

January 29, 2025

Dear everyone,

I write with a sense of urgency for the mission and scope of our university and its educational goals.

Firstly, I want to thank you for everything you do for this university. In my one month as president, I continue to be impressed by the great work and commitment that faculty, staff and students bring to their responsibilities. Which makes me state the following:

Powerful winds of change are happening and affecting our educational mission. In light of them, let's continue to be a collegial entity even as we respect the strong and healthy differences we carry as individuals (the etymology of both 'university' and 'college' stresses the ties that bind and unify us). So, let's strengthen our aspiration to build a culture of gratitude for one another and for the privilege of doing this work to uplift the people of New Mexico and beyond; and let's strive to transform the lives of our students, our collaborators, and the communities we serve in lasting and positive ways, despite our differences, despite the challenges.

During its first week of governance, the federal administration in Washington, D.C. has promulgated many executive orders. These actions have wrought significant havoc in the lives of the people we employ, teach and serve throughout the state. While it is easy to group people in blocks, it is important to have empathy for everyone whose research, studies, teaching, service and livelihood are affected. What is happening should not be thought of through the lenses of partisanship. As difficult as that might seem, let's keep our focus on NMSU's mission and continue to cultivate the principles of respect, courtesy and empathy for each other and for those who are most affected by these winds of change.

This does not mean that we should not embrace a more pragmatic approach to finding answers to the many challenges the orders have wrought on our communities. Among the questions we've begun to receive are how will the orders impact our research, our programs and the people who make up our Aggie community of faculty, staff and students?

This situation is fluid – new information and changes arrive daily, and our administrative and legal teams are actively seeking clarity and answers in this changing landscape.

Our commitment now is to provide information as soon as we have good, concrete guidance to share. The Vice Presidents for EID and Research are our point people for much of the information we will be providing moving forward. In a meeting of the Executive Team yesterday, we have agreed to build a website to collect the disparate measures and outcomes that impact our research, our service, and our teaching across the state and the various institutions

that represent us (e.g., Las Cruces campus, the community colleges, Extension offices, Agricultural Research Centers, and our affiliates around the state). A message from the Vice President for Research will quickly follow this one to inform faculty and staff on strategies, even as the news today is that the federal government has just rescinded the order regulating the disbursement of federal grants and aid. Similarly, we will be compiling information for how to respond to the banning of initiatives that have protected the rights of underrepresented people throughout our state.

To be specific, in addition to questions about federal research and program funding, the announcement of blanket changes affecting the future of diversity programs and the escalation and broadening of immigration enforcement (and more) have already resulted in heightened tension, anxiety, and fear for many in our communities. With regard to some of these mandates, the [New Mexico Department of Justice](#) has provided guidance specific to [higher education institutions](#) regarding the enforcement of immigration laws. This should be the guidance that informs our initial approach to these matters. For example, if you encounter federal agents on our campus, or at any of our community colleges, research centers or offices around the state, please contact NMSU Police at 575-646-3311 and notify our General Counsel Office at 575-646-2446.

Below are links to information about the executive orders, along with resources offered by NMSU and other organizations. We plan to bring them all together under one webpage and information center.

NMSU is committed to our Land-Grant and Hispanic- and Minority-Serving institution mission to serve the diverse needs of our state and its sovereign nations through comprehensive programs of education, research, extension and outreach, and public service. We owe respect to our core values which include the commitment to welcoming diverse populations to higher education, embracing our differences as an asset, and actively seeking to include wide-ranging perspectives.

*Nos Merecemos Ser Unidos*, especially when the challenge highlights our different worldviews and expectations. Let's find empathy in fear, and courage in the journey.

Sincerely,



Valerio Ferme  
NMSU President

## **Resources and Information**

### **Executive Orders**

[Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity](#)

[Ending Radical And Wasteful Government DEI Programs And Preferencing](#)

[Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats](#)

[Protecting the Meaning and Value of American Citizenship](#)

[America First Policy Directive to the Secretary of State](#)

[Other Presidential Actions](#)

### **Research**

[NMSU Office of Research, Creativity and Economic Development](#)

[NSF Implementation of Recent Executive Orders | NSF - National Science Foundation](#)

### **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

[NMSU Office of Equity, Inclusion and Diversity](#)

[NMSU Systemwide Diversity Council](#)

### **Immigration**

[NMSU Resources for Undocumented/DACA/Non-Citizen Students](#)

[ACLU Know Your Rights](#)

### **Mental Health Support**

[NMSU Counseling Services](#) (Students)

[Well-Being Solutions](#) (Employees)

[TimelyCare](#) (Employees)