

Office of Assessment & Academic Program Review

State of APR Affairs Report AY24-25

December 2025



OFFICE OF
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

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Introduction

During AY24-25, all academic program reviews (APR) were conducted in-person and on site. Nine academic units completed a review, eight of them under College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and one under the School of Medicine (SOM). This report summarizes themes and patterns across seven CAS APRs as well as the inclusion of unique information found in the review team reports. The Department of Mathematics & Statistics and Biomedical Sciences Graduate Program (BSGP) is excluded from this report due to a late final report deadline. Highlights of the Math & Stat and BSGP review team reports will be included in the AY25-26 APR report.

The APR process includes individually selected review teams for each review made up of experts from other institutions and within UNM. This year, 30 individuals served as reviewers representing a wide range of discipline expertise, administrative experience, and peer institutions. Review teams were provided with a comprehensive self-study report followed by site-visit meetings with various program constituents. UNM Branch campuses continue to conduct, document, and internally design their own APR structures and practices.

This year, nine academic units engaged in an APR mid-cycle meeting. Following the creation of a guided agenda, these meetings focus on the units' priorities, challenges, and current data trends in preparation for the next APR site-visit. Included below are the major takeaways from those meetings for the institution to reflect on.

APR Initiatives

Completion of the [10 Ed. APR Manual](#) from last year's collaborations with UNM Online and UNM Office of Community Engagement will lead to targeted information being captured for these offices to report up and out in a more systemic approach. In return, including these two new areas in the manual will capture a more comprehensive programmatic story. In AY25-26, two academic units with online programs will be the first to undergo these additions. OAAPR continues to collaborate with UNMO on developing appropriate student data for promoting reflection on the health and performance of online programs during the APR process.

During AY24-25, OAAPR co-created a task force with Cassie Rowe, Anderson School Management and Eva Rodriguez Gonzalez, College of Arts & Sciences to provide workshops and 1:1 consultation to support the higher education community in developing curriculum maps. Based on the overwhelming positive response to our NMHEAR presentation, OAAPR is collaborating with UNM Center for Teaching and Learning to develop a curriculum map institute. In addition, OAAPR is in discussion with leadership to incorporate curriculum mapping into the APR process. For AY25-26 OAAPR plans to promote curriculum maps and provide additional support to academic units in creating and analyzing a curriculum map for their various degree programs within their self-study reports or post-site visit during the strategic planning phase.

This past year, OAAPR focused on addressing APRs for programs that have less than 3 FTE dedicated faculty. OAAPR developed a compact APR model proposal for UNM leadership to review. The model reflects the concerns of niche program capacity to prepare for a traditional APR and scales down the design and structure of the process into a more manageable approach for the director and assisting staff

personnel. Implementation of a pilot compact APR is scheduled for Fall 25 with the Master of Public Policy program.

Starting early in the year, the Office of Assessment & APR (OAAPR) collaborated with the branch campuses to support refinement and simplification of their APR processes, focusing mainly on student success metrics and determining a set of criteria suited for their individual campus' needs. The OAAPR, with input from the branches, created a new APR form. The OAAPR also held monthly meetings with branch leadership and institutional researchers to support the synchrony of data collection. Due to the variation in processes and APR schedules, OAAPR recommends that all branch campuses create their own APR websites to display their APR calendars and house links to APR documentation. The OAAPR will continue to support branch campuses as needed.

Simultaneously, OAAPR Institutional Researcher (IR) held monthly meetings with OIA IRs, targeting data discussions around smaller academic units as well as branch APR data processes. The goals of these meetings are to expand data capabilities and to seek a more consistent APR data process with a focus on interdisciplinary programs, small enrollment, and associate level programs. Conversations have led to identifying a set of criteria to follow as well as distinguishing definitions for clarity. These discussions have led to improvements in understanding and efficiency as the IR community develops sharable processes.

For more information regarding these initiatives and others, please see the OAAPR annual office assessment report for AY24-25 on the UNM Assessment website or follow [this link](#).

Albuquerque Campus Program Reviews

APR Site Visits		APR Mid-Cycles	
Fall 2024	Spring 2025	Fall 2024	Spring 2025
Latin American Studies	Mathematics & Statistics	Architecture	Political Science
Spanish & Portuguese	Biology	Art	Music
School of Public Administration	Africana Studies	Computer Science	Chemistry
Physics & Astronomy	Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies	Anderson School of Management	Water Resources
	Biomedical Sciences		History

Summary of Review Team Reports for AY2024-2025

The section below summarizes the collective views and recommendations of this year's review teams. Each team produces a report specific to the academic program reviewed. Links to each report can be found on the last page.

Across AY24–25 reviews, it was clear to reviewers that UNM's programs respond dynamically to student needs, encourage faculty innovation, and address the university's mission to serve a diverse and evolving community. Review teams reported a rich tapestry of strengths among this round of APRs, highlighting both innovative practices and areas ripe for enhancement.

Curriculum

Innovation and Interdisciplinary Excellence

Many programs were commended for curricular advancements, including expanded offerings in relevant topics, interdisciplinary approaches, real-world applications, and research opportunities. Reviewers observed that units are clearly leveraging faculty expertise to enrich student learning. The Biology Department was praised for integrating R programming across all lab courses, equipping students with practical data analysis skills aligned with current research and graduate training expectations. The Women, Gender, & Sexuality Studies (WGSS) Program received recognition for its collaborative, student-centered pedagogy and broad topical coverage, including areas such as trans studies, ecofeminism, and borderlands issues. The Latin American Studies (LAS) Program was noted for its flexible, multidisciplinary concentrations and strong advising practices that support student customization. The Africana Studies Department was commended for its curriculum's relevance across ethnicities and its potential to fill epistemological gaps, with opportunities to expand into graduate certificates and professional pathways. The Spanish & Portuguese Department was highlighted for its innovative course offerings in areas such as Medical Spanish, Environmental Humanities, and Southwest Studies, which reflect both community needs and emerging academic trends. The School of Public Administration (SPA) was recognized for its evolving curriculum, including new concentrations and dual degree options that align with workforce needs in public and healthcare administration. Finally, the Physics & Astronomy Department was found to offer a curriculum consistent with national standards, supported by strong faculty expertise across subfields.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

With thoughtful consideration of each program's current position and future trajectory, review teams offered a range of recommendations to strengthen curricular design and delivery. Some reviewers identified a need for modernization to better prepare students for both academic and non-academic careers. This includes clarifying curricular identity for marketing purposes, establishing foundational structures for future growth, and ensuring consistent access to core skills and disciplinary knowledge across diverse student pathways. For example, Spanish & Portuguese was encouraged to rethink its curricular segmentation to better reflect contemporary

interdisciplinary trends, while LAS was advised to re-evaluate its graduate concentrations to balance flexibility with disciplinary rigor. Students across departments, such as Biology and SPA, expressed a desire for more applied and field-based learning experiences, as well as expanded training in statistical tools and research methods. Reviewers also advised units to review curricula to ensure practical and empirical content is threaded throughout. Aligning curricula with national disciplinary standards was also recommended to ensure adaptability and relevance across stakeholder expectations. Meeting these needs will require not only curricular updates but also resource allocation for equipment and software capacity. Lastly, for some review teams, it was clear that there is an increase in desire and need from students for programs to offer more asynchronous online courses for flexibility, particularly in WGSS and SPA, where such offerings could support enrollment growth.

Assessment

Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Across AY24–25 reviews, assessment practices were recognized as a vital mechanism for ensuring academic quality, student success, and program responsiveness. Review teams noted that many units have developed thoughtful, multi-layered assessment strategies that reflect both disciplinary standards and institutional priorities. Programs like LAS and Biology stood out for their proactive use of data to inform curricular redesigns and improve student learning outcomes.

LAS was praised for its comprehensive assessment plans across its BA, MA, and PhD programs. Their use of pre- and post-course exams, exit surveys, alumni feedback, and committee reviews ensures that student learning is consistently evaluated and refined. Biology similarly demonstrated a strong commitment to assessment, using curriculum data to restructure its core courses and piloting pre/post assessments to measure learning gains, with early results from assessment has shown 5-10% improvement.

Assessment Infrastructure and Innovation

Reviewers reported that several departments have made notable strides in aligning their assessment frameworks with national accreditation standards. The School of Public Administration, for example, integrates NASPAA and CAHME competencies into its MPA and MHA programs, using both direct and indirect measures to evaluate student performance. Spanish & Portuguese was commended for its rigorous and detailed assessment procedures, which exceed those of many peer institutions and demonstrate strong student outcomes across language instruction and graduate programs.

Physics & Astronomy employs a targeted approach to undergraduate assessment, focusing on core courses and identifying at-risk students for individualized support. This level of attention to student performance is rare and reflects a deep commitment to student success. WGSS, while currently rebuilding its assessment infrastructure, has begun implementing new protocols, including capstone evaluations and graduate certificate tracking.

Challenges and Opportunities for Improvements

Despite the strengths above, reviewers identified several areas for improvement. Africana Studies and WGSS were encouraged to formalize their assessment cycles and ensure alignment with university-wide standards. Biology, while innovative in its curriculum redesign, faces limitations in program-level assessment capacity and lacks mechanisms for tracking alumni outcomes and retention trends. The absence of broader indicators—such as writing samples or validated tools like Bio-MAPS—was noted as a missed opportunity to deepen assessment insights.

Across multiple units, reviewers emphasized the need for dedicated assessment staff support, clearer communication of learning goals, and more consistent use of assessment data to drive programmatic change. Expanding the frequency of alumni surveys, integrating feedback from diverse stakeholders, and developing standardized rubrics were among the recommendations offered to strengthen assessment practices.

Students

Opportunities & Recommendations: Recruitment, Retention, and Strategic Partnerships

Across AY24–25 reviews, student recruitment emerged as a multifaceted challenge and opportunity for growth. Review teams noted that programs are increasingly aware of the importance of strategic partnerships and targeted outreach. Units like Africana Studies and WGSS were commended for existing collaborations with campus resource centers. Community building was consistently linked to retention success. Programs with strong internal cultures—like Africana Studies, were praised for not only fostering a sense of belonging but members described the department as nurturing and restorative space. Retention strategies varied widely across programs, but a shared emphasis on community and career preparation stood out. Reviewers encouraged units to better communicate pathways beyond degree attainment, noting that career uncertainty can lead students to abandon their academic tracks prematurely. Biology, Spanish, and SPA were specifically advised to broaden career preparation efforts to support persistence.

Curricular innovations also played a role in retention. Several programs were encouraged to develop dual degrees, minors, and certificates to attract and retain a more diverse student body. WGSS was advised to explore a dual degree model to expand interdisciplinary appeal, while Spanish was encouraged to formalize a minor or certificate to better serve its large population of second majors. Africana Studies was urged to create a core set of non-cross-listed courses to strengthen cohort identity. Reviewers also noted that programs like PANDA and LAS could improve retention by increasing curricular flexibility, allowing students to progress more efficiently and avoid burnout.

While existing collaborations were praised, reviewers encouraged deeper, more intentional engagement with campus partners. Strengthening ties with African American Student Services,

the LGBTQ Resource Center, the Women's Resource Center, and the Feminist Research Institute could amplify visibility and foster inclusive recruitment pipelines. Funding limitations were a recurring theme, with four of the seven reviewed programs identifying GA-ship and TA-ship shortages as barriers to attracting top-tier candidates. Reviewers highlighted that UNM's assistantship packages often fall short compared to peer institutions, particularly impacting out-of-state and international recruitment. For example, Spanish reported losing competitive applicants due to financial constraints, while Physics and Astronomy noted that insufficient TA lines are limiting undergraduate access to high-demand courses like Astronomy, which remains perpetually waitlisted.

Conversely, Physics was flagged for gaps in staffing within the PAIS building, which reviewers felt were contributing to a fragmented student experience. Not all programs have fully leveraged curricular flexibility to support retention, and some learning environments may benefit from more cohesive support structures. These challenges present clear opportunities for growth through targeted investment, strategic collaboration, and continued curricular innovation.

Faculty

Faculty Excellence in Scholarship, Service, and Community

Across AY24–25 reviews, faculty emerged as a cornerstone of program strength, innovation, and resilience. Review teams consistently praised the dedication, scholarly excellence, and student-centered ethos of faculty across departments. From nationally recognized researchers to award-winning teachers, faculty contributions are recognized as shaping UNM's academic identity and advancing its mission to serve diverse communities.

Programs like LAS and Spanish & Portuguese were commended for their deep bench of affiliated and core faculty, whose interdisciplinary expertise and mentoring have elevated student outcomes and program visibility. Faculty in these units are actively publishing, securing competitive grants, and engaging in community outreach that reflects both academic rigor and cultural relevance. Similarly, the School of Public Administration and Physics & Astronomy were noted for their strategic hiring practices and collaborative research environments, which foster strong connections to national labs and professional networks.

AY24–25 reviews also revealed a vibrant and diverse research culture across UNM's academic units, with faculty contributing meaningfully to their disciplines, communities, and the university's mission. As a large STEM department, Biology demonstrated exceptional research output, averaging \$17.7M in annual funding and 145 peer-reviewed publications per year. Faculty success in securing grants, mentoring students, and engaging in community-based research initiatives like Bosque Ecosystem Monitor Program (BEMP) and Natural Heritage New Mexico reflect a deeply embedded culture of scholarship and service. Similarly, Physics & Astronomy maintains national prominence in multiple subfields, including Quantum Information

Science, AMO Physics, and Astrophysics, with faculty leading or participating in major national collaborations and centers.

The School of Public Administration showcased impactful research in areas such as health disparities, AI in governance, and nonprofit effectiveness, with faculty publishing in top-tier journals and securing competitive external funding. Spanish & Portuguese and Latin American Studies also demonstrated strong scholarly engagement, with faculty producing creative and academic work, participating in public humanities initiatives, and contributing to national grant efforts like Title VI NRC and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS).

Reviewers also highlighted the importance of faculty cohesion and morale. Biology and Africana Studies were praised for cultivating supportive, collegial communities that span faculty ranks and roles. Dual mentoring systems, inclusive departmental cultures, and engagement with professional development initiatives like the Student Experience Project were seen as key drivers of faculty success and retention.

Service emerged as both a strength and a challenge across units. Faculty across all units contribute significantly to departmental, university, and public service, often under increasing workloads due to faculty attrition. Spanish & Portuguese was praised for its proactive approach to service, including community engagement, support for faculty travel, and efforts to secure additional TA lines.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

Despite these strengths, challenges persist. Several programs reported concerns around faculty attrition, workload imbalances, and inconsistent messaging regarding promotion and tenure expectations. Reviewers from the WGSS and Africana Studies APRs emphasized the need for clearer communication around hiring decisions and job classifications, particularly for professional-track faculty. The review team encouraged the School of Public Administration to finalize its bylaws to clarify governance expectations and foster a stronger sense of faculty community. Across multiple units, reviewers recommend leadership to prioritize strategic hiring, reduce administrative burdens, and improve transparency in decision-making processes.

Africana Studies and WGSS were recognized for the range of faculty research , yet reviewers noted opportunities to strengthen intellectual cohesion. Africana Studies faculty maintain collaborations across UNM and beyond, but the reviewers believe the department would benefit from articulating a shared research focus to guide future growth. The review team noticed the WGSS program lacks a clearly defined scholarly identity although participating faculty across ranks are research active. Reviewers recommended convening affiliated faculty to shape a collective intellectual agenda—potentially centered on trans, queer, and border studies—to enhance visibility and attract students.

In several units, the importance of aligning research strengths with strategic hiring and program development was emphasized. For example, Latin American Studies relies heavily on affiliated faculty, and reviewers encouraged targeted hiring in departments like Sociology and Political

Science to support its interdisciplinary mission, competitiveness for federal grants, and important role in maintaining UNM strength in Latin American and Iberian Studies.

Reviewers also highlighted the need to monitor service equity, particularly among women and minority faculty, and to ensure sustainable practices that support morale and retention. Biology faculty, for instance, raised concerns about quantity-based publication metrics and the loss of NIH FIRST start-up funds in the face of federal grant terminations. WGSS faces acute service challenges due to its limited core faculty. With most responsibilities falling to the Director and a visiting lecturer, the program struggles to meet basic administrative and curricular demands. Reviewers recommended formalizing service roles, expanding faculty lines, and consolidating advisory structures with Feminist Research Institute to build capacity and institutional support.

Peer Comparisons

Peer comparisons are defined by numerous factors set forth by the NM Higher Education Department. The list of peer institutions is designated at an institutional level rather than identified by any singular program or department. Factors that support the identification of the peer list include but are not limited to: R1 status, student enrollments and demographics, program offerings, and a mission that closely resembles UNM's. Reviewers continue to question at the program/department level if true peers are being appropriately picked for comparison discussion.

Benchmarking Strengths and Aspirations

Across AY24–25 reviews, peer comparisons provided valuable context for understanding program performance and resource allocation. Review teams noted that many units selected appropriate peer institutions, offering meaningful insights into areas of distinction and opportunities for growth. Biology, Physics & Astronomy and Spanish & Portuguese were found to be competitive with or exceeding their peers in key metrics such as research output, faculty productivity, and program distinctiveness.

Biology, for example, demonstrated strong performance in publication and citation rates, student-to-faculty ratios, and graduate student support. Physics & Astronomy was commended for maintaining national prominence in research despite having fewer faculty than comparable institutions. Spanish & Portuguese stood out among its peers for its unique combination of offerings—including a Heritage Spanish program, Portuguese instruction, and a regional focus on Southwest Studies—all supported by a relatively small faculty.

Structural Challenges and Data Limitations

Several programs encountered challenges in making direct peer comparisons due to structural differences and limitations in institutional data. Africana Studies highlighted the need for improved data systems to accurately reflect shared FTEs, cross-listed courses, and second majors. Reviewers emphasized that meaningful peer benchmarking requires collaboration across

units—Academic Personnel, Enrollment Management, and Institutional Analytics—to develop tools that support nuanced comparisons.

Latin American Studies selected peer institutions with NRC/FLAS funding and similar student demographics but noted disparities in financial support for graduate students and general education language requirements. These structural differences limit LAS's ability to compete for top-tier students and underscore the importance of administrative support in leveling the playing field.

Opportunities for Strategic Alignment

Reviewers encouraged programs to use peer comparisons not only to benchmark performance but also to inform strategic planning. The School of Public Administration, for instance, selected aspirational peers with robust doctoral programs and online offerings. While these comparisons revealed gaps in recruitment strategy and faculty capacity, they also pointed to actionable steps—such as expanding tenure-track lines and developing targeted online programs—to enhance SPA's visibility and impact.

While currently smaller in faculty size and course offerings compared to its peers, WGSS presents a valuable opportunity for growth and refinement of its program identity. Institutions like NMSU and UTEP have developed clear intellectual focus and robust staffing models that UNM could emulate. Reviewers suggested that WGSS could differentiate itself through a focused investment in trans and queer studies, leveraging its historical legacy and regional relevance to build a flagship program.

Resources & Planning

Interdisciplinary Programs

AY24–25 reviews highlighted the growing importance and complexity of interdisciplinary programming across UNM. Three interdisciplinary programs underwent formal review this cycle, with a fourth encouraged to deepen its interdisciplinary collaborations. Review teams consistently emphasized the value of cross-unit partnerships and the need for sustained leadership support to ensure these programs thrive.

Programs like Africana Studies, Biology, Latin American Studies, and Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies were recognized for their efforts to bridge disciplinary boundaries, offering students expansive and integrative learning experiences. Reviewers praised these units for leveraging faculty expertise across departments and creating curricular spaces that reflect the interconnected nature of contemporary scholarship.

However, reviewers also identified structural challenges that must be addressed to support interdisciplinary growth. A recurring concern was the lack of adequate data systems to capture and reflect the unique nature of these programs. This includes tracking shared FTEs, cross-listed courses, and student credit hours. Reviewers called for improved collaboration among OIA,

EMRT, Academic Personnel, and college leadership to develop transparent and actionable reporting tools. Investments in administrative coordination, shared resources, and strategic planning were seen as essential to sustaining interdisciplinary visibility and impact.

To further strengthen interdisciplinary efforts, reviewers emphasized the importance of investing in core faculty lines and developing compensation models that recognize departmental contributions—such as course buyouts and formalized support for leadership roles. Programs like LAS and WGSS, which rely heavily on affiliated faculty, face unique vulnerabilities in maintaining curricular consistency and long-term planning. These investments are especially critical as programs prepare for upcoming grant competitions and seek to expand their academic footprint.

Staffing, Budgeting, and Operational Support

Across departments, reviewers noted that staff are often stretched thin, taking on expanded responsibilities due to compressed staffing models and limited operating budgets. Units such as Biology, Spanish & Portuguese, and WGSS reported concerns about staff morale, retention, and workload distribution. In Biology, the need for a dedicated student specialist was identified as a priority to support curriculum development and advising, particularly in response to growing demand from pre-health students. Similarly, Spanish & Portuguese highlighted the impact of losing key staff roles and the strain placed on remaining personnel.

WGSS and Africana Studies raised concerns about shared staffing models, unclear budget structures, and inconsistent messaging around job classifications. Reviewers recommended regular coordination meetings among unit directors and shared staff to improve communication and workload planning. In WGSS, the lack of dedicated faculty and limited operating budget were seen as major barriers to strategic growth. Reviewers strongly encouraged the development of a shared advisory board with Feminism Research Institute (FRI) to guide mission alignment, hiring plans, and long-term development.

Strategic Planning and Institutional Alignment

The Department of Physics & Astronomy was commended for their long-range planning and disciplined resource management. The department's tradition of ten-year hiring plans and strategic reserve building positioned it to respond to emerging opportunities, such as national quantum initiatives and radio astronomy investments. However, recent budget model changes and centralization of services have introduced new challenges. Reviewers emphasized the importance of maintaining open communication with central offices and ensuring consistent service quality to support departmental operations.

The Latin American Studies program benefits meaningfully from support through LAII and the Office of the Provost; reviewers observed, however, that its administrative positioning within the College of Arts & Sciences could be clarified to better reflect its academic significance. Strengthening alignment between the College and LAS—particularly around staffing, advising,

and grant competitiveness—was identified as an opportunity for growth. Reviewers recommended regular conversations between college leadership and LAS to help clarify roles, reinforce strategic priorities, and explore avenues for enhanced financial support.

Facilities & Technology

Supporting Learning and Research Environments

AY24–25 reviews revealed a wide spectrum of facility conditions across UNM’s academic units, with some departments benefiting from modern, well-equipped spaces while others face significant challenges due to aging infrastructure and temporary displacement. Review teams emphasized the critical role that physical and technological environments play in fostering academic excellence, community engagement, and student well-being.

The Departments of Physics & Astronomy and Spanish & Portuguese were commended for their effective use of space and technology. Physics & Astronomy’s new PAÍS building was described as superior to most peer institutions, with state-of-the-art labs and teaching spaces that support both undergraduate and graduate education. Spanish & Portuguese, while housed in the aging Ortega Hall, benefits from ample communal and instructional space, proximity to the Language Learning Center, and a strong sense of departmental cohesion.

Latin American Studies, operating within the LAII complex, has made notable improvements since its last review, including upgraded audiovisual equipment, renovated bathrooms, and enhanced computing resources. These updates have strengthened the program’s ability to host events, support hybrid learning, and maintain a vibrant academic community.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

Several units face pressing facility-related challenges that impact program delivery and community building. WGSS, currently displaced from the Humanities Building, is experiencing fragmentation of faculty offices, loss of student gathering spaces, and privacy concerns in open office settings. Reviewers stressed the importance of interim solutions to support student well-being and academic integrity during the multi-year transition.

Reviewers found biology’s facilities to be a combination of well-maintained but in need of attention, with the Museum of Southwestern Biology (MSB) recognized as a nationally prominent resource requiring urgent expansion. Space limitations, deferred maintenance, and inadequate support for collections managers were highlighted as barriers to sustaining MSB’s global leadership. The broader Biology Department also faces aging infrastructure, limited greenhouse capacity, and inconsistent responsiveness from Facilities Management, prompting calls for strategic renovations to Castetter Hall.

The School of Public Administration benefits from a central location and updated classroom technology, enabling flexible course delivery. However, limited community space and security

concerns suggest the need for enhancements such as PROX card access and intentional design to support faculty presence and interaction.

Across units, reviewers encouraged the university to prioritize long-term planning for facility upgrades, ensure equitable space allocation during transitions, and invest in technology that supports hybrid learning and research. Attention to deferred maintenance, ADA compliance, and shared cost models for repairs were also recommended to sustain functionality and foster inclusive, high-quality academic environments.

Conclusion and Strategic Planning

AY24–25 reviews underscored the resilience, innovation, and dedication of UNM’s academic units, even amid resource constraints and structural challenges. Across departments and programs, faculty and leadership demonstrated a clear commitment to student success, scholarly excellence, and alignment with UNM’s 2040 Strategic Plan. Review teams commended units for their thoughtful engagement with the APR process and encouraged continued reflection and collaboration to guide future growth. Physics & Astronomy and Biology were recognized for their national prominence in research and their strategic vision for infrastructure, curriculum, and faculty development. These departments are well-positioned to lead in interdisciplinary science and experiential learning, provided that institutional support keeps pace with their ambitions.

The Programs in Latin American Studies and Africana Studies were praised for their cultural and academic contributions to UNM’s mission, with recommendations to strengthen administrative support, clarify strategic priorities, and expand faculty resources. LAS, in particular, was encouraged to leverage its national reputation and geographic advantage to grow both undergraduate and graduate programs, while Africana Studies was advised to use strategic planning as a tool for cohesion, outreach, and curricular innovation.

Programs with smaller footprints, such as WGSS and SPA, were acknowledged for their impact and potential. WGSS was encouraged to define its intellectual identity, build a core faculty, and develop collaborative governance structures to support sustainable growth. SPA was advised to finalize bylaws, strengthen recruitment strategies, and expand online offerings to remain competitive and responsive to student needs.

Across all units, reviewers emphasized the importance of aligning departmental goals with college and university strategic plans. This includes articulating clear missions, investing in faculty and infrastructure, and fostering inclusive, student-centered environments. Strategic planning should be collaborative, data-informed, and forward-looking—grounded in the realities of each unit while remaining aspirational in scope. Spanish & Portuguese was urged to engage in holistic strategic planning that centers student needs and fosters interdisciplinary collaboration. Reviewers recommended facilitated dialogue to overcome segmented thinking and align hiring priorities with a shared departmental vision.

UNM's academic programs are rich in expertise, creativity, and commitment. With thoughtful investment and strategic alignment, they are well-positioned to thrive and to contribute meaningfully to the university's evolving mission and impact.

APR Mid-cycles

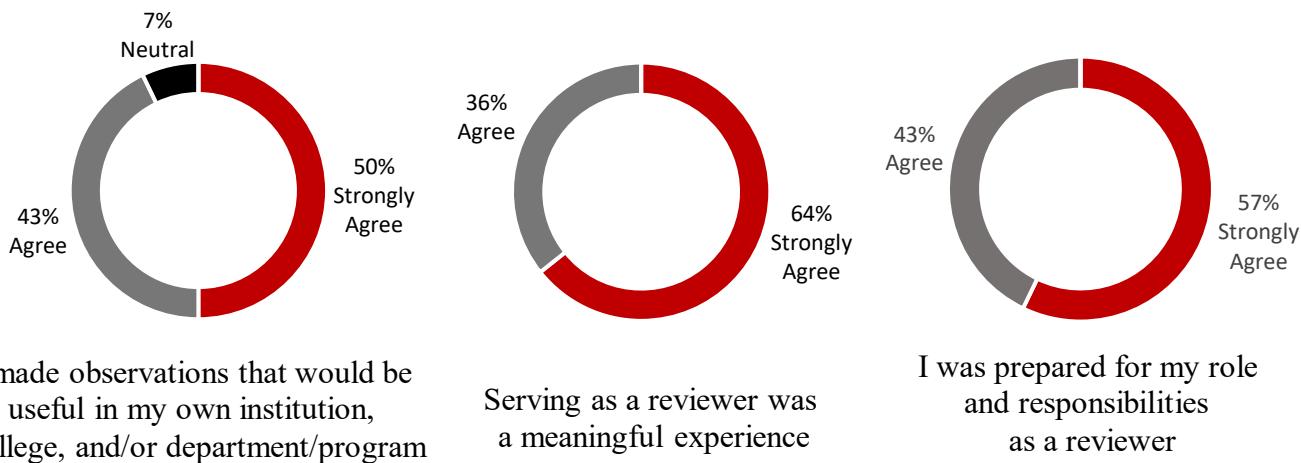
Nine units participated in an APR mid-cycle meeting with representation from the Provost Office, Office of Graduate Studies, College level leadership, Office of Research and the Office of Assessment APR. These meetings openly discuss units progress regarding their action plans, changes, arising challenges, and current priorities before preparing for the next APR. Each unit is provided with a data packet to reflect on current trends of program health and performance around various indicators involving students, faculty, assessment, and research information. While discussions vary across units the following points appeared to be most prevalent.

- Faculty concerns – service fatigue, faculty advising for interdisciplinary students (needs to be systematic & structurally built in), students seeking personal support - need a one stop shop of resources for faculty to share with students- adaptation of *WayFinder* for students?
- Assessment issues – bandwidth, lack of submissions, alignment between programs and higher levels
 - assessing strategic plan progress
- Too much generalization and coverage needs burdening staff
- Budget issues – hiring & retention (faculty & staff), more TAships, travel & conference funds (faculty, staff, & students), facilities maintenance
 - some tied to accreditation concerns
- Lab & technology concerns – need flexible hours for students, more equipment for capacity, additional staffing, maintenance & modernization funds

Reviewer Survey Results: Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Visits

The OAAPR solicits survey responses from all reviewers regarding their experience in the UNM APR process. This year, 14 of 30 surveys were completed, or a 46% response rate. All responses were generally positive. The following data summarize the survey responses and comments made by reviewers.

- Reviewers found the APR process enriching, well-structured, and professionally beneficial.
- Many gained transferable insights, especially in interdisciplinary work, assessment, and graduate program design.
- Self-study materials and communications were timely and clear, supporting a smooth experience.
- Areas for improvement included more robust data (e.g., enrollments, CVs, grants), clearer exit meeting expectations, and better rating guidance.
- Suggestions included more breaks, longer student meetings, and diverse review panels to avoid overburdening underrepresented groups.
- Meeting with the cognizant Dean was seen as key to closing information gaps and enhancing context.
- Despite some logistical issues, the process was flexible, and many reviewers expressed interest in participating again.



Quotes from Reviewer Survey

“Some of the meetings were a bit short, especially those with students. Other than that, it went well.

“Please consider broad demographics in choosing review panels. Choosing only from underrepresented groups in a subject area to bring in as outside reviewers is an undue burden.”

“The internal member of the review panel was not able to participate fully in the process, which reduced the effectiveness and efficiency of the panel. It was not appropriate for the panel to be composed of one demographic group, in this case three female professors; this is a situation of overburdening.”

“Things I generally find useful that we didn’t have until I asked. 1) sheet with enrollments (for example for the fall term) for all courses in the dept. 2) CV’s for all of the faculty 3) if possible, a break down of the grants to the dept, who is on them, how much goes to UNM, dates they are active. Generally this was a very well run review. I wish my university did this as well. My previous (Northwestern) had a well-oiled machine and yours is much closer to theirs”

“The feedback process and exit report was somewhat unique and could be improved. I would have appreciated an opportunity to meet with [...] leadership to provide preliminary feedback; more importantly the public nature of the exit meeting was a bit strange. I think the process could be improved by having a closed door meeting between the review team and the cognizant dean and provost. The review team did not meet with the cognizant Dean. This was a huge oversight and created information gaps in our visit. A meeting with the Dean is imperative for successful reviews.”

“Maybe a few more bathroom breaks. Also, I think prepping the chair and faculty as to what to expect during the exit meeting would be helpful; I had people contacting me directly complaining that we didn’t address their very specific concerns or mention them/their work/their section in the exit power point. They should be aware that the presentation is a general overview and the report will include specific details.”

“When I first learned that there would be a local UNM person on the review committee, I was concerned that this might detract from the openness of discussion among the committee members. My concern was misplaced. The local reviewer was a terrific resource for the committee, filling us in on many specifics of the university. Stick with your current policy on this.”

Appendix A – Reviewer Survey

Fall 2024 / Spring 2025 Reviewer Survey

Please take 5 minutes to answer the following questions. These responses will be used to improve the APR process for reviewers & units.

1. Which unit/department did you serve as a reviewer for?
2. I made observations that would be useful in my own institution, college, and/or department/program. (Likert) Please provide a rationale for your rating.
3. Serving as a reviewer was a meaningful experience. (Likert) Please provide a rationale for your rating.
4. I was prepared for my role and responsibilities as a reviewer. (Likert) Please provide a rationale for your rating.

Review Team Report Links

Latin American Studies

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/218/

Spanish & Portuguese

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/217/

School of Public Administration

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/216/

Physics & Astronomy

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/224/

Biology

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/222/

Mathematics & Statistics

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/223/

Africana Studies

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/221/

Women, Gender & Sexuality Studies

https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_acad_program_review/220/

Biomedical Sciences

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