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DATE: September 9, 2014

TO: Las Cruces campus faculty and staff

FROM: Garrey Carruthers, President 

SUBJECT: Lower enrollment/budget reduction measures

As I mentioned during our fall convocation ceremony, the state of this university is very good. In fact, New Mexico State University would be in excellent condition, if only our enrollment numbers were a little better.

For the Fall 2014 semester, preliminary enrollment numbers for NMSU's Las Cruces campus reflect a decline in student credit hours of about 4.5 percent. This seems to be the trend for most of higher education in New Mexico, with similar declines expected at other colleges and universities around the state.

A number of factors play into our enrollment picture. Among them are demographics and a shrinking pool of potential college students, as fewer high school students are graduating around the state.

There is, however, some good news to point out with regard to enrollment. We're encouraged by growth we see in the graduate program stemming from new students, which increased about seven percent from last year. There also is an increase in undergraduate transfers from outside the NMSU system to the Las Cruces campus. Enrollment of high school students taking dual credit courses at the university is up from last year as well.

Based on our revised projections for enrollment figures, the revenue collected from tuition and fees for fiscal year 2015 is expected to be approximately \$4.8 million less than the original budget estimate. We have already identified \$1.5 million in central I&G (Instruction and General) budget decreases, leaving a remaining shortfall of \$3.3 million to be covered through departmental I&G budget reductions.

Working with the President's Academic Council, we have agreed to collectively begin to analyze and discuss temporary and/or permanent reductions to the current year budget. These will not be across-the-board budget cuts. We will exercise discretion to ensure we protect our core mission. My goal is to avoid permanent budget reductions and to continue with our strategic investment plans.

It is not a time for panic, but it is a time to make an adjustment. I ask you to continue to mentor our students and show them that New Mexico State University truly is a caring community. These efforts will help in retaining these students and keep them on track through their graduation.