

NORTHERN New Mexico College REAFFIRMATION of HLC ACCREDITATION



ASSURANCE ARGUMENT 2025

Assurance Argument

Northern New Mexico College

Review date: 11-17-2025

Welcome Message for Review Team

Northern New Mexico College is pleased to present its Assurance Argument in support of its 2025 reaffirmation. This document reflects Northern's commitment to delivering high quality support and education to its students in furtherance of the college's mission.

Located across two campuses in Rio Arriba County, NM, Northern is a public institution founded in 1909 as the first Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) in the U.S. Northern offers undergraduate degrees and technical certifications in fields such as engineering, nursing, and education. Our strengths include a personalized learning environment with small class sizes, strong faculty connections, affordable tuition, and accredited programs in high-demand fields. Northern is dedicated to providing access to quality education for rural populations and offers career-oriented pathways through its Branch Community College and union-affiliated trades initiatives.

Northern engages with the community through workforce training, collaborations with K-12 schools and local businesses, STEM outreach, and tuition-free options like the Opportunity Scholarship for New Mexico residents.

Northern acknowledges all individuals, both past and present, whose invaluable contributions have shaped the development of this document. The college's remarkable journey is a testament to the dedication and hard work of its faculty, staff, and students, as well as its commitment to serving and enriching the community. Throughout various challenges and successes, it is evident that the college has fostered a spirit of teamwork and perseverance that continues to inspire growth and positive change in our environment.

Thank you for your service to this critical accreditation process, and we trust that you will find that this Assurance Argument reflects our commitment and dedication to our mission, our students, faculty, staff and broader community.

1 - Mission

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

1.A. Mission Alignment

The institution's educational programs, enrollment profile and scope of operations align with its publicly articulated mission.

Argument

Northern New Mexico College's New Mission/Vision

Mission: *Northern New Mexico College is an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community, dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives.*

Vision: *As a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution, sustained by place, culture, and innovation — Northern is a beacon of higher education for all students, igniting minds to create vibrant futures.*

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) has served the rural communities of Northern New Mexico for over a century, providing affordable access to high-quality academic programs that meet the region's evolving educational, economic, and cultural needs. As a comprehensive post-secondary institution that primarily serves its region and operates entirely as a commuter campus, NNMC offers a wide range of certificates, as well as two-year and four-year academic degrees.

[NNMC is designated a Hispanic-Serving Institution \(HSI\) by the U.S. Department of Education](#) and is nearing the designation of a Native American-Serving Non-Tribal Institution. NNMC's service area is home to a unique ethnic distribution of rural communities within one of the most underserved regions of New Mexico, including [Hispanic communities that constitute 67% of the population and Eight Northern Pueblos \(Native American\) that constitute 22.1%](#). In fulfilling its obligation as a regional educational provider, NNMC enrolls 66% of its students from Rio Arriba County, where the College is located. Through its mission and vision statements, NNMC identifies its role in serving the region's population, which is reflected in a [student population of 72.8% Hispanic and 8.9% Native American \(Spring 2025\)](#).

NNMC's Strategic Planning Process

[As articulated in the 2020 assurance argument, NNMC set out to update its mission as part of its larger strategic planning effort](#), driving NNMC's educational programs and operations over the next three years. After hiring its current President in 2023, NNMC began the [first phase of developing a new strategic plan, which included developing a new mission and vision](#). The process was inclusive, involving more than 100 students, faculty, staff, board members, and community members who came together to assess and establish the College's strategic direction.

[NNMC's Board of Regents \(BOR\) approved the new mission and vision statements in 2023, along with four strategic pillars](#) that emphasize the College's mission and guide its overall strategic direction. The College has continued to incorporate its mission into its operations through [three phases of strategic planning, leading to the adoption of its most recent Strategic Plan: Soaring to New Heights 2028](#).

As part of ensuring that its operations are rooted in its publicly articulated mission, NNMC publishes its mission in various locations, including the college's [website, Academic Catalog, Strategic Plan documents, Faculty Handbook, and Student Handbook](#). New employees are informed of NNMC's mission and vision statements, which are also frequently referenced in meetings and the BOR. [Promotional and student recruitment materials](#) also reflect the institution's commitment to the principles outlined in the mission (refer to 2B for more examples).

NNMC's mission is dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives. As such, NNMC offers programs based on their sustainability, the needs of local employers, and most importantly, the needs of its students. To ensure consistency with its mission, NNMC makes data-informed decisions about the job market and needs of its programs, assisted by [Gray Associates/DI](#). Through Gray's, NNMC can analyze current and future program opportunities based on employer needs and student demand, and better understand the demand for existing programs, as well as assess the sustainability and actual costs associated with maintaining them.

Educational Programs Aligned with Mission

Through such efforts, NNMC ensures that its educational programs are aligned with its mission to provide high-quality education that prepares students for the modern workforce and enriches their lives. NNMC's programs are tailored to meet job market demands in [areas such as teacher education, nursing, business, STEM fields, career technical trades, and the film industry](#), along with offerings specifically designed for the needs of Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), the region's largest employer.

Given its extensive service area and diverse population, NNMC provides programs in both traditional settings and through a growing online platform. The institution actively develops programs in collaboration with regional partners to address identified workforce gaps and to support community-based education. Examples include NNMC's [Radiation Control and Nuclear Operations AAS programs](#) to improve the pipeline of technicians hired at LANL.

Through a partnership with the lab, these programs offer enrollment, tuition assistance, and guaranteed employment at LANL for successful graduates. To further grow opportunities for students seeking employment at LANL, NNMC was granted the opportunity to develop a [new cybersecurity program through LANL's Mentor Protégé program](#).

Other examples of NNMC's educational offerings that meet the needs of its students and the region include the expansion of its [Technical Trades programs, primarily through dual credit](#). NNMC has developed an [AAS and certificate programs in Plumbing & Pipefitting in partnership with the Local 412 Plumbing and Pipefitters Union, Electrical Technology programs with curriculum enhanced in collaboration with the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers local union, a new Phlebotomy program](#), as well as upcoming new programs in carpentry, HVAC, and welding. Close associations with local unions strengthen curriculum development and provide pathways to union apprenticeships and membership. Through its work with the local community, unions, and employers, NNMC identified these programs as high-demand and developed them to provide students with opportunities to find meaningful career pathways in the region (refer to "Regional Economic Development" in 1B).

Another prime example of the exceptional opportunities and experiences that NNMC students gain is their collaboration with highly skilled faculty in the [Española GloveWorks project](#), an innovative initiative through the College's [Electromechanical Engineering Technology program](#), involving high school and college students and faculty to design and produce an affordable mechanical glove to assist individuals with Parkinson's disease (refer to "Youth Leadership & Mentoring in K-12" in 1B for more).

In addition to high-quality post-secondary education, NNMC offers [robust high school equivalency and adult education programs](#) for students who lack a high school diploma or its equivalent. Given the socioeconomic and public educational challenges in the regions, these programs are crucial in uplifting community members who may not have received the necessary support early in life to pursue their secondary education. They also provide pathways for students to transition to college, including at NNMC, and continue their education.

Operations Aligned with Mission

NNMC's operations are aligned with its mission to ensure excellent educational programming and service to its unique student population. As part of the annual budget planning process, NNMC identifies priorities that align directly with its stated mission and strategic direction.

For example, the [Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs captures all priorities for Academic Affairs through the Annual Reports of the prior year and then hosts a budget retreat](#) where each department head, academic and non-academic, has the opportunity to request funding or budget increases that align with the mission and the college's strategic pillars. The Provost hosts a budget retreat where all requests are openly analyzed and discussed, and recommendations are made. This process enables strategic resource

allocation to areas crucial for achieving the institutional mission, particularly those central to the institution's strategic plan. Academic Units, Student and Support Services, and unique programs are encouraged to develop more detailed courses of action, learning outcomes, and yearly reports that outline NNMC's direction and mission. This information, including departmental resource needs, is reflected in [NNMC's Annual Reports](#).

By aligning resources and operations with its mission, the **(HERE)budget for Academic Affairs has increased by more than 15% over the past four years**, alongside consecutive salary increases for all faculty and staff over the last two years. [Full-time faculty positions increased by 56%](#), from 37 to 57 positions over the last decade. [Investments in adjunct faculty](#) have also been improved to provide better compensation and to expand course section offerings. NNMC [increased the number of academic advisors](#) during this period and has offered [sabbatical opportunities every year since 2017](#), after more than ten years without them.

Annual budget retreats enable NNMC to identify needs that, despite not being funded through state appropriations, have received support through recently awarded targeted grant proposals. Some examples include the current [Department of Education DHSI Title III grant for STEM support and Title V grant](#), which provides funds to enhance tutoring services, support faculty professional development, improve student outreach, and fund mental health counselors. Another example is the [TRIO Upward Bound grant](#), which enables NNMC to conduct outreach and collaborate with Española Valley High School on after-school activities and learning experiences that enhance college readiness for these students (refer to NNMC's Upward Bound program in 1B for more).

NNMC's resource allocation and operational alignment contribute directly to student success, including assistance and activities outside the classroom. [NNMC's student services](#) include Advising, an Athletics Program, Financial Aid, Registrar, Accessibility Resource Center, Student Life, Native American Student Center, Veterans Resource Center, Student Counseling, Campus Security, and the Campus Gym. Services related to classroom or academic support include the Ben Lujan Library, the Writing Center, the Math Center of Excellence, and the Testing Center.

Furthermore, NNMC is expanding its use of alternative educational delivery methods to meet the educational needs of students who reside outside the immediate area or require scheduling flexibility. Currently, the College offers completely online programs in [Business Administration \(BBA majors in Management, Project Management, and Accounting\)](#); [Teacher Education \(BA majors in Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, plus Alternative Licensure\)](#), and [RN to BSN](#). NNMC is enhancing the quality of its hybrid and online course offerings throughout its programs of study and is investing in online learning capacity to meet the needs of its regional and statewide students.

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1.B. Mission and Public Good

The institution's operation of the academic enterprise demonstrates its commitment to serving the public good.

Argument

Mission and the Public Good

For over a century, Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) has provided quality, accessible education to the underserved populations of Northern New Mexico as part of its mission to contribute to community equity. Deeply rooted in the region's cultures, traditions, and land-based practices, NNMC's offerings and operations are guided by its responsibility to the public, recognizing that its role in higher education extends beyond its campuses to benefit the broad communities it serves.

NNMC's new Mission and Vision, revised in 2023 (refer to 1A for more about the process), further emphasizes student empowerment and success, highlighting a commitment to teaching & learning excellence and community advancement.

As an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community and Hispanic and Indigenous-serving institution, NNMC honors its public commitment to K-12 education, equitable higher education, community-based arts and service programs, economic development, innovative partnerships and training, and leadership and career opportunities for all.

[NNMC's Mission and Vision statements](#), Core Values, and Strategic Pillars are detailed in the NNMC Strategic Plan 2028 on the College website, in the General Information section of the College catalog, as a campus poster, and as placed in NNMC's Master Planning for HLC Reaffirmation of Accreditation document, distributed to the Northern community.

Youth Leadership & Mentoring in K-12

NNMC faculty, staff, and students, especially within its STEM/STEAM programs, dedicate time and energy to providing mentorship and learning opportunities for local schools and community groups. Key initiatives over the last few years include the following:

Northern's recently expanded [Dual Credit Center and ENLACE Program](#) (funded by an NNMC Title V El Centro grant) guides local high school students in team-building and leadership training.

NNMC welcomed over 200 seventh- and eighth-graders to the “[Empowering Young Minds: Exploring Cancer and STEM Pathways](#)” conference, in collaboration with the UNM Cancer Center and the National Cancer Institute. During the conference, students explored STEM and other health science topics, such as learning to read food labels and testing their olfactory senses.

Many faculty members at NNMC exemplify the mission of broadly serving the public good through their teaching, scholarship, and service. One notable example of this spirit is Dr. Steve Cox from NNMC’s Engineering Department, who leads several unique community STEAM initiatives:

[NNMC’s STEM Mentorship Collective](#) designs small group projects for kids with caring teachers and mentors in K-12 classrooms in Northern New Mexico. In their own words, they “recruit and train college-age mentors, encourage K-12 students to recruit mentors into their lives, and support K-12 teachers through focused Communities of Practice.” [NNMC and Española GloveWorks \(formerly “Steady Hands”\)](#) is a joint project with Española Valley High School (EVHS) students and teachers in the MESA program. This program has won local, state, and national attention and awards for its research and development of an affordable glove to reduce tremors in Parkinson’s patients. [Northern Stewards](#) is a unique, broad partnership devoted to building and testing a place-based participatory curriculum, preparing students and teachers to acquire geospatial data that is integrated into maps and narrated into personal and community stories and histories.

Other examples of K-12 and community engagement include NNMC Professors partnering with [MathAmigos](#), an organization that trains K-12 teachers; partnering with [STEM Santa Fe](#) to bring summer STEM camps and “circles” for community youth, especially girls; partnering with [LANL’s “Challenge Tomorrow Trailers”](#) with engaging science programming for middle and high school students, hosting the [LANL Foundation Inquiry Science Educational Consortium](#) and hosting and co-sponsoring [Transform Education / Freedom Dreaming 2037](#) with Moving Arts Española, a popular after-school community arts and performance program.

Regional Economic Development: Trades & Partnerships with Los Alamos National Laboratory

[The College’s growing Technical Trades](#) department offers a range of options from non-credit coursework to certificates and associate degrees — taught on the main campus and as [dual credit on our El Rito campus and at regional high schools](#) — and is committed to making students career-ready upon completion. Close associations with [local unions and the NM Workforce Integration Network \(WIN\)](#) strengthen the curriculum and prepare students for union apprenticeships.

Starting with popular [Electrical & Plumbing/Pipefitting degrees](#) and [Lineman, Carpentry, and Welding Camps](#) working with NNMC Continuing Education and partnering with NM

Workforce Solutions, NNMC's Technical Trades department is adding new programs for the Fall 2025 semester, including [Carpentry, Welding, and HVAC](#). A current [Tech Trades Grant](#) is funding a video outreach and marketing campaign to recruit women for the Electrical trades.

NNMC collaborates with LANL and N3B, respectively, to offer a [Radiation Protection AAS and Certificate program](#), as well as a Nuclear Operations Technology AAS, with guaranteed career opportunities for graduates. NNMC is also developing a new [Cybersecurity program through LANL's Mentor-Prótegé partnership](#).

[NNMC's Career Services hosts College Fairs and resume/interview trainings](#), collaborating with LANL, LANL Foundation, NM Department of Workforce Solutions, Goodwill Industries, HELP NM, and other regional organizations.

Continuing Education and Community Service

NNMC hired a new Continuing Education coordinator and expanded its [Continuing & Community Education \(CE\) classes on both campuses](#). Many are offered for personal enjoyment, such as NNMC's long-standing Rio Grande Weaving, Spanish Colonial Woodworking, and other heritage arts classes. Some provide skills and job training, including CDL and Welding, while others are developed in partnership with community organizations. Examples of Continuing Education courses include Adobe Horno Construction, Tai Chi, Kernel to Tortilla, Retablo Painting, Introduction to AI, Computer Literacy, Golf Essentials, and many more.

Some classes are free, including those offered by [Adult Education, ESL, and Integrated Education and Training \(IET\)](#), such as the [Wildland Fire Fighting class](#) and the Free Lineman, Carpentry, and Welding Camps mentioned above.

NNMC houses two grant programs that help the community achieve a high school equivalency credential. [The HEP/High School Equivalency Program](#) assists migrant and seasonal farmworkers and their immediate family members in obtaining their high school equivalency credential (HSE), and [Adult Education \(AE\)](#) is open to anyone age 16 and older seeking an HSE.

NNMC also offers two TRIO Programs that promote college access and success broadly in the region. The [NM Educational Opportunity Center \(NMEOC\)](#) provides community and college students with FAFSA and financial aid guidance, and services that help them move forward with their college and career goals. The NMEOC program is funded to assist over 800 eligible individuals per year across a ten-county service area in Northern New Mexico. [Upward Bound Española](#) (UB), founded in 2017 to support first-generation college-bound students at Española Valley High School, serves at least 60 students yearly in groups of around 15 by grade level. UB scholars participate in after-school tutoring, college tours, Saturday Academy enrichment programs, dual-credit coursework, and college admissions

seminars. NNMC proudly partners with the [Davis New Mexico Scholarship Network](#), which has awarded over \$27 million in scholarships, achieving a 90% four-year graduation rate well above the national average.

In addition to offering free, confidential services to enrolled students, [NNMC's Counseling and Student Support Center \(CASSC\)](#) actively engages in initiatives with local organizations, fostering safe environments for community and youth voices. Examples include National Recovery Month events and National Latino Behavioral Health Association (NLBHA) initiatives, including screening "Connecting Our Voices Project to Prevent Substance Use Disorder through Youth Voices," a film created by local youth, and Community Roundtable panel Q&A.

In 2023, NNMC joined with the [NM Higher Education Department's Basic Needs Consortium and the University of New Mexico \(UNM\)](#), along with 27 other institutions, to participate in a state-wide study of college students and follow-up efforts to address the results. The study revealed that nearly 60% of New Mexico students experience food and housing insecurity. The Consortium aims to alleviate this insecurity for students by 2030, in line with the White House initiative. The plan aims to foster change by focusing on education, policy, research, and developing practical solutions. Staff and faculty from colleges and universities across the state meet monthly. They are joining forces, confident that collaboration, sharing success stories, and requesting resources will be more effective than working individually.

Other community service work includes [Northern's Student Nurses Association \(SNA\)](#) [Blood Drives](#), [MLK's Day of Service](#), and various [community hosting engagements](#) including the NM food Depot, NM Disability Employment Awareness Month Conference, Eyes of Freedom Traveling Exhibit, NM Commission on the Status of Women Listening and Learning Tour, NM Supreme Court Law Library Pro Bono Committee, the United Way, and hosting the FAA Drone Conference, to name a few.

Culture, Community Arts & History

NNMC demonstrates its commitment to the public good by hosting diverse cultural events and community collaborations. A significant way NNMC supports the community is through the College's [Nick Salazar Center for the Arts \(CFA\) theater and gallery](#). This state-of-the-art venue accommodates more than 360 guests in the main theater and serves as a cultural hub, offering a wide range of arts, film, theater, and music events for the public.

The [CFA opens its doors to community arts and organizations](#) such as the New Mexico School for the Arts high school presentations of the whimsical play *Puffs*, and the classic drama *The Crucible*; the screening of the Santa Fe Opera's enchanting comedy *Elixir of Love*; and the imaginative play *She Kills Monsters*, performed by NNMC's Upward Bound high school students, and the national tour of the Indigenous play, *Bear Grease* (refer to 1C for more). Other featured events at the CFA include a celebration of Jimmy Santiago Baca,

New Mexico Poet, Memoirist, and writer of the 1993 Movie, *Blood In Blood Out*; Freedom Dreaming Norte 2037 event with Moving Arts Española, students and teachers from local schools; the Concierto Centenario Mariachi event in collaboration with the City of Española, a Chicano Film Festival "Que Pasa Raza," and monthly First Wednesday Movie Nights. These events showcase the breadth of artistic and community-based experiences that enrich the local cultural landscape.

NNMC's commitment to fostering arts and creativity also extends to the literary world. Since 2016, the student-edited [TRICKSTER Literary Journal](#) has invited New Mexico writers and artists to contribute prose, poetry, and artwork based on different themes. A recent issue, *Wild and Tame*, explored New Mexico's animal life and included contributions from a 5th-grade class in Dixon, NM. Other published issues include *The New Normal* about experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, *New Mexico Food and Gardens*, and *Crossing Borders*, along with a "Borders" community essay and poetry contest open to NNMC and local high school students.

NNMC's commitment to community engagement is also evident in its participation in local events, including the following examples. Northern's Upward Bound students and staff participated in the [Española Rising Youth Film Project](#), sponsored by Los Alamos National Laboratory and produced by local filmmaker Harry Gantz. NNMC's Nursing and Upward Bound program students built floats and joined the popular winter holiday [Española Electric Light Parade](#). The College also hosts the yearly traditional [Española Chamber of Commerce Trunk & Treat Fall Festival](#) on campus, providing a safe and fun environment for families to celebrate Halloween. On the occasion of NNMC hosting the NM Land Grant Commission, President Hector Balderas, NM State Senator Leo Jaramillo, and other NNMC staff, participated in the traditional ["Sonic to Sonic" Española Lowriders event](#) with Los Guys Lowriders.

With help from the [Small Business Development Center \(SBDC\)](#) at NNMC, the college created a public-private partnership with the [Lazy Buffalo Trading Co. \(formerly a local food truck\) to bring food services to NNMC's Cultura Café](#), reviving its beloved community gathering space, and fulfilling a crucial student request since the COVID-19 pandemic.

[The ¡Sostenga! Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, & Environment](#), dating back to 2007, showcases the college's commitment to sustainable agriculture. Collaborating with the local Greenroots Institute and Santa Cruz Farm/SARE, the ¡Sostenga! Farm is irrigated by the historic, centuries-old Vigiles acequia that runs through the Española campus, demonstrating traditional small-scale farming and educating the community on sustainable practices. [NM Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham Proclaimed July 14, 2023 to be NNMC Sostenga Water for the People Day.](#)

The college's [El Rito campus](#) serves as a living bridge between the past and the future, honoring the resilient El Rito community, the El Rito Normal School alumni association, and NNMC's rich history and pride of place, while reimagining its role for the next century.

[Ongoing work to renovate El Rito campus buildings, Chacon Park \(built by the WPA, and playground](#), enjoyed by the El Rito community for decades, demonstrates NNMC's commitment to preserving its legacy while adapting to meet the evolving needs of students and the community.

Athletics & Community

In addition to cultural and educational contributions, the college nurtures young talent and promotes community engagement through [athletics, particularly basketball](#). Each summer, NNMC hosts [youth basketball camps](#) at NNMC's Eagle Gymnasium, led by college athletes and coaches. These camps mentor young players and strengthen ties between the college and local families it serves.

Celebrating school spirit, the institution recently held its [First Homecoming event](#), an occasion that honored alumni and celebrated their accomplishments. During the basketball season and Homecoming events, [NNMC celebrates local community teams](#), recognizing them and their coaches at halftime for their leadership and sportsmanship, fostering a sense of community pride and camaraderie.

NNMC's Dedication to the Public Good

Through these diverse collaborations, celebrations, and activities, NNMC demonstrates its commitment to serving and uplifting its community, showcasing its holistic approach to education, community outreach, and public service.

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- PRES_COMM_MLK Days of Service
- PRES_COMM_Community Engagements
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- PRES_COMM_CFA Opens Doors to Community

- PRES_COMM_Espanola Chamber Trunk & Treat
- PRES_COMM_“Sonic to Sonic” Española Lowriders event with Los Guys
- PRES_COMM_Small Business Development Center
- PRES_COMM_Lazy Buffalo Trading Co. LLC brings food service to NNMC
- PRES_COMM_Sostenga! Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, & Environment
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- CAO_ACADEMICS_New Carpentry-Welding-HVAC degrees
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Tech Trades Grant Video Campaign

1.C. Mission and Diversity of Society

The institution provides opportunities for civic engagement in a diverse, multicultural society and globally connected world, as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.

Argument

Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) deeply embeds a commitment to preparing students for full participation in a multicultural society into its mission, values, and strategic priorities. As a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution, NNMC remains committed to fostering an inclusive environment that reflects the rich diversity of its region. These principles are woven into NNMC's mission as “an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community, dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives” and its vision “as a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution, sustained by place, culture, and innovation — Northern is a beacon of higher education for all students, igniting minds to create vibrant futures.” NNMC’s new core values and strategic pillars further emphasize this commitment, alongside a comprehensive strategic plan that outlines clear goals for inclusive excellence and equity. The Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Strategic Pillars are all detailed in the [NNMC Strategic Plan 2028](#) framework.

This commitment is reflected across NNMC’s educational programming. As outlined in the [NM HED’s Essential Skills for the General Education curriculum](#), NNMC’s [General Education Requirements in Science, Humanities, Social & Behavioral Science, and Creative and Fine Arts](#) all require the explicit incorporation of “Personal and Social Responsibility;” These skills are also assessed on a regular basis as described in subcomponents 3B and 3E of this Assurance Argument. Additionally, NNMC’s [Co-curricular SLOs](#) specifically emphasize culture, preparing students to thrive in diverse environments through the following seven themes: Health & Wellness, Social & Personal Growth, Culture & Identity, Leadership & Engagement, Campus & Community, and Career & Lifelong Learning. Taken together, these guiding frameworks ensure that NNMC’s educational offerings and student experiences remain inclusive and impactful.

Enrollment and Outreach for Inclusion and Access

NNMC employs a range of strategies to promote access and inclusion, particularly for underrepresented and underserved populations. Targeted outreach initiatives focus on:

1. Reaching the many diverse constituencies in the region, including [Spanish-speaking families](#) and the Eight Northern Pueblos.
2. Reaching rural students and schools throughout our wide [Geographic Area of Responsibility](#). NNMC has a regular presence in local high schools through our

Office of Admissions & Recruitment, [Technical Trades](#) programs, the [Dual Credit Center](#), and the institution's two TRIO Programs ([EOC](#) and [Upward Bound](#)). NNMC Trades programs offer [on-the-ground Dual Credit courses](#) to students at six regional high schools in a wide radius, with schools as far away as Jemez Valley High and Walatowa Charter (Jemez Pueblo, NM), which is 96 miles away from NNMC's main campus.

3. Reaching a wide range of students through a unique blend of pathways available to students, including the Technical Trades, traditional undergraduate programs, and innovative Continuing Education programs such as the [Integrated Education and Training \(IET\) Program](#).
4. Reaching Non-traditional learners, including those in [Adult Education \(AE\)](#) and [English as a Second Language \(ESL\)](#) programs, and the [High School Equivalency Program \(HEP\)](#).
5. Reaching a growing number of [transfer students](#) (in the Fall of 2024, there were 124 Transfer students, an increase of 38 percent from Fall of 2020).
6. Reaching other important student populations through specialized and targeted outreach programs for non-traditional students (EOC), first-generation college students (Upward Bound), veterans ([Veterans Resource Center](#)), Native students ([Native American Student Center](#)), and students with Migrant and Seasonal farm work backgrounds (CAMP and HEP).

These efforts are reflected in NNMC's enrollment profile, which mirrors regional demographics while highlighting areas for growth in serving Native American and male student populations.

	NNMC Fact Book 2024	Rio Arriba County
Female	58%	51%
Male	42%	49%
Hispanic	73%	67%
Native American	10%	22%
Black	2%	1%
White	12%	14%
Receiving Financial Aid	67%	
Persons in Poverty		?18.5 %

Faculty and Staff Training for Inclusive Practices

Faculty and staff at NNMC are equipped with tools and training to uphold NNMC's mission in all of their interactions with students. Key initiatives have included: The [Así Es Committee](#) of Faculty Senate, with the mission to “elevate discussion, awareness, and engagement toward increasing the sense of belonging in our classrooms through our pedagogy”; a Campus Equity Champions Initiative, spearheaded by President Medina in 2022, which created a cohort of campus leaders to provide ongoing support for inclusive practices and implemented [“Equity Gems” workshops](#); [DEIB \(Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging\) Training](#), led by NNMC Center for Teaching & Learning, to build institutional capacity for addressing diverse student needs; [Lunch & Learn sessions](#) hosted by the Center for Teaching & Learning which focus on addressing diversity within classroom settings. Recent sessions that explicitly address pertinent themes to this institutional mission include: “Teaching Multilingual Students” (09/24/2024); “Military Culture in Higher Education” (09/28/2024); “Equitizing Voice: Culturally Responsive Ways to Engage Students in Content Discussions” (11/20/2024); “Incorporating Cultural Traditions and Life Ways into an Experiential Based Curriculum” (03/25/2025); and, “Inclusive Perspectives: A Framework for Designing ‘Socially Inclusive Pedagogy’ Using Circle Practices” (4/15/2025).

Civic Engagement and Community Connection

NNMC promotes civic engagement as a cornerstone of its work with students. Students engage in capstone projects, community service, practicums, and community-based employment opportunities as described in Components 3A-3G. NNMC also collaborates with community leaders and organizations to host a wide array of on-campus events that engage students and the community in civic discourse about the issues that directly impact their lives. Recent examples include: [Governor-sponsored town halls on public safety](#); [listening sessions regarding the Martinez Yazzie Case](#) with the Higher Education Department; classroom visits, panel discussions and presentations with figures like [Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller \(2/2024\)](#), and a public hearing of legal arguments in a criminal case appeal as part of a civics education program for students. NNMC also partnered with the [New Mexico Supreme Court](#), the July 2024 Meeting of the [NM State Legislature’s Land Grant Committee](#), and the [New Mexico Legislature’s Courts, Corrections, and Justice Interim Committee convening](#) (09/2024) where representatives presented the institution's initiatives aimed at supporting at-risk students and enhancing community engagement.

NNMC students are also involved in other civic engagement opportunities where they interact directly with decision-makers. Some notable examples include: field trips for student leaders to meet state legislators and the [Governor at the NM State Capitol](#); delegations of staff and students attending public events at the NM State Capitol such as New Mexico Higher Education Day, Española Day, New Mexico Military & Family Day, and TRIO Day; and, the first [Annual Bridging Advocacy Action initiative](#) which brought together

students and community leaders to discuss strategies for building a more culturally responsive education system.

Student Organizations and Service Learning

NNMC also offers numerous opportunities for students to engage with the community and develop leadership through clubs and programs, including the [NNMC Student Senate](#), the Student Regent position, and Student Ambassador roles. Among [NNMC's Student Clubs and Organizations](#) are several identity-based organizations such as Veterans Club, American Indian Student Organization (AISO), Christians in College, and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán (M.E.Ch.A). Additionally, many other student groups participate in various community service projects, such as the [Student Nursing Blood Mobile](#), Upward Bound's Big Brothers Big Sisters collaboration, the Food Pantry and Basic Needs programs, and service projects conducted by the NNMC Athletics teams (refer to 1B for more details).

Service learning is embedded in the curriculum of many other campus courses and activities. In 2024, NNMC's Career Services Office partnered with the local non-profit, [Future Focused Education](#), on establishing work-based learning placements for NNMC students, which have placed more than 20 NNMC students in projects that combine work experience with civic engagement, community improvement, and serving/working with diverse populations. To date, work-based learning sites have included: the Food Depot, Inside Out Recovery, Christus St. Vincent Hospital Foundation, Pajarito Environmental Education Center, Katharsis Media, NextGen STEM, Tewa Women United, Presbyterian Hospital, the City of Española, Teambuilders Behavioral Health, NM Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, and Los Luceros Heritage Site. Another recent service learning project that has garnered national recognition is the Parkinson's glove initiative with NNMC Engineering Professor Steve Cox and a local high school's MESA program (refer to 1B for more).

Another way that civic engagement is embedded in the NNMC curriculum is through practicum. The NNMC Nursing & Health Sciences Department takes pride in providing [clinical practicums with holistic practitioners](#). Their two clinical practicums expose students to various integrative and complementary healing modalities, followed by a community-based practicum in their chosen modality. In the Community and Global Health II practicum, students develop a service-learning project that tackles a holistic health issue within their local community while considering its global implications.

NNMC recognizes student contributions through leadership awards and public celebrations, most notably the [Annual Student Leadership Awards Ceremony](#). The Inaugural Student Leadership Awards were organized at the end of the Spring 2023 semester by the Student Life Office. At this event, students nominate and vote on awards given for campus and community leaders in various categories of "Leader of the Year," including: Student Senate, Student, Club, Event, Community Service, HEP, CAMP, and Upward Bound.

Celebrating Cultural Diversity

NNMC hosts events that celebrate cultural awareness and engage students and the community. Highlights include:

1. [Hispanic Heritage Month](#) and related events - Other related activities in past years have included public poetry readings with noted New Mexican poets and NNMC students, salsa making competitions, the ¿Que Pasa, Raza? Film Series and Podcast, and the [Madrid lecture](#) series about local Nuevo Mexicano history and culture. In 2024, the institution hosted its largest event yet, a [Community Fiesta](#) that included local food and music, a lowrider car show, and the keynote Speaker of the NM House of Representatives, Javier Martinez.
2. [Native American Heritage Month](#), and related events - The Native American Center hosts regular campus activities exploring history, culture, and governance issues related to pueblos and other tribal communities both in the region and across the US. Some notable examples of this since 2020 include: the national touring production of [Bear Grease in 2024](#), an event in the Ben Lujan Library [commemorating 100 years of Native American citizenship](#), and a campus-wide, all-day 2024 [Indigenous People's Day](#) event.
3. [Women's History Month and related activities](#) - These annual activities have included guest talks, panels, open mics, film screenings, and music performances.
4. [Black History Month](#) and related activities, such as campus and community observances tied to the [Martin Luther King National Days of Service](#) and national [Juneteenth Observance](#) days.
5. **Other Celebrations of Campus Diversity** include [Pride](#), [Coming Out Day](#), [First-Generation Day](#), and other identity-affirming events and campus celebrations. The [student-run Northern ESP Podcast](#) also regularly highlights issues and topics that reflect the diversity and depth of engagement of the NNMC campus and community (such as LGBTQ students, dual credit students, athletes, and Dungeons & Dragons players).

Through these comprehensive initiatives, NNMC continues to build a campus and community that embodies its mission of inclusion, respect, and civic responsibility.

Sources

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- PRES_COMM_Equity Gems 2022
- PRESIDENT_Yazzie Martinez Listening Meetings
- CAO_Grants_Cultivating a Campus Where Everyone Belongs DEIAB April 2024

- CAO_Academics_Así Es Committee Charter
- CAO_Community_NNMC Upward Bound
- ASST_PROVOST_StudentServices_Future Focused Education
- ASST_PROVOST_Student Leadership Awards
- ASST_PROVOST_Student Clubs and Organizations
- ASST_PROVOST_Student Checklist Spanish Version
- ASST_PROVOST_Northern Pride Events
- ASST_PROVOST_Native American Student Center Newsletter
- ASST_PROVOST_EOC Educational Opportunity Center Home Page copy
- ASST_PROVOST_Coming Out Day 2023
- ASST_PROVOST_Bridging Advocacy and Action 2025
- ASST_PROVOST_Student Nurse Association Blood Drive
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Library_Madrid Lecture Series
- CAO_ACADEMICS_American Holistic Nursing Newsletter March 2025
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Undergraduate General Curriculum Requirements & Academic Policies
- CAO_Community_Adult Education Homepage
- CAO_Community_Juneteenth Celebrations
- CAO_Community_Integrated Education and Training (IET) Program
- CAO_GRANTS_HEP Brochure
- PRES_COMM_Governor Lujan Grisham at NNMC
- PRES_COMM_Women_s History Month Events 2020-2025
- PRES_COMM_Northern Welcomes Bear Grease Cast & Crew
- PRES_COMM_New Mexico Supreme Court Oral Argument
- PRES_COMM_New Mexico Land Grant Commission Meeting
- PRES_COMM_Native American Heritage Month
- PRES_COMM_Native American Citizenship Act
- PRES_COMM_Mayor Keller 2024 Visit
- PRES_COMM_Martin Luther King National Days of Service
- PRES_COMM_Legislative Committee Visits NNMC to Discuss Education and Workforce Initiatives
- PRES_COMM_Indigenous Peoples Day 2024
- PRES_COMM_Hispanic Heritage Month Activities
- PRES_COMM_Hispanic Heritage Month 2024
- PRES_COMM_HEP students meet Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham
- PRES_COMM_First-Generation Day Celebrations
- PRES_COMM_Black History Month Celebrations
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Strategic Plan 2028
- ASST_PROVOST_Associated Students of Northern New Mexico College
- ASST_PROVOST_Dual Credit Center Home Page copy
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Technical Trades
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Tech Trades Expanding Through Dual Credit
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Northern ESP Podcast
- CAO_ACADEMICS_NM HED Essential Skills

- CAO_ACADEMICS_CTL Professional Development Flyers
- CAO_ASSESSMENT_Cocurricular Assessment Plan and Handbook
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Geographic Areas of Responsibility
- ASST_PROVOST_Transfer Students Home Page
- ASST_PROVOST_StudentServices_VRC Veteran Resource Center Home Page

Criterion 1 Summary

The institution's mission is clear and articulated publicly; it guides the institution's operations.

[Criterion 1 demonstrates](#) that NNMC aligns its programs and operations with its mission to serve the community and support student success. Adopted in 2024, its new Mission/Vision emphasizes student empowerment and community development, especially for Hispanic and Indigenous populations.

As a regional comprehensive institution linked to place, culture, and innovation, NNMC strives to be a beacon of higher education and opportunity. Its inclusive strategic planning involves students, faculty, staff, and community, guiding decisions from academics to resource allocation.

NNMC designs curricula aligned with student goals and regional workforce needs, partnering with LANL for specialized training. It's expanding trades education and community programs to support underserved populations and promote lifelong learning.

NNMC integrates student engagement into all aspects of college life, promoting outreach to rural, first-generation, and underrepresented students. The college encourages civic involvement, preparing students both academically and as engaged citizens. Community participation in cultural events, arts programming, and partnerships builds cultural awareness and civic pride.

Through these collaborations and activities, NNMC demonstrates its commitment to its mission and the public good, showcasing a holistic approach to education, outreach, and service.

Sources

- PRES_COMM_NNMC Accreditation Newsletter CRITERION 1 - MISSION
- NNMC Accreditation News CRITERION 1-MISSION

2 - Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

2.A. Integrity

Actions taken by the institution's governing board, administration, faculty and staff demonstrate adherence to established policies and procedures.

Argument

NNMC's values and the laws, policies, and procedures that govern its operations ensure that the Board of Regents (BOR), administration, faculty, and staff act responsibly, ethically, and with integrity. Integrity is one of NNMC's [five core values](#), establishing that "honesty, trust, and transparency" are the principles with which it advances its mission. NNMC's core value of servant leadership establishes that in maintaining "the growth, well-being, and empowerment of students, faculty, and staff," all of its members act as "good stewards of resources entrusted to our care." These core values breathe life into the operational policies and procedures that govern the day-to-day work of the college.

As a public entity established by the [New Mexico Constitution](#), NNMC, its BOR, administration, and employees are governed by state laws that demand their integrity and ethical conduct in conducting NNMC's operations and advancing its mission. These laws are adhered to through [established college policies and procedures](#) that often exceed regulatory requirements, ensuring compliance with legal obligations and upholding the highest standards of its core values.

Principal among the state laws that govern the conduct of the BOR, administration, faculty, and staff of NNMC in their roles as public servants is [New Mexico's Governmental Conduct Act](#), which mandates that each BOR and employee treat their "government position as a public trust" and prohibits any conduct that poses a conflict of interest or advances individual gain over that trust. The Act mandates that the BOR and all employees "shall conduct themselves in a manner that justifies the confidence placed in them by the people, at all times maintaining the integrity and discharging ethically the high responsibilities of public service." The law includes civil and criminal penalties for any violation of these ethical and legal principles. In addition to the mandates of this act, the BOR and the President are subject to [New Mexico's Financial Disclosure Act](#), which requires them to file an annual financial disclosure with the New Mexico Secretary of State.

Integrity and Ethical Conduct in Operations

In addition to its obligations under state law, NNMC documents its expectations for ethical and responsible conduct in its [Board Policies and Procedures manual](#), the [Faculty Handbook](#), [Staff Handbook](#), the [Collective Bargaining Agreements for Full-Time Faculty, Adjunct Faculty, Nonexempt Staff](#), and [Student Handbook](#). These policies are developed through the campus community via NNMC's [Policy on Policies](#), which establishes that changes to any policy require a mandatory 30-day vetting period for community and stakeholder input, and mandatory legal review to guarantee consistency with federal and state laws, and to give ample time to avoid inconsistencies among college policies. No new policy or policy change can be submitted for BOR approval unless these minimum requirements have been met.

Through this process, the BOR updated its own [Policies and Procedures Manual](#) in 2024 to reflect NNMC's updated mission, vision, core values, and strategic pillars, as well as codified the BOR's obligations to be free from conflict of interest in conducting its business. The update also included the formal creation of a [BOR Governance Committee](#) to strengthen BOR governance, develop BOR policy, and ensure the BOR's effective functioning through processes such as self-assessment and periodic policy review. In addition to these policies and procedures, the BOR regularly receives training on its obligations of ethical conduct, transparency, and accountability to the public, as well as its fiduciary obligations to the college. Under a 2025 New Mexico law, the [BOR will also be obligated to undergo 10 hours of training](#) on these subjects provided by the state's Higher Education Department.

A primary focus of NNMC's administration has been to ensure integrity in its operations through enacting and following robust financial policies that govern the use of public resources. NNMC voluntarily adopted the [New Mexico Procurement Code](#), which governs the use of public funds. By adopting these regulations, the BOR implemented oversight and review over Northern's purchasing and contracting functions to ensure the proper and best use of college resources. The code also follows policies and procedures that NNMC has adopted to ensure strict internal control and compliance over its financial transactions. These policies and procedures include:

- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Inflow Procedures and Daily Transaction Log](#)
- [Property Management and Control Policy](#)
- [Procurement Policy and Procedure Guide](#)
- [Travel Policy and Procedure Manual](#)
- [Disposal and Donation of Property Policy](#)
- [Sub-recipient Monitoring Policy](#)
- [IT Policy and Procedures Manual](#)

Along with these policies, NNMC has worked diligently to comply with the highest standards of the [New Mexico Audit Act](#). With the implementation of the financial policies discussed above, NNMC has set an [audit plan](#) and worked with both its [independent public auditor and a financial accounting firm](#) to ensure timely and clean external audits. Over the past two years, NNMC has submitted audits on time and has achieved unmodified or “[clean](#)” audits. NNMC has also reduced the number of findings in its financial audit from approximately 26 in its fiscal year [2022 audit](#) to just six in its fiscal year [2023 audit](#) and finally down to just one finding in its fiscal year [2024 audit](#), which is expected to be resolved by the time of its next audit. The regular submission of its annual audit on time and the dramatic reduction in the number of audit findings over the past three years present clear evidence that these policies and accompanying changes are working. NNMC will continue to strengthen measures to ensure the highest level of accountability and transparency in its operations.

Employment, Collective Bargaining Agreements, and Shared Governance

NNMC’s faculty and staff are also governed by employment policies and procedures established through its collective bargaining agreements between NNMC and its full-time faculty, adjunct faculty, and non-exempt staff, as well as through college policy and faculty and staff handbooks. These agreements, handbooks, and policies address integrity and ethical issues such as [nepotism](#), [discrimination](#), and [outside employment](#). Both the collective bargaining agreements and the Faculty Handbook have been regularly updated to address these concerns. In 2024, NNMC amended the full-time faculty collective bargaining agreement to promote integrity in operations and to mitigate risk to the health, safety, and welfare of the campus community through the creation of a campus [Health and Safety Committee](#) with representation from faculty, staff, and administration. With this committee, NNMC is working to update its health and safety policies and procedures, as well as its [Campus Emergency Response Plan](#), to address risk mitigation in the event of natural disasters, health emergencies, and other critical incidents. These efforts have been accompanied by various campus [health and safety training sessions](#) made available to students, faculty, and staff.

Further, with the adoption of its [most recent strategic plan](#), Northern has established the objective of strengthening shared governance by developing a [Staff Association and Senate](#), currently in its exploratory phase, to represent the interests of all staff and serve as a advisory body to college leadership on matters related to the general welfare, success, and engagement of staff at NNMC.

Various college policies also govern the integrity of NNMC’s operations. For instance, Northern maintains and enforces a [Code of Conduct Policy](#) addressing conflict of interest that applies to all NNMC employees. All new employees are oriented to [Northern’s Respectful Campus Policy](#), [anti-harassment](#) and [non-discrimination policies](#), [Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#) policies, and Northern’s [Title IX policy](#), which is updated regularly to reflect changes in federal regulation. [Title IX training is offered every](#)

[semester](#), and all employees are required to participate at least once every two years. Students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to report unethical or unlawful behavior to both the Human Resources Department and the Title IX Coordinator, the employee responsible for addressing these issues and enforcing the Title IX Policy. Protocols for educating employees about these and other ethical obligations include: informal, open meetings; staff and faculty handbooks; new employee orientation; and performance reviews. Northern is also in the process of implementing Workday Learning, an online training platform in these areas.

Ethics and Integrity in Academics

Similarly, a system of checks and balances is in place to guarantee the integrity of academic operations. For example, changes to the curriculum require chair approval, curriculum committee approval, and Faculty Senate approval as described in the [Undergraduate Curriculum Handbook](#). Additionally, the development of new programs goes through a meticulous process that involves faculty approval (educational policy, curriculum committee, and Faculty Senate), relevant student services approval, administration approval, and BOR approval, as described in the flow [chart and template form](#) to authorize new programs. NNMC also follows policies on academic integrity and ethical research practices through its [Institutional Review Board](#) and [Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee](#) and [attendant policies](#). These policies and procedures complement others that address academic integrity for students and faculty, faculty and staff evaluation, program assessment, and other measures to ensure integrity in educational operations.

Each of these policies and procedures can be enforced through the policies, grievance, and complaint processes outlined in the staff and faculty handbooks, the collective bargaining agreements, and the student complaint process available to students. The policies and these [grievance and complaint procedures](#) are on NNMC's website.

Sources

- PRESIDENT_Core Values
- PRESIDENT_NM Constitution
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NNMC Policies & Procedures
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NM Governmental Conduct Act
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NM Financial Disclosure Act
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Board Policies and Procedures
- PRESIDENT_Collective Bargaining Agreement for Full-time Faculty
- PRESIDENT_Collective Bargaining Agreement for Adjunct Faculty
- PRESIDENT_Collective Bargaining Agreement for Non-Exempt
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_1100 Development of Policies
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Committee Charters
- PRESIDENT_BOR_NM BOR Training Law-2025

- CFO_BUDGET_NM_Procurement_Code
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Code of Conduct-Conflict of Interest Policy
- CFO_BUDGET_Inflow Procedures and Daily Deposit Log
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Property Management and Control
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Procurement and P-Card Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Travel Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Disposal and Donation Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Subrecipient Monitoring Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_IT Policies and Procedures Manual
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_New Mexico Audit Act
- CFO_Audit_NNMC Audit Plan
- CFO_Audit_Independent Auditor and Financial Accounting Firm Contracts
- CFO_Audit_Clean Audit 30June2024
- CFO_Audit_Fiscal Year 2022 Audit
- CFO_Audit_Fiscal Year 2023 Audit
- CFO_Audit_Fiscal Year 2024 Audit
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Nepotism Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_EEO and Non-Discrimination Policies
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Campus Emergency Response Plan
- PRESIDENT_Health and Safety Training
- PRESIDENT_NNMC Soaring to New Heights Strategic Plan 2028 Final
- PRESIDENT_Goal 4 Strategic Plan 2028 NEW
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Respectful Campus Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Non-Discriminatory Statement
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Student Records and FERPA policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Title IX Grievance Policy
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Staff Training
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- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NNMC_NFEE_FT Faculty Bargaining Unit_2025 CBA - signed
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Handbook V2
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Safety Committee Agenda and Minutes
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Undergrad-Curriculum-Committee-Handbook-Revised-2017
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_New Degree Program Approval
- CAO_ACADEMICS_NNMC IRB
- CAO_ACADEMICS_IACUC Assurance ID
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Attendance
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Grievance Policy and Procedures

2.B. Transparency

The institution presents itself accurately and completely to students and the public with respect to its educational programs and any claims it makes related to the educational experience.

NNMC presents itself to the public through various venues, including popular [social media platforms](#), [traditional marketing venues](#), [digital marketing channels](#), and most importantly, the college's new [nnmc.edu website](#) and online [course catalog](#).

Argument

NNMC recognized the need to improve its digital ecosystem to become genuinely accessible and student-centered, while presenting itself effectively in the digital age. Modern digital technology is vital for serving all students, remote or on campus. Besides the Learning Management System (LMS), all student services must be online, user-friendly, accessible, and mobile-responsive.

New Website and Online Catalog

In 2022, NNMC embarked on a two-year initiative to [transform its digital presence](#) and user experience to meet 21st-century technology standards and student expectations. This initiative provides a modern foundation for future growth.

In August 2024, the College went live with its [new website](#) and [online catalog](#), designed to meet the needs of NNMC's students and key constituencies. The site's simple, [intuitive navigation](#), robust search engine optimization (SEO), and powerful [search functions](#) enable users to access information quickly and fully explore NNMC's offerings. Prospective students and their families can access extensive details about NNMC quickly from the [top menus](#): About Northern, Admissions, Paying for College, and Student Life. The new website organization allows users to [apply for admission, engage with Northern, and request information on every page](#).

About Northern

The [About Northern menu](#) provides direct links to NNMC's Accreditation, Mission/Vision/Strategic Plan, Foundation, and the Office of Institutional Research webpages. The [About Northern page](#) introduces President Hector Balderas, the leadership team, and the governing Board of Regents, its bylaws, public meetings, minutes, and NNMC's co-located Branch Community College Board. Visitors can learn about NNMC's [two campuses, proud history](#), and read stories highlighting the College's [Commitment to Community](#).

Academics

The main Academic page features the college [Program Finder](#), which can be explored in three ways: by “Areas of Interest,” by NNMC’s distinct “Schools” (STEM-H, Liberal Arts, Business & Teacher Education, Technical Trades, and Continuing Education), or through a simple A-Z list. Regardless of the method chosen, visitors can explore each [academic department, degree, or certificate program offered](#), along with relevant student stories, videos, and podcasts about student accomplishments and undergraduate research opportunities. Additionally, they can access NNMC’s One Stop Student Services and Career Services.

Each [program webpage](#) offers essential details, accreditation status, and career outlook, complemented by [sidebar links](#) to relevant academic and program documents, including the academic calendar and schedule of classes. The Schedule of Classes is published twice yearly, detailing available class sections, times, locations, and instructors for both 8-week and 16-week terms. Furthermore, each program page facilitates direct access to its [specific catalog pages](#), with degree plans, program requirements, and convenient pop-up course descriptions.

Student Services

The website also provides [complete student services information](#), including admissions requirements, step-by-step application processes for all types of students, and helpful checklists in English and Spanish for new and transfer students. The Office of Financial Aid publishes many resources for prospective and current students. The [Paying for College menu and page](#) provides access to critical information for future students and their families, including: NNMC’s Cost of Attendance and tuition/fees charts with additional links to the Net Price Calculator and College Navigator; step by step instructions for [FAFSA completion and financial aid processes](#) with videos from *studentaid.gov*; and [New Mexico’s tuition-free scholarship programs](#); other scholarship opportunities; and student work study, student employment and internship opportunities through NNMC’s Career Services.

Student Life and Support

The [Current Students/myNNMC page](#) guides new and continuing students through NNMC’s student logins and supports, including the advisement center, registrar, technical support, and career services.

NNMC’s [Student Life page](#) provides potential students a sense of campus life, including clubs and organizations, athletics, opportunities for student leadership in

Student Senate, and Counseling & Student Support Center (CASSC) activities, such as the Pantry@Northern. Additionally, links are provided to key student policies, resources, and the [Student Handbook](#).

Events & News

NNMC [Events and News](#) are available on the Homepage, Community, and Student Life pages. The “All News” button links to a searchable Newsroom for current and past stories and press releases.

Directory & Search

The website provides an updated college [Directory of faculty and staff contacts](#), searchable by name, title, department, location, and phone number, and a search page with quick links for common search destinations.

Accreditation

NNMC utilizes its [website](#) and [academic catalog](#) to inform the public about its accreditation relationships. The institution's [regional accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission \(HLC\)](#) is shared with stakeholders on the Institutional Accreditation webpage and the online Academic Catalog under General Information. Several NNMC programs have [program-specific accreditations](#), including ACEN for Associate Degree Nursing, CCNE for RN to BSN, ABET for Engineering Bachelor’s programs, ACBSP for Business BBA Programs, and CAEP for Teacher Education. These accreditations are listed on the Institutional Accreditation page and specific academic program pages.

Consumer Information

NNMC is committed to providing all required [consumer information](#) to prospective and enrolled students in compliance with the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008. The Consumer Information link is located in the website footer with other important compliance information, and is available on every page. The institution ensures the availability of consumer information on various topics, including general institutional information, financial aid, health and safety, student retention and graduation rates, and equity in education and athletics.

Sources

- PRES_COMM_Social Media Platforms
- PRES_COMM_Traditional Marketing Venues
- PRES_COMM_Digital marketing venues

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- PRES_COMM_Redesign of Website + Online Catalog
- PRES_COMM_Intuitive Navigation
- PRES_COMM_About Northern menu
- PRES_COMM_About Northern page
- PRES_COMM_About place and history
- PRES_COMM_Commitment to Community
- PRES_COMM_Powerful Search Functions
- PRES_COMM_Events and News
- PRES_COMM_Directory + search
- PRES_COMM_Compliance-Consumer Information
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Academics Page Menu
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Program Finder
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Area of Interest-Department-Degrees
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Program pages_
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Program page access to relevant documents
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Access to program in catalog
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Accreditation Relationships
- CAO_Program Specific Accreditations
- ASST_PROVOST_Admissions
- ASST_PROVOST_Paying for College costs
- ASST_PROVOST_FAFSA-Financial Aid
- ASST_PROVOST_NMFree College+Scholarships
- ASST_PROVOST_CurrentStudents-myNNMC
- ASST_PROVOST_Connect and Request Info
- PRES_COMM_Info for prospective students & families
- ASST_PROVOST_StudentServices_StudentLife
- ASST_PROVOST_Admissions Webpage
- PRES_COMM_Top_Menus_V2
- ASST_PROVOST_StudentServices_Admissions

2.C. Board Governance

In discharging its fiduciary duties, the institution's governing board is free from undue external influence and empowered to act in the best interests of the institution, including the students it serves.

Argument

NNMC's Board of Regents (BOR) is composed of [five members, appointed by the Governor of New Mexico](#) with the consent of the New Mexico Senate, for terms of six years, except for the student regent who is appointed for a two-year term. Pursuant to the New Mexico Constitution, the BOR is responsible for the control and management of NNMC. This responsibility includes fiduciary responsibility for NNMC and establishment of policies to guide its function and management. The BOR vests responsibility for the operation and management of the college in the President.

The BOR adheres to its established bylaws. [BOR bylaws](#) dictate that the student member is selected from a list provided by the President; no more than three board members may be of the same political party; and BOR members must abstain from any financial interest that may be either directly or indirectly related to NNMC.

The BOR conducts regular discussions on institutional issues during monthly [regular and special meetings](#). The BOR grants degrees and approves new degree programs, the annual budget, investments, facility renovations, and expansions. Additionally, the BOR approves tenure promotion for faculty and ratifies Collective Bargaining Agreements for all bargaining units. The BOR approves strategic plans that govern NNMC and is responsible for hiring and evaluating the College President.

The [NNMC BOR web page](#) includes links to BOR Meetings & Minutes, Bylaws, Policies, Resolutions, the Open Meetings Notice Resolution, and Audit Findings Matrix, along with biographies of officers and members and the terms of their service.

To ensure that the BOR is free from undue influence in the discharge of its fiduciary duties, it follows applicable state and federal public accountability laws, such as the [New Mexico Open Meetings Act](#). With limited exceptions, all meetings of a quorum of the BOR are open to the public, ensuring that any official action is discussed and taken in public. Further, each member is required to submit an annual financial disclosure statement with the New Mexico Secretary of State that describes their finances with sufficient detail to establish that they have no financial conflict of interest in holding their position. Members are also expressly prohibited from conducting business with the college, absent very limited circumstances. Finally, the BOR complies with the state's Governmental Conduct and Gift

Acts, which regulate the members' receipt of gifts or anything of value in exchange for performance of their duties.

In addition to following its obligations under the law, the BOR avoids undue influence from donors, public officials, or other external parties in setting the direction for the NNMC through institutional policy. [NNMC's Code of Conduct](#) policy includes language on conflict of interest to ensure that the BOR and high-level administration act in the best interest of the institution. The BOR preserves its independence from undue influence from donors, elected officials, ownership interests, and other external parties.

As of 2025, the BOR, along with all governing boards of public colleges in the state, is required by [New Mexico law to undergo 10 hours of training](#) provided by the New Mexico Higher Education Department on topics of board governance. The training will include obligations under the laws described above and other state laws, the ethical obligations and accountability to the public, and financial management and their fiduciary duties.

BOR Committee Structure

The BOR works through five committees to ensure that all matters have been considered by NNMC's internal and external constituencies before decision making. These committees allow for the full participation of administration, staff, students, and community members. Two regents are appointed per committee. One member of the Executive Team serves on each committee along with staff and student representatives. Reports from these committees are included in the [BOR minutes](#).

Housing Committee: This committee is responsible for addressing issues related to student housing and providing recommendations to the BOR. This includes evaluating current housing issues, assessing the quality and availability of student accommodations, and identifying innovative opportunities to improve the overall living conditions for students. Moreover, the committee researches emerging trends and challenges in student housing, ensuring that the latest data and best practices in the field inform their guidance.

Audit/Finance/Facilities Committee: This committee reviews and advises the BOR on matters, activities, and policies related to financial accounting and reporting, internal control, risk management, fiscal compliance matters, long-range physical planning, capital projects, and operations and maintenance. The NNMC CFO serves on this committee.

Student and Academic Affairs Committee: This committee reviews and advises the BOR on issues related to teaching, research, diversity, community outreach, and service. The committee attends to students' concerns about matters such as tuition, fees, financial aid, admissions, retention, student success, graduation requirements, faculty teaching and advisement, student life, student conduct, housing, and student services. The NNMC CAO serves on this Committee.

[Governance Committee](#): This committee provides the BOR with guidance to ensure that NNMC is committed to responsible and effective governance. The committee promotes transparency, accountability, and best practices within the institution, ensuring that governance structures align with the organization's mission and goals. The college's General Counsel serves on this committee.

[HERC Committee](#): This committee collaborates with the Higher Education Regents Consortium on issues that affect all state higher education institutions. The committee reports its findings and recommendations to the Board of Regents as part of the regular agenda.

The NNMC BOR delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.

The President, who reports to the BOR, is NNMC's chief executive officer and supervises and controls all day-to-day business and affairs. The President serves as the Board's designated representative with respect to personnel matters, including evaluations, in accordance with college procedures. The President provides the BOR with appropriate information in order to promote policy. The President executes policies and implements identified goals through day-to-day management. The President manages and controls college property and enters into contracts on behalf of NNMC, as authorized by the BOR. Finally, the President participates in planning NNMC's long-term goals and serves as the BOR's administrative arm in carrying out those goals. The BOR approves all long-term goals.

Sources

- PRESIDENT_BOR_BOR Minutes
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Committee Charters
- PRESIDENT_BOR_HERC Committee
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Regular and Special Meetings
- PRESIDENT_BOR_NM BOR Training Law-2025
- PRESIDENT_BOR_BOR Members
- PRESIDENT_BOR_BOR Members Appointed
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Resolution Supporting GO Bond 3
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Board of Regents Bylaws
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Code of Conduct
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Unit of Credit
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Board of Regents webpage
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Deep Dive Topic CASSC
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Open Meetings Act
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Policies and Procedures
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Public Input

2.D. Academic Freedom and Freedom of Expression

The institution supports academic freedom and freedom of expression in the pursuit of knowledge as integral to high-quality teaching, learning and research.

Argument

NNMC is dedicated to promoting freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in both teaching and learning. As an institution focused on education, research, and public service, NNMC values the unrestricted exchange of ideas in classrooms, laboratories, and all college activities. Therefore, safeguarding freedom of expression is of utmost importance to NNMC.

NNMC acknowledges that the exercise of free expression must be balanced with the rights of others to learn, work, and conduct business. Speech activities that unduly interfere with the rights of others or hinder NNMC's ability to fulfill its mission are not protected by the First Amendment and violate [NNMC's Freedom of Expression and Dissent policy](#). As a public institution, NNMC is committed to allowing all peaceful speech activities on campus. Any activities that destroy or significantly damage property, materially disrupt other legitimate college activities, or pose a substantial health or safety risk are prohibited. This policy applies to all buildings, grounds, and property owned or controlled by NNMC. Speech activities protected by this policy include speechmaking, praying, distributing written materials, picketing, gathering in groups, demonstrating, sidewalk chalking, building symbolic structures, and any other form of actual or symbolic speech or conduct intended to communicate an idea.

NNMC is dedicated to fostering responsible academic freedom for its faculty, staff, and students. This freedom preserves open inquiry and expression, which are vital to NNMC's mission. [The Student Handbook](#) outlines this commitment to freedom of expression, academic freedom, and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning. Additionally, the Collective Bargaining Agreements for [full-time faculty](#) and [adjunct faculty](#) detail the aspects of academic freedom (Article 9, pages 11 and 12, respectively, in the CBAs). Similar language can be found in the Faculty Handbook, which applies to non-union faculty members. Furthermore, academic freedom is safeguarded by the tenure granted to full-time faculty members, as outlined in [Article 20 of the full-time faculty CBA \(page 32\)](#) and [the Faculty Handbook \(page 16\)](#).

NNMC's commitment to the pursuit of truth is demonstrated by the following:

- Student research symposia ([INBRE](#))
- The [BOR public input agenda item](#)

- [NNMC President's Communications](#)
- Faculty and Staff [feedback form](#) on the website
- NNMC student and Faculty Senate participation in [BOR agenda](#).

Pursuing truth in teaching and learning requires understanding and respect for honesty and responsibility in scholarly work. NNMC has established processes to monitor and enforce the legal pursuit of truth, including policies against [copyright infringement](#) and [research misconduct](#), as well as an [institutional policy for live streaming and lecture capture](#). Some of these policies were recently developed as the college expands its online course and program offerings, along with its research capabilities. Additionally, NNMC has taken proactive steps to prevent and report instances of plagiarism by creating [guidelines and forms](#) for faculty members.

Sources

- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Freedom of Expression and Dissent Policy
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Agenda Examples
- PRESIDENT_Faculty and Staff Feedback Form
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_File Sharing and Copyright Infringement
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Policy & Procedures for Research Misconduct
- CAO_ACADEMICS_NM INBRE Symposium
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Livestreaming and Lecture Capture
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Plagiarism Resources and Reporting
- PRESIDENT_Communication Between Leadership, Staff and Faculty
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NNMC_NFEE_FT Faculty Bargaining Unit_2025 CBA - signed
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NNMC_NFEE_Adjunct Bargaining Unit_2025 CBA - signed

2.E. Knowledge Acquisition, Discovery and Application

The institution adheres to policies and procedures that ensure responsible acquisition, discovery and application of knowledge.

Argument

NNMC provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff, and students.

NNMC is committed to maintaining the highest standards of ethics and integrity in scholarship and research and to safeguarding the rights and welfare of all participants in research under its sponsorship. The [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) for the Protection of Human Participants](#) at NNMC provides an independent determination concerning how the rights and welfare of individual research participants are safeguarded.

IRB

Per Federal regulations, NNMC's IRB has at least five members with varying backgrounds to promote, complete, and review research activities commonly conducted by the college. The IRB reviews specific research activities and must be able to ascertain the acceptability of proposed research in terms of institutional commitments and regulations, applicable law, and standards of professional conduct and practice. Any IRB regularly reviewing research involving a vulnerable category of participants must include at least one person primarily concerned with the welfare of these participants. Further, the IRB must include at least one scientist, one non-scientist, and one member who is not otherwise affiliated with NNMC. This individual should be knowledgeable about the local community and willing to discuss issues and research from that perspective.

IRB membership includes: emeritus professor of biology (scientist), department chair of business programs (non-scientist), faculty members from Environmental Science, Engineering Technology, Arts and Human Sciences, and a retired faculty (external member).

To enhance the integrity and professionalism of investigators and staff conducting research affiliated with NNMC, IRB members completed CITI ([Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative](#)) research education training specific to the IRB Common Rules in March 2021.

IACUC

NNMC is committed to the highest standards of ethical research, regulatory compliance, and responsible stewardship in the care and use of animals for research. NNMC complies with the [Animal Welfare Regulations \(AWR\) outlined in 9 C.F.R. Parts 1, 2, and 3](#), which provide detailed guidance and enforceable standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for the implementation of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

Additionally, NNMC acknowledges the [Rules of Practice Governing Proceedings under the Animal Welfare Act \(9 C.F.R. Part 4\)](#), which establishes procedures for addressing administrative violations of the AWA. Beyond federal law, NNMC follows principles established by the Institute of Laboratory Animal Resources of the National Academy of Sciences, ensuring that research involving animals upholds the highest standards of humane care and ethical responsibility. Additionally, the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW) oversees all Public Health Service (PHS)-funded animal research activities under the authority of the Health Research Extension Act of 1985 and the PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals (PHS Policy). As mandated by [PHS Policy, Section IV.A](#), no animal research activity may be conducted or supported by PHS until NNMC has provided a written Assurance acceptable to PHS, demonstrating compliance with the Policy. NNMC holds [Assurance ID D21-01105](#) and ensures all animal research conducted at the institution adheres to U.S. government guidelines, including the AWA.

NNMC is fully committed to complying with all applicable provisions of the AWA and other federal statutes and regulations related to the ethical treatment of animals. The institution is guided by the [U.S. Government Principles for the Utilization and Care of Vertebrate Animals Used in Testing, Research, and Training](#). It acknowledges its full responsibility for the care and use of animals in research and teaching activities. As part of this commitment, NNMC ensures that all faculty, staff, and students involved in animal care and use understand their individual and collective responsibilities for compliance with this Assurance, as well as all relevant laws and regulations.

NNMC has established and maintains a comprehensive program for animal research activities under the [Guide for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals \(Guide\)](#). For research involving agricultural animals, NNMC adheres to the [Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching](#). Additionally, NNMC ensures that all performance sites engaged in research involving live vertebrate animals under consortium (sub-award) or subcontract agreements have an approved Animal Welfare Assurance and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval.

Academic Standards

NNMC students are offered guidance on the ethical use of information resources. [NNMC's Academic Standards Committee](#), in conjunction with the Faculty Senate, works to bring campus-wide awareness and understanding of the ethical use of information.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) usage at NNMC presents both potential benefits and ethical concerns. Key points include clarifying AI usage in course materials, utilizing AI as a tool rather than for original work, and consulting with instructors if there is uncertainty about AI policies. The Academic Standards Committee promotes ongoing discussions about AI across departments. The NNMC [Faculty and Staff webpage](#) provides recommendations for preventing plagiarism and the ethical use of AI. The importance of educating students on the proper use of information is also a presentation topic at convocation and via the peer tutoring center workshops.

The Committee for Learning Assessment of Students (CLAS), based on institutional assessment, dedicated a portion of its website to providing faculty with recommended resources for students, many of which deal with providing credit and adhering to academic honesty in scholarly conversations.

The NNMC Library plays a critical role in providing resources and supporting student awareness and understanding of the ethical use of information via guidance on copyright, academic honesty, and licensing.

- [Copyright for Instructional Materials](#)
- [Electronic Content and Licensing Restrictions](#)
- [Citations and Plagiarism Guide](#)
- [Find and Use Images Guide](#)

NNMC's computing and network resources, services, and facilities are used with consideration for the needs of others. To prevent or mitigate misuse, the [Information Technology Policies Manual](#) and the [Acceptable Computer Use policy](#) outline proper behaviors and review the repercussions of violating these codes of conduct.

NNMC's [Student Handbook](#) contains detailed information concerning specific standards expected from each student, including information about disciplinary sanctions for improper conduct. In particular, dishonesty in connection with tests, quizzes, or coursework assignments may be cause for dismissal.

NNMC has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity. Students are introduced to the Student Code of Conduct via the [Student Handbook](#). NNMC has also developed a [Research Misconduct Policy](#) to address research misconduct. Similarly, as mentioned in section 2.D, the Academic Standards Committee of the Faculty Senate maintains a [process for cases of plagiarism](#).

The [Associate Vice President for Student Success](#), in collaboration with academic chairs and faculty members, oversees, interprets, and implements the policies and procedures related to academic misconduct and other student affairs issues.

Sources

- CAO_ACADEMICS_Plagiarism Resources and Reporting
- CAO_ACADEMICS_NNMC IRB
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Animal Welfare Act and Animal Welfare Regulations
- CAO_ACADEMICS_PHS Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals
- CAO_ACADEMICS_IACUC Assurance ID
- CAO_ACADEMICS_U.S. Government Principles for the Principles for the Care and Use of Vertebrate Animals in research and teaching
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Guide for the Care and Use of Lab Animals
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Guide for the Care and Use of Agricultural Animals in Agricultural Research and Teaching
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Copyright for Instructional Materials
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Electronic Content and Licensing Restrictions
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Citations and Plagiarism
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Find and Use Images
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Electronic Content and Licensing Restrictions LibGuides
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_IT Policies and Procedures Manual
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Acceptable Computer Use Policy (2500)
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Code of Conduct-Conflict of Interest Policy
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Plagiarism-Cheating Incident Form
- CAO_Associate VP for Student Success position
- CAO_ACADEMICS_IRB Training - CITI
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Academic Standards Committee By Laws
- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Policy & Procedures for Research Misconduct

Criterion 2 - Summary

In fulfilling its mission, the institution acts with integrity; its conduct is ethical and responsible.

[Criterion 2 demonstrates](#) NNMC's integrity and ethical conduct through transparent communication, accountable governance, and responsible academic practices. The College accurately presents itself to students and the public via its redesigned website and online catalog, which offer user-friendly access to information on academics, student services, financial aid, and compliance data. The site includes [accreditation details](#), program accreditations, cost of attendance, consumer information, and student policies.

NNMC's Board of Regents operates independently, guided by bylaws, state law, and public accountability measures, including open meetings, ethics training, and annual financial disclosures. The Board avoids undue influence from external entities and maintains fiduciary oversight while delegating day-to-day management to the President and administration.

Academic freedom and freedom of expression are protected through institutional policies and faculty agreements, which support inquiry and the pursuit of truth. NNMC promotes academic honesty, ethical research, and information literacy, with policies that address plagiarism, copyright, and the responsible use of artificial intelligence. Oversight bodies like the Institutional Review Board and Animal Care Committees ensure compliance with federal regulations and humane research practices. Student conduct and computing policies reinforce ethical behavior and integrity in the academic environment. Together, these practices uphold NNMC's commitment to ethical, responsible, and transparent institutional conduct.

Sources

- NNMC Accreditation News CRITERION 2-INTEGRITY
- PRES_COMM_NNMC Accreditation News CRITERION 2-INTEGRITY final
- PRES_COMM_Accreditation 2025 Master Plan - Final

3 - Teaching and Learning for Student Success

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

3.A. Educational Programs

Argument

The institution maintains learning goals and outcomes that reflect a level of rigor commensurate with college-level work, including by program level and the content of each of its educational programs.

NNMC awards degrees and certificates which serve its institutional mission as "an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community, dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives." NNMC offers 16 certificates, 23 associate degrees, 12 baccalaureate degrees, and three online programs. Academic curriculum is developed to meet current or projected educational needs. Recently, NNMC has committed to strengthening its trades programs, with the addition of programs in HVAC, carpentry, welding, as well as new programs in computer-aided design (CAD), phlebotomy technician, nuclear operations technology, biotechnology, and data science. Descriptions for each degree and certificate program are outlined in the [college catalog](#).

Although they do not count towards degree requirements, NNMC also offers developmental courses that prepare students for college-level courses in English and math. Students have opportunities to engage in research through such grants as the NM-INBRE grant and the New Mexico Alliance for Minority Participation (NM AMP) grant, which can supplement coursework. A student's academic experience is also enhanced through many co-curricular activities discussed in core component 3E.

The New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) provides oversight on aspects of course and program offerings at public institutions in New Mexico, including courses offered at NNMC. As a result, [NNMC General Education courses](#) abide by [NMHED policies, procedures, and recommendations](#) for course content, credit hour limits for degree programs, and state-wide transferability requirements. A statewide [common course numbering system](#) was recently implemented to improve transferability and articulation between New Mexico's public and tribal higher education institutions. NNMC contributed to these endeavors, and currently, the majority of NNMC's lower-division general education courses are numbered using the

NMHED course numbering matrix. Each course that falls under the common course matrix adheres to statewide course descriptions and student learning outcomes (discussed in 3B).

NNMC utilizes an internal program review process (for more information on program review, refer to 3F), based on the program review policy. This process evaluates academic programs on a number of predetermined factors every seven years. All programs, regardless of external accreditation, are required to engage in the program review process. One important aspect of the program review is to ensure a high-quality, relevant curriculum. Some programs, such as Nursing and Education, use student pass rates of licensure exams to evaluate their quality.

The program levels offered at NNMC are the following:

1. **Certificates** - formal awards granted upon completion of a vocational training program (e.g., Administrative Office Assistant) or for professional certification (e.g., Alternative Licensure Programs) requiring at least 15 but no more than 59 semester hours of credit and fulfilling the requirements for a Regents-approved program to satisfy job competency requirements. In unusual and fully justified cases, the minimum and maximum credit hours may be adjusted.
2. **Associate Degrees** - require a minimum of 60 semester hours for completion and 31 credits of general education following NMHED requirements.
3. **Bachelor's Degrees** - require a minimum of 120 semester hours for completion and 31 credits of general education following NMHED requirements.

Undergraduate General Education Standards

After the implementation of the general education changes required by NMHED in 2019, all general education courses were revised to meet the new standards, and each program revised its degree to comply with the new general education requirements. Moving forward, all general education courses that are approved by the General Education Committee at NNMC must be reviewed and approved by the statewide committee on General Education. Each course must provide a narrative that provides evidence that it will teach the essential skills assigned to each specific content area. These skills are described in core component 3B.

Policies and Procedures to add courses and make changes to degree plans are found in the [Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Handbook](#) (pp. 5-6). Courses that are added to the catalog or changes to program degree plans need to be first submitted by the responsible department to the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee. If the course is approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, the course is then submitted to the Faculty Senate for approval. If the Faculty Senate approves the changes, the course becomes formally accepted by the NNMC Registrar upon the Provost's signature.

Members of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate are faculty members. Since chairs or directors are considered faculty, they can also serve on the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee and the Faculty Senate.

The Board of Regents approves all new academic program proposals. All proposals must follow the procedure described in the [NNMC New Academic Program Policy](#). Proposals utilize a standard template and must provide evidence of compliance with the Criteria for New Academic Program Approval. Important criteria include a program description, documented program need, alignment with the college's mission and strategic goals, program level student learning outcomes, a plan for assessment of program student learning outcomes, a curriculum matrix/degree plan, course syllabi, budget, input from an external advisory committee, and a plan for program support and sustainability. The creation of programs requires the approval of the Educational Policy Committee, followed by the approval of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Faculty Senate, Provost, President, and Board of Regents in that order. As an example, the following documents are included for the recently approved certificate program in Engineering Drawing and Computer-Aided Design: [New Academic Program Approval form \(CAD\)](#), and the Approval or [Signature form \(CAD\)](#). New undergraduate degree programs (associate or bachelor's degrees) are subject to [approval by the New Mexico Higher Education Department \(NMHED\)](#). For new bachelor's degrees, the program proposal is then submitted to the HLC for approval. The termination or suspension of programs begins with Program Review, which is held once a year. Programs that are being reviewed need to submit a formal report to the Program Review Committee (addressed in core component 3F).

Rigor of Degrees

NNMC offers undergraduate degrees (2-year associate and 4-year bachelor's degrees) and certificates that are appropriately rigorous for the level of degree awarded. Course numbers beginning with a 1 or a 2 indicate lower-division courses, while course numbers beginning with a 3 or a 4 indicate upper-division courses with prerequisites that satisfy bachelor's degree requirements. While lower-division courses prepare students with foundational knowledge and understanding of the basic concepts in their discipline, the learning goals and objectives associated with the curricula and content of upper-division courses in the bachelor's programs are developed around higher-level learning goals and objectives (application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation). Achievement of these higher-level learning goals are ensured through careful consideration of the prerequisite structure that provides the appropriate background required. An example of the [program prerequisite structure](#) is provided here for the Bachelor in Electromechanical Engineering Technology. Appropriateness of the student learning outcomes and integration of these outcomes for specific programs are periodically reviewed through the involvement of program stakeholders, including the Program External Advisory Committee, as evidenced by the program

[stakeholders survey result](#) provided here for the Electromechanical Engineering Technology program.

NNMC articulates and differentiates student learning goals for undergraduate and certificate programs. Each department has developed specific Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) for each of its degree programs. Examples of how the associate and bachelor's programs differentiate clearly in terms of the PSLOs are easy to understand by comparing programs in the same field. For instance, Program Educational Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes for the [Associate in Pre-Engineering vs Bachelor in Electromechanical Engineering Technology \(EMET\)](#) are delineated clearly in the NNMC website. As an example, one of the program educational objectives of the Associate in Pre-Engineering program is as follows: Graduates will have demonstrated involvement in high-level technical roles. A similar objective of the Bachelor in EMET program is as follows: Graduates will demonstrate involvement in significant technical roles, and beginning leadership roles. Notably, the bachelor's program objective differs from the associate program in the fact that it prepares students not only for technical careers, but also for leadership roles.

Similar observations can be made regarding distinction between [Associate of Applied Science in Nursing](#) and the [Bachelor of Science in Nursing \(RN to BSN\)](#), as well as between [Associate of Science in Biology & Bachelor of Science in Biology](#). It is important to note that most of the associate degrees offered at NNMC are stackable and articulate with a bachelor program also offered at the institution.

Specific programs have their own accrediting agencies. These programs develop their degree plans based on national accreditation standards as well as national professional standards. For example, the Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) pre-licensure program at NNMC was developed around nine nursing concepts (patient-centered care, teamwork and collaboration, evidenced-based practice, quality improvement, safety, informatics, professionalism, leadership, communication) adapted from [Quality and Safety Education for Nurses \(QSEN, 2007\)](#) and the [Massachusetts Nurse of the Future \(2016\)](#). The QSEN competencies and the Massachusetts Nurse of the Future competencies were developed to define graduate quality and safety competencies for pre-licensure nursing programs. These competencies guide curriculum development and inform the program's end of program student learning outcomes (EPSLO). For example, the concept of patient-centered care aligns with EPSLO #1. Demonstrate nursing practice that is holistic, patient-centered, caring, culturally sensitive and based on the physiological and psychosocial and spiritual needs of patients. The concept of evidence-based practice aligns with EPSLO #3. Integrate the best current evidence-based practice to support clinical judgment in the provision of patient care. In addition, the ADN program is nationally accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) and meets all 2023 ACEN Standards and Criteria for associate degree nursing programs. Professional accreditation is a measure of program quality and ensures

that programs are meeting best practices for the educational preparation of members of a specific profession or occupation.

In contrast, the college's baccalaureate degree nursing program (RN to BSN program) is a post-licensure nursing program that utilizes the [AACN Essentials \(2021\)](#) specific to baccalaureate degree education to guide curricular development. Endorsed by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (2021) delineates the competencies that encompass professional nursing practice, including entry-level professional nursing education at the baccalaureate level, RN-BSN, and all graduate nursing programs (master's and doctoral level of nursing programs). These national nursing standards for baccalaureate degree nursing practice differ from those prepared at the associate degree level, and reflect the professional competencies required to provide healthcare to individuals, families, communities, and populations across the lifespan and in an increasingly complex healthcare environment. Advanced concepts not usually explored in associate degree nursing programs, such as system based practice, population health, social determinants of health, health policy, and leadership are explored in depth in NNMC's RN to BSN (baccalaureate degree) nursing program.

Several programs within the departments of Business, Education, Engineering, and Nursing are accredited by their respective accreditation agencies. For example, both the bachelor's programs in Electromechanical Engineering Technology and Information Engineering Technology are accredited by ABET, as evidenced by the [summary of accreditation actions](#) from the 2019-2020 accreditation cycle. These programs have Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) that meet the standards of their accrediting agencies. For example, the accreditation agency for Engineering Technology programs, ABET, has defined student learning outcomes that must be assessed and evaluated on a periodic basis for continuous improvement of the program. These standard SLOs for the two accredited engineering bachelor's programs can be found on page 5 and 6 of the attached [ABET Engineering and Technology Accreditation Commission Criteria](#).

NNMC is an open-admission college. Students complete placement testing in English and math to determine which introductory classes to take. Students declare their major upon admission to the college and then meet with a program-specific academic advisor after completing general education courses. Some academic programs require that students meet specific admission criteria prior to acceptance into the program. This ensures that students have the academic capacity to engage in a rigorous academic program. One example is the Associate Degree Nursing program, which has [specific admission criteria](#). Students must have a 2.75 GPA in prerequisite coursework; meet an overall score of 58.7% on the nursing entrance exam, Test of Essentials Academic Skills (TEAS) test; and complete an essay question in order to be considered for admission. Similarly, in the Department of Education,

students must submit a [formal application](#) to be accepted into the Bachelor of Arts in Education program and the Alternative Licensure program.

Program Accreditation

Several academic programs have earned national accreditation from discipline specific accreditation agencies. National accreditation ensures that programs meet discipline specific academic rigor.

The Bachelor of Engineering in Information Engineering Technology program is currently accredited by the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC) of [ABET](#). The Bachelor of Engineering in Electromechanical Engineering Technology Program is accredited by the Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission (ETAC) of [ABET](#). Teacher Education's Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, Bachelor of Arts in Early Childhood Education, and the Alternative Licensure Program: Elementary Education, Secondary Education, and Special Education are accredited by the [Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation \(CAEP\)](#). Nursing and Health Sciences offers an Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program that is accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing ([ACEN](#)), and the Bachelor's Degree in Nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education ([CCNE](#)). Business Administration's bachelor's and associate degrees are currently accredited by the Accrediting Council for Business Schools and Programs ([ACBSP](#)).

NNMC's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations (on the main campus, at additional locations, by distance delivery, as dual credit, through contractual or consortial arrangements, or any other modality).

NNMC provides courses through various delivery modes as per their [policy](#) defining all offered modes of delivery: OL (Online), BOL (Blended Online), TR (Traditional) and BTR (Blended Traditional). According to the [NNMC Factbook 2024](#), 192 courses were offered online (including blended online, and blended traditional), while 158 were delivered through traditional in-person instruction.

To ensure consistency in teaching effectiveness across all modes of delivery, faculty members teaching online are required to have credentials to teach online. As per the [NNMC Center for Teaching and Learning policy](#), there are two pathways for faculty to get credentialed for online teaching, a) the instructor completes an in-house professional development course, *NNMC 101: Teaching Online and Blended Online at Northern*, or, b) the instructor provides the Quality Assurance Specialist with documentation of online teaching experience or recent training (within the last 18 months) related to online teaching and learning that was completed outside of NNMC. The in-house developed *NNMC 101: Teaching Online and Blended Online at Northern* is a multi-module self-paced asynchronous course that introduces instructors to tools and resources for teaching online and blended online courses.

Academic Quality and Effectiveness

To ensure the quality of course instruction across all modes of instructional delivery, fully online courses undergo a rigorous approval process as described in the [NNMC Center for Teaching and Learning policy](#). At NNMC, we utilize the QM (Quality Matters) standards and rubric for an internal review process of NNMC online courses to ensure the consistency and quality of online courses. QM is a nationally recognized, peer-reviewed process that certifies the quality of online courses. The online course review process can only be initiated by an academic program director or chairperson. NNMC faculty interested in teaching online must have their courses approved. After the course has been developed, and at the conclusion of the first time it is offered online, the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) will initiate a course review. Fully online courses must demonstrate that they meet 85% of QM Rubric Standards (7th edition), including all 3-point “Essential” standards to be certified. Courses that fail to meet these standards (or any of the 3-point, “Essential” standards) will be returned to the course developer with suggestions and feedback. Course developers will then have two weeks to revise and resubmit the course for approval.

CTL approval of online courses is mandatory (since Spring 2020), and online courses must be taught by a credentialed faculty members. This applies to all full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty. At present, we have 74 faculty (full-time and adjunct) members who are [credentialed](#) to teach online courses. The policy for online course approval has evolved over the last 5 years. All online courses have a [uniform template](#) with common information relevant for all students (for example, accessibility information, student support services, writing center, etc.) through a “Start here” module. The CTL assists instructors with development of online courses.

In the summer of 2025, the college transitioned to Canvas LMS. All online courses (including blended online) now use the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) for online course delivery. To support this transition, the NNMC CTL set up Canvas accounts for all faculty members. Each faculty member has access to a private Sandbox course shell, which functions like a regular course but without student enrollment. This space allows instructors to experiment freely—building content, exploring new tools, and getting comfortable with the LMS. Additionally, all faculty have been invited to enroll in “*Growing with Canvas*”, a self-paced course designed to guide instructors in using Canvas effectively. Participation in this course is strongly encouraged. Furthermore, six virtual Canvas training sessions have been recorded and are available on demand for faculty to review at their convenience.

Student learning outcomes are comparable for all modes of delivery, including online and dual credit. Examples include course syllabi from ENVS 1110- Environmental Science I ([OL](#) and [TR](#)), ENGL 1210 - Technical Communications ([OL](#) and [TR](#)), MATH 1220- College Algebra ([OL](#) and [TR](#)), and MATH 1350- Intro to Statistics ([OL](#) and [TR](#)).

Dual credit courses have the same academic rigor as college courses and the same credentialing process for instructors. Here are some examples of academic rigor and college-level standard maintenance in dual credit courses from the Department of Language and Letters ([ENGL 1110](#)) and the Department of Engineering Technology ([CAD 1100](#)).

NNMC is a member of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (NC-SARA), which allows the College to provide distance learning programs and coursework to residents of states other than New Mexico. While NNMC professional licensure programs are designed to meet the licensure and/or certification requirements for the state of New Mexico, they may or may not meet requirements for licensure or certification in other states. NNMC has done its due diligence in determining which NNMC programs meet certification or licensure requirements in other states. NNMC has been [approved](#) as an institutional partner for NC SARA for the current period, Dec 2024 to Dec 2025, and this information is posted on the NNMC website under [Professional Licensure Disclosure & NC SARA](#).

NNMC's academic policies and practices support rigorous, high-quality academic programs that serve to support the institutional mission. To ensure academic excellence and student success, NNMC strives to continuously improve and adapt academic policies and procedures that align with the current higher educational climate and the needs of our students.

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3.B. Exercise of Intellectual Inquiry

The institution's educational programs engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in practicing modes of intellectual inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.

Argument

Through general education and support for scholarship and creative activities, NNMC creates meaningful curriculum and relationships with faculty that align with our mission statement and both empower and support students. General education is centered on preparing students for college-level intellectual inquiry with an emphasis on communication, critical thinking, use of information sources, and emphasis on personal and social responsibility. In their programs of study, faculty create student-centered opportunities to build relationships and support research and creative endeavors.

General Education

NNMC has an active General Education Committee that ensures that its general education program is relevant in terms of mission and program offerings. The [General Education Committee Handbook](#) reviews the mission and responsibilities of this committee. As the handbook states, this committee reviews additions and deletions to the General Education core and ensures the curriculum is appropriate to NNMC's overall mission. The General Education Committee assists departments in submitting applications to the New Mexico Curriculum and Articulation Committee (NMCAC). In the past couple of years, the committee completed internal processes to add the following courses to our General Education offerings: SOCI 1110 Introduction to Sociology (2024); ENGR 112L Math for Engineers (2022); ENGR 1101L Computer Science for All (2022), and FDMA 1560 Screenwriting I (2024). [Minutes](#) from meetings in 2022 and 2024 document the approval process for these courses.

According to the [NNMC's General Education Committee Handbook and the NNMC Academic Catalog](#), "Northern New Mexico College's general education requirements reflect the values of the college and its faculty. The purpose of these courses is to help you achieve a foundation of knowledge that broadens and enriches your abilities to communicate, to think critically, to problem solve, and to broaden your worldview regarding global awareness, human values, and social consciousness. These selections call for you to develop written and oral communication skills, problem-solving skills, scientific, historical, cultural, and ethical thinking." General Education at NNMC is designed to create a strong foundation for students that empowers them to embrace the challenges of upper-division courses within their programs of study.

In 2019, NMHED adopted new [General Education requirements](#) comprising six content areas, constituting 22 credit hours (Communication, Mathematics, Science, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, and Creative and Fine Arts). Each content area is required to teach a subset of essential skills, which include Communication, Critical Thinking, Quantitative Reasoning, Personal and Social Responsibility, and Information & Digital Literacy.

In addition to the 22 credits from the six content areas listed above, NMHED allows each institution to develop a specific curriculum for nine additional hours. In 2019, the NNMC General Education Committee and the Faculty Senate approved curriculum for the additional nine credit hours of General Education, the "[Flexible Nine](#)". NNMC's current [General Education courses](#) are listed in the Fall 2024-Summer 2025 [Academic Catalog](#). Additionally, every degree program described in the academic catalog demonstrates that NNMC has mandatory General Education requirements.

Courses that are adopted into the General Education matrix need to follow this approval process: 1. Approval by the General Education Committee; 2. Approval by the Faculty Senate; and 3. Approval by the NMCAC to ensure they teach the required essential skills. The NMHED application process requires narratives that explain how the course engages students in learning the aforementioned essential skills, as well as assessment documents that demonstrate this active learning. The NMHED-approved general education courses ensure all students are engaged in mastering modes of inquiry, research, production of arguments or creative work, and in developing communication and critical thinking skills adaptable to changing environments. Additionally, these courses integrate a curriculum that honors sustainability and cultural diversity and fosters students' ability to reason ethically, engage in civic discourse, and develop team-building skills as they collaborate with their classmates. The use of common course descriptions and student learning outcomes in the [NMHED Common course catalog](#) helps to guarantee that these skills are covered by all instructors who teach these courses.

Certification began in Fall 2018, and as of Fall 2024, NNMC has been granted approval from the NMCAC for 58 (100 and 200 level) courses across all content areas: Communication, Mathematics, Science, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities, and Creative and Fine Arts. NMHED lists these courses on their website under the [NMHED General Education Approved Courses](#). NNMC continues to submit courses to NMCAC for approval to expand general education offerings and meet student needs.

Since the redesign of New Mexico General Education in 2019, Northern has aligned its general education student learning outcomes with the essential skills identified by NMHED: Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, Critical Thinking, Information and Digital Literacy, and Personal and Social Responsibility. As outlined in 3E, Northern's CLAS committee has collaborated with faculty to develop assessment cycles, collect data from

designated courses, and analyze data for continuous improvement. (See core component 3E for more information on the plan creation and implementation.)

Specific courses in each degree program also require students to hone the essential skills introduced through general education courses. For example, many bachelor's degree programs have mandatory capstone courses with discipline-specific intensive writing projects requiring students to compose, collect, and cite sources. Specific examples of these courses are outlined in 3D. NNMC also promotes the [Annual Academic Research, Creativity, and Scholarship Symposium](#), a showcase of student work that demonstrates the aforementioned skills, which is discussed later in section 3B.

NNMC's curriculum provides students with broad exposure to human and cultural diversity and growth opportunities in these areas. Within the general education curriculum, all students are required to take one humanities and one social/behavioral science course; these courses provide students with a foundational experience and understanding in this area. Specific NNMC courses in the [General Education Common Core](#) address [human and cultural diversity](#).

The submission process with NMCAC requires that faculty demonstrate how courses in content areas of Science, Social and Behavioral Science, Humanities, and Creative and Fine Arts engage students in learning the [essential skill of Personal and Social Responsibility](#). This essential skill includes intercultural reasoning and competence, sustainability and the natural world, ethical reasoning, collaboration skills and teamwork, and civic discourse and engagement.

Within the General Education requirements, students are also required to take a civics course as part of the [Flexible Nine](#).

Most academic programs include [discipline-specific courses](#) in their degree programs that further support and deepen NNMC's commitment, [as outlined in the institution's Vision Statement](#), to be a Hispanic- and Indigenous-serving institution, sustained by place, culture, and innovation.

Teacher Education and Nursing and Health Sciences departments host a range of [clinical education](#) and practicum sites that engage students in the community. NNMC Career Services also offers a [robust offering of internships and work-based learning placements](#) for NNMC students.

To supplement and complement academic programs, NNMC has a wide range of co-curricular activities that promote learning and growth in support of cultural diversity. In fact, one of the institution's Co-Curricular Student Learning Outcomes is "Culture and Identity." To support this domain, NNMC programs have hosted a number of activities as described in more detail in core components 1C and 3E.

Promotion of Scholarship and Creativity

Scholarly activity is one of the four criteria—Teaching, Scholarly Activity, Advisement, and Service—used to evaluate [faculty members applying for tenure](#). Scholarship is also assessed during the [annual faculty evaluation](#). Consequently, all faculty members are expected to engage in scholarship and contribute to advancing knowledge in their field. Since 2020, many faculty have accomplished [notable examples of scholarship and creative work](#).

As an undergraduate teaching institution, NNMC is proud to provide many unique opportunities for undergraduate students to actively participate in scholarly research, field experience, and creative activities. The institution's [Undergraduate Research](#) page provides the public and prospective students with notable examples of the types of opportunities available at NNMC. Other [examples of scholarly and creative activities](#) are included here.

To promote this campus-wide culture of scholarship and creative activity, NNMC hosts a number of on-campus activities, including the [Annual Student Academic Research, Creativity, and Scholarship Symposium](#), the student-run [literary journal *Trickster*](#), and Annual Student and Faculty Art Exhibitions. All departments work closely with the NNMC Communications and Marketing Department to promote activities and events which feature student and faculty scholarship and creativity.

Beyond these activities, NNMC celebrates academic achievement in the public promotion of Dean's List honorees and through graduation honors. In 2024, the NNMC's Phi Theta Kappa chapter was revitalized and welcomed the largest membership yet of this service and academic excellence organization.

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3.C. Sufficiency of Faculty and Staff

The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.

Argument

Faculty

NNMC is committed to the institutional mission of dedication to excellence in teaching through employing qualified faculty. This commitment is reflected in its rigorous process of hiring and retaining faculty members who possess not only the necessary academic credentials but also a demonstrated passion for effective instruction and student development. Numerous processes exist to ensure that faculty are qualified and supported to deliver high-quality academic programs. In addition, the College monitors program-to-faculty ratios to support achievement of program outcomes.

As per the [NNMC Factbook](#), 2024, NNMC employed 47 full-time and 73 part-time faculty. The median number of full-time and part-time faculty employed over the past five academic years by NNMC is 47 and 56 respectively. 76% of full-time tenured/tenure-track faculty members hold a [terminal degree](#).

In AY 2023-24, 59% of courses were taught by full-time faculty, with an average of 57% of courses being taught by full-time faculty over the past three academic years. Faculty retention rates have fluctuated over the past several years but have recently shown significant improvement. Faculty one-year retention was 79% in Fall 2022, remaining stable at 78% in Fall 2023, and a notable increase to 93% in Fall 2024. The adoption of the salary matrix for faculty compensation may have contributed to this improvement by providing more structured and equitable pay, potentially enhancing faculty satisfaction and retention.

The student-to-faculty ratio has consistently remained 11:1 since 2020 (except for 12:1 in 2022) demonstrating the institution's commitment to maintaining small class sizes and personalized instruction. NNMC has successfully maintained the [faculty-to-program ratio](#); the current average faculty-to-program ratio is 2.1 compared to 2.2 in 2020-21. The average class size in 2024 was 13 for lower-division courses (100 and 200 level) and 10 for upper-division courses (300 and 400).

Faculty Qualifications

NNMC faculty are appropriately qualified. NNMC gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The College also considers competence, effectiveness, and

professional capacity, including, as appropriate, professional licensure and certifications, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional honors and awards, academic and/or regional community service, and continuous documented excellence in teaching. Other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching, student learning outcomes, and institutional advancement are also considered (Pages 9-14 of [Faculty Handbook](#)).

Chairs are responsible for verifying the academic credentials for faculty and adjunct faculty. NNMC requires faculty to have specific minimum credentials to teach courses at different academic levels as laid out in the [Faculty handbook](#) Article II C. For associate-level programs, faculty are required to have a minimum of a master's degree in the field from an accredited institution with the exception of associate-level programs in trades, where faculty are required to have a minimum of a bachelor's or associate degree. For bachelor's level programs, NNMC requires faculty to have a terminal or master's degree with a minimum of 18 graduate credit hours in the relevant discipline. The only exception can be obtained if a faculty meets the criteria established in the [Tested Experience form](#) which is reviewed by the departmental chair and Provost. Dual credit instructors should meet the same credentialing requirements (verified through vetting documentation) as faculty teaching traditional college courses in accordance with HLC and NNMC faculty qualifications. The Office of Human Resources retains the official transcripts of all faculty at NNMC.

Faculty Evaluation

NNMC faculty are evaluated annually through the faculty evaluation two-stage (pre-evaluation and evaluation) process as per the [Collective Bargaining Unit](#) Article 19.1. The annual evaluation is based on the faculty performance in the broad areas of a) teaching, b) scholarly activities, c) college and community service, and d) student advisement consistent with [NNMC's Mission, Vision, Strategic Goals, and Core Values](#). The evaluation assesses whether the faculty member met the goals established in the pre-evaluation. This process supports faculty retention and mentorship towards achieving tenure.

All instructors are also evaluated each semester in each course through student course evaluations. Registered students participate in these evaluation surveys through the LMS during the last two weeks of the semester prior to final exams. The survey results are archived in Watermark system where supervisors can access the reports as required. Faculty members receive the reports from Institutional Research after submission of final grades. Student feedback helps faculty improve their teaching methods and validates instructional methodology.

Faculty Professional Development

Robust professional development opportunities support faculty retention. NNMC faculty are encouraged to participate in professional development and training opportunities. Workshop organizers are supported with needs assessments and feedback from professional development events.

Faculty have had professional development opportunities through the current [Title III](#) and [Title V](#) grants. The professional development activities include participation in various conferences and training programs. Examples include a faculty member from the Department of Language and Letters presenting at the 2025 Conference on Acceleration in Developmental Education (CADE), a Nursing faculty member attending the 2023 New Mexico Nurse Educators Conference and the Western Institute of Nursing Conference. Additionally, math faculty participated in the 2022 Innovative Educators Conference and also completed the ESCALA STEM-X training in 2024. Faculty members from the Department of Engineering attended the American Society of Engineering Education Conference (2022), completed SolidWorks CAD 210 (2022), GoEngineer CAD (2023), and CISCO (2024) trainings. Several faculty members have also participated in professional development opportunities through other grants (e.g. NM-INBRE).

In addition to external professional development opportunities, at the beginning of each semester during convocation, faculty participate in convocation activities. Examples include Ally training to ensure accessibility (Fall 2024), using signature assignments for assessment (Fall 2024), Artificial Intelligence: Educator's New Best Friend (Spring 2025), and Creating Safe and Supporting Learning Environment (Spring 2025). The CTL continues to support the professional growth and learning needs of educators by organizing [“Lunch and Learn” in-person sessions and “Tech-Talk” virtual sessions](#) throughout the academic year. NNMC hosts its own professional development to train faculty to teach online. The multi-module online course introduces instructors to tools and resources for teaching online and blended online courses.

NNMC faculty members have the opportunity to apply for faculty sabbaticals for one semester or for one academic year. In academic years 2023-24 and 2024-25, two faculty members were awarded sabbaticals to pursue their academic and professional interests that align with student learning and success at NNMC.

Faculty/Student Mentorship

Students have opportunities to meet with faculty during weekly office hours. NNMC website posts contact information of staff and faculty. Faculty include contact information on their course syllabi and under the Instructor Information page on the LMS. Faculty are required to regularly participate in

student advisement, a criterion used in the annual faculty evaluation and subsequently in the tenure evaluation process.

NNMC faculty mentor students to foster academic engagement and provide opportunities to work with hands-on research projects. For example, BCES has four undergraduate research labs (Cell Biology Lab, Fish Behavior Lab, Environmental Microbiology Lab and GIS/GPS Remote sensing Lab) to help students gain practical experience and the opportunity to apply classroom knowledge to real-world problems. Faculty pursue grants for such activities through funding agencies like NSF (National Science Foundation) and through NM-INBRE (New Mexico-Idea Network for Biomedical Research and Excellence) and NM-AMP (New Mexico Alliance for Minority Population). Other opportunities for student academic engagement are outlined in component 3B.

Staff

Processes are in place to ensure staff members in Student Services are sufficient and qualified to support student success. Below we discuss qualifications and professional development opportunities within the Financial Aid Office, Advisement and Testing Center, and Tutoring Services.

[NNMC Financial Aid Office](#): Financial aid employees are selected based on qualifications such as communication and customer service skills that would enable the individual to be an effective contributing member of the financial aid team. Staff members are provided regular opportunities to attend live and remote training sessions to enhance their knowledge of federal and state aid programs.

Professional development opportunities include attending the U.S. Department of Education's annual Federal Student Aid conference and state and regional professional organization training. The National Association of Federal Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) organization provides email communications that help to keep staff members abreast of the ever-changing landscape of regulatory and compliance issues that affect the administration of federal student aid programs. On an annual basis, individuals are evaluated on their effectiveness as financial aid professionals. The evaluation process emphasizes improving job performance.

The Financial Aid Office manages work study positions. Applications for work study are submitted annually, students are evaluated each term, and a [supervisor handbook](#) and training are provided each term.

[NNMC Advisement Center](#) and [Testing Services](#): Advisement Center and Testing Services personnel are committed to student success and providing high-quality service to all stakeholders, which includes students, staff and faculty, and community members. Current

job descriptions for all positions define the job requirements and duties. The position descriptions include minimum education requirements, a commitment to a collaborative work environment, and dedication to higher education and the NNMC community. NNMC's three First-Year Academic Advisors can draw on their personal and educational experience to connect to students and support them as they set goals and navigate their academic paths. The Testing Coordinator responsibilities are currently incorporated into the duties of one of the First-Year Advisors. The Testing Coordinator maintains currency through the annual certification renewal process through HiSET and Educational Testing Service.

Advisement Center staff participate in the professional development opportunities NNMC offers. The [Title V](#) and Title III grants have sent them to various conferences, such as the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Conference and Summer Institute.

Advising staff meet regularly for departmental meetings to develop effective and consistent processes for first-year students. Advising, Financial Aid, Registrar, and Admissions meet regularly to discuss enrollment management and improve services for students, faculty, and staff. All student services staff go through yearly evaluations in the Spring semester. During evaluations, the supervisor discusses performance and sets goals for improvement and professional development.

[NNMC Tutoring Services](#): NNMC offers free tutoring services for all students by qualified staff and peer mentors. The Math Center of Excellence uses both professional tutors and student tutors. Professional tutors come from the ranks of math instructors and are qualified through NNMC's process for establishing faculty credentials. Student tutors are also employed and are hired based on transcripts and performance in math courses.

The Writing Center employs professional tutors through our current course instructors. The center has one student who serves as a peer tutor. Qualifications for hiring peer tutors include course performance and instructor recommendations in Composition and other writing-intensive courses.

Title V hired embedded tutors until funding ended in 2024. Embedded tutors have taken the course previously, attend the current course being taught, and provide support during the course for students. They also provide support outside of the class session. Currently, Title V embedded tutors are integrated into Summer Bridge courses.

[Embedded tutors](#) within courses are now funded through NNMC's Title III grant and are focused on STEM courses such as Human Anatomy and Physiology, General Biology, Introduction to Chemistry, Calculus I, and Trigonometry and Pre-calculus. Recommendations for peer tutors come from instructors or student self-selection. Selected students must have already completed the course and earned a 'B' or higher.

In addition to department-specific NNMC provides [Professional Development](#) during convocation week each semester. These trainings range from Title IX to Business Office

Processes to FERPA Training. Each semester training offerings are adjusted as needs on campus change.

Since 2019 Title V has provided memberships to Academic Impressions, an online professional development solution for higher education institutions. Academic Impressions offers highly focused and practical training sessions for faculty and staff. The memberships were dispersed to the academic chairs and student services leaders. These sessions will enable NNMC to continuously improve student services and instruction, focusing on connecting academics with student success and achievement. Title V also funded a two-day [Service Excellence Training](#) and Certification that included all student services departments and academic department administrative assistants.

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3.D. Support for Student Learning and Resources for Teaching

The institution provides student support services that address the needs of its student populations, as well as the teaching resources and infrastructure necessary for student success.

Argument

NNMC provides support for student learning and resources for teaching that meet student needs and align with our mission statement. Student support services are designed to empower students to navigate their educational journeys in ways that transform their lives. Resources are student-centered with clear communication and easy access. Additionally, faculty are supported through professional development and resources to help them maintain academic excellence.

Student Support Services

To better align with NNMC's student-centered mission, a One-Stop model was developed in 2022 to streamline student services offices within the Joseph Montoya Administration Building. Officially opening in Fall 2024, the [One-Stop Center](#) centrally houses the Office of the Registrar, Financial Aid, Recruitment, the Advisement Center, the Accessibility Resource Center, and Career Services. These offices work together to alleviate roadblocks for students while they navigate all processes from application to enrollment and throughout the student lifecycle. Aiming to empower students and help them succeed beyond their NNMC journey, the One-Stop Center includes services to assist students with graduation and job placement. Through cross-training and gentle overlapping of services, students have multiple opportunities to obtain critical information needed to succeed at NNMC.

The following offices address diverse student needs:

[Admissions and Recruitment](#): The Office of Admissions and Recruitment is the first point of contact for all prospective, new, or returning students. Admissions focuses on guiding students toward the program that best suits their academic and professional goals and assisting them through the application process. Over the past two years, Admissions has increased essential communication with new students. Admissions has focused on quicker, consistent communication throughout the application process and has implemented a ["What's Next?"](#) guide that directs new students to their academic advisors and other important next steps, such as logging into their email and the LMS.

[Registrar](#): The Registrar's Office provides academic services to Northern's students and faculty, including maintaining the Academic Catalog and the Academic Calendar, creating the Schedule of Classes, administering registration for all for-credit classes, and certifying the credentials of graduates. The Registrar's Office also processes and maintains all student records, including changes of major, changes of personal information, grades and transcripts, enrollment verifications, and petitions to graduate. Through the newly implemented [CourseDog system](#), departments now work directly on course schedules and classes. This allows department chairs and the Registrar to better plan each semester's Schedule of Classes based on real-time and anticipated needs of the current student population.

[NNMC Financial Aid Office](#): A significant percentage (96%) of NNMC's first-time, full-time students rely on federal, state, and scholarship aid as a lifeline to complete their educational goals. The Financial Aid Office works diligently to assist students in learning about and applying for a range of financial aid programs, including federal and state aid and, if needed, loans. New students are provided with Financial Aid [Packages](#) upon admission and information on Financial Aid through a presentation at the [New Student Orientation](#).

The Financial Aid Office hosts Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) events in area high schools and provides expert financial aid support to all students regardless of where they attend college. On campus, the office provides workstations and in-person events where staff members assist students and their parents in completing the FAFSA or required processes.

The [student loan default rate for NNMC is 0%](#). This is attributed to the work of the Financial Aid Office, COVID tuition assistance, and state aid for new graduates and returning learners.

Northern's [Counseling and Student Support Center \(CASSC\)](#) is guided by inclusivity, student-centered care, and empowerment. The center provides free, confidential, and culturally responsive behavioral health counseling through a dedicated team that includes a licensed counselor and two Student Care Specialists. Services are designed to support the unique challenges and diverse needs of every student, ensuring that no one feels left behind. By connecting students to essential resources such as the food pantry and professional clothing closet, and by actively engaging with the Basic Needs Consortium (BNC), staff work to remove barriers that impede access to basic necessities like food and shelter. Additionally, the [Consultation, Assessment, Referral, and Education \(CARE\) Team](#) offers interdisciplinary support that empowers students to overcome challenges, build resilience, and achieve personal and academic success. Through these efforts, CASSC transforms lives by fostering an environment where every student is valued, heard, and equipped to thrive.

The [NNMC Bookstore](#) is an on-line service where students can purchase/rent textbooks, and purchase on-line resources and materials. Vouchers are provided to students who

have aid in excess of tuition. Vouchers are available approximately three weeks into each term to purchase materials and textbooks needed for enrolled classes. The Bookstore website includes videos and instructions to assist students in completing their purchase of textbooks and materials for enrolled classes.

[NNMC Ben Lujan](#) Library staff work with administrators and faculty to acquire, maintain, and update library-related resources. Materials are acquired in print and electronic format per Collection Development Guidelines. As new academic areas of study are suggested, the Library is included in the approval process to ensure the college's ability to support the given program. The library also offers a material fulfillment service that allows patrons to receive resources via Interlibrary Loan to supplement the existing collection free of charge.

Since 2023, the library has added more online resources to support multiple department needs and new programs of study. EBSCOlearning is a platform that provides practice tests for NNMC certifications, associate and bachelor programs, adult education, and high school equivalency programs. In 2024, BlueCareer and FinancialFit were added to the library's online learning tools to support the growing trade programs. BlueCareer is a resource center for users interested in learning more about the skilled trades and exploring a career transition. FinancialFit helps students make informed financial decisions and achieve their financial goals.

Because many students lack technology resources, the library offers Wi-Fi and over 25 computers dedicated to student use. For research, the library provides access to approximately 65 databases that include over 21,000 electronic academic journals. The library houses the Pearson Testing Center, meeting rooms, group and individual study rooms, the NNMC Food Pantry, and space for STEM tutoring.

[Information Technology \(IT\)](#): To strengthen student success and access, NNMC has implemented a more student-centered IT approach. Student services staff received expanded training on IT systems, improving support for student needs. The Advisement Center provides new students with detailed login instructions for email, Banner, and the LMS, as well as hands-on guidance to ensure successful access and navigation.

All incoming students attend an IT workshop during [New Student Orientation](#) to familiarize themselves with available tools and resources. The One Stop Center supports cross-trained staff who assist with essential IT tasks, including Banner access and student form navigation. The IT Department also offers email support, device and connectivity troubleshooting, and free Microsoft 365 access.

Communication about IT services is consistently delivered through email, the college website, social media, and a texting platform—ensuring students remain informed and supported throughout their academic journey.

Learning Support

NNMC provides students with learning support and placement policies to address their academic needs as they enter the institution.

In 2023 the college transitioned to a placement system of multiple measures to better serve students as this approach yields more accurate and fair placement. Multiple measures allow for a more comprehensive view of students' abilities and reduce the high stakes pressure of one assessment instrument.

NNMC's [Placement Policy](#) uses the following measures: (1) Achievement in previous coursework, through the examination of transcripts and consideration of GPA; (2) Test scores when available, including Accuplacer, ACT, SAT, HiSET, or other approved exams; and (3) When necessary, performance on placement instruments developed by the Math and English departments.

NNMC provides courses in English and mathematics to transition developmental students into college-level courses.

In Fall 2024, co-requisite English courses (ENGL 1110 Composition I with a co-requisite support course of ENGL 109N) were offered at scale, ensuring all students an accelerated path to reach college-level English Composition. The data comparing traditional and co-requisite tracks demonstrates greater persistence and retention for students in the corequisite track. (See 3G or access the [full report](#) on the success of this effort.)

Additionally, accelerated courses are offered in [math](#) (MATH 1215 Intermediate Algebra combined with the supportive course of MATH 101). Another accelerated track is designed for some programs in the college of Liberal Arts, Education, and Business. Students can take MATH 100N Fundamentals of Math and then move directly into MATH 1130 Survey of Mathematics for a college level math course that emphasizes more practical applications. Traditional tracks of developmental Math with two courses MATH 100N and MATH 1215 are also offered for students who would benefit from a slower pace.

NNMC's [Accessibility Resource Center \(ARC\)](#) Coordinator provides reasonable accommodations under Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for students with exceptionality. Accommodations are determined through an interactive dialogue as required by ADA. The aim of ARC is to ensure students with exceptionalities are provided equal access to the curriculum so their opportunity to learn is the same as their peers. This center offers inclusive strategies that are centered on enabling students to succeed in their educational journey.

The [Writing Center](#) offers writing assistance for all NNMC students at all stages of the writing process. The goal of the Writing Center is to support students' ability to become strong and independent writers. The Writing Center is a space where students can receive the help they need, including basic writing skills, detailed explanations of thesis

statements, help in correcting errors in MLA or APA citations and many other topics. If students lack confidence in their writing or feel underprepared for college writing, working individually with a tutor can empower them to gain the necessary skills to excel in their writing assignments. Students may drop by or schedule appointments for in person or online tutoring.

The [Math Center of Excellence](#) provides services for students and faculty and is dedicated to helping students strengthen their math skills so they gain confidence and independence in mathematics. The Math Learning Center welcomes all students as valued mathematicians and critical thinkers. Students do not need an appointment for in person or zoom tutoring sessions.

To promote the value of tutoring, students are provided information regarding tutoring services during New Student Orientation, first year English, Math, and First Year Experience classes. Additionally, links to the Writing Center and Math Center of Excellence are included in the Current Student webpage under [Academic Resources](#) so that students can easily connect to these centers and utilize their services.

Advising

At NNMC, advisement serves as a key support system for all students, providing resources that align with the college's mission of inclusive, student-centered learning. NNMC Advising consists of three interlocking components: 1) The First-Year Advising Center (including New Student Orientation); 2) Specialized Advising programs that serve particular student populations (dual credit students, CAMP students, and STEM students); and, 3) Degree-specific faculty advisement.

NNMC has [well-established advisement procedures](#) tailored to meet the needs of its students, many of whom are first-generation, often underprepared, and at risk. Proactive advisement provides these students, and all others, with valuable support, guidance, and connections to enhance their academic success. Students and advisors are able to regularly review their progress through [general degree audits](#) available through the on-line catalog or by utilizing [Degree Works software](#).

The Advisement Center: The [mission](#) of the [Advisement Center](#) is to support student success by assisting first-year students to set goals, select and navigate an academic path, and develop lifelong learning. At NNMC, advising begins as soon as a student is admitted to the college with initial contact from the Advisement Center and through initial sessions (to discuss goals, foster connections, connect to campus resources, and register) and follow up sessions to check in and keep the students on track. The Advisement Center encourages all students to register early for classes and regularly hosts [early registration events](#). First-year advisement remains mandatory for the first 30 credits or three semesters. After this, students are transitioned to faculty program advisors.

The Advisement center is also a centralized hub for coordinating academic interventions and referral for students who may be struggling. The [Early Alert System](#) allows faculty members to communicate concerns, such as poor attendance or participation and missing assignments. NNMC has invested in [Watermark's Student Success and Engagement platform](#) to improve the infrastructure for early warning as a commitment to this essential support. Advisement Center staff members coordinate referrals and interventions for at-risk students. The Advisement Center works with NNMC Athletics to provide specific support for student athletes, many of whom are International Students and have specialized needs regarding scheduling and selection of classes, NAIA eligibility, and other concerns. Advisors also support [transfer students](#) by helping these students navigate the initial matriculation process and transition to the appropriate faculty advisor. Additionally, the Advisement Center houses a full-time Trades Advisor who works directly with all Trades program students from admission to graduation.

The Advisement Center coordinates advisement policies and procedures across campus to ensure consistency, coordination, and high standards of excellence. The [Advisement Handbook](#) includes an advisement syllabus and other resources to aid advisors. The Advisement Center also provides training and technical assistance to programs and academic departments, such as [Degree Works Training](#). Faculty and staff have also received training through participation in National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) conferences.

The Advisement Center hosts NNMC's campus-wide [New Student Orientation \(NSO\)](#). NSO is foundational in setting students up for excellence. This event focuses on creating a sense of belonging and community for new students. These in-person events, held prior to both Fall and Spring semesters, familiarize students with the campus, programs, and resources. During NSO, new students interact with faculty, staff, new and current students through engaging workshops. Recently, NSO has incorporated the [Advisement Expo](#) where students can meet their faculty advisors, review their schedules, and make any necessary adjustments. A recent [evaluation of NSO](#) demonstrates the effectiveness of the event.

Specialized Advising Programs: NNMC also provides a number of special advisement programs that serve specific student populations. This allows the institution to provide more targeted and individualized services to students:

- [The Dual Credit Center](#)
- [College Assistant Migrant Program \(CAMP\)](#)
- [Veteran Resource Center](#)
- [TRIO Educational Opportunity Center](#)
- [STEM Holistic Advisement](#)

Degree-specific faculty advisement: As a regional comprehensive institution, teaching and advisement are central to the mission of NNMC faculty. Advising has been incorporated in [annual faculty evaluations](#) as well as for [evaluation criteria for tenure applications](#). For all

students, regardless of major, faculty serve as their primary academic advisor in their college journey. Academic departments assign faculty advisors each semester through Banner. These advisors help students stay on track to graduate, take the correct sequences of courses, and have the guidance necessary to pursue their academic and career goals.

Every department develops their own system for tracking and documentation, registration and outreach, and department-specific procedures. Many programs require mandatory advisement to ensure student success. For instance, as soon as a student declares a Liberal Arts major, a faculty advisor from Languages and Letters reaches out to the student for required advisement, regardless of credits completed. [Engineering students](#), on the other hand, are assigned a PIN that is required for registration and must be obtained from their faculty advisor. Faculty from across the college regularly participate in campus-wide events that promote advisement, such as the NSO, Academic Expo and [“Know Your Program”](#).

Infrastructure and Resources

NNMC provides students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning.

The [NNMC Information Technology department](#) supports the Banner Administrative Software system; college-wide phone systems, and WiFi network. Classroom Technologies are also supported through departmental computers and equipment such as printers, smartboards, classroom digital projectors, and computer software/network upgrades.

The following academic departments provide research facilities, labs, clinical practice sites, and other resources that encourage student engagement and growth in research activities:

- [Nursing and Health Sciences Clinical Practice Sites](#)
- [Engineering Labs](#)
- [Mathematics and Physical Science Labs](#)
- [Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science Research Labs](#)
- [Arts and Human Sciences Studios and Galleries](#)

The NNMC [Center for Teaching and Learning](#) (CTL) advances the college mission by fostering culturally-responsive, student-centered teaching and developing faculty leadership. CTL supports instructional excellence through professional development, offering monthly workshops for faculty, staff, and students—both in-person and online. Faculty sessions emphasize pedagogy, curriculum design, and technology integration, while student-led workshops build academic and professional skills. CTL services include

online course design support, Learning Management System (LMS) assistance, Quality Matters training, and ongoing instructional development—all contributing to student success and institutional effectiveness.

In Summer 2025, NNMC transitioned from Blackboard to Canvas for all courses. CTL has been instrumental in supporting students and faculty in this transition. They have offered a [session at Convocation](#) to introduce the LMS and a series of 6 workshops to cover special topics. The workshops have been very informative and well received. Additionally, CTL formed a committee with faculty and Distance Education staff to address the transition and related issues.

Guidance on Effective Use of Research and Information Resources

NNMC develops students' ability to engage in research and learn how to use information resources. Students are supported through practicums, academic coaching, capstone courses, and faculty-mentored projects. The following list captures some of those efforts:

- [English Courses and Research Skills](#)
- [Associate Nursing Program and Academic Support](#)
- [Engineering Capstone Courses](#)
- [Bachelor in Business Administration Capstone Courses](#)

Students from every department may utilize support from Library staff through online [research guides and research consultations](#) . Typically, research consultation appointments last between 30 minutes to an hour and include guidance from library staff to refine a research topic, develop search strategies, and identify appropriate sources.

Finally, to guide integrity and ethical behavior in the effective use of information sources, the [Student Handbook 2025/2026](#) outlines values of the campus community, including “Honesty and Integrity,” and emphasizes that “At Northern, student members of the community are expected to foster these values. Consistent with our academic mission, each member of the college community bears personal responsibility for their conduct, and assumes reasonable responsibility for the behavior of others.” The handbook includes a link to the [Academic Integrity Guidelines](#), which define plagiarism and provide examples. The document outlines the consequences of violating academic integrity, the steps involved in the process, and the appeal process.

Sources

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- CAO_ACADEMICS_NNMC Library Research Support

3.E. Assessment of Student Learning

The institution improves the quality of educational programs based on its assessment of student learning.

Argument

NNMC consistently demonstrates a commitment to assessment processes to analyze and improve student learning.

The campus-wide assessment committee, Committee for Learning Assessment of Students (CLAS), [meets regularly](#) to organize General Education assessments, develop [guidance on academic program assessment expectations](#), and [archive institutional information](#) and General Education courses for assessment. The committee provides [professional development](#) and coordinates faculty collaboration on assessment activities. Examples of best practices include a session by QM promoting [objective/assessment alignment](#), two sessions on rubric and norming presented by the National Institute for Learning Outcomes Assessment, and [sessions led by NNMC faculty based on their use of tools](#).

General Education

In 2019, the NMHED implemented a new model for General Education courses, which includes a common numbering system, course descriptions, and student learning outcomes, along with five essential skills (Communication, Quantitative Reasoning, Information & Digital Literacy, Personal & Social Responsibility, and Critical Thinking) that every student should demonstrate upon successful completion of general education courses.

NMHED also defined six General Education content areas (Communication, Mathematics, Science, Social and Behavioral Science, Humanities, and Creative & Fine Arts), credit hours that must be obtained in each area, and a subset of the five essential skills that must be taught in each area. Each NMHED public institution also selects an additional nine hours to fulfill the NMHED General Education requirements.

NNMC reorganized its General Education curriculum to align with the NMHED requirements. Furthermore, each course in NNMC's General Education curriculum was submitted and approved by NMHED. All [General Education courses have been through this approval process](#).

Since this implementation, General Education faculty have developed definitions for each essential skill to measure student learning, and an [overarching timeframe](#) for data

collection, analysis, and implementation of improvement plans. Based on this established timeline, [rubrics](#) for each essential skill are used by General Education faculty to assess student work. The CLAS Curricular Assessment Plan tracks the current process, cycle, and timeline for the assessment of these five areas. The yearly rotation is divided into Data Collection, Evaluation, Improvement, and Implementation.

Results are compiled through the CLAS Committee and reported to the faculty to review and discuss the assessment results, share pedagogy, strengthen measurements, and develop improvement strategies when warranted. When results are finalized, the CLAS Committee submits [yearly reports](#) to the Provost ([most recent report](#)).

Although the 2019 shift to incorporate NMHED Essential Skills and rework General Education student learning outcomes at the college is relatively new, examples of the impact include:

- After faculty raised concerns over the small number of artifacts reviewed, two members of the CLAS Committee presented [confidence interval research](#) that, in turn, led to more precise expectations and [curriculum mapping](#) of General Education courses.
- After the Center for Teaching & Learning [presentation on signature assignments](#), the Arts & Human Sciences faculty worked to develop a [signature assignment template](#) that allows the faculty to better identify both General Education and departmental outcomes when creating assignments. It also allows faculty to better share assignment ideas with adjuncts.
- Faculty teaching Quantitative Reasoning have developed an assignment repository. Examples include [Math](#) and [Engineering](#).
- The Language & Letters department applied the James Madison University model of learning improvement at scale to develop an [intervention based on the “written expression”](#) performance indicator. The [Student Success Narrative Communication Action Plan](#) indicates the successful implementation of this intervention.

Academic Programs

Considering the wide range of degree programs available, NNMC aims to provide flexibility for each academic department to assess faculty-identified student learning outcomes within their distinct academic programs. The importance of continuous improvement related to student learning is first emphasized in the [academic program proposal](#) process. All new academic programs must develop a comprehensive assessment plan as part of the new program approval process. In addition to the accreditation requirements for externally accredited programs, all NNMC's programs are required to follow NNMC's internal program assessment requirements. These include:

- Establishing Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLO) for each degree program.

- Developing a Curriculum Map which specifies the courses in which each PSLO is assessed, the assessment measurement tool, and benchmarks.
- Developing an Assessment Plan and reporting results for the assessment, evaluation, and improvement of programs.

These requirements are later echoed in the [academic program review prompts](#), where an entire criterion is dedicated to student learning assessment.

Programs are expected to choose outcomes to assess and are required to submit an annual assessment report as an appendix to the departmental Annual Reports, on the [progress of the current program assessment plan](#). Non-accredited programs use Watermark's Planning & Self-Study tool for this endeavor, while accredited programs utilize existing methods for documenting cycles, expectations for student performance, results, and improvement strategy progress. Examples of these reports can be seen with the [Associate of Arts in Liberal Arts](#) (non-accredited program) and [RN to BSN program](#) (accredited).

Several examples of academic program changes that have resulted from assessment results include:

- Arts & Human Sciences: Full-time faculty have realigned their student learning outcomes, created a departmental [assessment plan and timeline](#) applicable to all programs, and generated six rubrics for departmental use.
- Barbering & Cosmetology: Instructors noted that students were taking too much time to react to situations that necessitated blood spill procedures. As a result, instructors enhanced expectations and pedagogy with [improved results](#).
- Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science programs: Instructors recommended [changes in course sequencing in the BS in Biology](#) and [length of term in the AS Radiation Protection](#) to improve student learning in the respective programs.
- Math & Physical Science recommended the use of paper exams in Calculus II instead of WebAssign exams to encourage the use of proper notation when responding to a Calculus II question. The department recommended an increased number of word problems in College Algebra since students were experiencing more difficulty when answering word problems. This has been implemented in [College Algebra](#).
- As a result of participating in the NMHED ECHO project and an [analysis of courses with high Drop, Fail, and Withdraw \(DFW\) rates](#), Language & Letters and Math & Physical Science implemented a corequisite model for Composition I and Intermediate Algebra which was brought to scale in Fall 2024.

Co-Curricular Assessment

Following the 2020 Year 4 Mid-cycle Comprehensive Evaluation, NNMC continued to develop the [co-curricular assessment process](#). The development of the co-curricular program slowed after 2020, due to the sudden transition to remote learning caused by the COVID pandemic between 2020 and 2023, as well as turnover in leadership within Assessment and Co-curricular. Remote co-curricular activities faced challenges such as limited spontaneous interactions, unequal access to technology and the internet, and the difficulty of replicating physical events like fairs and arts activities. In 2022, the responsibility for co-curricular assessments shifted from the Associate VP to the Assessment Director. Although the Assessment Director resigned in 2023, they continued to manage the program remotely in 2024. Other resignations also impacted the membership of the co-curricular committee. In 2025, a tenured faculty member with 19 years of experience in higher education and assessment, agreed to lead the assessment efforts.

Northern has various instruments for planning and reporting co-curricular activities and assessments. For selected events the [Co-Curricular Plan](#) form is due before an activity is held and collects information on assessed goals, student learning outcomes, data collection methods (e.g., surveys, interviews), a description of methods, sample size, resources, and the assessment timeline. Final reports are due on the last Friday in June, gathering similar information while also requiring reflective questions on the results of the learning outcomes and their contribution to identified co-curricular goals. The Co-curricular Assessment Cycle is concluded with an end-of-cycle retreat and/or training. During 2021-2025, the following co-curricular trainings were held.

- Fall 2021 – [Co-curricular Assessment Training](#)
- Spring 2023 - [Development of Rubrics and Training](#)
- Summer 2025 - [Retreat](#)

In 2025, the co-curricular committee administered the [Co-Curricular Assessment Inventory](#), which recorded over 130 [co-curricular activities](#) provided between 2020 and 2025. Results showed that the Student Life Department offered 22% of these activities, the Nursing Department provided 18%, the Native American and Veterans Center contributed 22%, and the Title III and Title V offices added 16%.

Examples of the co-curricular plans and reports include the Madrid Center Co-Curricular Assessment Plan in 2020. Recommended actions from the [Madrid Center Co-Curricular Assessment Plan](#) included collaborating with Student Life and holding [student stress management workshops](#). Recommended actions resulting from the New Student Orientation Fall 2023 included generating more volunteers, having activities for early arrivers, and ensuring the event is a school-wide initiative rather than relying only on student affairs staff. A recommended action from the [resume writing activity](#) in Spring

2023 was to focus on the formatting of resumes. Finally, a recommended action from the [20th Annual Academic Research Symposium in Spring 2025](#) was to encourage more students to present posters.

[A student inventory](#) of co-curricular assessment at Northern was conducted this year (2025) from March 24 to March 31. The survey was distributed to the entire student body, consisting of 1,400 students, and received 72 responses. Among those respondents, 50% reported [participation in co-curricular activities on campus](#). When asked about the categories of co-curricular activities they engaged in, 51% indicated Community Service, while 46% mentioned Arts and Culture events. Respondents rated their co-curricular experience an average of 3.8 stars out of 5.

Students shared key college experiences, including joining clubs, engaging in community service, and attending networking events. [Career fairs](#) were essential for job exploration, while the [Financial Literacy events](#) continue to provide essential financial resources for NNMC's students. Cultural celebrations, such as [Hispanic Heritage Month](#), highlighted diversity, and unique activities, like the [Haunted Morgue](#), added enjoyment. Visits to local sites, such as the [Santa Fe Roundhouse](#), enriched cultural understanding. Students reported achieving co-curricular goals in areas like health and wellness (48%) and community engagement (70%). Skills utilized included effective communication (20%) and networking (24%). Over 60% of respondents felt that co-curricular involvement boosted their academic performance. Suggestions for improvement included better event notifications via social media, increased community engagement, accommodating different schedules, integrating study spaces with activities, and considering paid leadership roles for club presidents.

The Co-Curricular Committee hosted the [2025 Co-Curricular Summer Retreat on June 13, 2025](#), focusing on the assessment cycle, objectives, activities, results, and instruments to ensure a successful process. A [Co-Curricular report](#) was submitted to the Accreditation Steering Committee, the Executive Team, and the Academic Deans and Chairs Committee.

The committee shared an [update on co-curricular assessment](#) with faculty and staff during the Fall 2025 Convocation.

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3.F. Program Review

The institution improves its curriculum based on periodic program review.

Argument

Program Review Process

NNMC's Program Review process evaluates whether programs meet the highest standards and deliver an exceptional education to all students, reflecting the institution's mission to be a student-centered community dedicated to excellence.

The [Academic Program Review policy](#) outlines guiding principles for these evaluations and describes how the college will conduct systematic and periodic reviews of its academic programs. These reviews are typically conducted on a [seven-year cycle](#), taking into consideration specialized program accreditation schedules. The review process evaluates six criteria for program review.

1. Student Learning, Outcomes Assessment, and Curriculum
2. Faculty Qualifications, Effort, and Evaluation
3. Student Success
4. Program Analysis
5. Program Economics
6. External Stakeholders

The Provost schedules self-studies according to a set timetable. Each year, in the first week of April, the Provost shares any updates to the seven-year review calendar, provided there are no financial emergencies.

Throughout April, guidance for [Gray Associates](#) (now Gray Decision Intelligence (DI)) and Watermark software is made available for programs under review, along with [relevant rubrics](#). By May, the Provost [appoints reviewers](#), including stakeholders from academic leadership and various support services, to ensure there are no conflicts of interest.

In July and August, the Office of Institutional Research provides a [comprehensive data table](#) that presents longitudinal performance metrics for each program, including aspects such as program profiles, faculty profiles, student academic progress, and overall program outcomes. This information is also shared with the Provost for review and feedback.

Participants in the Program Review process are required to complete a [Program Review Template](#) (available in Watermark), which includes a series of detailed questions related to each of the specified criteria. Additionally, a [Self-Study Job Aid](#) is available to assist with the self-study submissions. Programs that hold external accreditation, such as the

associate and baccalaureate degrees in Nursing, baccalaureate Engineering programs, the Department of Business degrees, and all Teacher Education programs, are permitted to submit [abbreviated reviews](#). Additionally, certificate programs can now submit a [certificate specific template for certificate program reviews](#).

Self-studies and program reviews are due by October 15 and are distributed to reviewers for evaluation until November 15. Peer evaluators use the Criterion Performance Rubrics (provided within the [Program Review Template](#)) to assess the self-studies and assign performance levels for each criterion. Each evaluation team typically includes three to four peer evaluators, chosen based on their expertise for the criteria. After analyzing the programs individually, the evaluators compile their findings and provide justifications for their assessments. The Office of the Provost offers [guidelines](#) and resources for reviewers throughout this evaluative process. Reviewers' feedback is due by December 15.

The Academic Program Review (APR) Policy states that on January 15, the chairs receive feedback on the program reviews they submitted. Fridays in February are designated for Q&A sessions between program leaders and reviewers. In March, a meeting is held to discuss the findings and recommendations, including the potential elimination of programs or increased funding. The Office of the Provost reviews the self-study submissions and the feedback provided by peer evaluators to compile a final report. The Provost informs the Faculty Senate and shares the report with the union representative.

Recommendations from the review process can be categorized into one of three pathways:

1. The program is deemed viable, with no interim report necessary.
2. An area of program improvement is identified, necessitating an interim report to evaluate improvements; or
3. The program is considered not viable, with an interim report unlikely to yield beneficial changes.

Interim reports are submitted and reviewed at the end of each semester to address the evaluator's recommendations. Programs from previous reviews meet with the Provost in March or April, with additional meetings arranged if necessary. In May, the Provost presents the final report to the Board of Regents. Chairs have the flexibility to develop and oversee action plans based on their program structures. If the College decides not to continue a program, the [Academic Program Elimination Policy](#) is implemented. When a review requires administrative action, it is presented to the relevant academic chair and President, and if needed, ultimately to the Board of Regents.

Accredited and Non-Accredited Program Reviews

Since the 2020 Assurance Review, NNMC has had [nineteen reviews](#).

2021 Program Reviews

In 2021, the college conducted three program reviews. Two of the reviews involved programs with program accreditation: the [Electromechanical Engineering Technology \(EET\) program](#) and the [Information Engineering Technology \(IET\) program](#). The APR reports, or conclusions, for both program reviews determined that the “pathway” was a 2: “An area of program improvement is identified, necessitating an interim report to evaluate improvements.” The reviewer recommendations were similar for the [EET](#) and [IET programs](#).

The EET and IET interim reports were also similar as they addressed strategies that benefited both programs. These interim reports, submitted in [December 2023](#), [May 2024](#), and [December 2024](#), discussed the development of responses to these recommendations. Specifically, the Department of Engineering (DET) has launched several initiatives, including the [“Aspire to Engineer” seminar](#) and the [Northern Stewards Field School](#). They offered a [Certificate in Engineering Drawing and CAD](#), resulting in 11 graduates. DET has finalized a \$638,000 [agreement with LANL for a CAD program](#) to increase the number of qualified designers/drafters at LANL. The [strategic plan](#) focuses on increasing enrollment through online courses and high school outreach.

2022 Program Reviews

In 2022, five programs underwent evaluation through the program review process. Of these, the [AAS Allied Health Program](#) underwent a non-accredited program review. The results determined that the “pathway” was a 2: “An area of program improvement is identified, necessitating an interim report to evaluate improvements.” The 2022 [AAS Allied Health Program Review Report](#) recommended that outreach to at-risk ADN students is necessary, along with a plan to achieve this. The program was advised to establish nursing orientation and follow-ups for students who are not admitted, as well as to develop a Phlebotomy Certificate proposal and explore the development of stackable credentials. Additionally, the recommendations included developing an action plan to improve graduation rates and dual credit pathways. The program was also encouraged to strengthen employer relationships for placements. Interim enrollment reports were submitted in [December 2023](#) and [December 2024](#), and a report for June 2025 is also due. Reported information indicates that the department hired a qualified [phlebotomy instructor](#) in fall 2024, and the [phlebotomy program](#) has been available to both dual credit students and adult learners since spring 2025. The Allied Health Degree plan now features two tracks: a phlebotomy track and a non-phlebotomy track. Students in the Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) who do not succeed can choose to enroll in the phlebotomy program to earn a Phlebotomy Technician Certificate and continue on to earn an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) in Allied Health. Additionally, a lab manager from Presbyterian Espanola Hospital has joined the Nursing & Health Sciences [Community Advisory Board \(CAB\)](#). Phlebotomy employer stakeholders continue to participate in the biannual meetings of the Nursing & Health Sciences CAB.

Another program review in 2022 included the [Bachelor of Integrated Studies in Psychology and Humanities](#). The [Program Review Report](#) recommended that program leadership consider eliminating the Humanities Emphasis due to low enrollment. An interim report was due to the Council of Chairs by December 2022. Key recommendations included forming an External Advisory

Committee by May 31, 2022, developing a Strategic Plan and Enrollment Plan by December 2022, and improving the Student Learning Outcome Assessment by July 2022. Additional recommendations include exploring a fully online program, short-term certificates, and a focus on faculty retention and development.

The [interim reports](#) describe how the department addressed these recommendations. The department developed a [strategic plan for AHS](#) including a new mission, enhanced program quality, and strategies for recruitment and retention. AHS offers both online and in-person courses, mostly taught by QM-approved instructors. A [professional development fund for faculty](#) was established, resulting in two applicants at the time of the report.

The department planned to review its mission and vision in Spring 2025. Additionally, an [assessment plan](#) and [advising document](#) were developed, as well as a [signature assignment template](#). Major updates included introducing [rubrics for Critical Thinking](#), developing a 5-year strategic plan, and conducting a retroactive assessment for the 2023-24 academic year. An [External Advisory Committee \(EAC\)](#) was formed, holding its first meeting in February 2023, to evaluate program-level Student Learning Outcomes.

2023 Program Reviews

In 2023, five Program Reviews were conducted. The program review for the [sUAS Program](#) found that the program did not meet quality standards. As stated in a [memo dated April 3, 2023](#), the department recommended that the program's certificate be terminated. As part of the termination process, the department was required to follow the established [Teach-Out Process](#). Similarly, the [2023 AA Substance Abuse Counseling](#) program review recommended suspending the program due to program deficiencies. This suspension, after consultation with the HLC, was [approved by the Board of Regents](#).

The [2023 AAS Radiation Protection Program Review](#) was [concluded with the following recommendations](#). Faculty should create a mission statement and a strategic plan that includes data analysis and collaboration with Admissions and Career Services. To boost graduation rates, the program should support faster student progress and encourage involvement in CEFs. The grant funded faculty position should be institutionalized. Classroom observations should be resumed in spring 2023 to enhance teaching. Detailed inventories of lab supplies for the LANL partnership should be maintained.

The program's [interim reports](#) stated that BCES's AAS Radiation Protection program [revised its PSLOs in Fall 2023](#) and implemented a [new 8-week course format](#) to improve graduation rates. The faculty engaged in assessment activities (see Core Component 3E for more detail on assessment reports and assessment workshops) and applied for four grants, with two [being successful in securing funding](#). [Course evaluations](#) in Watermark began in Fall 2023, showing response rates of 75% and 66.6% for the Radiation Protection Courses. The [faculty position became 100% funded](#). The recommendations from the [April 2024 External Advisory Committee \(EAC\) meetings](#) will inform the Strategic Improvement Plan.

2024 Program Reviews

In 2024, the college conducted two program reviews for programs in two departments, Teacher Education and Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science Department. Due to a transition in Provost leadership, some components of the program review policy for 2024 were delayed or abbreviated.

The [Teacher Education Department's](#) Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, and Alternative Licensure Certificates programs underwent a CAEP review and visit in fall 2023. The narrative was provided to the 2024 Program Review Committee. The department submitted a summary of its internal self-study to the 2024 Program Review Committee and reviewers completed their process. A conclusion report was not completed for this Program Review.

The Biology, Chemistry, and Environmental Science Department's [Environmental Science](#) programs (Associate and Bachelor of Science) were also evaluated in 2024. The Environmental Science program is stackable, and this program review, therefore, covers both degree levels. In this case, the incoming Assessment Director compiled a conclusion report based on the reviewers' completed rubrics. [The conclusion report](#) provided several recommendations. Key recommendations included establishing measurable Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs), integrating assessments into the curriculum, developing an exit survey for graduates, enhancing employer collaborations, assessing laboratory feasibility, creating a five-year plan, and identifying courses for Quality Matters approval.

The Interim Report reported that Student Learning Outcomes ([SLOs](#)) have been revised for measurability and realigned with the curriculum. The BCES program is focusing on assessment reporting, while curricula for AS and BS degrees are under review. [Equipment management](#) is maintained by the BCES Lab Manager. Faculty collaborate with LANL on climate change research and GIS/GPS training. The impact of the flexible schedule on enrollment is still to be assessed.

2025 Program Reviews

The most recent 2025 Program Review evaluated two programs. These self-studies include the [2025 AAS in Nuclear Operations Technology](#) and the [2025 Technical Trades programs](#). The Program Review process was delayed in 2025 due to a transition in leadership. The new Assessment Director compiled a conclusion report based on the reviewers' completed rubrics for both the AAS in Nuclear Operations Technology and the Technical Trades programs.

[AAS Nuclear Operations APR recommendations](#) included: uploading a curriculum map to Watermark, assessing the program with the new Provost, increasing enrollment, improving graduation rates, creating a faculty credential table, and holding External Advisory Committee meetings. The next program report and check-in are due in December 2025.

[The Technical Trades Program Review Report recommends](#) creating a curriculum map to assess student learning outcomes and record results in Watermark. It also advises compiling a faculty qualifications table, obtaining enrollment data from IR, and establishing a system to track students who leave before completing their programs, including exit interviews and collaboration with IR and Assessment. Additionally, the College's Credit for Prior Learning policy should be revised to better support Technical Trades programs. The Chair and faculty should work with the Director of Assessment and the External Advisory Committee (EAC) on this. Lastly, a list of EAC members should be provided, along with an increase in membership and meeting frequency. Minutes should also be submitted to the Director of Assessment. The next program report and check-in are due in December 2025.

2026 Program Reviews

The [2026 Program Review](#) is well underway. With a new Provost hired, this process will resume with a plan to fully implement the Program Review Policy.

Evaluation of Transferred Credits

NNMC evaluates all transferred credits, including those awarded for experiential learning. The Office of the Registrar is responsible for this function. To maximize the opportunities available to the public, the institution has adopted guidelines.

The [online academic catalog](#) discusses these policies (including the transfer criteria). The [Transfer Policy](#) can be accessed on the Transfer Students page. Credit can be awarded for prior learning based on multiple factors including CLEP, AP, locally developed exams as explained in [the Credit for Prior Learning Guidelines](#).

The statewide general education [common course numbering system](#) includes common course descriptions and course competencies that facilitates the [ease of credit transfer](#) from one in-state college/university to another.

Some departments may have agreements with external colleges that help transfer courses between programs and minimize course duplication. Articulation Agreements by Degree Program are established and available on the website.

- [RN to BSN \(Luna Community College\)](#)
- [RN to BSN \(NMNEC\)](#)
- [RN to BSN \(UNM Taos\)](#)
- [BA in Business Administration \(Luna Community College\)](#)
- [AA in General Psychology \(Santa Fe Community College\)](#)
- [BA in Early Childhood Education \(UNM Taos\)](#)
- [AAS in Pre-Engineering \(Mesalands CC\) to BEng in Electromechanical Engineering Technology \(NNMC\)](#)

- [AAS in Wind Energy Technology \(Mesalands CC\) to BEng in Electromechanical Engineering Technology \(NNMC\)](#)

NM public institutions are required to accept specific lower-division courses for degree requirements. NMHED has developed transfer guides to facilitate this process, in accordance with state law (21-1B, NMSA 1978). First- and second-year students should complete specific courses during their freshman and sophomore years, as these general education courses can be transferred to other public colleges in the state. Students starting their first year who have not declared a major are encouraged to take [General Education courses during their freshman year](#). These General Education courses transfer to all public colleges and universities in New Mexico. There is a common system for naming and outlining learning objectives for 1000- and 2000-level courses, while courses unique to one institution at these levels are called "unique courses." Note that some courses approved for associate of applied science degrees may not transfer to other programs. NNMC's common and unique courses are listed on the [New Mexico Common Course Matrix](#), and course descriptions and student learning outcomes are available in the [New Mexico Common Course Catalog](#). Discipline-specific courses are transferred after consulting with program faculty and reviewing course syllabi for equivalency.

Course and Faculty Standards

NNMC's Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC), part of the Faculty Senate, approves all curricula. See the [Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Handbook](#), 3A, 3B, and 3C for more information on the UCC policies and procedures.

Academic Chairs and Program Directors document faculty qualifications upon hiring and at the beginning of each semester. The [Faculty Handbook](#) and [Faculty Collective Bargaining Unit Agreement](#) outline minimum qualifications for faculty. See 3C for more information on these requirements and how the [Faculty Evaluation Credential Form](#) and the [Tested Experience Form](#) are used to verify academic credentials. Dual credit instructors must meet the same qualifications as any faculty and must maintain the same academic standards and student learning outcomes.

Program Learning Outcomes

Assessment of program level learning outcomes is reported in the Program Review process. Responsibility for the rigor of credit-bearing courses and student learning outcomes (SLOs) lies with the faculty and is often determined by industry professional standards and accreditation standards. Each department develops specific Program Student Learning Outcomes (PSLOs) for its respective programs. See 3A for examples of specific departments and the process of creating meaningful PSLOs.

Specialized Accreditation

NNMC, accredited by the Higher Learning Commission, gained candidacy status in 1975 and full accreditation status in 1982. In addition to regional accreditation with the HLC, several of NNMC's

educational offerings are accredited by specialized national accreditation organizations or approved by other agencies.

- NNMC's Associate Degree Nursing Program is accredited by the [Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing \(ACEN\)](#).
- The baccalaureate degree in nursing is accredited by the [Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education \(CCNE\)](#).
- The Bachelor's of Engineering in Information Engineering Technology Program is accredited by the [Engineering Technology Accreditation Commission \(ETAC\) of ABET](#).
- The Department of Business Administration's bachelor's degree programs (Bachelor of Business Administration with concentrations in accounting, management, and project management) and associate degree programs, including the AAS in Office Administration, are accredited by the [Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs \(ACBSP\)](#).
- NNMC's College of Education offers a baccalaureate degree in Elementary Education and Alternative Licensure programs, both of which are accredited based on the [National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education \(NCATE\)/CAEP standards](#).

Evaluating the Success of Graduates

NNMC evaluates the success of its graduates through various methods. Every May, a [Graduating Student Survey](#) is distributed to gather information on the post-graduation plans of students, including their employment in their respective fields of study. Additionally, [discipline-specific professional licensure pass rates](#) are used to assess program effectiveness. Each summer, [the college surveys local employers for feedback](#) on student preparation, job market conditions, and the quality of their graduates.

Graduate school enrollment data is collected through the Student Clearinghouse via Student Tracker. Many departments also hold informal exit interviews with graduating seniors. Additionally, [alumni information](#) is gathered through the Graduating Student Survey, which is used to improve efforts in tracking and contacting alumni.

The associate degree nursing program tracks [NCLEX-RN pass rates](#), completion rates, and job placement to assess its success. RN to BSN graduates are registered nurses with bachelor's degrees, and their [program outcomes](#) include completion and employment rates. BS Biology students also complete a capstone course to assess Technical and Analytical Skills.

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3.G. Student Success Outcomes

The institution's student success outcomes demonstrate continuous improvement, taking into account the student populations it serves and benchmarks that reference peer institutions.

Argument

Retention, Persistence, and Completion Goals

Retention, persistence, and completion are essential to NNMC's focus on student success and enrollment management. NNMC's retention and graduation goals are based on first-time, full-time cohorts. The retention goal is that 66.5% of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking, fall students will return in the consecutive fall term. The graduation goal is that at least 30% of this cohort will graduate within 150% of the time to completion. The goals are communicated in the state quarterly report to the NM Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), the [Student Outcomes Data](#) webpage, and the annual [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#).

Data Analysis of Retention, Persistence, and Completion

NNMC provides data to Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), an annual U.S. Department of Education survey that collects information from higher education institutions involved in federal student financial aid programs. At the end of each reporting cycle, IPEDS issues a [Data Feedback Report](#) illustrating how NNMC's enrollment, costs, financial aid, retention, and graduation rates compare with those of peer institutions. For example, the [2024 IPEDS Data Feedback Report](#) compares NNMC with thirty-four [similar colleges](#). The report shows that NNMC has a retention rate of 61% for first-time students seeking bachelor's degrees, while the average for the peer group is 57%. Moreover, NNMC's graduation rate for bachelor's degrees after 150% of the normal time is 20%. In comparison, the peer group has a graduation rate of 33%. The rates are also benchmarked against other regional comprehensive institutions in New Mexico and reported to the New Mexico Council of University Presidents. This [statewide accountability report can be accessed on the NM CUP website](#). NNMC produces other internal reports using processes and methodologies that align with IPEDS and other best practices.

Institutional Research (IR) conducts [annual Retention Studies](#) and publishes the results on the NNMC website. Targets and measures are based on a cohort of first-time, full-time freshmen. As mentioned earlier, the target for fall-to-fall retention is set at 66.5%, while the benchmark for fall-to-fall retention, is set at 60%, based on NM comprehensive 4-year institutions. The most recent fall-to-fall retention rate is for NNMC is 59% compared to 55% last year.

NNMC regularly publishes graduation results, which are available on the NNMC IR website (see CUP 2020 to 2024) in the [annual Graduate Summary](#). The targets and measures for graduation rates are based on a cohort of first-time, full-time degree-seeking students. The target was set at a minimum of 30% for completing a bachelor's program within six years. The actual graduation rate for the years 2017-2023 was 33.0%, exceeding the target. The most recent graduation rate for the years 2018-2024 was 29%.

NNMC conducts [graduating student satisfaction surveys](#). Results are available on the NNMC website. The survey gathers information about graduating students' satisfaction with their education at NNMC.

NNMC also conducts surveys on student satisfaction. Survey results have been published from 2016 to 2024, with the exception of 2020. The [Student Services Survey](#) asks students to respond to 33 questions (e.g., How well does student services support students at Northern New Mexico College? How effective is the teaching outside your major at this college?).

Enrollment statistics are collected and published on the NNMC website. The [Fall Factbook](#) is created each fall based on the census student profile, while the [Enrollment Report](#) is created for faculty use each semester at census and the end of the term.

NNMC also participates in the [National Student Clearinghouse \(NSC\)](#) and uses the NSC Student Tracker to capture data regarding student transfer and completion. This information is also used to inform the college's Retention Reports and to identify [students who leave NNMC and have not returned](#).

NNMC collaborates with other New Mexico Higher Education institutions in the Council of University Presidents (CUP) Accountability Work Group to discuss collecting and analyzing data on student retention, persistence, and program completion. These metrics are considered suitable for our student populations.

Our data collection and analysis efforts inform our [Strategic Enrollment Management Plans](#), which are developed and submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department. The report describes how NNMC monitors and adapts to its target population and workforce needs. Enrollment trends and impactful subgroups in enrollment are identified.

Enhancing Processes and Methods for Best Practices

In 2021, NNMC decided to participate in the HLC Student Success Academy and created a student success plan that aims to remove the barriers that prevent students from reaching their goals. The project engaged the college in support, infrastructure, and engagement strategies needed to help students succeed. The Student Success Initiative (SSI) was integrated into both the Strategic Enrollment Plan and the Strategic Direction 2019-2022, as well as the current Strategic Plan 2028.

In the first year of the SSI, NNMC participated in the following inventories:

- [Data Inventory \(August 2021 to October 2021\)](#) -the committee collected data on all NNMC students.
- [Initiative Inventory \(October 2021 to November 2021\)](#) -the committee examined what was being done to support student success.
- [Infrastructure Inventory \(March 2022 to August 2022\)](#) -the committee evaluated how processes, policies, and procedures affect student success.

Highlights of the inventories include the following:

- Identification of common challenges from the [Focus Groups](#) (9 total) that were convened for staff, faculty, administration, and students.
- [Clustering analysis](#) was used to identify characteristics of three different groups of students who were not retained.
- Identification of courses with high Drop, Fail, or Withdraw (DFW) rates. [Courses were analyzed](#) by class (freshman, sophomore, junior, senior), gender and ethnicity, teaching format (traditional, online, hybrid), and term (16-week vs 8-week). Individual departments then identified [DFW courses within their departments](#) and devised strategies to improve the pass rates in these courses.
- Integration of student systems, services, and processes to support retention efforts. NNMC has completed [renovations for the one-stop center](#), where students can meet with representatives from Financial Aid, the Registrar's Office, and Advisement.

Next, NNMC participated in Analysis and Planning, which included an “[Engagement Inventory](#)” to identify initiatives aimed at promoting student success. This inventory evaluated personnel involved in student success and resources dedicated to engagement. A total of nine focus groups were conducted with staff, faculty, students, and administration. [A brief summary of those results was shared](#), along with an overview of the Student Success Academy's next steps, during the Fall 2023 Convocation.

The information was used to create the [Quality Initiative Student Success Plan](#), which includes four goals that align with our Strategic Enrollment Management Plan and our campus-wide strategic plan. The goals are:

1. Elevate course quality and transparency,
2. Improve retention through targeted academic interventions,
3. Integrate student service systems and processes, and
4. Enhance infrastructure to support student retention.

Inventory data, the Quality Initiative Success Plan, and updates on the progress of the Student Success Initiative are available on the Student Success Initiative [webpage](#). Changes motivated by our Student Success Initiative are listed below.

- The instrument used by NNMC for Student Course Evaluations is now administered through Watermark, which is the same software the College uses for assessment and represents an improvement over the previous instrument. The [response rate comparison](#) is 27% (SurveyMonkey) and 44% (Watermark)
- Meetings with departments were held to schedule classes to minimize time conflicts in General Education classes, specifically corequisite English and math courses. NNMC has adopted a new course scheduling software called [Coursedog](#).
- NNMC strives to improve its [New Student Orientation](#) and maintain the [Early Alert](#) program for students who are failing or not attending class.
- NNMC has established a free food and clothing [pantry](#) for students in need of food or clothing.
- NNMC seeks to improve the college readiness of students through dual credit and Summer Bridge efforts. Summer Bridge offers free developmental English and math courses to students to accelerate their progress through required General Education courses. The [Summer Bridge program](#) will be offered for its fourth consecutive summer in Summer 2025.
- Northern is also expanding its strategic partnerships, entering into Los Alamos National Laboratory's mentor/protege program to develop a [cybersecurity](#) program at Northern. Other strategic partnership expansions include renewed commitments with trade unions to provide state-of-the-art student experiences and strengthened [career pathways](#) in career technical education.
- These strategic initiatives have led to a significant increase in enrollment, with Northern experiencing a 22.4% rise in headcount from Fall 2022 (1153 students) to Fall 2024 (1414 students). Importantly, this growth is most prominent in Career Technical Education, Teacher Education, Business, Nursing, Engineering, and Cybersecurity, all areas of high need for the state of New Mexico as discussed in the statewide [Accountability Report \(p.20\)](#). NNMC's enrollment increase can also be attributed to dual credit increases and increases in the Native American population, as noted in the [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan FY25](#).

One notable student success was the implementation of corequisite courses in English and mathematics.

- NNMC participated in the New Mexico Higher Education Department's ECHO project in Spring 2023 and Fall 2023. The ECHO project engaged other colleges in New Mexico and encouraged the implementation of corequisite courses. In addition, our [DFW report](#) showed low pass rates in ENGL 1110 (Composition I) ranging from 50% to 60% across all teaching formats (16-week, 8-week, face-to-face, and online). In contrast, data from the corequisite sections of ENGL 1110 showed pass rates of 80% or higher in three out of four sections. These efforts motivated the full-scale implementation of the corequisite model in Fall 2024.
- As a [result of the implementation](#) of the corequisite model in English, the pass rates of students in ENGL 1110 increased from an average of 60.2% in 2017-2022, 66.4%

in Academic Year 2022-2023, to 71.6% in Fall 2024 (Spring 2024 pass rates dipped to 65.5%). Therefore, the pass rates with the fully implemented corequisite model in English have achieved the highest average pass rates since 2017.

- In MATH 1215 (Intermediate Algebra), the pass rate with the fully implemented corequisite model in Fall 2024 was 61.2%. The pass rate with the traditional model in Spring 2024 was 63.3%. The average pass rate of MATH 1215 from Fall 2022 to Summer 2023 was 70.4%. Thus, the pass rates decreased in the corequisite model. However, many NNMC students are now taking only MATH 1215 or MATH 1215 and its corequisite support course MATH 101 in the same semester instead of the course sequence MATH 100N (Fundamentals of Mathematics) followed by MATH 1215 in the subsequent semester, which was required before Fall 2024 for those students who did not place directly into MATH 1215. The pass rates of MATH 100N were quite low (42.16%) from Fall 2022 to Summer 2023, so more students are finishing MATH 1215 than in previous years.

Student success has also been achieved in the accredited Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program, which has seen an improvement in its NCLEX-RN pass rates. In 2017-2019, the program's pass rates were below 70%, which was below the required benchmark of 80% set by the New Mexico Board of Nursing. As a result, the [improvement plan](#) was developed. A student [Success Coach](#) was hired, and the program admission criteria were changed in prerequisite courses to require a GPA of 2.75 instead of 2.5. This year, for the second year in a row, graduates of the Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) program had a [100-percent pass rate](#) on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) licensure exam on their first try.

Student Success is at the center of the College's [2024 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#). Information used to respond to changes in the population includes data from recruiting, admission applications, FAFSA forms, and technical trades enrollment. NNMC continues to monitor its workforce needs, which has prompted an increase in technical trades programs (e.g., plumbing, pipefitting, electrical, and welding).

Sources

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- CAO_IR_Survey of Graduating Students

- CAO_SSI Focus Group

Criterion 3 - Summary

The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs, learning environments and support services, and it evaluates their effectiveness in fulfilling its mission. The rigor and quality of each educational program is consistent regardless of modality, location or other differentiating factors.

Argument

[Criterion 3 demonstrates](#) that NNMC provides high-quality, mission-aligned teaching and learning through well-designed academic programs supported by qualified faculty and student services. All programs are based on clear learning outcomes and follow appropriate levels of academic rigor for certificate, associate, and bachelor's degrees.

Program quality is ensured through a seven-year program review cycle, external accreditation when applicable, and assessment of student learning outcomes. Faculty are credentialed, regularly evaluated, and supported through professional development in pedagogy and online instruction.

Courses, including online and dual credit, uphold consistent standards and are taught by qualified faculty. The General Education curriculum builds foundational skills in communication, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, and social responsibility, aligned with state-mandated skills and course numbering standards.

Academic and co-curricular learning are integrated throughout the student experience to support student engagement and success. Student support—advisement, tutoring, developmental coursework, and early alert systems—are accessible, regularly reviewed, and aim to promote equitable outcomes.

Sources

- NNMC Accreditation News CRITERION 3-TEACHING LEARNING

4 - Sustainability: Institutional Effectiveness, Resources and Planning

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

4.A Effective Administrative Structures

The institution's administrative structures are effective and facilitate collaborative processes such as shared governance; data-informed decision making; and engagement with internal and external constituencies as appropriate.

Argument

Board Governance

NNMC's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that help the institution fulfill its mission. The Board of Regents (BOR) at NNMC is well-informed about the institution and oversees its financial and academic policies and practices while ensuring compliance with legal and fiduciary responsibilities.

The control and management of NNMC are vested in the BOR, pursuant to the [Constitution, Art. XII, Sec. 13](#). The BOR controls and manages NNMC through the direct exercise of its authority and the delegation of authority to the President. (Refer to 2C for details on the following.)

- BOR Membership
- BOR Responsibilities
- BOR Bylaws
- BOR meetings (Open Meetings Act)
- BOR Standing Committees
- BOR Regulations as a Legal Entity

Additional practices that engage the NNMC community in governance and decision-making include distributing the BOR meeting agenda 72 hours in advance for public comment opportunities. The BOR also encourages public comment at meetings by including the [public comment agenda item in the BOR Meeting agenda](#).

Executive sessions (closed sessions) are included in the board agenda to discuss litigation matters, personnel matters, and collective bargaining negotiations, among other allowable closed session topics.

NNMC has financial and academic policies in place to meet its legal and fiduciary responsibilities. The [BOR policies and procedures](#) outline how the BOR performs its duties. Members of the BOR are sworn in by an elected official and receive training through an onboarding process. Orientation topics include regulatory obligations and an overview of the budget and current audit. A binder of NNMC policies is provided to each regent. Board Retreats also provide professional development for our Board of Regents.

NNMC has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies—including its BOR, administration, faculty, staff, and students—in the institution's governance. [NNMC's policies and procedures are posted on its website](#) and updated as needed. NNMC is continuously engaged in developing and updating policies that align with new practices adopted by the institution. New and updated policies are shared with the NNMC community. This provides students, staff, and faculty an [opportunity to review the policies and provide feedback](#), after which the policy is presented to the BOR for final approval.

On July 26, 2019, the president launched a Policy Action Team during a day-long retreat that included all staff and faculty. The group was tasked with reviewing the policies and determining currency/need, ownership, and whether there was redundancy with other policies. The data was collected, compiled, and recommendations were shared with policy owners. However, due to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent leadership transitions, Northern paused this work. Now, with new permanent leadership in place, the college is resuming its efforts on policy revision. Additionally, there was some review and [reorganization of policies with the implementation of the new website](#).

Institutional Committees

NNMC's administration, faculty, staff, and students participate in setting academic requirements, policies, and processes through effective collaborative structures. Regarding the administration of academic affairs, NNMC adopts a shared approach to policy review and development, consulting various stakeholders and using data to ensure policy effectiveness. The Provost/VP for Academic Affairs has an Academic Chairs and Directors Committee (ACD) to vet policies and discuss practices pertaining to academic processes. The committee meets twice monthly to discuss ongoing academic affairs matters and assess the need for administrative or policy changes to address any concerns.

A key to facilitating effective administration at NNMC through shared governance is the [Northern Faculty Senate](#), which serves as an advisory and consultative body in the governance process in matters affecting instructional programs and the faculty. The Faculty Senate constitution and bylaws guide the work of the Faculty Senate. Regular activity of the Faculty Senate and the Student Senate is reported monthly to the BOR, as mentioned before. NNMC convenes the following Faculty Senate Committees, [described in the Faculty Constitution](#). These committees are entirely faculty-led to ensure shared governance and collaboration.

1. [Academic Freedom, Promotion, and Tenure](#): responsibilities include all issues related to academic freedom and tenure. Specifically, it shall evaluate the credentials of and make recommendations to the Provost on faculty members who are eligible for tenure or promotion in academic rank. The transfer of tenure and granting of Associate Professor is subject to action and approval by the BOR.

2. [Undergraduate Curriculum](#): responsibilities include all issues related to the instructional curriculum at the undergraduate level. The committee includes members from all vocational and academic areas. It reviews and approves requests for new programs (once the programs have passed the Educational Policy Committee), new courses, program changes, and course changes.

3. [Honors](#): responsibilities shall include the nomination of candidates for honorary degrees. The committee oversees the selection of candidates, considering the present interests, functions, and anticipated development of NNMC.

4. [Personnel](#): responsibilities include all issues related to Faculty positions. Specifically, the committee reviews proposed changes in the Faculty Handbook, improves the professional development and sabbatical programs, consults on changes in the number of Faculty positions, reviews changes in the Faculty Constitution and by-laws, and provides input to the administration in the development of the Faculty salary matrix. Further, it ensures that all Faculty Constitution and Faculty Handbook procedures are followed fairly and correctly.

5. [Academic Standards](#): responsibilities include all issues related to academic standards. Specifically, the committee reviews policies governing admissions, academic advising, and the transfer and validation of credits. It reviews requirements for honors and degrees, hears cases of plagiarism, cheating, or improper conduct, and considers appeals of readmission or change of grade.

6. President's Faculty Advisory Committee (PFAC): The purpose of this committee is to advise the Provost and the President on matters of college policy, particularly urgent matters that require immediate consultation. It consists of three members chosen from the Faculty Senate.

7. [Educational Policy](#): the duties of this committee include examining the academic structure of the institution and any changes in this structure. It also provides advice on these matters to the President and the BOR. The committee reviews and approves requests from Academic departments for new programs and to discontinue programs.

8. [General Education](#): responsibilities include all issues related to general education for undergraduate students. The committee shall make recommendations to the Faculty Senate regarding General Education. It shall work in collaboration, when appropriate, with the undergraduate curriculum committee. The committee ensures that general education requirements satisfy the General Education Common Core Competencies established by the State of New Mexico. The committee reviews and approves departmental requests to add or delete courses from NNMC General Education offerings and assists departments in the process of gaining approval from NMHED for general education courses.

9. [¡Asi Es!](#): The duties of the Committee are to elevate discussion, awareness, and engagement toward increasing the sense of belonging in classrooms through pedagogy. The committee keeps abreast of best practices of other colleges working toward diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. It curates provocative articles and information relevant to the campus community and distributes them to the faculty for reflection and discussion. The committee facilitates workshops and seminars on equity and belonging, and coordinates with the Provost and Student Senate to enhance initiatives.

These committees interact when necessary with the American Federation of Teachers (Faculty Union Chapter), the Care Team, the Institutional Review Board, and the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee. Finally, these committees report on a monthly basis to the Faculty Senate who according to the Faculty Handbook, has the duties specified here. Just recently, the Faculty Senate developed the President's Faculty Advisory Committee which meets with the President monthly to discuss policies and practices that impact NNMC and to represent concerns from the Faculty Senate.

Staff and faculty also participate in institutional committees throughout NNMC that contribute to its continuous improvement. Standing institutional committee meetings take place regularly. *Committees include the following:*

- [Academic Chairs and Directors](#)
- [Canvas LMS Integration and Engage Committee](#)

- [Strategic Enrollment Management \(SEM\) Committee](#)
- [Safety Committee](#)
- [Committee for Learning Assessment of Students](#) (CLAS)
- [Co-Curricular Assessment Committee](#)
- [Web Governance Council](#)

Through the adoption of its latest strategic plan, Northern has identified as an objective to create a Staff Association and Senate that will serve a similar advisory function as the Faculty Senate. The Staff Association Constitution and Bylaws were developed by a Staff Senate Exploratory Committee and were approved by the BOR in August 2025 (Board Packet).

NNMC staff and faculty have other opportunities to come together and engage in college governance. Staff and faculty participate in hiring committees, strategic planning committees, and accreditation committees, as well as participate in open forums with the President. Also, in the [Presidential Update Newsletters](#), the President communicates to the campus community and raises awareness of recent events and developments at NNMC. The [President's Report and Announcements](#) is a standing agenda item of BOR meetings.

In addition to the various institutional committees that advance the administrative function of the college, the president directly interacts with individual students, faculty, and staff leaders to check in, listen, and provide support.

Student Senate

NNMC's Student Senate provides students the opportunity to gain leadership experience, engage with college leadership, and contribute valuable insight from the student perspective. According to the [Student Senate webpage](#), "The Associated Students of Northern New Mexico College (ASNNMC, or Student Senate) has been established to provide Northern students with an organizational vehicle to provide input to college administrators, and to sponsor and support student activities, participate in leadership training/opportunities, and facilitate student responsibility and empowerment in all areas of college life."

Community Engagement

NNMC's Assurance Argument section 1B includes many detailed descriptions and evidence documenting partnerships that engage the community and contribute to the public good. Among the partnerships included in this section are the following (refer to 1B

for more information on these and other collaborations that foster community engagement):

- [Technical Trades Programs](#)
- [Dual Credit Center and Enlace Program](#)
- [Basic Needs Consortium](#)
- [Collaborations with LANL \(Example 2\)](#)
- [NNMC's STEM Mentorship Collective](#)
- [NNMC and Española Gloveworks](#)
- [Continuing and Community Education](#)
- [Española Rising Youth Film Project](#)
- [¡Sostenga! Center for Sustainable Food](#)

The president and executive team (President, Provost, CIO, CFO, and General Counsel) regularly meet with community leaders—including representatives from other higher education institutions, state, local, and tribal governments, industry employers, and nonprofits—to discuss strategic partnerships and community issues. NNMC is also an active member of the Council of University Presidents (CUP) and New Mexico Independent Community Colleges (NMICC), collaborating on legislative priorities and shared challenges in higher education.

Sources

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- CAO_Community_Basic Needs Consortium
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- PRESIDENT_POLICY_NNMC-LANL Mentor Protege Cybersecurity copy
- CAO_Community_DrCox NNM STEM Mentor Collective copy
- CAO_Community_NNMC-MESA-Española GloveWorks copy
- CAO_Community_Expanding Continuing Education on both campuses copy
- CAO_Community_NNMC Participates in Española Rising film copy
- PRES_COMM_Sostenga! Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture, & Environment copy
- PRESIDENT_NM Constitution

- CAO_ACADEMICS_Personnel Committee
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Faculty Senate Meeting Minutes
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Faculty Senate Constitution and Bylaws
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- CAO_ACADEMICS_Undergraduate Curriculum Committee
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Honors Committee
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- CAO_ACADEMICS_General Education Committee
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- PRESIDENT_POLICY_Policy 1100
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Policies and Procedures
- PRES_COMM_Web Governance Council
- PRES_COMM_President's Update Newsletters
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Liberal Arts AA Program
- PRESIDENT_BOR_Public Input
- CAO_ACADEMICS_Tech Trades Grant Video Campaign
- CAO_ACADEMICS_NNMC Technical Trades department webpage

4.B Resource Base and Sustainability

The institution's financial and personnel resources effectively support its current operations. The institution's financial management balances short-term needs with long-term commitments and ensures its ongoing sustainability.

Argument

Fiscal Responsibility and Strategic Funding

NNMC derives its funding from four primary sources: state appropriation, tuition revenue, a mill levy, and grants and contracts. State appropriations are determined by a [funding formula](#), which employs a base-plus model and allocates new funding based on shared performance measures and weighted calculations. This model has resulted in a [growth of 2 to 3% in state appropriations](#) over the recent fiscal years. Tuition revenue has experienced gradual growth due to rising enrollment and limited [tuition increases](#), with the most recent increase of 5% occurring in Fall 2022. The passage of a mill levy in November 2019 also positively impacted enrollment, as evidenced in the [Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#) (Figure 6), and [currently generates between \\$2.5 and \\$3 million](#) annually, specifically for career technical programs. NNMC has established partnerships with regional high schools, employers, and community organizations, creating a [diverse income base](#), including collaborations and grants.

Building on the success of its grant-seeking campaign in 2017 to diversify revenue and lessen dependence on state funding, NNMC secured additional major awards, including \$8.5 million in [Title V funding](#), \$4.9 million through [Title III](#), \$2.3 million for the [College Assistance Migrant Program \(CAMP\)](#), \$2.3 million for the [High School Equivalency Program \(HEP\)](#), \$588,000 through the [NIH INBRE program](#), and \$250,000 from the [PWDI grant](#). Several other smaller foundation grants have also contributed to the college's growing grant portfolio.

NNMC has been awarded [four Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions \(DHSI\) Title V](#) grants since 2018: *Connecting Academics with Student Success and Achievement* (CASSA), *Fast-track to Finish* (F2F), *El Centro*, and *Proyecto Apoyo*. Each grant supports student retention, persistence, and completion through initiatives such as tutoring, [Summer Bridge programming](#), the establishment of a [Dual Credit Center](#), and a [Center for Teaching and Learning \(CTL\)](#). Throughout the lifetime of these projects, 160 faculty members participated in [professional development](#) aimed at strengthening instruction, and approximately 70 staff members attended training in service excellence. Monthly professional development through the [CTL](#), along with its support for dual credit expansion and trades partnerships, reflects institutional efforts to expand peer tutoring, improve

high school outreach, and [bolster recruitment and retention \(see Strategic Enrollment Management Plan\)](#). The new Dual Credit Center and the creation of the [Advisement Handbook](#) reinforce NNMC's commitment to student support. The Proyecto Apoyo initiative focuses on building a Student Success Center and integrating practices that enhance [student outcomes](#) — investments that make the college a candidate for future grants.

The impact of [federally funded initiatives](#) — such as a [28% increase in graduation rates](#) or support for Hispanic and low-income students under CASSA — demonstrates return on investment to potential funders and alumni, helping build a case for philanthropic campaigns.

NNMC pursues new grants with sustainability in mind. Budget proposals often include transitional funding or plans for phased integration into base budgets to minimize disruption. By [absorbing costs for project-funded personnel](#), the institution sustains these improvements long term.

Budgeting and Financial Oversight

The business office and the Academic Affairs division jointly develop NNMC's annual budget. The Provost's Office leads a retreat to discuss academic priorities for budget allocations (refer to 4C for more details). The Business Office and leadership assess academic and operational needs to create a [strategic financial plan](#).

Additionally, NNMC must report annually and [secure final budget approval](#) while maintaining fiscal accountability. These entities include both branches of government: the New Mexico Legislative Finance Committee (LFC), the Executive New Mexico State Department of Finance and Administration (DFA), and the State of New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED), all serving as [oversight entities for NNMC's budgetary and financial reporting](#).

NNMC departments initiate financial transactions, which then go through a structured, multi-level approval process involving the Business Office and its financial management system ([Workday](#)). The process begins with a [Budget Review](#), where the system automatically verifies the fund availability for both Unrestricted and Restricted transactions. Separately, the Budget Director or Grants Manager and Accountant review each transaction to ensure it aligns with the institution's mission and, for [grant-funded expenditures](#), complies with grant requirements. After these checks, the transaction moves through additional workflow stages, including [account review and validation](#), and a final review by the Chief Procurement/Compliance Officer. Insufficiently funded transactions are routed back to the originating department, requiring a [Budget Amendment Request \(BAR\)](#) to secure necessary funds. Each department designates a Cost Center Manager and the NNMC Budget Analyst accesses Workday to verify departmental

budgets, supporting daily or as-needed oversight. An institutional budget review is prepared and [presented quarterly to the Board of Regents, accompanying the quarterly certification](#) submitted to the NMHED.

To maintain budget control and flexibility throughout the fiscal year, NNMC utilizes a well-developed [Budget Amendment Request \(BAR\) process](#). Departments can adjust their budgets as needed, whether spending Unrestricted funds (General Fund and Other revenue) or Restricted funds (Private, State, Federal, and Local grants). There are two main types of BARs. Internal BARs involve moving funds between accounts within the same fund and do not require BOR approval. Other BARs require BOR approval and include: a) Budget Transfers (moving funds between different funds); b) Budget Increases (to cover new, unbudgeted revenue); and c) Budget Decreases (to reflect lower grant awards).

Each fiscal year, NNMC adheres to the [NMHED Running Institutional Finance Schedule](#), which provides a guide for key budget and fiscal processes, including deadlines for Budget and Funding Requests and Financial Reporting. According to [NMHED Budget Instructions](#), aligned with NACUBO guidelines, NNMC must submit a [final budget adjustment request \(BAR\) form](#) for the current fiscal year by the statutory deadline of May 1st. This Final BAR, reflecting any adjustments made during the year, accompanies the [BOR-approved proposed Operating Budget](#) for the next fiscal year. After approval by the Legislative (LFC) and Executive (DFA) branches, as well as the NMHED, the operating budget is loaded into the financial management system, making funds available to departments for the new fiscal year.

Fiscal Accountability and Stewardship

NNMC verifies that resources are expended for their intended purposes. For example, [FY25 Expense figures](#) show that the college directs 69% of its expense budget to Instruction and General (I&G) for Instruction, Academic Support, Student Services, and Institutional Support, directly supporting its mission to ensure accessible education.

Recent audits demonstrate NNMC's financial accountability has improved due to sustained institutional focus. The [FY23 audit](#) yielded the fewest findings in over a decade (six) and its first unmodified opinion since FY15. Corrective actions [lifted the Heightened Cash Monitoring designation](#) by the US DOE's Grants Risk Management Services Division in 2023, with federal findings resolved and closed. The [FY24 audit](#), submitted on time, had zero repeat findings. In February 2025, NNMC was formally released from the NMHED's [Enhanced Fiscal Oversight Program](#). Strong cash and fund balances allow NNMC to balance short-term needs with long-term goals.

NNMC prioritizes responsible fiscal stewardship through cost containment. For example, an [FY24 risk pool analysis](#) identified potential cost savings and better

coverage options for educational institutions, leading NNMC to [transition to the New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority risk program in FY25](#) from the General Services Division pool. This shift provides access to [unlimited training](#) at no additional cost, including Communication and Teamwork, Diversity and Cultural Awareness, OSHA, and Defensive Driving. Additionally, the IT Department hired project management staff, which improved internal capacity and reduced dependence on costly consultant contracts.

Operational Efficiency and Infrastructure Investments

NNMC allocates resources through the budget process to enhance operations and promote growth with stronger accountability.

A prime example of this is NNMC's membership in [The Collaborative for Higher Education Shared Services \(CHESS\)](#). The college joined CHESS in 2022, implementing Workday for financial and HR management and shared payroll services, [going live on December 17, 2022](#). Workday's automated workflows improve trackability and audits, strengthening institutional resilience and efficiency.

NNMC demonstrates its strategic priorities beyond the annual base budget by utilizing special appropriations to address key areas. In FY24, \$3.1 million in [legacy appropriations was secured for critical infrastructure repairs](#), including roofing, campus parking lot resurfacing, and storm drainage. This fiscal stewardship resulted in significant awards of [special/Capital funding of \\$10 million in the 2024 Legislative Session](#) and an [additional \\$4.8 million in 2025](#). These investments aim to enhance the student experience and community well-being, evidenced by creating [Northern's Cultura Cafe](#) to combat the campus food desert and remodeling the [Student Services area \(ONE STOP\)](#) for improved flow and a more student-centered atmosphere. The Cosmetology program benefits from modern classrooms and labs through portable renovations, while the Biology, Chemistry & Environmental Sciences (BCES) department gains high-quality, safe lab space via state and grant-funded renovations, directly supporting STEM students. [Renovating the Nick Salazar Center for the Arts \(CFA\)'s](#) roof and exterior enabled internal improvements. The renovation was celebrated by the ["Mold to Gold"](#) event in 2025.

NNMC is committed to strategic growth and enhancing the student experience through a comprehensive Master Plan developed with its architectural partner. This forward-thinking blueprint guides [future investments](#) aligned with the College's vision of an inclusive, student-centered learning environment and its strategic pillars (refer to 4C).

Complementing these strategic investments, NNMC's established physical infrastructure across the [Española and El Rito campuses includes 24 buildings](#) providing a comprehensive learning environment with classrooms and laboratories for diverse academic programs. Recognizing the importance of community and

belonging, [NNMC offers dedicated spaces](#) for wellness, academic support, and community events, with free parking for accessibility.

Human Capital and Professional Development

NNMC values its people and is committed to fair hiring practices, ensuring that the best candidates are selected for each position.

[NNMC's hiring policy](#) mandates that employment decisions rely solely on an individual's qualifications for the position. Promotion decisions also depend exclusively on qualifications related to the position. This policy applies to all positions at NNMC, which is an [equal opportunity employer \(EEO\)](#).

NNMC designed its hiring process to effectively recruit and retain qualified faculty, adjuncts, staff, and student workers. The process involves advertising open positions through various channels, including the [NNMC website](#), hiring platforms like [LinkedIn](#), and [internal email broadcasts](#). Each posting clearly states the minimum qualifications and educational requirements.

Employees have access to professional development opportunities, including internal sessions, retreats, and external conferences, as appropriate. [Professional development](#) sessions, typically held in the Fall and Spring, occur the week before classes start, enabling faculty attendance. [Post-session surveys](#) collect feedback on their effectiveness. NNMC will launch [Workday Learning](#) in 2025 to improve onboarding and provide on-demand training for all faculty and staff. This module will host mandatory training like Title IX, FERPA, harassment, active shooter, and role-based courses, with Human Resources tracking completion progress.

Faculty and staff also have additional training options, including [Communication and Teamwork](#). Newly hired full-time faculty attend an [orientation session](#) led by the Provost during Convocation. This session introduces the faculty resource guide, collective bargaining agreement, best practices for advisement, and academic policies.

Technology Infrastructure

NNMC values skilled professionals and supports them with a reliable IT system. NNMC manages a network with backup systems and internet connections to support online learning and administrative tasks. It implements a [cybersecurity plan](#) with firewalls, intrusion detection systems, and regular security checks to safeguard student records, financial information, and research data in accordance with regulations and best practices. NNMC [trains employees to recognize cybersecurity risks and security awareness](#). Its cybersecurity plan includes tools for problem detection, vulnerability management, updates, and system testing. IT

focuses on [network protection \(firewalls, intrusion detection\)](#), [endpoint security](#), [data privacy](#), and [identity management](#).

NNMC IT Services supports college operations for academic and administrative tasks. The IT team handles the design, setup, maintenance, and security of the campus network. They provide [internet access](#), manage servers, and [ensure data storage and backup](#). They offer tools like [Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace](#), along with telecommunications and data center operations. They also manage [equipment quotes, inventory, and software licensing](#).

The college utilizes integrated systems to support its functions. IT developed [NNMC Apps](#) to provide Single Sign-On (SSO) access to the following resources: Workday for finance and HR; Canvas for course materials and classes; the Ben Lujan Library Databases for research materials; Eagle Email for communication; Banner for registration, grades, and financial aid; TouchNet BillPay for processing tuition and fees; and Degree Works for tracking academic progress.

NNMC's IT and Communications & Marketing co-manage the school's website. In 2022, the college established a [Web Governance Council](#) and initiated a two-year project to redesign its website and develop its first [online Academic Catalog](#), both of which were successfully launched in August 2024.

The [NNMC Eagle Help Center](#) offers support with desktops, mobile devices, password management, account services, and campus printers. They also provide [IT training and documentation for users](#). NNMC IT Services develops IT policies, [plans for the future](#), [manages IT purchases](#), leads IT projects, and ensures compliance with regulations and risk management.

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4.C Planning for Quality Improvement

The institution engages in systematic strategic planning for quality improvement. It relies on data, integrating its insights from enrollment forecasts, financial capacity, student learning assessment, institutional operations and the external environment.

Argument

Strategic Planning

In November 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, [Northern's president resigned](#) to pursue a new position. The college conducted a statewide [search to appoint an interim president](#) who oversaw daily operations while conducting a more extensive national [search for a permanent president](#). As [interim president](#), Dr. Barbara Medina fulfilled this role for one year, providing transitional leadership until a new president was appointed in 2023. The college welcomed Hector Balderas, New Mexico's [immediate outgoing attorney general, as its new president](#), who arrived with an executive team that included a Chief of Staff, Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer, General Counsel, and Grant Manager.

In fall of 2023, the [Provost resigned](#) for personal reasons, and the Accreditation/Assessment Director relocated. An interim provost was appointed, and accreditation and assessment responsibilities were redistributed among IR and Mathematics faculty. NNMC initiated a national search for a new provost, culminating in the successful hiring of a [new provost in May 2025](#), Dr. René Vellanoweth.

During this period, NNMC operated under its [Strategic Direction \(2018-2022\)](#) framework following the 2020 HLC Assurance Review. NNMC's Strategic Direction was extended for an additional year. The BOR approved the extension [on May 5, 2022](#) to ensure that the institution could continue to navigate the evolving landscape and meet its strategic goals.

NNMC's most recent strategic planning process began when President Hector Balderas took office on January 1, 2023, and initiated a [100-day listening tour](#) to gather feedback from the college community. In April 2023, NNMC [launched the "Soaring to New Heights Strategic Plan 2028" planning process](#), supported by the LANL Foundation and facilitated by Dini Spheris, a [strategic management consultant](#).

[Leadership, staff, and community stakeholders](#) conducted a SWOT analysis in the context of the post-COVID landscape. The first phase of [this collaborative effort](#) resulted in [new Mission and Vision statements, Core Values, and Strategic](#)

[Pillars](#), which were [approved by the Board of Regents](#) in Fall 2023 as Phase I of the strategic planning process. As articulated in Core Component 1A, the process to update the mission followed NNMC's statement in its 2020 Assurance Argument, which indicated that an update to the College's mission was forthcoming.

In Spring 2024 semester, a dedicated team of staff, faculty, and leadership concentrated on the goals and objectives of NNMC's [Student Success Initiative \(SSI\)](#). The strategic emphasis on the SSI allowed the college to prioritize current efforts aimed at improving student retention and completion rates while ensuring alignment with the established Strategic Pillars. This stage is referred to as Phase II, underscoring the college's commitment to its mission of being an inclusive, student-centered teaching and learning community dedicated to excellence, empowering students, and transforming lives.

By Fall 2024, in response to Phases I and II findings, the president appointed a [Strategic Plan Steering Committee](#) to complete Phase III and develop NNMC's next strategic plan. The committee evaluated data from the previous phases to develop comprehensive, actionable goals and objectives, supporting the Strategic Pillars and reflecting the year's work. The committee also reevaluated relevant Strategic Direction (2018-2022) goals. This effort culminated in a [Strategic Planning Retreat](#) on May 7, 2025, and resulted in proposed new [strategic goals and a strategic plan](#), which [the BOR approved on May 30, 2025](#). The [strategic planning process](#) took a thoughtful approach, emphasizing careful observation and collaboration among stakeholders.

Data Driven Decision Making

NNMC employs a thorough approach to [data collection and analysis](#) and uses various sources to support its planning and decision-making. The Office of Institutional Research (IR) manages annual reporting, surveys, and research projects, and serves as a central hub for data collection, management, and accreditation efforts. IR provides both internal and external reports on student retention, satisfaction, IPEDS, and planning, as well as custom studies for departments, such as [Annual Retention Reports](#) and [Enrollment Reports](#). A [Calendar of Reports](#) is published each Fall to convey essential reporting timelines. The [NNMC Fact Book](#), published each Fall, contains profiles on enrollment, degree offerings, and finances for internal and external stakeholders.

NNMC conducts several surveys, including an [internal processes survey](#) and [student services survey](#), to identify areas for improvement in operations related to student life and student services. The results are shared with office leadership and their supervisors. The findings from the student services survey

are also provided to the Associate Vice President and the Provost. The [data is posted on the IR website](#) and used for program accreditation, data immersion, data inventories, strategic enrollment planning, SWOT analyses, and comparative analysis. The college conducts ad hoc surveys, such as those on transportation and childcare, to explore new ideas and strategies. The college also conducts [360 evaluations](#) to gather feedback from managers, peers, direct reports, and customers, providing a comprehensive understanding of an employee's performance. This holistic approach aims to enhance self-awareness, identify development areas, and improve individual and organizational performance.

Additionally, Northern benchmarks against external colleges and uses [IPEDS](#) to evaluate costs, enrollment, and graduation rates.

In addition to its internal data gathering and reporting, NNMC IR chairs and collaborates with the Accountability Workgroup of the CUP (Council of University Presidents, a statewide consortium of public, four-year higher education institutions) to produce the [Annual Statewide Accountability Report](#).

This report not only serves to reconcile Northern's key accountability metrics, but combined with those of our peer in-state institutions, addresses policymakers' and legislative requests and statewide research. The report complies with [New Mexico's Accountability in Government Act](#), which sets specific key performance metrics for each institution and ensures the effective use of public resources as measured by these metrics.

Bringing Data and Strategic Planning Together for Quality Improvement

NNMC's mission is the focal point of the college's [planning efforts](#). The college's planning, budgeting, and operations are guided by its four Strategic Pillars (Organizational Excellence, Transformational Student Experience, Academic Excellence, and Strategic Partnerships). This process is also informed by Northern's [strategic enrollment management plan](#), accreditation responsibilities, departmental master plans, and goals for the [Student Success Initiative](#).

Budget Planning Process

Annual Report Year	Annual Report Submitted	Academic year when the Budget Retreat takes place	Fiscal Year being budgeted
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2019-20	Summer 2020	2020-21	FY22
2020-21	Summer 2021	2021-22	FY23
2021-22	Summer 2022	2022-23	FY24
2022-23	Summer 2023	2023-24	FY25
2023-24	Summer 2024	2024-25	FY26
2024-25	Summer 2025	2025-26	FY27

The annual budget process reviews the institution's mission, vision and departmental priorities.

Academic budget requests are submitted during the [summer annual report](#) period. Each department submits an annual report with budget requests. The provost then [compiles the annual reports](#) and the associated budget requests which are reviewed collectively by the Academic Department Chairs and Directors. Through a collaborative process the this leadership prioritizes the budget requests for discussion in a [budget retreat](#). The recommendation is then submitted to administration for approval. The table below outlines the budget cycle for each year.

The FY26 was slightly different due to leadership transitions. The [interim provost hosted two budget retreats](#) to gather information, one with chairs and enrollment managers and another with other student affairs directors. The interim provost and the college's Budget Director then met with chairs and directors to finalize and prepare budgets.

The Business Office uses input from department managers and staff during its budget retreats, along with academic recommendations, to create each fiscal year's budget in collaboration with executive leadership. They consider both academic needs and operational requirements to develop a balanced [financial plan](#).

These planning processes enable NNMC to identify areas of priority and allocate sufficient resources to address them, ensuring a sustainable and effective financial capacity to support NNMC's operations. This allows NNMC to allocate the limited funding appropriated by the state, as well as to thoughtfully allocate additional funding secured through grants or other funding sources. Examples of NNMC securing and allocating this additional supplemental funding are discussed in 4B. Examples of strategic outcomes that have followed the budget planning process and allocation of funding are also discussed in 4B.

As a learning organization, NNMC emphasizes continuous improvement through effective [communication and collaboration between leadership, staff and faculty](#). The CFO leads a dedicated team to ensure financial stability and compliance, fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement. The CFO holds bi-weekly meetings to discuss finance topics, which are later addressed in Executive Team meetings. The budget includes projected tuition revenue based on enrollment trends and follows an outcomes-based funding model that reviews graduation and course completion data. Funding for special projects requires alignment with the institution's mission and community interests. Regular meetings between the Provost and academic leaders and directors ensure effective communication and planning. In addition, the [President and Provost provide reports to the Faculty Senate](#) at their monthly meetings.

Planning for Academic Success

To ensure quality improvement in student learning and academic assessment, Northern uses assessment and other data to plan and implement measures for quality improvement. For example, following program accreditation feedback in 2022, Northern's nursing program underwent a [planning and improvement process designed to improve licensure pass rates](#). Now, every faculty member in the ADN program provides tutoring and study sessions, including review sessions before major exams and personalized coaching for students who may be struggling. As a result, in 2023 and 2024, graduates of the NNMC Associate Degree in Nursing (ADN) [program achieved a 100 percent pass rate](#) on the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) on their first attempt. This impressive achievement reflects how NNMC's strategic planning process positively impacts both the students and the program.

Another example is through its program review process (in particular for the Business, Teacher Education and Nursing bachelor programs), NNMC has determined that demographic shifts in enrollment show that these programs would have a better community impact if they are offered entirely online. As discussed in 3A, NNMC has developed a robust infrastructure to offer these programs online.

Finally, following [program review recommendations](#) and identification of workforce needs, NNMC launched a [Phlebotomy Certificate Program](#) in spring 2025, giving students real-world experience and a stackable, entry-level healthcare credential upon graduation. This program offers hands-on training in essential blood collection techniques and includes clinical internships. It prepares students for national certification exams and careers in healthcare. Adult students can earn the certificate in two semesters, while high school students can accumulate credits over two years. This demonstrates efficiency

on two levels: students have the option for immediate career paths in identified areas of workforce needs and the program is designed to support the college's time-to-completion goals. Currently, the program has enrolled 14 adult students and four dual credit students, totaling 18 participants. Of these, the four dual credit and 12 adult students have successfully completed the program and were celebrated at NNMC's first [Phlebotomy program graduation in summer 2025](#).

Planning for Student Success

Another example of improvement driven by data and strategic planning is NNMC's efforts to address food access for students and employees. This initiative was supported by a statewide [Basic Needs Survey](#), which indicated that over 50% of our students and 46% of our employees are food insecure. NNMC used this data to identify two priority projects. First, NNMC opened a [food pantry](#) accessible to all students, staff and faculty, supplied through partnerships with local nonprofits, and with produce grown by NNMC's demonstration farm, the [¡Sostenga! Center for Sustainable Food, Agriculture and Environment](#). NNMC also sought out a long-term, sustainable plan for food vending options, establishing a self-service snack bar available to the campus community. Then, in the summer of 2023, NNMC contracted with the [Lazy Buffalo Trading Co., a popular local food truck](#), as a pilot to determine demand for full food service and as a temporary solution until a permanent one could be identified. Following the pilot, NNMC reroofed and remodeled its old cafeteria space and the Lazy Buffalo now provides healthy meals for both staff and students.

Another example of systematic planning for quality improvement is the Strategic Enrollment Management plans, which are submitted to the New Mexico Higher Education Department (NMHED) each summer. These plans provide NMHED with institutional challenges and goals related to enrollment and student success. The [2022 Strategic Enrollment Management Plan](#) prompted the development of a [One-Stop Center](#) at NNMC, merging key services to support students through enrollment and career readiness. Staff training is currently in progress, and the center has been fully renovated.

The [Student Success Initiative](#) also yielded successful outcomes, including the expansion of our Early Alert process and the investment in course evaluation software. The course evaluation software has [improved the student response rate](#) from an average of 26% when we used SurveyMonkey to 44% with Watermark. Furthermore, administrators and instructors can access the results and generate reports. [Instructions and resources](#) are provided on the IR Outcomes webpage.

In response to student concerns about schedule delays, the college implemented Coursedog, an academic operations platform designed to manage

scheduling. [Coursedog](#) provides tools for scheduling courses, managing room assignments, and optimizing schedules to ensure student success. Additionally, academic chairs and directors have received training in Coursedog's predictive analytics.

Finally, as an example of both academic excellence and transforming the student experience, NNMC has begun its transition to an updated learning management system (LMS). A faculty-led committee studied the efficacy of NNMC's LMS by analyzing pertinent data, best practices, cost and market research, concluding that a migration to the [Canvas LMS](#) would keep NNMC in line with emerging academic trends, enhance collaboration with other educational entities across systems, ensure the quality of course design and development, and overall enhance NNMC's students' experience. As of Summer 2025, the transition from Blackboard to Canvas is complete with [ongoing training to support faculty and students](#).

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Criterion 4 - Summary

The institution's resources, structures, policies, procedures and planning enable it to fulfill its mission, improve the quality of its educational programs, and respond to future challenges and opportunities.

Argument

[Criterion 4 demonstrates](#) NNMC's philosophy that resource decisions and activities reflect Strategic Direction objectives, aligned to the institution's mission. Its organizational structures reflect the awareness and understanding of current resources, organizational changes, and emerging opportunities that influence NNMC's mission.

NNMC is dedicated to responsible financial management and proactive cost control. It has integrated sustainability into its strategic and operational framework. Through various initiatives and successful grants, NNMC aims to enhance long-term institutional resilience, diversify revenue sources, and manage costs, all while maintaining a high quality of education. Each of these efforts not only addresses present-day challenges but also lays a foundation for future generations.

NNMC has leveraged funding to strengthen core institutional capacities that appeal to external funders and partners, thus enhancing its ability to attract future philanthropic support.

Sources

- NNMC Accreditation News CRITERION 4-SUSTAINABILITY final