

ADVISOR INSTITUTE 2026



Advise, Adapt, and Advance in the Age of AI



September 25, 2026
8:30 am - 5:00 pm



Available on Zoom



Smith Brasher Hall
Central NM College
717 University Blvd. SE
Albuquerque, NM 87106



Welcome!

On behalf of CNM Advisement & Accessibility Services and the UNM Advisor Training & Education Committee, welcome to the 2026 Advisor Institute!

Zoom link for ALL sessions:

<https://unm.zoom.us/j/95852056718>



SCHEDULE

8:00 - 8:30 AM	Check In & BINGO	SB Lobby
8:30 - 9:00 AM	Welcome & Land Acknowledgement Dr. Brandi Wells / Executive Director, Student Affairs, UNM	SB 101
9:00 - 10:00 AM	KEYNOTE: Building Human-Centered Futures: Human Connections, AI, and Technology in Times of Change Elisha Allen, MBA / Director, Online Strategies & Academic Technologies, UNM	
10:00-10:15 AM	International Updates Linda Melville / Manager, Global Education Office, UNM	
10:15 - 10:30 AM	Transition & BINGO	
10:30 -11:15 AM	CNM & UNM Independent Meeting Time CNM advisors go to the computer lab with Christiana Ricci UNM advisors stay in the auditorium with Stephanie Hands	
11:15 - 11:45 AM	Discover Health Sciences Fair & Networking See page 5 for a list of participating departments	SB Lobby
11:45 AM - 12:00 PM	Transition & BINGO	
12:00 - 1:00 PM	LUNCH	SB Lobby
1:00 - 1:45 PM	Breakout Session #1 See page 6-7 for topics, presenters, and locations	
1:45 - 2:00 PM	Transition & BINGO	
2:00 - 2:30 PM	Case Study Breakout See page 8-9 for locations	
2:30 - 2:45 PM	Transition & BINGO	
2:45 - 3:30 PM	Breakout Session #2 See page 10-12 for topics, presenters, and locations	
3:30 - 3:45 PM	Transition & BINGO	
3:45 - 4:15 PM	Advisor Self Care Dr. Ashley Martin-Cuellar, LMFT / Lecturer III, Family Studies, UNM	
4:15 - 4:45 PM	Closing Remarks Tracy Hartzler, JD / President, CNM	
4:45 - 5:00 PM	Give-Aways!	

KEYNOTE SPEAKER



Elisha Allen, MBA

**Director
Online Strategies & Academic Technologies
University of New Mexico**

With a dual director appointment, Elisha leads departments in Academic Affairs and UNM IT. Within UNM IT, Elisha is responsible for support, maintenance, and strategic planning for UNM's academic technology tools—online and in classrooms. As a strategic advisor to the provost for academic technologies and online strategies, Elisha provides leadership for both the UNM Online distance education department and the Institute of Design and Innovation. An advocate for lifelong learning, he is involved with statewide P-20 learning initiatives with a focus on digital inclusion, equity, and literacy.

Presentation:

Building Human-Centered Futures: Human Connections, AI, and Technology in Times of Change

Technology, and AI in particular, is rapidly reshaping our world. As an institution of higher education, we have multiple responsibilities for leading and guiding this change: supporting our faculty so that they can lead in research and classrooms, empowering our staff with tools that can assist their work and improve their experience, and preparing our students to succeed in this new context: as learners, as future workforce, and as humans. Navigating that change while preserving human connections, creativity, and flourishing will require mindfulness and the concerted efforts of our UNM Community. This presentation provides a taste of work underway and a preview of things to come.

DISCOVER HEALTH SCIENCES FAIR

11:15 - 11:45 PM

UNM Physician Assistant Program

UNM Radiologic Sciences

UNM Health Sciences Office for Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

UNM College of Population Health

UNM College of Education & Human Sciences

- Community Health Education Program
- Exercise Science Program
- Physical Education Program
- Nutrition and Dietetics Program
- Athletic Training Program
- Counselor Education (MA) Program
- Educational Psychology (Ph.D.) Program

UNM Department of Physical Therapy

UNM Emergency Medical Services

UNM School of Medicine

- Anesthesiology & Critical Care Program (MSA)

UNM College of Nursing

UNM College of Pharmacy

UNM Master of Social Work Program



BREAKOUT SESSION #1

1:00 - 1:45 PM

ROOM 102

AI and Student Success: How Enrollment Management Has Utilized AI to Support Students

Joe Debonis / Director, Strategic Project, Freshman Retention, UNM

Enrollment Management has been utilizing an AI platform called College Vine for the past year to support student success. In this presentation, I will discuss the pro's and con's that we have observed with AI and in particular College Vine, as well as how we will utilize the product going forward.

ROOM 108

What do you want to know about ALEKS PPL?

Cash Clifton / Director of Academic Communities, UNM
McGraw-Hill ALEKS representatives

This interactive session provides an introduction to professional licensure in higher education and explains why it matters in academic advising. Participants will learn what professional licensure is, how it relates to academic programs, and the advisor's role in supporting students while referring them to the appropriate campus resources when needed. Through examples and discussion, attendees will gain practical strategies for answering common student questions, recognizing when additional guidance is needed, and helping students navigate professional licensure information with confidence.

ROOM 207

Guiding and Advising the Pre-Health Student Population

Dr. Ken Cradock / Director, Pre-Health Professions Student Dev., UNM

The students who are interested in healthcare careers are a diverse population dispersed across campus in a variety of majors and programs. They often have uncertainties, preconceptions and misconceptions about what counts as healthcare and how to be a competitive applicant. This breakout session will help highlight how to assist and guide this population of students.

OUTSIDE

CNM Main Campus Tour

Marissa Carmenaty / Recruiter, CNM

Tour of CNM Main campus highlighting student services & resources: A member from our team will be stationed outside the Katharine Winograd (KW) Student Success Center, 716 University Blvd SE, to begin your visit.
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/bpVDRckE6D2k5GWcA>

BREAKOUT SESSION #1 (cont.)

1:00 - 1:45 PM

ROOM 209

The Force-Multiplier Leadership: Elevating Staff Career Trajectories and Scaling Impact in Higher Education Administration

Dr. Aaron Rodriguez / Director of Academic Success, UNM

In the fast-paced, resource-constrained environment of higher education administration, supervisors and department leaders are constantly caught between managing daily operational demands and cultivating long-term talent. Traditional management approaches often default to maintenance and oversight, leaving high-performing staff feeling stagnant and driving turnover in critical student success and administrative roles.

Designed for Executive Directors, supervisors, and mid-to-senior level managers, this session introduces the Force-Multiplier Leadership Framework—a strategic approach to supervision that transforms managers from task-masters into talent multipliers. Attendees will explore how to intentionally design career trajectories within higher education structures, unlock hidden institutional potential, and align staff professional development with institutional mission-critical goals.

This presentation provides actionable strategies for conducting high-impact career conversations, delegating for developmental growth rather than mere task completion, and fostering an internal culture of upward mobility and continuous learning. Participants will leave with practical tools to advocate for their teams, build resilient operational pipelines, and cultivate an environment where employee retention and institutional excellence go hand in hand.

ROOM 211

“It Depends...”: Navigating the Complexity of Graduate Advising

Carol Jimerson / Sr. Academic Advisor, UNM

“Can I use this course toward my degree?” Sounds simple—until it isn’t. In graduate advising, the answer is often: “It depends.” Join us for a conversation about those not-so-simple advising questions, the connections and partnerships that help us navigate them, and practical ways to guide students toward making informed decisions and taking ownership of their academic journey—all without having to know every answer ourselves.

ROOM 212

What’s Changed, What Hasn’t: Understanding Student Immigration Regulations

Linda Melville / Manager, Global Education Office, UNM

Advisors are not always familiar with rules international students need to follow to remain lawfully present in the U.S. New immigration rules make this even more challenging for students and critical for advisors. Join us for a primer on what academic advisors should know when working with international students.

CASE STUDY BREAKOUTS

2:00 - 2:30 PM

ROOM 102

UNM Honors College: Navigating Student Pathways

Laurel Schimelfenig / Academic Advisement Coord., Honors College, UNM

Do you ever wonder how your students can fit an Honors College Credential into your demanding major? Or perhaps you wonder what the Honors College is all about! In this case study, we will explore the most basic pathway – a Certificate in Honors Interdisciplinary Liberal Arts – and how those 15 credits can mold into your students' academic journeys. You will leave with handouts on Honors College General Education courses, a 4-year plan, and questions answered.

ROOM 103

Journey of a Student Veteran

Chiaki Ramirez / Student Eligibility Specialist, Veteran's Outreach, UNM

This case study follows the journey of a student veteran transitioning from active-duty service to higher education after relocating to New Mexico.

ROOM 104

Working with Undergraduate Student Researchers

Jennifer Chamberlin Payne / URAD Project Mgr., Provost Office Staff, UNM

This case study session will highlight real-world advising scenarios when working with undergraduate students interested in research. Strategies for guiding student conversations, identifying research readiness, and connecting students with faculty mentors and research opportunities will be covered. The student ambassadors from the Undergraduate Research and Arts & Design Network (URAD) will also share their experiences in getting involved in research at UNM in this session.

ROOM 108

More Than a Music Major: The Case for Ensemble Participation at UNM

Beth Elkin / Manager, Academic Advisement, UNM

Ensemble participation is more than making music, it can be a powerful pathway to engagement, belonging, and student success. Music ensembles can be one of the University of New Mexico's most accessible and overlooked opportunities for student engagement. Many UNM ensembles welcome students regardless of major or experience, creating opportunities for both UNM and CNM students to participate.

CASE STUDY BREAKOUTS (cont.)

2:00 - 2:30 PM

ROOM 207

Supporting Online Students

Olivia Torres Jojola / Program Planning Officer, UNM Online Operations

A step-by-step guide to supporting online students from admission through graduation.

ROOM 209

Izzy Indecisive -- Helping students find their way

Daniel Kinghorn / Academic Advisor, UNM

Edgar Corona Castaneda / Academic Advisor, UNM

In this case study, we will review a student going into their third year who has decided that the path they chose (in this case, the MD pathway) is not for them. We will discuss strategies to help the student find the pathway/program for them, resources for students to explore their options and support their journey, and what we can do when a crossroads turns into a crash out.

ROOM 211

Transfer Student-Athletes

Joylynn Benefiel / Supervisor for Student Success, Athletics Academic Advising, UNM

Transfer Student-Athletes - we'll review the frequent challenges of transferring both out of our institution and into it for student-athletes; which is a very frequent experience.

ROOM 212

The Student NSO Cycle

Margaret Garry / Program Manager, College Enrichment & Outreach Programs, UNM

If you are attending the Advisor Institute, you likely support NSO students by advising them or sharing your knowledge during a presentation or at Discover Fair. Have you ever wondered what else students experience as part of NSO? This Case Study will follow three hypothetical students, a first-year student, a transfer student, and a readmitted student as they navigate new student orientation and prepare for their first day of class!

BREAKOUT SESSION #2

2:45 - 3:30 PM

ROOM 102

“Can I petition that?” Effectively Advising Students through the Petition Process

Athena Gordon / Supervisor, Academic Advisement, UNM

Let's talk about petitions & advisement. We've all encountered situations where students are requesting an exception to an academic requirement, policy, or deadline. In this session, we'll explore the petition genre (what is a petition, anyways?), what makes an effective petition, ethical boundaries as advisors, and how AI can help (or hurt) petition writing. I'll provide some insight that I've learned from my work in Graduate Studies and PhD research in Professional & Technical Communication. All advisors across departments, colleges, and student populations are welcome to attend!

ROOM 103

Partners in Policy: Collaborating with Faculty to Cultivate Safe, Accountable, and Resilient College Learning Environments

Dr. Aaron Rodriguez / Director of Academic Success, UNM

Cynthia Padilla Rodgers / Learning Specialist, College of Nursing, UNM

Stephanie Montoya / Learning Specialist, College of Nursing, UNM

As university classrooms increasingly reflect broader societal tensions, student behavioral concerns—ranging from bullying and verbal harassment to aggressive posturing and peer ostracization—pose a direct threat to academic freedom, psychological safety, and inclusive learning environments. Too often, academic affairs and student services operate in silos, leaving faculty isolated on the front lines and administrators disconnected from the classroom reality.

Designed for higher education administrators, program directors, and faculty leaders, this session outlines a collaborative, college-level framework for bridging the gap between instruction and behavioral accountability. Attendees will explore structured strategies for empowering faculty to address disruptive dynamics early, while establishing clear, enforceable thresholds for college-level intervention.

This presentation moves from proactive classroom management to formal administrative action, detailing clear procedural pathways for progressive discipline—including college-level probation, suspension, and dismissal for severe infractions. Additionally, it introduces Student Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) as a developmental, high-accountability mechanism to correct behavioral drift, ensuring that discipline is paired with clear expectations, behavioral re-training, and structured pathways for student rehabilitation.

BREAKOUT SESSION #2 (cont.)

2:45 - 3:30 PM

ROOM 104

Advising as Teaching: Tips and Tricks from the Classroom

Sara Analise Shoemate / Sr. Academic Advisor, UNM

As a former elementary school teacher, I want to share techniques that I have carried over from the classroom that help me to be successful in advising college students. From building strong personal connections with students to having difficult discussions, there's no school like the elementary school way of doing things.

ROOM 108

Academic Advising During Uncertain Times in Higher Ed

Dr. Joanna Camacho Escobar / Supervisor, Academic Advisement, UNM

Inspired by the experiences shared by colleagues in NACADA 2025 in Las Vegas, this interactive session seeks to discuss how recent changes in higher education affect academic advising practices. We have been experiencing the tension between the best practices backed by NACADA that promote relational approaches and the push from “Big Tech” on higher education to implement AI and other technology tools to manage student success. This is in addition to the dismantling of the U.S. Department of Education, the updates to federal financial aid guidelines, new restrictions on international student regulations, among many other changes. The session intends to foster a solutions/solidarity-based conversation to know how academic advisors in New Mexico are navigating these changes. Attendees should be opened to a dialogue that could generate potential best practices to navigate this new higher-ed landscape.

OUTSIDE

CNM Main Campus Tour

Marissa Carmenaty / Recruiter, CNM

Tour of CNM Main campus highlighting student services & resources: A member from our team will be stationed outside the Katharine Winograd (KW) Student Success Center, 716 University Blvd SE, to begin your visit.
<https://maps.app.goo.gl/bpVDRckE6D2k5GWcA>

BREAKOUT SESSION #2 (cont.)

2:45 - 3:30 PM

ROOM 207

Better Together: The Power of Group Advising

Madison Castellano-Donovan / Supervisor, Academic Advisement, STEM, Arts & Sciences, UNM

Abdulmajeed Yamani / Sr. Academic Advisor, A&S, UNM

Ashley Busby / Sr. Academic Advisor, A&S, UNM

Richelle Gatchell / Sr. Academic Advisor, A&S, UNM

This panel discussion, featuring the College of Arts and Sciences Biology Advisement Team and moderated by the Arts and Sciences STEM Advisement Supervisor, will explore how group advising was used to follow up with new Biology students after orientation.

Panelists will discuss how group advising provided an opportunity to reinforce key advising information, connect students with resources, build community, and encourage early engagement with advising. The session will also highlight the use of Student Hub to support communication and outreach.

Through this initiative, the team was able to reach approximately 20% of Biology's first-year students through group advising. Panelists will share successes, lessons learned, and practical strategies for using group advising and Student Hub to enhance the new-student advising experience.

ROOM 212

Understanding Professional Licensure: A Guide for Academic Advisors

Ashley Campbell / Operations Specialist, UNM

Eva Padilla / Program Planning Officer, UNM

Academic advisors play an important role in helping students make informed decisions about their educational and career goals. For students enrolled in programs that lead to professional licensure, advisors are often the first point of contact for questions about licensure requirements, program eligibility, and available resources.



Thank you for being part of Advisor Institute!

We hope this was an enriching and informative experience. We appreciate all of our presenters for donating their time, talents, and expertise.

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the UNM Training & Education Committee and CNM Advisement & Accessibility Services for their work coordinating today's event:

- Chris Ricci
- Shannon Saavedra
- Cynthia Padilla Rodgers
- Grace Willerton
- Jennifer Chamberlin Payne
- JJ Conn
- Krystal Zaragoza
- Nancy Cabrera Duran
- Olivia Torres Jojola

**We look forward to seeing you at the next
Advisor Institute in September 2027!**

Please fill out the feedback survey to log
your participation in today's event:

