March 19, 2012

Dr. Chaouki T. Abdallah
Interim Provost and Executive Vice President
Academic Affairs
Scholes Hall, Room 240
1 University of New Mexico
Albuquerque, NM 87131

Dear Dr. Abdallah:

Enclosed please find the final academic advising consultants' report for the University of New Mexico. We thank you and those with whom we spoke for their time and candor in addressing our questions related to academic advising at UNM. Our hope is that our observations about the current status of UNM's academic advising program along with our recommendations for improvement will be helpful to the University, particularly as continuing emphasis is placed on undergraduate student success. It is our belief the potential that academic advising has to improve the student experience and student learning should not be underestimated!

Again, we thank all of the administrators, staff and faculty involved in the program review for their collegiality during our recent visit. We consider it an honor to have been asked to serve as consultants for the University of New Mexico.

On behalf of Nancy, Terry and me, our best wishes to you and your colleagues as you move forward with a very exciting plan for improving advising and the UNM undergraduate experience.

Sincerely yours,
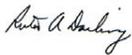
Dr. Ruth A. Darling
Assistant Provost for Student Success
Past President, National Academic Advising Association: The Global Community for Advising

Encl: Report
Cc: Dr. Greg Heileman, Associate Provost
        Ms. Vanessa Harris, Director of University Advising
        Dr. Nancy King, NACADA Consultant
        Dr. Terry Musser, NACADA Consultant

ACADEMIC ADVISING PROGRAM REVIEW REPORT

Prepared for

The University of New Mexico
March 2, 2012

On February 1-3, 2012 a team of consultants from the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) visited the University of New Mexico (UNMUNM). The team included Dr. Ruth Darling, Assistant Provost for Student Success, University of Tennessee-Knoxville; Dr. Nancy King, Executive Assistant for Strategic Initiatives and Vice President Emeritus for Student Success and Enrollment Services, Kennesaw State University; and Dr. Terry Musser, Advising Coordinator, College of Agricultural Sciences, Penn State University. The team was contacted by Vanessa Harris on behalf of the Office of the Provost at UNM. The consultants' charge was to conduct a thorough review of the academic advising program. In particular we were asked to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the program and determine whether or not UNM currently meets students' advising needs and is in line with best practices in the field of academic advising.

In advance of our visit we were provided a number of resources in addition to the UNM website. These resources included a chart describing the types of undergraduate advising delivery across the main campus and NSSE data from 2000-2001, 2003-2004, 2007, 2009, and 2011. We also received a copy of a report, *Improving Academic Advising: A Progress Report Submitted to the Higher Learning Commission,* prepared in January 2011 as a response to the *Report of a Comprehensive Evaluation Visit to the University of New Mexico.* The Progress Report addresses the concerns expressed by the Higher Learning Commission as a result of the commission's site visit in 2009.Specifically the major concerns centered upon the extremely high advisor to student ratios. In addition to understaffing and underfunding of advising, the Commission expressed concerns about the training and professional development of advising staff, communication among advisors across the university, and adequate space for the advising program campus-wide.   The Progress Report included memorandums describing the Advising Structure Task Force, Revised Recommendations for Advising Structure, Launching the University Advisement Center (UAC), and materials from the UAC Management Group 2010. We also received a full description of Advisor Passport 2010, materials from the 2010 New Mexico Higher Education Assessment and Retention Conference and materials from the Advisors Institute.

Other resources included *Recommendations for Process Improvement/Cost Containment Strategies for FY13 and Beyond* submitted by the President's Strategic Advisory Team and a *Strategic Framework for 2008 and Beyond.* We also reviewed the UNM President's Work Plan for FY10 and Key Dashboard Indicators of Progress toward UNM Presidential Work Plan FY 2010-2011. Other materials included information from the Provost's Committee for Advising (PCA) and full descriptions of all of the Academic Advising Centers, including the Student Affairs Advising Centers. In addition we reviewed materials from the Freshmen Learning Communities (FLCs) and Student Outcomes (2001-2004 cohort); UNM retention reports; advising traffic on AdvisorTrac; information regarding holds placed on students; and UNM and FAC freshmen Ledger. We also examined information provided from orientation for both freshmen and transfer and non-traditional students and a copy of the Advising 101 syllabus used in the UAC.

Our report is based upon the information we received prior to our visit from the various reports and documents and the interviews we conducted during our two and one-half day review of the UNM advising program. A copy of our Site Visit Itinerary and the people with whom we met is included in Appendix A. We met with a number of groups involved in academic advising including the Provost's Committee for Academic Success and the Provost's Committee on Advising; members of the Enrollment Services team, advisors from centers and departments across campus, representatives from First-Year programs, and a group of students. In addition we had meetings with the President, the Provost and Associate and Assistant Provost and the Director of University Advisement. The protocol of our interviews with the various groups consisted of framing our discussions around three major questions: What does UNM do well in academic advising? What are the challenges? What recommendations would you make to improve advising at UNM? In addition, we allowed time for observations and comments from the participants related to advising.

Although we did receive extensive documents and resources regarding academic advising at UNM, and we were able to meet with a variety of individuals who are involved in the advising program, we did note a few limitations to our visit. Specifically, these limitations included the following:

- With the exception of the Interim Dean of University College we were unable to meet with the academic deans; therefore, we did not get their perspectives on academic advising at UNM. We understand, however, that the Deans have empowered their Associate Deans to make improvements in the advising system.
- We were limited by time in meeting some of the goals of our visit. For example, we were unable to conduct a full review of all of the individual advising units at UNM because of time restraints.

- Clearly our focus during our visit was the undergraduate advising program; however, there are a number of areas on the campus that impact advising, i.e. enrollment services, first-year programs, and graduate advising. We had limited access to these areas. We did meet with a number of individuals in groups; however, we were unable to have one-to-one interviews with important stakeholders in areas such as Career Services, Orientation and other first-year programs or technology. Our exposure to faculty advisors was also limited.
- We did note a lack of assessment data. Primarily the data we were provided included student satisfaction surveys and NSSE data.
- We were unable to meet with a large number of UNM students. We provided an open forum for students to discuss their experiences with advising; however, the number who attended was relatively small and did not represent a cross section of the UNM student body.
- We had a limited conversation with branch campus advising representatives via a conference call. Only two of the campuses were represented on the call. As a result our understanding of advising on the branch campuses is limited.

Framework of Consultants' Visit

It is important to clarify the consultants' perspective on academic advising as a preface to our general observations and recommendations. See a chart outlining the key components of an advising program in Appendix B. NACADA has numerous resources that address the philosophy and practice of academic advising. Links to several important documents can be found on the NACADA website: (www.nacada.ksu.edu) including *Concept of Academic Advising; Statement of Core Values;* and *Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education: Standards and Guidelines for Academic Advising.* Advising programs that are considered "best practices" in the field will reflect the advising philosophy contained in these documents. For the purpose of framing the context of our review of UNM's advising program, the following points address our major assumptions about academic advising:

- Academic Advising is best viewed as a form of teaching and is integral to the success of the teaching and learning mission of higher education institutions. As Marc Lowenstein (2005) observes, "an excellent advisor does the same thing for the student's entire curriculum that the excellent teacher does for one course." Advisors teach students to value the learning process, to apply decision-making strategies, to put the college experience into perspective, to set priorities and evaluate events, to develop thinking and learning skills, and to make informed choices.
- The NACADA "*Concept of Academic Advising"* identifies three essential components of advising: curriculum (what advising deals with), pedagogy (how advising delivers the curriculum), and student learning outcomes (the result of

academic advising). These student learning outcomes are based upon what we want students to know, to be able to do, and to value and appreciate as a result of the academic advising process.

- Best practices in advising programs consistently address three major issues: providing professional development opportunities for advisors; recognizing and rewarding advisors; and creating an on-going assessment plan for advising.
- Finally, we are convinced that, when done well, academic advising has a significant impact on student success as reflected in an institution's retention and graduation rates. Appendix C includes additional NACADA resources and references that discuss the impact of academic advising on student success.

General Observations

It is clear that UNM has made considerable progress in efforts to improve academic advising and the efforts were evident and verified in a number of university official documents reviewed by the consultants. Throughout the two and one-half day consultancy, the NACADA team heard from administrators, advisors, faculty and students about how advising is targeted as an institutional priority that supports the university's focus on increased retention rates, persistence to graduation and general student success. We believe the importance assigned to academic advising is a value widely shared across campus and has been recently operationalized through: a) the infusion of funds that support advising professional development, new/renovated facilities and additional advising positions, b) the restructuring of advising, c) the development of a mission and goals for advising along with learning outcomes, d) the acquisition and continued evaluation of various technologies that support advising, e) the implementation of new, intentional advising programs at the central and college/department levels, and f) the creation of an advising leadership position at the Provost Office level along with a committee charged by the Provost with accountability for implementation of the campus-wide advising program. The University of New Mexico is well on its way to exemplifying a campus that is focusing on advising best practices!

As noted in the methodology section of this report, the interviews were semi-structured and included the feedback on advising strengths, challenges and recommendations for improvement. This approach provided the consultants the opportunity to hear diverse voices across several general themes. In addition, the consultants were able to check information gleaned from numerous advising documents and the web site against the information provided in the interviews. Using this analytical approach, we arrived at the following general observations:

Strengths

- As noted in the opening paragraph of this section, UNM is focusing on a number of areas that represent a best practices approach to academic advising programs, e.g. mission, goals and learning outcomes, advising structure and program delivery, technologies and tools, leadership at the Provost's level, assigned accountability, and an infusion of funds to support advising staff, renovation of facilities and program implementation.
- There is great respect for Vanessa Harris and her leadership across stakeholders in Academic and Student Affairs. Her ability to build collaborations and campus partnerships is respected and many acknowledge her new leadership role as challenging and "difficult."
- As a result of the increased emphasis on advising, many interview participants felt that concern for student success is more evident in both staff/faculty interactions and in program priorities. At the level of the Provost's Committees on Advising and Student Success, it was clear to the consultants that the institutional goals were understood and many expressed confidence that programs, processes and policies were in place to make progress.
- The strengthening of collaboration across units was often mentioned and examples cited. The advising programs in the Ethnic Centers were noted as being student centered, easily accessible and focused on a "holistic" approach. Other notable collaborations included those with Career Services, CAP, Student Success, Registrar's Office, First-Year Programs and various college units.
- Changing advising from "service" to a "teaching/learning activity" is seen by a number of stakeholders as a significant change from the previous service model. The consultants did not have the opportunity to interview many faculty members, so it is not clear if the notion that academic advising is an activity that falls under the teaching mission of the institution is widespread amongst both faculty and professional advisors.
- Interviewees mentioned several times that decision making is now "data" informed – rather than making decisions on anecdotal evidence. Data on student success has been used to inform policy and program development in a number of areas, e.g. advising, career services, and first- year programs.
- The Athletics academic support unit was generally noted as a unit that "has advising and student success down." Several interview participants noted the holistic approach to advising and student success – including an early alert system, tutoring, structured mentoring in study skills and time management, class attendance follow up and partnerships with advising staff across colleges. The retention and graduation rates for student-athletes are higher than the general student population at UNM.

- Various college advising units expressed confidence in their approach to advising – noting that their specific unit had unique needs resulting in priorities and processes that were different from other units. At times the discussion moved to the challenges of a decentralized system with many and at times competing or complicated advising "paths" for advisors, students and other stakeholders to navigate.
- Advances in technologies were noted as positive but were also reason for concern. The full implementation of Banner has provided opportunities for data collection, file notes and improved reporting. Lobo Trax, AdvisorTrac and a Live Chat Feature has improved both advisors' and students' abilities to track progress and communicate. Technology has also allowed students to more easily book appointments.
- The focus on advisor development and the addition of a staff member to lead this initiative was universally seen as a positive move for advising across campus constituencies. The Advisor Institute was noted as an initiative that made an impact on professional development, communication across units and improved practices.
- The initiative to train academic advisors to also serve as academic coaches is another positive move towards an academic advising model that incorporates teaching students proven student success strategies within the context of advising.
- The colleges of Engineering, Education, Fine Arts and Architecture believe that the direct model of admission (advising from first-year on) has been beneficial for students, advisors and faculty. The students are clear about college requirements and are able to build a relationship with college-based advisors through graduation.

Challenges

As we examined our interview notes and reflected on the program review visit, it was apparent that UNM is doing many things right. The complexity of "doing things right" is evident in the implementation of new approaches that change the nature of how advising has been viewed at the university, requiring a shift in commonly held beliefs about student success, student learning and the context and framework needed to support a changed culture in advising. As the program review progressed, it was evident that the challenges are very frustrating to those closest to the daily implementation of the advising programs.

Academic advising at a research one university is often an "easy target" for blame when examining retention and graduation rates. Undergraduates sometimes blame their difficulties on their "advisor" without articulating the problem, the advice sought, or the advisor's name. The students we interviewed were very critical of advising but were

quick to acknowledge the less than ideal conditions faced by most academic advisors, especially those in the UAC and Arts and Sciences. The students were also aware of the IT challenges and the complexity of the degree programs as they relate to the advising process and communicating clear, concise information.

As we considered the challenges presented by those interviewed, we discovered a number of common themes and categories across interview groups. We used these themes as a framework for presenting the following challenges.

- **Communication**: As is the case during periods of campus transition and change, the interviewees expressed concern over what they perceive to be a lack of communication and understanding of advising between campus leadership and advisors. The frustration became more evident as we moved from interviews with campus leadership to those involved in the daily implementation of advising and primary stakeholders (students).
- **University advising leadership**: We applaud the appointment of Vanessa Harris to Director of University Advising and the focus on leadership and accountability for advising within the Provost's Office. Since this appointment is fairly recent, there is confusion about the Director role and its authority over advising programs other than the UAC. One interviewee stated, "There needs to be more teeth in Vanessa's position."
- **Advising mission, goals, learning outcomes**: There is not a clear sense that there is "buy-in" to a common advising mission, goals and learning outcomes. In several sessions, it was evident from comments made that units are not tied to a common mission or set of advising goals in spite of the work that has been done by the leadership to change the advising culture. This has resulted in major inconsistencies in advising programs and delivery across campus**.**
- **Faculty Role**: Faculty role in advising is not clear to those we interviewed. We could not find any documentation that spoke directly to faculty role/expectations. The interview comments suggest that faculty role varies across colleges/units and is not viewed as a strength of the advising program at UNM.
- **Professional/Full-time Advisor Role**: The role of professional advisors varies across units and is often misunderstood from unit to unit. Different titles, "advising positions" that involve a number of other responsibilities and HR/union regulations contribute to advisors' frustrations and resentments. Several of the interview participants expressed concern that staff members in positions that had recently been added as advising positions were being asked to spend time on other administrative functions for the unit or college. We feel that this comment merits follow-up by Ms. Harris as specific units and positions were not named. **Advisor Turn-over:** Unfortunately, there appears to be low morale at the entry level, partially based on a recent "downgrade" of advisor positions, frustration with

Human Resources and overall low salaries. The advisors present were not clear as to why the positions had been changed to what they perceived as being less than professional. Again, it was difficult for us to gain clarity on this issue and follow-up by Ms. Harris would be helpful. The advisors themselves seemed confused as to mixed messages about their role as "educators" and the importance of what they do as many spend an inordinate amount of time on "clerical" tasks, e.g. clearing holds, filling out forms, and other unit administrivia. As a result of these frustrations, a high rate of turnover was mentioned several times by various members of the advising community.

- **Students' Perceptions of Advisors:** The role of advisors is perceived by the students we interviewed as one that focuses on clearing holds so they can register for courses and does not provide opportunities for developmental conversations or extended conversations about degree plans, university resources and opportunities, success and academic progress.

- **Complex processes**: As we reviewed documentation and engaged in conversations, there appeared to be a "hold" and a "form" in place to support most all policies and processes. In advising alone, there are eleven holds that are placed on students' records. When asked about this, interviewees responded that as Banner was implemented and "holds" became available, units placed holds at will without a systemic overview of the impact on the various processes and the student advising experience. The desired outcome of an advising program that supports student success and progress towards degree is basically being held "hostage" by the creation of a system based on holds and other administrative functions. New and innovative approaches to advising, e.g. academic coaching and career advising, will not yield the results hoped for if continued emphasis is placed on a complicated and administratively- driven process rather than a student- centered advising approach.

- **Significant inequities in advisor/student ratios**: We acknowledge the infusion of funds into the campus advising program allowing for restructuring of the largest advising units, improved facilities and a faculty/staff professional development emphasis. However, the ratios continue to be far too high for impactful change in many of the advising units. Due to the very high student to advisor ratios, the intrusive administrative responsibilities of advisors and the short time allotted for advising appointments, it is impossible to meet the advising goals and the students' experience is compromised.

- **Complicated curricular process**: During interviews with advising staff and other administrative staff members that interface with curriculum, frustration was expressed with the curricular process and lack of clear communication with the campus community about changes in degree programs. There appears to be a lack of understanding concerning the process starting at the departmental/college level through the Faculty Senate approval process and then back to advisors and

students. Several interviewees agreed that emphasis needs to be placed on clear communication of curricular and policy changes leading to a more "integrated approach and explicit process between the Faculty Senate and advisors." The expressed lack of communication could signify several organizational issues, e.g. confusion with the approval process and/or how changes are communicated, or perhaps frustration with keeping track of a significant number of changes.

- **"Bottleneck" issues**: Significant impediments related to timely progress towards degree appear to be "bottleneck" courses (high demand courses) and policies that actually undermine student progress. Concern was expressed about this issue in most interviews and participants were aware that efforts are being made to learn more about bottleneck courses and students' time to degree through various IT initiatives. It was not clear if an analysis was in process that would address the policy issues.

- **IT initiatives**: There is in process an intentional review of IT products that might better meet the needs of the advising community and other units who engage in various student interactions. Although IT initiatives have improved certain aspects of the advising experience, it is evident that some of the programs utilized are not efficient or impactful. The various campus leaders appear to be fully aware of the issues and are seeking a system that will alleviate many of the "shadow" systems that exist on campus. It was noted that the shadow systems were developed and implemented to close the "gaps" in IT delivery. The current analysis should focus on those gaps and determine what product will address the majority of concerns. It was not clear if the various features of Banner were being fully utilized across campus.

- **Lack of assessment plan**: We acknowledge the number of new initiatives that have been put in place to address perceived shortcomings in the advising programs at UNM. Missing from the implementation strategies is a clear plan for assessment. Assessment is identified as one of the main responsibilities of the new Director for Campus Advising and the Provost's Committee on Advising. There are already several critical pieces in place for an assessment program but few acknowledge or refer to those components, e.g. mission, goals, and learning outcomes. Several units have advising syllabi in place but no one mentioned these documents until asked by the consultants. It was also clear that these important guidelines are not what drive the various advising programs and daily practice across campus units. We did observe and hear a clearer understanding of these components at the leadership levels and with the Provost Committee members. Absent from the framework needed for assessment are process outcomes that complement the goals and learning outcomes. Process outcomes are a critical piece for assessment as numerous advising issues and concerns tend to fall under an umbrella of complex and confusing policies and processes.

In summary, it is evident that UNM has intentionally put in place a framework of best practice initiatives that provide much of the context and a potential "road map" for improving academic advising, retention of students and an increased graduation rate. The following recommendations will focus on initiatives that will strengthen the culture of advising and student success and will address specific implementation strategies.

Systemic Change

Before a discussion of recommendations for improving the advising system at the University of New Mexico, it is beneficial to include a brief discussion of systemic change as the efforts to improve advising at UNM are definitely systemic in nature. Jenlink (1998) recommends the following principles for a successful change initiative:

- creation of an overall image for the ideal system;
- continuous engagement of knowledgeable and committed stakeholders;
- recognition that all parts of the system are connected;
- the importance of careful planning for implementation; and
- the need for the system to commit resources for evaluation.

The work done thus far by the Provost and Vice Provost as well as the Director of Academic Advising certainly has followed these principles for systemic change. As previously stated, our review team met with many stakeholders of the advising system and its related systems when we visited the University. There is no doubt that UNM leadership and many staff are committed to continuous quality improvement by considering advising as a University-wide system rather than as a single enterprise within one particular academic unit. It is our belief that the change process is in good hands based on the systemic view we witnessed and heard in the stakeholders of the UNM system.

Any type of systemic change takes time, but everyone wants to know how much time. According to Eccles (1994), "Timely strategic change is not the same as the fastest change, but is the ability to implement a change effectively and expeditiously. It requires a talent for combining carefulness with speed." He argues the most effective change occurs when the organization:

- employs reflective, information-based, analysis;
- gathers comprehensive data;
- debates before deciding;
- embraces innovation and action;
- creates a culture that is united and change-oriented; and
- has an understanding of the twin needs for speed and care (p. 261-262).

We are convinced the institution is poised to work through the changes it is already aware are necessary as the components of systemic change listed above were quite evident. It is now a matter of timely development and management of a strategic plan to move forward with the recommendations for change as well as resources dedicated to this effort. Some changes will achieve buy-in rather quickly, while cultural change admittedly takes years. Patience, diligence and inclusiveness of all stakeholders are the virtues of an effective change process.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are organized according to the established "Academic Advising Program Components" (see Appendix B). We believe that many of these recommendations will work to move the UNM advising community's philosophy of advising toward what we described earlier as our conviction that advising is part of the teaching and learning mission of the University. A proposed timeline for change follows the recommendations.

Vision, Mission and Goal Statements (Learning and Process Outcomes)

It is recommended that the entire University community understand and accept a common vision, mission and set of goals for the advising system. The following strategies are outlined to achieve this recommendation:

- Vet a shared advising vision, mission, goals and learning outcomes through the faculty governance structure, clearly articulating that academic advising falls under the teaching/learning mission of the institution and of faculty role. A shared university-wide advising syllabus should be a part of the document.
- Submit a Faculty Senate resolution that is in support of academic advising as teaching/learning and that includes a clear definition of faculty role in advising. The resolution should be submitted as an addition to the UNM Faculty Handbook and Manual for Faculty Evaluation. A clear statement on how faculty advising can be assessed is a necessary part of this resolution.
- Introduce the Advising Syllabus (which includes the V/M/G statements) to all students during orientation and use it as a teaching/learning tool for both students and parents
- Put the advising vision statement on appropriate letterhead, documents and Websites as often as possible.
- Reward units and individuals who demonstrate buy-in of these statements and who create unit specific syllabi that complement the shared document.
- Measure learning outcomes annually and publish results.
- Measure process outcomes annually and publish results.

<u>Advising Program, Organizational Structure, Policies</u>

We encourage the Provost to consider strengthening the advising program, organizational structure and policies at the UNM. We recommend the following:

- Improve advising staffing in ways that continue to address advisor/advisee ratios that are currently far too high to support quality advising and clarify advisor roles.
  - Reconsider the role of the Director of Advising to assess if it is possible for one person to direct a very complex unit with a large student population and staff like the UAC *and* provide leadership for a very complex and decentralized university advising program. Ms. Harris provides excellent leadership in both capacities, but her work load will hinder her ability to make the impact she is clearly capable of making. A different title might provide the context for university wide leadership and signify a change in role to members of the campus community. We think it is premature for us to make a recommendation as to specific positions titles or the need for another position, in this particular case, as additional inquiry and evaluation needs to take place. Clarify the role of faculty in advising and consider increasing the use of faculty for advising within departments and colleges. We believe that faculty advisors are an underut*iliz*ed resource on campus.
  - Revisit advisor/advisee ratios in the various units and create a model that utilizes both faculty and professional advisors in the delivery of a student centered advising program focused on learning outcomes.
  - Revisit staff advisor position descriptions and standardize across units as much as possible, fully utilizing their time for advising students.
  - Recognize outstanding professional and faculty advisor(s) annually at President's awards ceremony (or appropriate awards function) and recognize all advisors nominated for advising awards with a campus reception.

- Simplification of advising policies and procedures
  - Technology
    - Consider a technology/retention program that integrates with Banner and supports student success across units. The program elements should include shared advising notes, early alert system, web-based appointment system, tutorial center support, student tracking, communication capabilities via email and social networking and easy to access reports that can support initiatives and assessment.

- Fully utilize Banner in ways that support students and provides students with easy access to their own records, i.e. grades, transcript, schedule, degree audit, financial account, etc.
- Consider developing a "tracking" system that monitors students' progress in their degree programs, notifying both student and advisor when a student is "off track." This initiative requires programming that allows the degree audit, the university catalog (curriculum) and the hold system to "communicate" with each other. Institutions to benchmark include University of Florida (https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/academic-progress.aspx) Florida State University (http://www.academic-guide.fsu.edu/) and Arizona State University (https://eadvisor.asu.edu/node/2) . Tracking initiatives have shown to be an impactful intervention that increases retention and graduation rates and increases four-year graduate rates.
- Require all units across the University to use the same IT system and enter advising notes after every student contact so that advisors are supporting not only students but each other in their efforts to give guidance and provide accurate, timely information.
- Dedicate IT analysts and programmers to advising and related systems supporting continuous quality improvements to the various systems.
  - Reduce holds procedures through a systemic review and analysis.
    - Consider other methods for achieving mandatory advising, i.e. the personal identification number or "PIN" system. The "PIN" system requires every student to be assigned a number for logging into the registration system. Students receive their PIN the first time they meet with their advisor, allowing them to then schedule courses.
    - If a PIN system is not feasible, have only ONE mandatory advising hold placed on students in the registration system each term.
    - Standardize holds placed on students files. Currently, individual colleges and departments place holds for various reasons, i.e. the 80- and 100-hour holds placed by Arts & Sciences and Engineering respectively and the departmental holds placed by some departments. We believe a standardized approach to mandatory advising and the development of supporting materials for students (i.e. on-line graduation check, degree progress checking/tracking) will communicate that advising is important while making the processes less confusing and cumbersome to all stakeholders.
  - Spread registration of courses out over the entire semester to reduce lines at advising centers; athletes and honors students register very early in the semester, followed by Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores, First-Year students,

and new students. If there are no holds or if students must have a PIN to register, they will go to their advisor close to their registration date thereby distributing the workload for advisors more uniformly over the semester.

- ○ Create entrance to major requirements.
  - One Website should be created for students to access the entrance to major requirements and an eight-semester recommended academic plan for every major offered. Example: Florida State University http://www.academic-guide.fsu.edu/Maps/Mapaccounting.html
  - Create a specific deadline for students to meet the entrance to major requirements for all majors. The official University policy could state that all students must be in a major by the beginning of the fifth semester. Students who do not meet entrance to major requirements for specific majors by that deadline must then select a major for which they do meet the requirements. This will prevent students from trying over and over again to obtain a specific GPA or pass a certain course to gain entry to a major.
- ○ Continue to focus on the UAC as the home for exploratory students and students in transition while allowing "pre-majors" to be advised in the college of their first choice and/or intended major. The UAC advisors should advise only newly admitted exploratory and provisional students (on probation or admitted provisionally); "exploratory" means interest in majors that span more than one academic college.
  - The UAC would also be responsible for students in transition (i.e. changed their mind, couldn't get into their first-choice major, transfer but exploratory, etc.).
  - All other students, including all pre-major students, should be advised in the college that houses their intended major(s).
  - Develop an exploratory curriculum and train advisers to work with this unique population.
  - We suggest benchmarking institutions that have created an advising/enrollment unit for exploratory students. Penn State University's Division of Undergraduate Studies (http://www.dus.psu.edu/), North Caroline State University's First Year College (http://www.ncsu.edu/fyc/) , and Arizona State University's University College   (http://uc.asu.edu/node/4) are models that focus on exploratory students and intentional advising programs. These institutions also have proven track records in improving retention and graduation rates.

- Strengthen partnerships between advising and other units providing services to first-year students.

- ○ Pre-orientation – begin the teaching process even before students arrive on campus for orientation. Online activities to introduce students to the University academic structure, curriculum and language will prepare students for an effective and efficient orientation. This approach will also off-load some of the overwhelming amounts of information provided at orientation. The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (http://torch.utk.edu/preorientation/) and Penn State (http://dus.psu.edu/ftcap/advising/up/homework.html) both have online work for students to complete before attending their on-campus orientation program.
  - ○ Orientation – make it as organized and engaging as possible. ALL advising community members should be involved in staffing orientation activities; focus on introducing students further to the academic requirements and sorting students out to be advised in the appropriate center. Develop a curriculum for orientation based on specific advising/learning outcomes and include ways to engage students in the program (not just lecture). The University of Tennessee at Knoxville (http://sold.utk.edu/about.php) and Penn State's First-Year Testing, Consulting and Advising Program (http://dus.psu.edu/ftcap/index.html) are examples of excellent orientation programs.
  - ○ First-year seminars – perhaps UNIV 101 could be required of all new students. Instructors could be recruited from advising, career services, student success and targeted faculty/instructor groups. This approach would give advisers, academic support staff and faculty access to this entire population to teach them study skills, introduce advising preparation, focus on major and career exploration and familiarize them with the campus and available resources. University of North Carolina at Raleigh has created their First Year College using this approach which has resulted in a significant rise in first- to second- year retention and four- year graduation rates.
  - ○ Career Advising – fully utilize career advising training and certification for all professional advisors and adopt training to include faculty role.

- ● Effective communication – Coordinated by the Director of University Advising
  - ○ Develop a monthly or quarterly newsletter for the advising community – share curricular changes, introduce newly hired advisers, highlight progress and improvement, recognize achievements, etc.
  - ○ Post minutes from Provost's Committee on Advising meetings.
  - ○ Hold an annual "town hall meeting" of the University advising community to discuss issues and concerns.

- ○ Explore ways to include the branch campuses in all conversations about advising that focus on the student's experience of moving from one campus to another.
  - ○ Produce an annual "advising" report with accomplishments and goals featured.

- Advisor Training and Development
  - ○ Conduct on-going needs assessments of the faculty and staff advisors to determine their advising development needs.
  - ○ Intentionally structure the current training around the three major areas of concern to advisors: the conceptual, informational and relational elements of advising. Consider the conceptual as the framework in which one considers the other two elements. This approach will emphasize the broader mission and focus of UNM advising and ground it in the teaching/learning paradigm.
  - ○ Fully engage professional and faculty advisers in the academic coaching training, career advising certification, and advising assessment initiatives and provide rewards for those who achieve the goals of training and development.

Comprehensive Assessment Program

The major components necessary to have an effective assessment program are already in place with the vision, mission and goal statements – if these are in fact a "shared" document across the institution. An assessment plan can be developed to gather data and information to evaluate the outcomes of the changes being implemented to the advising system. A strong plan will include the instruments and evaluation methodologies, the names of who will be responsible for gathering the data, a timeline for assessing various components, the methods for reporting results, and the processes by which the assessment will be reviewed for future improvements to the system. The following specific assessment components are recommended:

- Student learning outcomes, not simply student satisfaction of advising, should be assessed annually. This will require not only the writing of comprehensive advising learning outcomes for the entire University, but rubrics and measurements for determining achievement of learning outcomes as well.
- Changes to the processes and procedures made as a result of this review – i.e. shorter lines or less time in line, students and advisers understand the processes and procedures, etc. - must also be assessed.

- The development of an advising program review for each unit/department/college to be done every 3-5 years and focused on the quality of advising as evidenced by adherence to the V/M/G statements and achievement of learning outcomes should be conducted by the Director of Advising.

Systemic Change Timeline

As consultants, we were asked to provide a roadmap of change to the University's advising system. As previously stated, systemic change walks the fine line between effectiveness and speed in the change process. This impact/time to change analysis chart provides a visual representation of the potential change process recommended by the review team.

University of New Mexico – Impact/Time to Change Analysis of Recommendations

High Impact	• Strengthen faculty advisor roles • Restructure UAC to be an advising center for exploratory students and students in transition	• Improved advising technology and standardized use of system throughout the University • Strengthen collaboration between advising and all units providing first-year student programming • Simplify student processes and procedures	• Strengthen role of Director of Advising • Create entrance to major requirements and 8-semester suggested curricular plans for Web • Improve communication among the University advising community
Medium Impact	• Achieve buy-in of advising V/M/G and learning outcomes	• Strengthen assessment program • Clarify and standardize advising job descriptions • Standardize entrance to major policy across University	• Spread registration dates evenly over each semester • Strengthen advisor training and development
Low Impact			• Recognition for good advising
	3-5 Years to Change	1-3 Years to Change	Immediate Change

Summary

As we have noted throughout the report, it is clear that UNM has made considerable progress in efforts to improve academic advising and the efforts were evident throughout our visit to the campus. The NACADA team heard from campus advising stakeholders about how advising is targeted as an institutional priority that supports the university's focus on increased retention rates, persistence to graduation and general student success.

We believe the importance assigned to academic advising is a value widely shared across campus and has been recently operationalized through efforts ranging from an infusion of over one million dollars to the identification of leadership accountable for the campus advising program development and implementation. Using the best practices already in place at UNM, we believe an intentional focus on the impact/change model presented as a summary of the recommendations will provide institutional leadership with the "road map" necessary to achieve the advising goals outlined and expectations put forth in university reports and the strategic plan.

We very much enjoyed visiting the UNM campus and appreciate the warm hospitality we received. Clearly UNM has many talented and dedicated faculty, staff and administrators. We congratulate you on securing funds to commit to improving advising. Given the current economic climate, this funding is extraordinary and demonstrates a strong desire to improve the academic advising program and the overall undergraduate experience. Hopefully you will find our observations and recommendations to be helpful as you work to improve academic advising. We applaud UNM's commitment to undertaking change on behalf of your students, and we wish for you great success in this endeavor.

Appendix A

Itinerary for Dr. Ruth Darling, Dr. Nancy King, and Dr. Terry Musser

DAY 1   **February 1**

Morning arrival	
12:00-12:30 PM	Shuttle from Hyatt
1:00 – 2:00 PM	Introductory Meeting with Vanessa Harris, Stephanie Hands and Dr. Heileman **(UAC Conference Room)**
2:00 – 2:30 PM	Meeting with President Schmidly **(President's Office)**
2:40 – 4:00 PM	Meeting with Provosts' Committee for Academic Success- **(Roberts Room)**
4:00 – 5:00 PM	Tour of UNM Advisement Centers
5:00 – 6:30 PM	Dinner

DAY 2   **February 2**

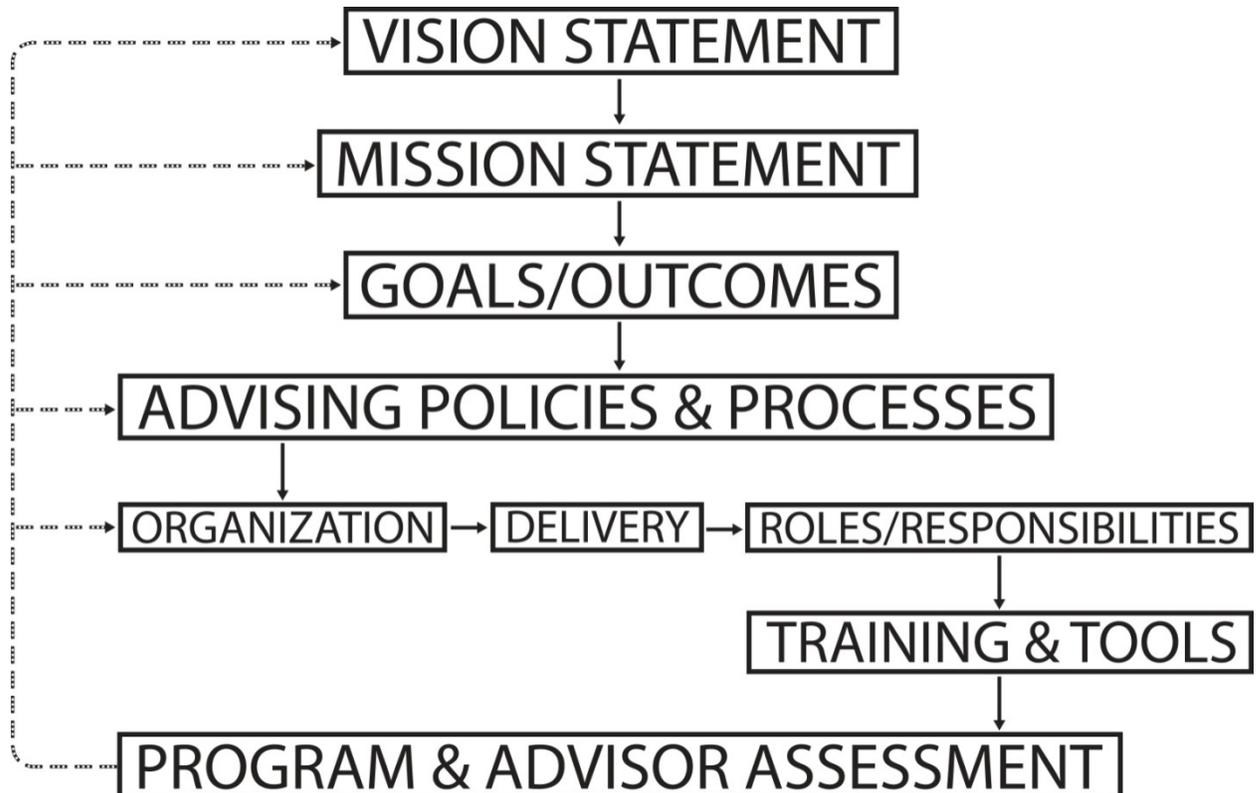|	
8:00 AM	Shuttle from Hyatt
9:00 – 9:45 AM	Meeting with Alec Reber, Associate Registrar; Brian Malone, Director of Student Financial Aid; Matthew Hulett, Director of Admissions & Recruitment and Merle Kennedy, Transfer Articulation Manager **(OneStop Conference Room)**
10:00 – 12:00 PM	Meeting with the Provosts' Committee on Advising **(SUB Fiesta)** *12:00 – 12:30 "Advising International Students from China" Dr. Musser webinar*
12:00 – 1:30 PM	Lunch
2:00 – 3:30 PM	Meet with the advising community **(SUB Fiesta A&B)**
3:30 -3:45 PM	Break
3:45 – 5:00 PM	Student Forum **(SUB Acoma A&B)**
5:00 – 7:00 PM	Dinner

DAY 3   **February 3**

8:00 – 8:30 AM	Shuttle from Hyatt
9:00 – 9:45 AM	Tour of selected advising centers
10:00 – 10:45 AM	Meeting with Joel Nossoff, Director of Freshman Learning Communities; Mary Thomas, Program Manager for Student Academic Choices; Andres Armijo, Director of Living & Learning Communities and Dr. Kate Krause, Interim Director of University College. **(UAC Conference Room**
10:45 –11:00 AM	Break
11:00 – 12:30 PM	Branch Campus Directors
12:30 – 2:00 PM	Lunch and tour of selected advising centers
2:00 – 2:45 PM	Kate Krause
3:00 – 4:00 PM	Meeting with Provost Abdallah and Assoc. Provost's Dougher and Heileman (**Scholes' 101**)
4:15 – 5:00 PM	Exit Meeting with Vanessa Harris and Dr. Heileman **(UAC Conference Room)**
5:00 PM	Return to Hotel

Appendix B

Components of Advising Program: Used by the consultants as a guide for the program review and evaluation process and as the framework for the recommendations

The National Academic Advising Association
The Global Community for Advising

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            ├──────►│  MISSION STATEMENT  │
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            ├──────►│  GOALS/OUTCOMES     │
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            ├──►│  ADVISING POLICIES & PROCESSES   │
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Definitions of Terms

Vision: The aspirations of what academic advising can be on your campus

Mission Statement: The statement which reflects the purpose of academic advising on your campus that serves as the institution's roadmap to reach its vision and affirm its values for academic advising

Goals: The long-range expressions of the desired future state for academic advising

Student Learning Outcomes: A series of statements that articulate what students are expected to KNOW (Cognitive), DO (Behavioral), and VALUE (Affective learning) as a result of their academic advising experience

Process Outcomes: A series of statements that articulate the expectations for how advising is delivered and what information should be delivered through the experience

Advising Policies: The institutional guidelines and rules that support the advising goals and outcomes

Organization/Delivery: The institutional delivery model for academic advising that is clear, easily communicated to all stakeholders and reflects the advising goals and outcomes

Roles/Responsibilities: A clear statement on the roles and responsibilities for all involved in the academic advising process, e.g. ownership/leadership, faculty advisors, staff advisors, students, IT representatives, Registrar, etc., that reflects and reinforces the goals and outcomes

Advisor Development/Tools: An intentional, institutional plan that provides advisors and students with the knowledge and skills needed to satisfy both the learning and process outcomes and how to fully utilize the tools available for the support of advising.

Program and Advisor Assessment: The process through which the institution gathers evidence about the claims it is making with regard to student learning and the process/delivery of academic advising in order to inform and support improvement (Campbell, S. 2008).

Appendix C
Additional Resources

NACADA Institutes (Summer Institute, Assessment Institute, Persistence Seminar, and Administrator Institute)

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/events/winter/admininst/2012/index.htm?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=UpcomingEventsLinks&utm_campaign=UpcomingEventsLink

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/events/winter/winterseminar/2012/index.htm?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=UpcomingEventsLinks&utm_campaign=UpcomingEventsLink

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/events/winter/AssessmentInst/2012/index.htm?utm_source=homepage&utm_medium=UpcomingEventsLinks&utm_campaign=UpcomingEvents

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Events/SI/index.htm

Webinars and Professional Development Packages – a low-cost way to offer on-campus professional development presented by national experts.

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Publications/profdevelpkgs.htm
http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Webinars/events.htm

Publications for University Library and Teaching Learning Center

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Monographs/index.htm
http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Monographs/books.htm
http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Monographs/audiovisual.htm

National and Regional Conferences

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Events/Conferences/Regional/upcoming.htm
http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/AnnualConf/Proposals/index.htm

NACADA Concept Statement

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingIssues/Concept-advising-introduction.htm

Advisor Development

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/advisingissues/adv_training.htm

Assessment of Advising

http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Clearinghouse/links/assessment.htm

Appendix D

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