

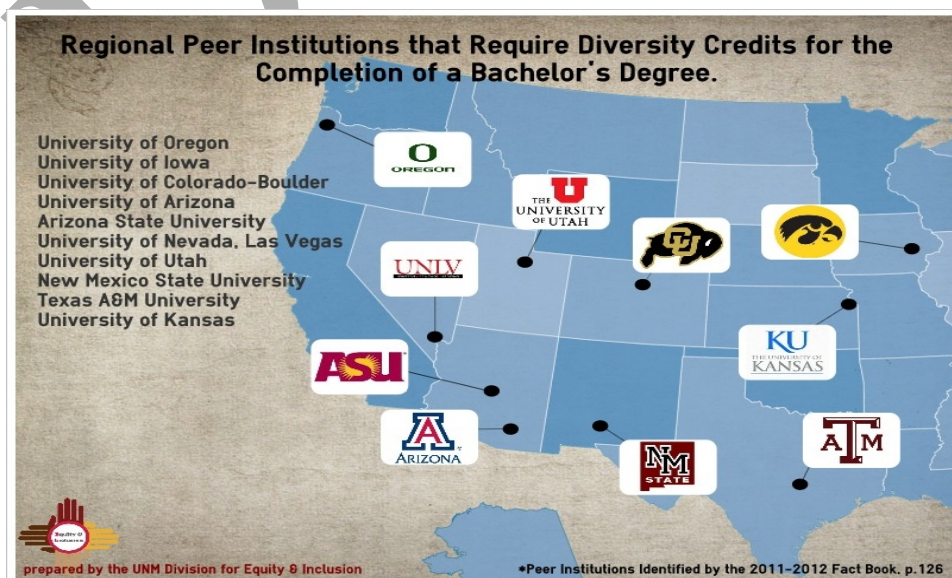
**U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion**  
**Proposal for 3-credit University-wide Undergraduate Degree Requirement**  
Dated: October 15, 2012

**INTRODUCTION**

In a memo outlining his vision for UNM dated June 28, 2012, incoming President Robert Frank addressed the Board of Regents and UNM’s Leadership Team with a cautionary statement: “The future will happen whether we act or not.” For UNM, this future entails confronting difficult economic realities while embracing the state’s historic and present-day demographics. Complex local and national, as well as global, politics pose daunting challenges, but also open the door for UNM to grow and develop in exciting and unprecedented ways. It is a well-documented fact that undergraduates who have more frequent experiences with diversity tend to be more engaged, and are more likely to persist and graduate than their counterparts who lack such experiences (Ibarra, 2001; Kuh, 2005; Martinez, 2010). Numerous research-based studies examining the impact of diversity on students and educational outcomes have produced extensive evidence that diversity has a positive impact on all students, minority and majority (Smith et al. 1997).

To better respond to shifting demographics, nearly every one of UNM’s peer institutions in the Southwest, along with the most well-recognized institutions nationally, have implemented diversity requirements into their degree requirements and/or core curricula. For example, Arizona State University requires three separate diversity courses for all undergraduates and Texas A & M requires two courses. At UNM this oversight has hampered retention and graduation rates; as well, students not well-versed in the issues and ethical considerations involved in working with diverse communities are disadvantaged as they enter an increasingly global labor market.

Table 1 shows peer institutions approved by the HED and used for IPEDS comparisons that require diversity credits for the completion of a bachelor’s degree. The vast majority of universities in the southwest region require credits in diversity. UNM is not among them.



## RATIONALE

UNM is the state’s flagship institution for academic research, teaching, and service. As a Research I university where the number of Hispanics (37%) is nearly equal to the number of Anglos (38%), UNM also serves a significant number of Native American (11%) students as well as Asian American (3%) and African American (2%) students. In fact, **over 60% of the undergraduate population come to UNM from an underrepresented racial or ethnic group and the majority of UNM students are female (57%)** (see [Table 2](#), below).

Table 2: Enrollment All Students, all UNM Campuses (Fall 2011)

Race, Ethnicity, Immigration Status, Gender	Fall 2011 21-day enrollment
American Indian	11%
Asian	3%
Black	2%
Hispanic	37%
White	38%
International Students	3%
Female	57%
Male	43%
<b>Total Student (absolute #)</b>	N=36,742

As well, there are alarming race-gender gaps in UNM’s graduation rates. While the overall six-year graduation rate for all UNM undergraduates is 45%, it is even lower among Native American, Black, and Hispanic students, ranging from 22%-43% respectively (See [Table 3](#), below).

Table 3: Race-Gender Gap in Six-Year Cohort UNM Undergraduate Graduation Rates (Full-time Freshman entering in Fall 2005 and graduating by Spring 2011)

Race, Ethnicity, Immigration Status, Gender	(Cohort Entering in 2005, Graduated by 2011)	Male	Female
American Indian	22%	22%	22%
Asian	67%	47%	62%
Black	37%	41%	34%
Hispanic	43%	38%	44%
White	57%	45%	53%
International Students	70%	67%	73%
Female	47%	-	-
Male	41%	-	-
<b>Total Student</b>	45%	-	-

The Mission Statement of UNM emphasizes diversity in the Vision and Values Statements as quoted below:

Vision: Strength through Diversity

We lift up our cultural and ethnic diversity as the unique strategic advantage it is, providing the environment in which our students learn with one another to generate new knowledge that helps the world's people leverage and celebrate the value of difference (UNM Catalog 2010-2011, p. 11).

Values :

Diversity that enlivens and strengthens our university, our community, and our society (UNM Catalog 2010-2011, p. 11).

UNM's first strategic priority as to "foster a vital climate of academic excellence that actively engages all elements of our community in an exciting, intellectual, social, and cultural life" (I). According to the Mission Statement UNM must strive to "Develop a sense of campus community that supports the success of all students, faculty, and staff by engaging them in an active and diverse intellectual life" (I.D.). In fact, diversity and inclusion are cited either implicitly or explicitly in every stated objective and tactic for strategic direction. Most significantly, the Mission Statement directs UNM to "advance the interests and aspirations for New Mexico and its people" (II). The addition of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement will enhance the deep and engaged learning that can have a dramatic effect on graduation rates (Kuh 2005; Ibarra 2001; Chavez 2011).

For underrepresented students, as well as for all students who come to UNM as undergraduates, college represents a time of formative personal and social identity development (Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, and Gurin 2002). Yet while diverse populations contribute to student development, the benefits of diversity are *not* automatic and do not simply occur from being part of a diverse campus. Rather, educators must work in intentional ways to increase educational benefits for students and for the institution (Milem, Chang, and Antonio 2005). Students at strong performing campuses, i.e., institutions with better-than-predicted student engagement scores and better-than-predicted graduation rates, not only have more frequent experiences with diversity, but are also engaged at higher levels in many other educationally purposeful activities, inside and outside the classroom (Kuh 2005).

Two implications flow from this observation. First, for UNM to take advantage of the diversity indigenous to its region and represented in its undergraduate population, UNM must ensure that students are able to take advantage of opportunities to engage in meaningful ways with the institution, especially through high-impact practices (Kuh 2008). Second, to maximize the benefits of experiences with diversity, such experiences must be offered throughout the campus, both in and outside the classrooms. As Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) make clear, an institution must "pull many levels" (have students do different things) over an extended period of time in order to increase the odds that most students will acquire

the knowledge, skills and competencies and develop the attitudes and dispositions that will equip them to function effectively in an increasingly diverse global world. This means that an understanding of and appreciation for diversity may best be cultivated when students encounter diversity in its multitude of forms in multiple settings throughout their undergraduate days. Thus, while one or more courses that feature diversity have a role to play, other kinds of experiences are needed also.

To begin the process of ensuring UNM makes good on its mission, it is imperative that students demonstrate critical literacy pertaining to the dynamics of diversity and inclusion by race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, and disability in the U.S. and global context. It is also important that UNM's curriculum reflect values that demonstrate the university's commitment to diversity. The proposed university-wide 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement directly addresses this need.

## **BACKGROUND OF PROCESS AIMED AT ADOPTING DIVERSITY REQUIREMENT**

In 2007 a proposal for a graduate level diversity requirement was brought before the faculty senate. The Committee on Graduate Studies voted against the proposal to add a diversity requirement to graduate degree requirements. A memo justified the Committee's decision to leave diversity to each individual department to implement by citing already existing workshops that addressed issues of diversity on campus. The memo also expressed concerns that an undue burden would be placed on graduate students by the addition of credit hours to degree requirements.

Although the Committee on Undergraduate Studies at that time discussed adding a diversity requirement to the undergraduate curriculum, no vote was taken.

In May 2012, the UNM Provost's Diversity Council Curriculum Committee (co-chaired by Nancy Lopez and Michelle Kells 2011-12; Nancy Lopez and Glenabah Martinez 2012-2013) submitted to Provost Chaouki Abdallah a memo outlining a 3-credit university-wide requirement to be called "U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion." A solid semester's worth of research, discussion, and debate resulted in the recommendation by this Committee that a 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement be implemented into the UNM undergraduate curriculum for the benefit of all UNM students.

The current proposal differs from the 2007 proposal in two primary ways: (1) it focuses solely on undergraduates; and (2) it does not add credits to existing degree requirements.

## **INSTITUTIONAL LOGISTICS, SUPPORT, & PARTNERSHIPS**

Whether fulfilled by existing courses, new courses, or the modification of courses, courses meeting the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement would need to offer a

**substantive focus (50% of course content) on understanding race, class, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability in the U.S. and/or global context.**

The proposed start date for implementation of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement is Fall 2014 with piloting that includes assessment of existing courses beginning in Fall 2013. Though each UNM undergraduate will earn three (3) credits to satisfy the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion university-wide requirement, this requirement will not add additional credits hours to the existing core curriculum or degree-granting programs. To satisfy the requirement, students will take a minimum of one 3-credit course in either (a) the core curriculum; or (b) the courses offered by their respective degree-granting departments. Courses that satisfy the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement can “double-count” for major/minor degree requirements.

The proposed 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement can be satisfied by general education courses as well as courses related to an undergraduate’s major field of study. Studies show that the universities that offer a wide range of courses that emphasize diversity are more likely to produce benefits related to student success, as contrasted with institutions that marginalize diversity by isolating this important educational component to a handful of courses, required or optional (Kuh 2005). For example, while Arizona State University requires students to complete nine credit hours in diversity, ASU does *not* require three separate diversity courses for every student. Rather, ASU breaks the nine credit hours into three "awareness" areas: "cultural diversity," "global awareness," and "historical awareness." A student is expected to take only one course in each area. As well, ASU’s diversity requirement can be satisfied via a wide range of course listings. Similarly, while Texas A&M has a six-hour "International and Cultural Diversity" requirement in its core, it offers roughly 200 courses that meet this requirement.

It needs to be noted, however, that the ease with which students can fulfill the proposed 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement does not diminish the UNM’s responsibility to participate on all levels to make UNM a truly diverse educational setting. A seminal report referenced in the “Rationale” section of this proposal, “Making Diversity Work on Campus: A Research Based Perspective,” stresses the importance of a university-wide approach that includes a basic set of principles that are understood by administration, faculty, and staff as well as students (Milem, Chang, and Antonio 2005). Ultimately, as will be examined in the “Learning Outcomes” section of this proposal, diversity as a stated goal only becomes realized when its effects are felt and understood both in- and outside the classroom. The 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement provides an important step toward the realization of this important outcome, but it will *not* be effective in its pedagogical goal of transforming culture, nor in its pragmatic outcome of increasing student retention and graduation rates, without the backing of administrative vision and leadership. Rather than view “diversity” as a burden, faculty must want to develop new courses and explore issues of social relevance within their existing course content. Thus, UNM faculty must have opportunities to participate in the national conversation that has thus far taken place outside the UNM campus. Speakers should be invited to present, faculty should be encouraged to contribute work and hear the work of their colleagues, and students should be included in this process of engagement. The Diversity Council Curriculum Committee will assist and support departments interested in exploring the creation of new

courses and/or modifying existing courses to meet the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion undergraduate requirement.

Certain campus initiatives are already scheduled to dovetail with the implementation of the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. The Writing Across Communities (WAC) Initiative, scheduled to be piloted in Fall 2013, will incorporate critical literacy as it pertains to issues of power, diversity and difference by race, class, gender, sexuality, and ethnicity in U.S. society and beyond as key learning outcomes.

A newly envisioned Freshman Learning Program will include readings and writing that explore issues of diversity and identity and can be used to satisfy the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement.

The proposed “U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion” requirement also supports the Foundations of Excellence program of the Gardner Institute initiated by Provost Chaouki Abdallah in Fall of 2012. Specifically the diversity and learning dimensions, as well as the “all students” dimension of the program will be buttressed by this requirement. First, the diversity dimension specifies: **“Foundations Institutions ensure that all first-year students experience diverse ideas, worldviews, and cultures as a means of enhancing their learning and preparing them to become members of pluralistic communities.** Whatever their demographic composition, institutions structure experiences in which students interact in an open and civil community with people from backgrounds and cultures different from their own, reflect on ideas and values different from those they currently hold, and explore their own cultures and the cultures of others.” The second dimension is the “learning”: **“Foundations Institutions deliver intentional curricular and co-curricular learning experiences that engage students in order to develop knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors consistent with the desired outcomes of higher education and the institution’s philosophy and mission.** Whether in or out of the classroom, learning also promotes increased competence in critical thinking, ethical development, and the lifelong pursuit of knowledge.” And finally, the third dimension, “all students”: **“Foundations Institutions serve all first-year students according to their varied needs.** The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is ongoing and is subject to assessment and adjustment throughout the first year. Institutions provide services with respect for the students’ abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Institutions also ensure a campus environment that is inclusive and safe for all students.” Taken together these Foundations of Excellence have the potential to transform the deep and integrative learning that better enables students to enter an increasingly evolving and global labor market and society. While the Foundations of Excellence and the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion proposal are both focused on undergraduate students, these Learning Outcomes are also very relevant for graduate students. Accordingly, the Diversity Council Curriculum Committee will explore developing a similar requirement to meet the Learning Outcomes of graduate students.

Many existing courses that focus substantively on issues of diversity and inclusion by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, and disability in U.S. and/or global societies will satisfy the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. A “Listing of

Courses that Fulfill the 3-Credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion Requirement” is attached.

The Office of Equity and Inclusion will facilitate resources and serve as a hub for the exchange of information across disciplines and programs. Specifically, the Diversity Council Curriculum Committee proposes the creation of a Faculty Senate Undergraduate Committee specifically charged with reviewing and approving the courses to be included on the list of courses meeting the “U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion” requirement. The Diversity Council Curriculum Committee will work with the Undergraduate Committee of the Faculty Senate, the Registrar’s Office, University Advisement Center, as well as Student Services to facilitate the implementation of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. Africana Studies, Native American Studies, Chicana/o, Hispana/o, & Mexicana/o Studies, and Asian American Studies, as well as The Feminist Research Institute, Peace Studies, Sustainability Studies, and Women Studies are committed to assisting in cross-listing courses and/or helping individual faculty members to address relevant learning outcomes in the development of courses that strive to meet this requirement. Course-buyouts and/or extra compensation should be made available to faculty charged with assisting departments in designing and implementing courses (both in and outside of the classroom) that would meet the learning objectives of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. Cluster hiring in these areas (race, class, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation) should also be considered a strategic priority that can help transform and buttress cross-disciplinary fertilization and interdisciplinary dialogue at UNM.

## **TRANSFER OPTIONS**

Students transferring to UNM from other institutions may petition to apply credits received from previous coursework toward the fulfillment of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. Students seeking to apply for transfer credit should submit course syllabi or course descriptions to the Diversity Council Curriculum Committee to demonstrate fulfillment of the requirement. The Diversity Council Curriculum Committee will work collaboratively with student advisors to establish course equivalents.

## **LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Current research and data suggest that culture shifts begin with conversations that ultimately lead to programming designed to close the race-gender gap in graduation rates at the undergraduate level. Following extensive research gathered on behalf of the University of Michigan in its defense of its affirmative action policies before the U.S. Supreme Court, Jeffrey Milem, Mitchell Chang, and Anthony Antonio (cited in the “Rationale” section of this proposal) argue for **“a conception of diversity as a process toward better learning rather than as an outcome—a certain percentage of students of color, a certain number of programs—to be checked off a list.”** As a preface to discussing Learning Outcomes, it is important to note that these researchers argue convincingly that diversity must be “engaged” in the service of learning, ranging from recruiting a compositionally diverse student body,

faculty, and staff; to developing a positive campus climate; to transforming curriculum, co-curriculum, and pedagogy to reflect and support goals for inclusion and excellence” (Milem, Chang, & Antonio 2005). To this end, UNM is well on its way. The demographic make-up of the campus, combined with recent ethnically diverse hires, pave the way for a culture shift reflected by the curriculum.

The University of Utah describes the substantive core goal of its diversity requirement as follows: “**Diversity requirement stands as an institutional commitment and to develop and teach ways of thinking drawn from multiple histories and cultural heritages that shape the United States.** Courses which fulfill this requirement are designed to explore the national society—its norms, laws, public policies and discourse—in the context of the rich and varied cultural diversity which has shaped it. The goal of this requirement is to extend cross-cultural understanding, perhaps replacing the impulse to stereotype, with better informed reasoning, understanding, and judgment skills. This, in turn, will open possibilities for meaningful communication across social boundaries and allow students to better consider ethical and social decisions from multiple perspectives. This requirement also signals to students that their distinctive traditions, opinions, and insights belong at the university.”

The stated aim of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement is **to promote a broad-scale understanding of the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion among diverse groups of people in the U.S. or in global context who have experienced historic and/or contemporary inequitable treatment.** It is expected that leadership from the Faculty Senate, in consultation with the Diversity Curriculum Committee, will create conditions under which departments may engage faculty in developing and refining a set of Diversity Learning Outcomes. It is further expected that the curricular shift necessitated by this requirement will engender constructive conversations among the various units, departments, and programs that make up each college across the university, as well as self-reflection via constructive conversations on topics that range from the ideological to the pragmatic.

The University of Utah developed the following criteria for course meeting the requirement:

1. The central focus of the course is the culture, history or current circumstances of one or more groups of people in the US who have experienced inequitable treatment.
2. The course critically examines and grapples with one or more factors supporting and sustaining inequitable treatment of groups of people in the U.S. (e.g., institutional racism, homophobia, sexism, ageism, classism).
3. The course critically examines methods and strategies of moving toward a more equitable society and challenging social structures.
4. The course challenges students to reflect on and apply the concept of equity to their interactions.”



Because the substantive requirement of the course is a focus on the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion, courses that fulfill the “U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion” requirement would engage with one or more of the following Key Learning Outcomes:

- Demonstrate critical literacy and ethics pertaining to the dynamics of diversity and inclusion by race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion and disability in the U.S. and/or global context;
- Understand the dynamics of historic and contemporary inequality, oppression, and resistance for marginalized groups in local and global societies and how those dynamics shape individual and community power and experiences;
- Communicate an understanding of the ways in which race, ethnicity, disability, religion, sexual orientation, and/or gender inequality is socially constructed and politically implemented and maintained; and
- Demonstrate an ability to view issues from multiple perspectives as well as analyze, evaluate, and interpret one’s own history and position in contemporary U.S. society as well as in a global context.

A comprehensive study conducted by a recognized peer institution on the positive learning outcomes of diversity and inclusion, which includes sections on qualitative methods and analysis, can be found in “Agencies of Change: Faculty Leadership in Initiating and Sustaining Diversity at the University of Arizona,” a report authored by Jeni Hart, Lindy Brigham, Mary Good, Barbara Mills, and Jan Monk and submitted to Rutgers University as part of the Re-affirming Action: Designs for Diversity in Higher Education grant funded by the Ford Foundation in 2005. That report, appended to this proposal in its entirety, provides evidence of how faculty at the University of Arizona “worked toward change, specifically toward creating a more diverse, fair, and hospitable campus climate” (Hart, Brigham, Good, Mills, & Monk 2005). Models from this study can be adapted for study at UNM and to track learning outcomes of the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement.

### **ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The Diversity Council will collaborate with the Office of Institutional Research to track the success of students who fulfill the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. Such tracking will examine the retention and six-year undergraduate graduation rates of students by race (race by gender and race by class) before and after the implementation of this requirement. Student evaluation forms will be used to assess student responses to courses that fulfill the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement. The Diversity Council is committed to working with the Faculty Senate toward issues of compliance, particularly as those issues impact retention and graduation rates among underrepresented student groups.

## **INCREASING GRADUATION RATES & PROVIDING CRITICAL STRATEGIC KNOWLEDGE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

Less than half (45%) of all students who attend UNM graduate with bachelor's degrees after six years. As previously mentioned, the demographic breakdown of graduation rates indicates an alarming race-gender gap that needs to be eliminated (see [Table 3](#), above). By aligning its curriculum to reflect its values and commitment to diversity learning outcomes, UNM can improve retention and graduation rates for all its undergraduate students. Moreover, the implementation of the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement will enable UNM graduates to compete in a global labor marketplace where diversity is valued.

Diversity learning is a key factor in contributing to high impact student engagement, which has been shown to result in a significant improvement in graduation rates (Kuh 2012; Ibarra 2001; Martinez 2010). Key knowledge, which is the subject of courses specified by the U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement, will prepare UNM students to lead productive lives in an increasingly diverse society—whether in New Mexico or in another part of the world.

It is significant to note that the overwhelming majority of peer institutions in the Southwest region treat diversity with a core curriculum and/or general education diversity requirement (see “Peer Institution Diversity Requirement Data”). The models from these institutions incorporate studies of diversity in community, nation, and world. The context for key knowledge is historical, cultural, theoretical, and service-learning oriented.

Research along with compelling data show that diversity is a process. UNM lags behind other peer institutions in the Southwest region as one of the only Higher Education Department and IPEDS institutions in the Southwest that has yet to implement a diversity requirement.

### **CONCLUSION**

UNM serves students in a state with the highest percentage of Hispanics (46%) and the fourth largest percentage of Native Americans (10%) in the nation. Situated in a majority minority state, the UNM community boasts nearly equal numbers of Hispanics and Anglos along with rising numbers from other ethnic communities and a campus where the majority of the students are female. Upon graduation, these students, as well as *all* UNM students, must be able to compete and thrive in an increasingly complex labor market. In other words, UNM must prepare students to serve in the local, national, and global workforce. Valuing U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion will prepare UNM students for successful careers as engineers, physicists, psychologists, teachers, artists, lawyers, medical doctors, policy makers, criminal justice administrators, media specialists, and business leaders. The future leaders of our city, state, nation, and global economy expect and deserve no less.

Most significantly, the curricular inclusion of the proposed 3-credit university-wide U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement will reflect UNM's commitment to the core values of its stated mission.

Implementing a 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement is a strategic opportunity and a step toward a cultural shift in which diversity and excellence are inextricably linked. Does the university have the political will to—as President Frank's vision suggests—face its future? If so, the 3-credit U.S. & Global Diversity & Inclusion requirement might be viewed proudly in 2020 as the first step in a process that enabled UNM to begin a meaningful and high-impact effort toward ensuring the success of all its students and redefining the public face of a vibrant and robust university community.

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