**; Sadie Hollrah; **Misha Chavez**; Alejandro Arguello; **Jacob Omlor**; Mary Jane Mars; **Avery Ketchmark**; Fennel Doney; **Penelope Baca**; Anne Zabala; **Cecelia Mastripolito**; Robin Liu; **Dylan Lorraine**; Seven Valenzuela; **Kendall Dehn**; Jasper Bragg; **Jillian Miller**; Erin Potts; **Spencer Dimitroff**; Benjamin Miller; **Lucien Guy**; Stephanie Meyer; **Lila Nezar**; Eli. M. Behrens; **Clare Haley**; Jordyn DeMay; **Pat Arite**; Jeanie Vo; **Sterling Sloop**; Arthur Jimenez; **Ronan Helvey**; Michèl Poindexter; **TJ**; Kirby Myers; **Megan Keller, UNM PhD student**; River Sandoval; **Christy Frederick**; Jenny Fiedler; **Luca Berkley, UNM-UGW Steward**; Abbie Rosencrans; **Shalome Musignac Jordan**; Lorenzo F. Garcia Jr.; **Delia Bradley**; Nay Meiseles; **Cassandra Dierks**; Anjali Dvorak; **Noah Mertz**; Shelbie Waganaar; **Quintin Baca**; Daphne Yejerla; **Lilan Lawrence-Metzler, BLA**; Zoë Rebecca Macknick Hill; **Rae Bretado**; Sandra Bermudez; **Jessica Iannon**; Sam Colombo; **Benjamin Anker**; Roman Hill; **Rachel Taylor**; Kyreen White; **Isabella Mendez**; Caleb Jennings; **Kacie Carpenter**; Cameron Martinez; **Ari Limon**; Robinson Lewis Worley; **Sage Simpson**; Abby Schuh; **Logan Cordonnier**; Orli Mercado; **Allison Graham**; Louis Jencka; **Alonso Arana**; Nancy Dewhurst; **Xavier Angus**; Erin Spurgeon; **J Meng**; Brynn LiaBraaten; **Angela Stevenson**; Zach Matthews; **Amanda Cramer**; Jessie Johnson; **Julianne Peterman**; Mario Atencio; **Kaveh Malek**; Joss Carlisle; **Cassandra Miller**; Austin Hendricks; **Jessica Pereira**; Mitchell Freedman; **Joseph Alan Ukockis**; Shruti Gharde; **Joseph Kleinkopf**; Cassidy A. Tawse-García; **Daniel Slencsak**; Matthew Iazaric; **Kill**; Zj Johnson; **Chelsea Lynn Roe**; Raven Vix; **Cyrus Stuvland**; Jackson Andress; **Alec Goldberg**; Sydney Brazil; **Stephen M. Stumpf**; Morigan Vega; **Nathan Leach**; Gavin H. Rogers; **Joshua Heckman-Archibeque**; Yoma Wilson; **Beth Wilson Norwood**; Martin Buck; **Basie Siebert**; Erin Krantz; **Nathan Cleaveland**; Rowan Converse; **Shannon Rollins**; Alexander Connolly; **Chris McDaniels**; Marissa Ramirez; **Ivette S. González**; Elizabeth DeJong; **Cat Hubka, MFA**; Daniel Smith; **Kaja Gjeldel-B**; Julia Sheronova; **Leilani De Lude**; Jesse Larence; **James Rawson**; Farda Anziza; **Will Tatman**; Cole Kelson-Packer; **Andrew Graybill**; Stephanie Flores; **Rikki Farrel**; Monica Perez; **Ean Carris**; Zevon Pagano; **Sallie Olbrish**; Violet Olbrish; **Justine Kablack**; Lizzie Hodgdon; **Mayaneli Brown**; Nick DePascal; **Leah Greer**; Ana Lucaci; **Brandy**

Reeves; Rae Stringfield; **Dylan Lilla**; Gabriel Garcia; **Kyleigh Swindle**; Joseph Iannello; **Maggie Hirshland**; Jackie Truitt; **Judith Fischer**; Rose Huynh; **Lais Gomes**; Gary Haldane; **Allie Heckerd**; Julia Valero; **Emily Feldman**; Alexander Pearl; **Alexander Fritschi**; Martin Credo; **Sofie Hecht**; Sarah Bennett-Davidson; **Jordan Neely**; Jaime Branaman; **Florian Knowles**; Tristan Larkin; **Bonni J. Benton**; Elvis Pagano; **Ria Suarez**; Gabriel Martinez; **Hyesun Choi**; Arlo Menchaca; **Saskia Becker**; Cecilia Sena; **Razi Zarchy**; Ruthie Knowles; **Kelly Seis**; Camilla Hayes; **Megan Tucker**; Aaron Canter; **Holly Smith**; Billy Von Raven; **Kathryn Bruce**; Alex Sommer; **Chandler Veal**; Julia Oliver; **Neider Devia Merchan**; Osman Umurhan; **Miles Kelsey**; Ellie Lawrence; **Mark Campbell**; Mark Lavelle; **Sandra Dierks**; Stormy Stewart; **Margaret Carriedo**; Alexia Morales; **Rachel DiPirro**; Daniela Galvis; **Aya Williams, Co-President of PHS**A; John Ringer; **Xochitl Santillán Reyna**; Maddy; **Rhett Sanders-Spencer**; Chaithanya Rayudu; **Holly Mayer**; Ariana GoGo Salguero; **Kelsey Knowlson**; Zac Coppler; **Samantha Bonawitz**; Emily Pollard; **Cidney Robertson-Benta**; Eunice Kim; **Koreen Pagano**; Eileen O'Shaughnessy; **Gwyneth Henke**; Hariprasad Madathil; **Karla Poblano-Rodriguez**; Sam Smith; **Katie Silva**; Lucas Meimgartner; **Tyler Thurtell**; Dan Calderone; **Natalia Teschner**; Ariq Haqq; **Addison Hinton**; Alix Walkup; **Hayley Machado**; Chris Eckerson; **Carolina Muñoz**; Jade Waskow; **Alyssa Martinez**; Rachel Johnston; **Briana F.**; John Pagano; **Lucas Garcia**; Maya Dawson; **Briana Martin**; Yogi Elwell; **Jaylin Scott**; Riley Nyght; **Mason A. Bright**; Grace Petro; **Katie Despeaux**; Jacob Spinks; **Olympia Breen**; Daniela Del Mar; **Luc Biscan-White**; B. Tadeo; **Jess Lanham**; Gabriel Hudson; **Hannah Taylor**; Chloe Dichter; **Cormac League**; Anne Turner; **Jillian D. Podmore**; Margaux Lopez; **Isabelle Reeves**; Wilber Dominguez; **Eva Gemrich**; Brendan Kuncel; **Maggi Van Drunen**; Carmen Atchley; **Alliyah Marez**; Guadalupe Zavala-Orozco; **Lauren Hartzell**; Gulay Guler; **Kyronn Young**; Andre Montoya-Barhelemy; **Lisa Santillanes**; Nancy Flores; **Madison Otero**; Rosemary Covarrubias; **Zach Waring**; Ben Thorp; **Rachel Baten**; Caroline L. Crosby; **Olivia Goosherst**; Daniel Crosby; **Ethan Casul**; Phil Cioppa; **Julian Terra**; Naomi Ull; **Gray Hettler**; Elena Finnegan; **Linnet Hinkle**; Mathilde Walker; **Holly Duffy**; Lili Roehrig; **Ajae Gartman**; Mariah Patton; **Matthew J. Archibeque**; Catherine Collins; **Isa Chou**; Elijah Borowsky; **Isabella Chavez**; Jillian Grandinetti; **Izzy Gurney**; Sophie Nelson; **Lily McGee**; Lucas Raney; **Max Aragon**; Jacob Deneff; **Muriel Watkins**; Areyon Clay; **Z'maury Zamora**; Meirah Williamson; **Blair Mirka**; Olivia Kelly; **Aaron Canter**; Eric Brannen; **Wilho MacNeil, GEO GA and LING TA and RA**; Skylar Adams; **Austin Daniel**; Sarah Lease; **Caitlyn Bizzell**; Luke Allsup; **Seamus Kavaney**; Ernesto Longa; **Jennifer Tucker**; Dr. Emma B. Mincks; **Benjamin Abbott (Summer)**; Lucy Wang; **Elis Merrill**; Bryana Olmeda; **Ryan Stumbaugh**; Jessalyn Ayas; **Tyler Clayshulte**; Ara Winter; **Kourtney Zimmerly**; Andres Morales; **Amanda Stanfield**; Jade McLellan; **Adina Ataran**; Sorrel Tran; **Emerson Martin**; Shadiya Onor; **Jon Dunnum**; Elizabeth M. Lombardi; **Orion Lee**; Marissa Bluestein; **Joseph McKee**; Daniele Wiley; **Nic Hinson**; Louis Hight; **Lisa Barrow**; Zoe Mae Hunter; **Don Natvig**; Bryanna Saxton; **Hakim Bellamy**; Delaney Fitzgerald; **Nikhet Chodhury**; Grace McCarthy; **Jordan Rosenberg Cobos**; Heather MacNeil; **Tim C-M**; McKenzie Williams; **Christopher Witt**; Alana Bock; **Anicca Cox**; Xim Rene Kilbourn; **Nahir I. Otaño Gracia**; Emily Schmidtt; **Amanda Sanchez**; Daniella Matthews-Trigg; **Justin Bendell**; Dewey Devivi; **Chuck Hayes**; Tom Davies; **Lexi Baca**; Selinda Guerrero, Organizer; **Blayne Greiner**; Jennifer Jordan; **Melissa Bacigalupa**; Peter Cabrera; **Siihasin Hope**; Emery Schmidt; **X E Oaks**; Sarah TevisTownes; **Tara Smith**; Abdulmajeed Yamani; **September Benson**; Jackie Davis; **Thalia Papadakis**; Miles Tokunow; **Maya Shamsid-Deen**; Elliot Pending; **Devon Thompson**; Milton Ospina; **Amari Becker**; Ellie Larence; **Justin R. Allen**

Updated as of 9:00 am 12/19/2024

Official Statement from UNM Faculty & Staff for Justice in Palestine

UNM Board of Regents Meeting
December 19, 2024

Who we are/our demands:

My name is Justin Bendell, and I am an associate professor of English and Chair of Humanities at UNM-Valencia. I will present first before passing the mic to my colleague Jennifer Tucker, an associate professor of Community and Regional Planning at UNM-Albuquerque.

We are here today to speak on behalf of UNM Faculty & Staff for Justice in Palestine, a group of UNM Faculty, Staff, Students, and Alumni advocating for a just political solution for Palestine. We come to you today in grief and in rage over the genocide being waged by Israel against Palestinians, a genocide that UNM is supporting through its financial investments.

UNM is an R-1 institution that prides itself on community contribution, sustainability, innovation in healthcare and global leadership. Investing in companies that profit from Israeli war crimes and genocide go against these aspirations. As the Israeli Holocaust scholar Omer Bartov said in his talk at UNM this past October: Israel is committing genocide, and institutions like UNM have a moral obligation to divest from this most abhorrent form of violence and dehumanization.

Students and faculty across UNM are calling for divestment.¹ Over 30 organizations endorsed our divestment resolution.² United Graduate Workers unanimously affirmed their national union's statement³ that called for a halt to all military aid to Israel. Last fall, the Faculty Union passed a resolution calling for a ceasefire with 87% of the vote. The Committee of Interns and Residents passed a resolution with 90% of the vote denouncing Zionism and antisemitism and calling for an end to military aid to Israel.

We have divested in the past. Former President Farer reflected that UNM's 1985 divestment from South Africa "represented our strong feeling that apartheid is bad, [that] it is evil, and [that] we do not want to be associated with this evil system."^{4 5}

We are demanding an orderly, transparent process toward divesting from Israeli occupation, war crimes and genocide, one with a clear timeline that fully engages students, faculty, and staff. Specifically, we call for divestment from the 19 companies the American Friends Service Committee has identified as complicit in the genocide in Gaza.⁶

¹ United Graduate Workers of UNM, Biology Students Against Imperialism, Law Students Against Imperialism, Never Again is for Everyone, Health Care Workers for Palestine, Leaders for Environmental Action and Foresight

² <https://unmdivestmentcoalition.weebly.com/local-resources.html>

³ <https://www.ueunion.org/ue-policy/for-peace-jobs-and-a-pro-worker-foreign-policy>

⁴ ["It probably was not the intent of the founding fathers to have us make investments which foster violation of fundamental human rights, or are inconsistent with international or national law. Should we take into consideration the nature of regimes where the investments are made, or should we only consider the maximization of resources? ... What would be the cost to the university for action taken regarding investment in regimes which engage in violation of human rights"](#)

⁵ https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1612&context=bor_minutes

⁶ <https://afsc.org/sites/default/files/2024-10/divestment-list-for-palestinian-rights-october-2024.pdf>

UNM has an obligation to divest from ongoing genocide and occupation

We must act because our tax dollars are funding this unconscionable violence, breaking American *and* international laws.

On December 5, 2024, an Amnesty International investigation concluded that Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians, carrying out acts prohibited by the United Nations' Genocide Convention. These acts include killings, causing serious bodily, or mental harm, and deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the physical destruction of Palestinians in Gaza.

Secretary General of Amnesty International Agnès Callamard commented that,

“For months, Israel has persisted in committing genocidal acts, fully aware of the irreparable harm it was inflicting on Palestinians in Gaza. It continued to do so in defiance of countless warnings about the catastrophic humanitarian situation and of legally binding decisions from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) ordering Israel to take immediate measures to enable the provision of humanitarian assistance to civilians in Gaza” and furthermore that key arms suppliers like the USA and Germany “are violating their obligation to prevent genocide and are at risk of becoming complicit in genocide.”⁷

On December 23, 2023, South Africa formally accused Israel of genocide, bringing its case to the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Since then, 14 countries have joined the case.^{8 9}

On January 26, 2024, the ICJ ordered Israel to “take immediate and effective measures to enable the provision of urgently needed basic services and humanitarian aid,” and to report back on its compliance to the specific measures “within one month.” One month later, Israel failed to take the *bare minimum steps* to comply.¹⁰

Despite the collapse of the Gazan food system, Israel has also banned the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) from reaching Gaza.¹¹ This organization provides approximately 50% of Gaza’s aid.

Almost all of Gaza’s population—1.9 out of 2.2 million people—are internally displaced, many multiple times and with no homes to return to, as over 80% of Gaza’s infrastructure has been destroyed. Approximately 17,000 children are orphaned in Gaza, and tens of thousands more

⁷ [Amnesty International investigation concludes Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians in Gaza](#)

⁸ [South Africa vs Israel: 14 other countries intend to join the ICJ case ; South Africa submits its main legal claim to the top UN court which accuses Israel of genocide | AP News](#)

⁹ The International Court of Justice (ICJ) defines genocide as the intentional destruction of a national, racial, ethnic, or religious group, in whole or in part. [Definitions of Genocide and Related Crimes | United Nations; The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide \(1948\)](#)

¹⁰ Per Heba Morayef, Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa at Amnesty International, “Israel has been blocking and impeding the passage of sufficient aid into the Gaza Strip . . . in a clear show of contempt for the ICJ ruling and in flagrant violation of its obligation to prevent genocide. <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/02/israel-defying-icj-ruling-to-prevent-genocide-by-failing-to-allow-adequate-humanitarian-aid-to-reach-gaza/>

¹¹ [UNRWA Statement ; Gaza: urgent action needed as hunger soars to critical levels | World Food Programme](#)

have been injured, with the Strip becoming the site of the largest cohort of child amputees in modern history.¹²

A study published on July 10, 2024 by *The Lancet* estimated that the death toll in Gaza exceeded 186,000 people. This number accounts for both direct and indirect deaths, including thirst, starvation, disease, and purposeful destruction of the health system. *The Lancet* predicted that if deaths were to continue at this rate – about 23,000 a month – there would be an additional 149,500 deaths by the end of this year.¹³

More women and children have been killed in Gaza by the Israeli military this past year than in any equivalent period of conflict over the past two decades.¹⁴ This does not include the thousands of unaccounted-for bodies still buried in the rubble. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights expressed that 70% of those killed by Israel are women and children, with children making up 44%.¹⁵

A new study shows that since the beginning of Israel's bombardment, the destruction of civilian infrastructure including water, healthcare, and educational facilities was "not random" but intentional.¹⁶

Israel has destroyed every university in Gaza. Just three days ago, Israel bombed a United Nations school in southern Gaza that killed at least 20 people. Of course, this is a low estimate, because hundreds were sheltering in the school.¹⁷

Israel's occupation, which the ICJ has ruled illegal, did not start on October 7, 2023.¹⁸ In February 2022, Amnesty International released an almost 300-page report documenting Israel's system of apartheid and occupation in the West Bank and Gaza. The report opens with a quote from Benjamin Netanyahu himself, who said in 2019, "Israel is not a state of all its citizens...but rather the nation state of the Jewish people, and only them."

Amnesty International's report found that the Israeli state is wholly inseparable from apartheid and occupation, because "almost all of Israel's civilian administration and military authorities, as well as governmental and quasi-governmental institutions, are involved in the enforcement of the system of apartheid against Palestinians."

Israel enforces apartheid and occupation through military checkpoints, border walls, denial of nationality, denial of political participation, and dispossession of land and property.¹⁹

On June 20, 2024, The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights called on Nations to cease the sale, transfer and diversion of arms, munitions and other military equipment to Israel

¹² [Intent to Destroy: Documenting a Year of Israel's Attacks on Health in Gaza; Gaza toll could exceed 186,000, Lancet study says - Israel-Palestine conflict News | Al Jazeera](https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/10/11/155356); <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/10/1155356>; <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20240820-un-over-80-of-gazas-buildings-destroyed/>

¹³ [How a year of war has devastated Gaza's civilian infrastructure | Doctors Without Borders - USA](https://www.doctorswithoutborders.org/usa/news/2024/07/16/how-a-year-of-war-has-devastated-gaza-s-civilian-infrastructure)

¹⁴ [More women and children killed in Gaza by Israeli military than any other recent conflict in a single year - Oxfam](https://www.oxfam.org/en/press-room/2024/11/8/nearly-70-percent-of-deaths-in-gaza-are-women-and-children-un).

¹⁵ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/11/8/nearly-70-percent-of-deaths-in-gaza-are-women-and-children-un>

¹⁶ <https://fxb.harvard.edu/2024/04/09/press-release-new-study-of-satellite-data-shows-israels-assault-on-hospitals-schools-and-water-infrastructure-in-the-gaza-strip-was-not-random/>; <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-024-00580-x>

¹⁷ <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2024/12/16/israel-bombs-another-un-run-school-in-gaza-without-warning-killing-20>; <https://conflictandhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s13031-024-00580-x>

¹⁸ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2024/07/experts-hail-icj-declaration-illegality-israels-presence-occupied>; <https://news.un.org/en/story/2024/09/1154391>

¹⁹ <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2022/02/israels-system-of-apartheid/>

stating that the transfer of weapons and ammunition to Israel may risk State complicity in international crimes and violation of human rights including genocide. The arms manufacturers and corporations specifically mentioned in this demand include Boeing, Caterpillar, General Dynamics, and Lockheed Martin.²⁰

Supporting genocide goes against UNM's stated values of accountability, respect, equity and integrity.

Here I turn it over to my colleague, Jennifer Tucker. Thank you.

UNM's Inadequate Disclosure

We were heartened by UNM's commitment in May of 2024 to meet a core demand of student activists and disclose its financial investments.²¹

Transparency is a pillar of democracy and the foundation for trust between UNM administrators and students, faculty, and the greater community. Unfortunately, the disclosure provided on August 19, 2024 was inadequate.

This disclosure of the UNM Foundation's \$805 million in investments included a list of securities but declined to specify the individual investments contained within most of these funds. One of the three disclosure documents, the Schedule of Investments from the Commonfund Capital Venture Partners, was completely redacted. This means that the disclosure did not provide basic information about the companies that UNM invests in, as demanded by students.

Fund managers and university lawyers may claim that they can't provide this information, but this is false. In October, we provided guidance as to how the UNM Foundation can disclose without violating legal agreements about proprietary information by disclosing aggregate exposure to companies on our divestment list while redacting the names of the specific funds. Organizations like the American Association of University Professors have used this model of aggregate exposure to share information about their holdings to stakeholders. We have also requested UNM disclose its exposure to the 19 publicly traded companies specified on the AFSC divestment list. We have not received a response to this request.

New Mexico State Representative Elanor Chavez cautioned against investing in non-transparent companies, saying "We should not be investing in those kinds of companies, because obviously they have something to hide."²²

UNM investments in companies that profit from genocide

We advocate for divesting from companies that the American Friends Service Committee has documented as having direct ties to the Gaza genocide. The AFSC is an esteemed organization with a 100-year track record advocating for justice including opposing Japanese internment, fighting apartheid in South Africa, and helping hundreds of Jewish children escape Nazi Germany.

²⁰ [States and companies must end arms transfers to Israel immediately or risk responsibility for human rights violations: UN experts](#)

²¹ In a campus-wide email on May 14, 2024, President Stokes wrote, "UNM is committed to public disclosure of the results of its research into its investment portfolio."

²² <https://www.dailylobo.com/article/2024/08/stokes-discloses-unm-foundation-holdings>

Since UNM has not lived up to its disclosure commitment, we have been doing our own research. We have found that UNM has investments in companies like Elbit, Lockheed-Martin, Boeing, Caterpillar and General Dynamics--companies identified by ASFC and the UN as profiting from genocide.

In fact, about \$363 million of UNM's investments are in two different BlackRock indexes (its US Equity Market and ACWI Index). About 45% of UNM Foundation investments are in these two holdings, including holdings in the aforementioned companies.²³

The American Friends Service Committee provides comprehensive information about the impact of these companies.²⁴

Elbit is Israel's largest weapons manufacturer. It supplies Skylark and Hermes military drones to the z which have been used extensively in Gaza.

Elbit's MPR 500 multi-purpose bombs used by the IDF in Gaza are Designed²⁵ for use in "densely populated urban warfare," and "high kill probability." Elbit says that these 500-pound bombs are as powerful as U.S.-made 2,000-pound MK-84 bombs. Israel used²⁶ a MPR 500 bomb in a March 27 airstrike on an emergency and relief center in Habbarieh, Lebanon. The attack killed seven civilian aid volunteers and quote "should be investigated as an apparent war crime," according to Human Rights Watch²⁷

The world's largest weapons manufacturer, Lockheed Martin,²⁸ supplies Israel with F-16 and F-35 fighter jets, and AGM-114 Hellfire missiles, all of which have been used extensively against Gaza.

Between Oct. 7 and Nov. 14, 2023, two thousand Hellfire missiles were delivered²⁹ to the Israeli military. In a call with investors, Lockheed Martin CEO Jim Taiclet "highlighted the Israel and Ukraine conflicts as potential drivers for increased revenue in the coming years."³⁰

On Nov. 9, an Israeli missile hit journalists sitting near Shifa Hospital in Gaza City. The missile was reportedly³¹ a Hellfire missile.

On Dec. 11, the Israeli Air Force used a Lockheed Martin C-130-J Super Hercules aircraft to drop approximately seven tons of equipment to Israeli soldiers engaging in ground attacks in Khan Younis.³² Later that month, Lockheed Martin was awarded³³ a \$10.5 million contract for continued support for Israel's fleet of F-35 warplanes.

²³ <https://www.dailylobo.com/article/2024/08/stokes-discloses-unm-foundation-holdings>

²⁴ <https://afsc.org/gaza-genocide-companies>

²⁵ https://www.israeldefense.co.il/node/59994#google_vignette

²⁶ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/may/06/israel-airstrike-lebanon-us-weapons-international-law>

²⁷ <https://www.hrw.org/news/2024/05/07/israel-us-arms-used-strike-killed-lebanon-aid-workers>

²⁸ <https://investigate.afsc.org/company/lockheed-martin>

²⁹ <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-11-14/pentagon-is-quietly-sending-israel-ammunition-laser-guided-missiles>

³⁰ <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/18/investing/premarket-stocks-trading/index.html>

³¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0zJTz52X9lg>

³² <https://israeldefense.co.il/node/60572>

³³ <https://www.defense.gov/News/Contracts/Contract/Article/3627836/>

For decades, Caterpillar³⁴ has been supplying Israel with the D9 armored bulldozer, which the Israeli military routinely uses to demolish Palestinian homes in the occupied West Bank and to enforce the blockade of Gaza.³⁵

After Oct. 7, 2023, Israel ordered³⁶ dozens more D9 bulldozers for Israel's ground invasion of Gaza.³⁷

These bulldozers have systematically destroyed civilian buildings alongside the Gaza border, creating a half-a-mile-wide so-called “buffer zone” over roughly 16% of the Strip's area.³⁸

On Dec. 16, 2023, Israeli bulldozers ran over and crushed to death “displaced people inside their tents in Beit Lahia’s Kamal Adwan Hospital courtyard.”³⁹

We CAN divest

This board has the power and historical precedent to enact an orderly divestment. Article 7 of the New Mexico Statutes grants the Regents ultimate authority over UNM finances and therefore the power to divest. UNM’s Investment Fund Investment Policy on pages 7–8 commits to the consideration of human rights, community relations, equity, and environmental stewardship in university financial decisions—values that demand ethical scrutiny of the Foundation’s investments.

When UNM divested from South African apartheid, then-UNM Secretary-Treasurer Paez emphasized our broader ethical responsibilities, stating that “South Africa is not the only country where human rights are being violated” and urging future policies to consider similar human rights concerns. The Regents reinforced this commitment by encouraging “other public institutions to consider the adoption of comparable policies,” as recorded in the June 11, 1985 meeting minutes.⁴⁰ This forward-thinking stance established a precedent for ethical leadership in investment decisions—a precedent that institutions across New Mexico have followed in subsequent years. The New Mexico Educational Retirement Board (NMERB), divested from the exploitative private prison industry in 2020.⁴¹ These actions reflect a broader recognition across New Mexico that ethical responsibility in investment decisions is critical to upholding human rights and sustainability.

Divestment from Israeli war crimes and genocide is entirely consistent with the precedent UNM has already set. Moreover, we know it is possible because universities in the U.S and around the world have already undertaken the divestment process. MIT, for example, ended its MISTI-Israel Lockheed Martin Seed Fund and chose not to renew the related contract,⁴² while San Francisco State University approved a revised investment policy *just last week* that centers on human rights.⁴³ Evergreen State College has also committed to revising its investment policies to include divestment from companies that “profit from gross human rights violations and/or the occupation of Palestinian territories,” with a timeline to

³⁴ <https://investigate.info/company/caterpillar>

³⁵ <https://investigate.info/company/caterpillar>

³⁶ <https://www.calcalistech.com/ctechnews/article/bjcr08wv6>

³⁷ https://news-walla-co-il.translate.google/item/3619960?x_tr_sl=auto&x_tr_tl=en&x_tr_hl=en&x_tr_pto=wapp

³⁸ <https://www.wsj.com/world/middle-east/israel-gaza-hamas-war-buffer-zone-explained-2a7347af>

³⁹ <https://euromedmonitor.org/en/article/6202/Israeli-tanks-have-deliberately-run-over-dozens-of-Palestinian-civilians-alive>

⁴⁰ https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1612&context=bor_minutes

⁴¹ <https://www.ai-cio.com/news/new-mexico-teachers-pension-divest-private-prisons/>

⁴² <https://english.almayadeen.net/news/politics/mit-divests-from-israeli-arms-firm-funded-program>

⁴³ <https://www.kqed.org/news/12017889/sf-state-limits-investments-weapons-manufacturers-after-student-activists-push>

implement divestment by Spring 2026.⁴⁴ These examples demonstrate that institutions with large endowments and complex investments are fully capable of aligning their financial practices with human rights values.

I would like to close with a poem by Refaat Alareer, a brilliant Palestinian scholar and poet killed by Israel last December

“IF I MUST DIE” by REFAAT ALAREER

If I must die,
you must live
to tell my story
to sell my things
to buy a piece of cloth
and some strings,
(make it white with a long tail)
so that a child, somewhere in Gaza
while looking heaven in the eye
awaiting his dad who left in a blaze—
and bid no one farewell
not even to his flesh
not even to himself—
sees the kite, my kite you made, flying up above
and thinks for a moment an angel is there
bringing back love
If I must die
let it bring hope
let it be a tale

⁴⁴ <https://www.evergreen.edu/student-life/student-activities/student-governance/gazasolidarity>