UNM GRADUATE STUDIES
2025-2026 IMPACT REPORT



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO



MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

Graduate education sits at the center of a research university's mission. Graduate students drive discovery, create new knowledge, advance innovation, support instruction, strengthen community partnerships, and develop the expertise needed to address society's most pressing challenges.

In Graduate Studies, our work begins long before enrollment and has impacts well beyond graduation. We recruit talented students from New Mexico and around the world, invest in their success through scholarships and fellowships, support their academic progress, foster community and belonging, create opportunities to showcase their scholarship, and help prepare them for leadership in their professions and communities.

Academic Year 2025-2026 was a year of growth, investment, and impact. Over the course of the year, Graduate Studies:

- **Supported more than 160 graduate academic programs**
- **Received nearly 4,900 applications for graduate admission**
- **Supported the enrollment of more than 1,500 new graduate students**
- **Invested $5.5 million in scholarships, fellowships, tuition assistance, research support, and student success initiatives**
- **Strengthened key mentoring and community-building programs that benefited graduate students from numerous disciplines across UNM**
- **Saw record-high participation in research showcase programs**
- **Continued its role as a leader in graduate education policy, governance, and institutional collaboration**

This report highlights the breadth of Graduate Studies' impact across the University of New Mexico. It reflects not only the outcomes we can measure, but also the thousands of interactions, consultations, opportunities, and partnerships that help students thrive.



Maria Lane, PhD
Dean of Graduate Studies
Professor of Geography & Environmental Studies

GRADUATE STUDIES BY THE NUMBERS

Graduate Studies supports a dynamic portfolio of academic programs that prepare a diverse student body for leadership and service in New Mexico and beyond.

Graduate education is one of UNM's most important investments in workforce development, research productivity, and community impact.

Our programs span almost every college and school at the university and range from traditional doctoral and master's degrees to workforce responsive certificates in emerging fields.

Graduate Program Oversight

75 master's degrees

58 doctoral degrees

33 graduate certificates

24 accelerated or other specialized programs

164

GRADUATE PROGRAMS*

Academic Innovation

Graduate Studies partnered with colleges and schools across campus to advance new academic offerings aligned with workforce needs, student demand, and emerging research areas.

These developments reflect UNM's commitment to preparing graduates for careers in education, healthcare, technology, public service, and community leadership while responding to emerging societal needs.

NEW MASTER'S PROGRAM (2027)

Master of Social Work

New Graduate Certificates

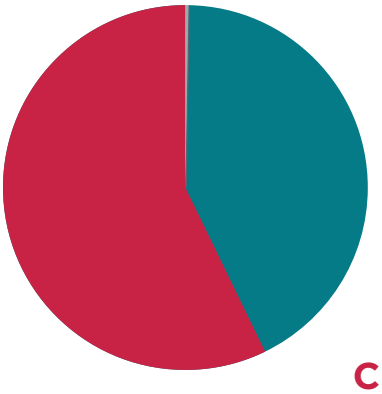
- Educational Leadership with K-12 Administrative Licensure
- Special Education PreK-12 Teacher Licensure
- Substance Use and Behavioral Addictions Counseling
- Ethical AI for Autonomous Systems
- Global and National Security
- Health Professions Educator

**UNM has 16 additional graduate-professional programs that are administered directly within their colleges (Schools of Law, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, and Business Leadership) rather than by Graduate Studies.*



GRADUATE STUDENT POPULATION

Graduate education at UNM reflects the diversity of New Mexico and the university's commitment to broadening access to advanced education.

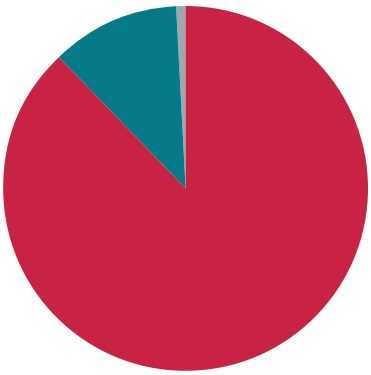


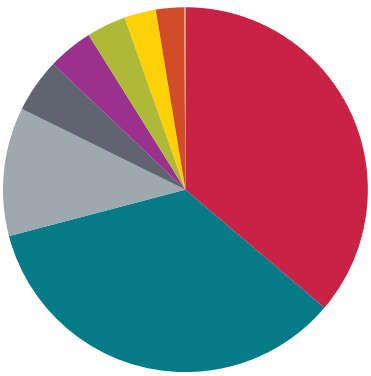
Gender Distribution

- Female: 57.2%
- Male: 42.4%
- Nonbinary: 0.3%
- Unknown: 0.1%

Citizenship Status

- U.S. Citizens or Permanent Residents: 88%
- International Students: 11.4%
- Unknown: 0.6%





Race & Ethnicity

- White: 36.2%
- Hispanic/Latino: 34.7%
- International Students: 11.4%
- Asian: 4.8%
- American Indian: 4.0%
- Two or More Races: 3.5%
- Black/African American: 2.8%
- Unknown: 2.5%
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: 0.1%

ACCESS TO GRADUATE EDUCATION

Graduate Studies prioritizes direct investments that reduce financial barriers and help students focus on completing their academic goals.

RECRUITMENT AND ENROLLMENT

Recruitment remains one of Graduate Studies' most important strategic responsibilities. Successful recruitment not only sustains enrollment but also strengthens research productivity, educational quality, workforce development, and the university's long-term impact.

In 2025, we launched a comprehensive recruitment initiative to enhance the visibility of UNM graduate programs while empowering academic units with practical tools and resources to support student recruitment and enrollment.

Key activities:

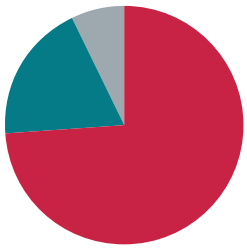
- **Updated website and social media**
- **Built a centralized hub with promotional materials and digital guides**
- **Hosted workshops, training, and consultations for faculty**
- **Recruiting trip to India and Nepal to build enrollment pipelines**

Highlights for 2025-2026

4,821 applications received

2,243 students admitted

1,569 new graduate students enrolled



Among newly enrolled students:

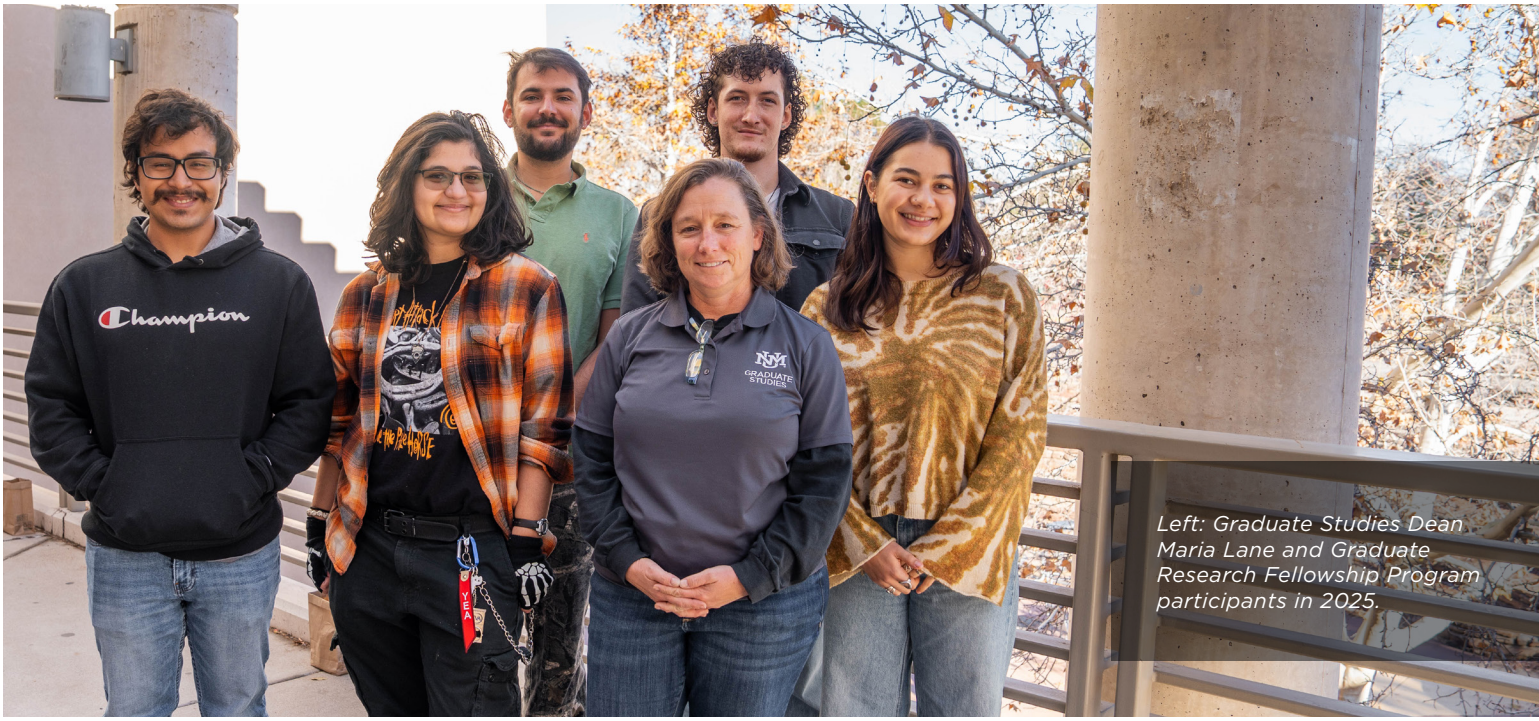
- **74% pursued master's degrees**
- **19% pursued doctoral degrees**
- **7% enrolled in stand-alone graduate certificate programs**



$55,761 in recruitment funding distributed

60 prospective graduate students supported through travel assistance and incentive awards

These investments provided direct support to departments seeking to recruit high-quality students and improve enrollment yield.



Left: Graduate Studies Dean Maria Lane and Graduate Research Fellowship Program participants in 2025.

SCHOLARSHIPS AND FELLOWSHIPS

During AY2025-26, Graduate Studies awarded scholarships, fellowships, and tuition assistance to support graduate students at all stages of the educational lifespan.

$5.5 million in scholarships, fellowships and tuition assistance

- **Emergency scholarships**
- **Graduate assistantships to support teaching and research**
- **Tuition support for students who receive outside fellowships**
- **Need-based support for graduate students nearing degree completion**
- **State scholarships (HED) for New Mexico residents and STEM students who graduated from New Mexico high schools**
- **Support for the research and writing phases of doctoral programs**
- **Conference and travel support**
- **Dissertation prize**

These investments help address workforce needs while expanding access to advanced education throughout the state.

New Funding Programs

$132.5k Resilience Innovation Fellows

$15k Graduate Pathway Scholarship

$10k Emergency Scholarships

COMMUNITY AND BELONGING

Research consistently shows that students who feel connected to their academic communities are more likely to persist, succeed, and graduate.

PROJECT FOR NEW MEXICO GRADUATES OF COLOR

For more than two decades, Project for New Mexico Graduates of Color (PNMGC) has supported students through leadership development, peer mentorship, outreach, professional growth, and community building. All programming is led by students, and Graduate Studies provides administrative support.



Above: 2026 PNMGC End-of-Year Celebration

PNMGC by the numbers

24 events

52 student participants

$95K total funding

GRADUATE COMMUNITY MENTORING

GCM is a community-oriented initiative designed to support graduate students and faculty in building strong mentoring relationships, navigating academia, and fostering professional growth. It was originally funded directly by the New Mexico legislature but in 2025 was incorporated fully into the Graduate Studies budget.

GCM by the numbers

15 faculty participants

62 graduate student participants

$153K total funding

New Initiatives

- "Conversations & Stories" series
- "Listening Circles" series
- Graduate Wellness & Writing Retreat



Above: 2026 GCM End-of-Year Celebration

PNMGC Impact

MORE THAN **90%** of respondents reported being **satisfied or very satisfied** with their overall experience, with **mentorship experiences** ranking most highly.

STUDENTS IDENTIFIED GROWTH IN

- Leadership development
- Communication
- Academic planning
- Time management
- Networking skills
- Public speaking
- Career readiness
- Confidence
- Self-advocacy

Student Voice

"This program supported me by giving me guidance and encouragement throughout the semester. It helped me better understand how to balance my coursework, stay organized, and use campus resources effectively. It also helped me grow personally by building my confidence and making me feel more connected to the UNM community."

GCM Impact

100% of survey respondents reported **improved community connection**

40% of survey respondents reported that the GCM experience **exceeded expectations**

Writing retreat participants reported **substantial progress on major projects.**

STUDENTS IDENTIFIED GROWTH IN

- Leadership
- Communication
- Academic planning
- Networking
- Public speaking
- Career readiness
- Confidence
- Self-advocacy

Student Voices

"Being part of the program made me feel more connected and less alone."

"Hearing other stories helped ease my impostor syndrome and gave me more confidence."

GCM "gave me a sense of community and tools to protect my well-being as I finished my classes and advanced in my degree program. For Indigenous students and others entering academia later in life or without built-in networks, this program is imperative. It is the difference between simply surviving graduate school and being supported well enough to thrive in it."

SHOWCASING EXCELLENCE

Graduate Studies hosts two major events each year to showcase student research and help students develop key communication skills.

LOBOBITES

LoboBites competitors tackle the challenge of communicating complex research topics in concise, accessible presentations. Competitors have three minutes to present their research to judges and a public audience, using a single slide display.



Above: 2025 LoboBites 1st place winner Gabriela Guajardo.



Above: 2025 LoboBites Preliminary Round

Highlights

60+ applications from
6 colleges and nearly
40 graduate programs.

3 winners took home
$2,250 in prize money.

Below: A student audience at the 2025 LoboBites Preliminary round.



1st Place
$1,000 prize

Gabriela Guajardo, M.A. Chicana & Chicano Studies
"Tamalewood: The Sparkling Cinematography of Colonization in the New Southwest"

2nd Place
$750 prize

Oona Takano, Ph.D. Biology
"Drivers of Bird Body Size Adaptation: Are Birds Shrinking?"

People's Choice
$500 prize

Benjamin Garcia, Ph.D. Biology
"Nasal Immunity in Fish: More Organized Than We Thought"

GRADUATE POSTER SHOWCASE

The Graduate Poster Showcase creates opportunities for students to develop poster design skills, receive expert feedback, build professional networks, and celebrate research accomplishments.

Highlights

102 student applicants from **34** academic departments

85 posters selected for the showcase

40 judges

$12,550 total prizes/scholarships awarded

Prizes awarded for first and second in multiple categories spanning disciplines across the university.



Above: Judging underway at the 2026 Graduate Poster Showcase.

Every student participant received $100 to support poster printing.



Above: Posters & presenters at the 2026 Graduate Poster Showcase.



Above: Participants & judge at the 2026 Graduate Poster Showcase.

CAMPUS IMPACT

Graduate Studies coordinates with faculty, staff, and offices across campus to support graduate students through every stage of degree progression.

DEGREE COMPLETION AND ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Graduate Studies provides critical infrastructure and support for students as they progress from admission to graduation. Although often invisible to external audiences, these services play a vital role in student persistence and degree completion.

- **Tracking of degree milestones**
- **Approval of graduate committees**
- **Review of academic petitions**
- **Processing for probation and suspension**
- **Direct outreach to students about time to degree**
- **Confirming academic eligibility to hold assistantships**
- **Academic policy guidance**
- **Manuscript workshops**
- **Drop-in advising sessions**
- **Individual student consultations**
- **Training for faculty and staff**
- **Degree audits**
- **Final degree certification**



Degree Completion Statistics 2025-26

FALL 2025

303 degrees awarded

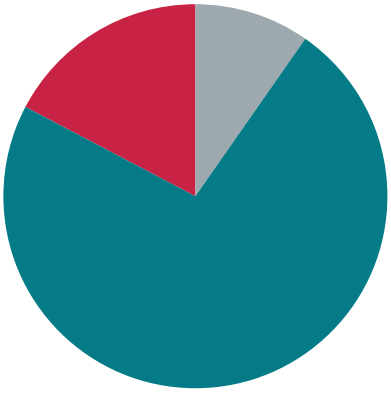
SPRING 2026

479 degrees awarded

SUMMER 2026

278 degrees awarded

1,106 total graduate degrees processed by Graduate Studies



2025-26 Graduate Degrees

- 17.3% Doctoral
- 73% Masters
- 9.7% Post-Masters/Certificate

INSTITUTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Graduate Studies plays a key coordinating role on campus, providing communications and partnerships that bring campus units together in support of graduate programs and students.

Communications

- Graduate Council meeting twice per semester to discuss graduate issues and resources
- Monthly newsletter to graduate and professional students
- Monthly newsletter to graduate program leaders
- Biweekly newsletter to staff and faculty who work with graduate students
- Three workshops per semester focused on best practices in graduate education

Representation and Collaboration

In 2025-26, Graduate Studies representatives served on:

- Academic Technologies Advisory Board
- Budget Leadership Team
- Deans' Council
- Executive Cabinet
- Faculty Development Council
- Faculty Senate Graduate and Professional Committee
- Faculty Senate Admissions & Registration Committee
- Faculty Senate Curriculum Committee
- Institutional Review Board
- IT Administrative Leadership Committee
- IT Administrative Operations Committee
- LEID Council
- NM Council of Graduate Deans
- McNair Conference judging panel
- PCA Cross-College Sub-Committee
- Provost's Committee for Advisement
- Research Council
- Research Technologies Advisory Board
- Salesforce Community of Practice
- Staff Council
- TargetX Administrative Committee
- Undergraduate Research Opportunity Conference judging panel

Below: 2026 La Raza Stolling Ceremony.



A STRONG FOUNDATION

Graduate Studies is a critical unit at UNM, with an accomplished staff who excel in providing support for all areas of graduate education.

GRADUATE STUDIES UNIT

Throughout 2025-26, Graduate Studies expanded its staff and refined its organizational structure. We promote a staff culture that values growth through continuous learning and skill development.

1 Dean
1 Associate Dean
4 Faculty Fellows
10 Staff
2 Student employees

57
workshops, trainings, and conferences attended by Graduate Studies staff during the year



Above: Graduate Studies staff.

NEXT STEPS

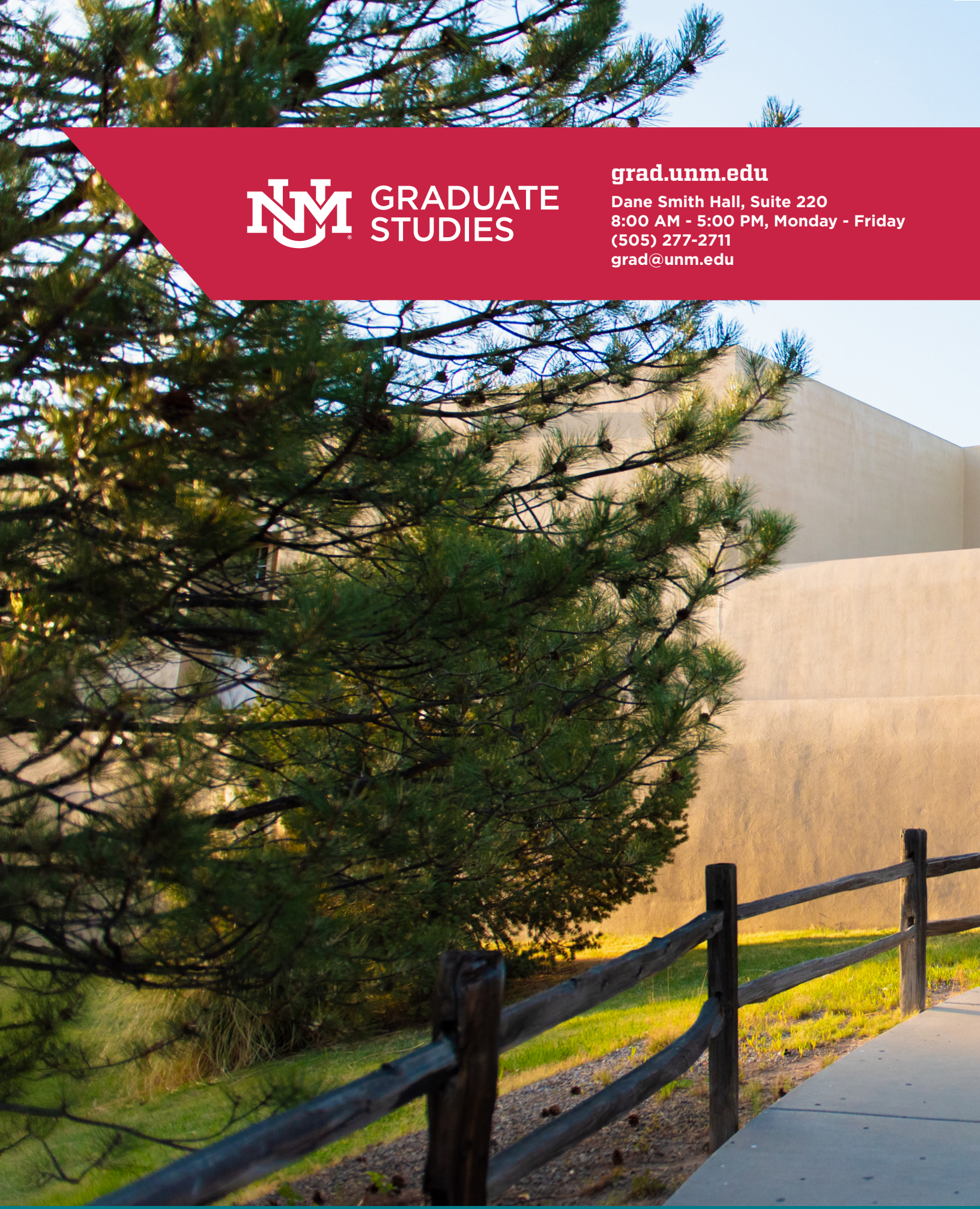
In 2025-2026, Graduate Studies strengthened every stage of the graduate student experience at UNM. From recruiting and enrolling new students, to providing critical financial support, to fostering mentoring relationships, showcasing research, and supporting degree completion, Graduate Studies continually invested in student success and institutional excellence.

Looking ahead to the next academic year, Graduate Studies will build on its strong momentum by:

- **Expanding graduate access and enrollment**
- **Increasing scholarship and fellowship support**
- **Enhancing student success programming**
- **Strengthening degree completion initiatives**
- **Supporting interdisciplinary research**
- **Advancing innovation in graduate education**
- **Building partnerships that benefit students and the State of New Mexico**

Through these efforts, Graduate Studies will continue to cultivate the next generation of scholars, professionals, innovators, researchers, and leaders for New Mexico and beyond.

GRADUATE STUDIES



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