

SEM Strategic Plan

Approved by NMHU Board of Regents 5-23-22

NMHU Mission, Vision, Core Values

Mission

New Mexico Highlands University is a public comprehensive university serving our local and global communities. Our mission is to provide opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to attain an exceptional education by fostering creativity, critical thinking and research in the liberal arts, sciences, and professions within a diverse community.

Vision

Our vision is to be a premier comprehensive university transforming lives and communities now and for generations to come.

Core Values

Excellence

Diversity

Accessibility

Responsiveness

NMHU Strategic Plan Goals

Goal 1: Teach and mentor students to integrate a broad range of academic skills, a breadth and depth of curricular knowledge, and an interdisciplinary understanding.

Goal 2: Inspire students to action through environments that foster scholarship and produce graduates equipped to address regional and global issues.

Goal 3: Engage with and serve our communities for mutually beneficial exchanges of knowledge, services and resources.

Goal 4: Advance excellence in diversity, equity and inclusion policies and practices.

Goal 5: Be a comprehensive educational provider for all students including traditional, non-traditional, online, distance, community, and lifelong learners.

NMHU SEM Strategic Plan

Purpose – To provide forward-looking, strategic direction to Strategic Enrollment Management efforts through FY25, including:

- Undergraduate Recruitment
- Graduate Recruitment
- SEM Marketing
- Admissions
- Student Success Coaching
- Financial Aid
- Native American Student Services and Recruitment
- International Education Center

Goals:

1. Grow total NMHU enrollment
 - Reach total enrollment goal of 3,000 by FY25
 - Increase # of graduate students to 1250 by FY25, particularly non-traditional, returning, adult populations
2. Repopulate main campus by increasing on-campus, residential enrollment
 - Increase # of main campus first time freshmen to 200 each fall, with focus on athletics, transfer, ABQ/RR/SF, and out of state (AZ, CO, TX) populations.
3. Achieve NASNTI (Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institution) status by FY25
 - Reach 10% proportion of Native American students for two consecutive years
4. Increase graduation and retention rates
 - Keep FTF fall to fall retention rates at or above 58% by FY25
 - Keep six-year graduation rate for new FTF at or above 30% by FY25

Strategic Initiatives:

Undergraduate recruitment strategic initiatives support goals 1 and 2, and are focused on first time freshmen, including both in-state and out-of-state populations, transfer students, and dual credit students.

A key to enrollment growth is population of the NMHU main campus in Las Vegas. To recruit and enroll students who will reside on or attend main campus, we must look beyond our traditional Northern New Mexico recruitment area. To that end, we will enhance recruitment of in-state first time freshmen with the following strategies:

1. Addition of two Albuquerque-based recruitment staff who can both recruit and provide financial aid assistance to potential first-time freshmen. These staff will develop relationships with metro area high schools and students, and will focus on the area with the highest population of potential first time freshmen in New Mexico.
2. Development of automatic admission agreements with NE regional, Santa Fe, and other NM schools, streamlining the admissions process for select first time freshmen, and packaging financial aid for these students. An example of such an agreement is attached as Appendix A. These agreements are reviewed annually.

3. Change in policy to allow for a conditional admission status. This permits students who are awaiting official transcripts or other materials necessary for formal admission to enroll in classes on a conditional basis until all materials can be received.
4. Enhanced partnership with athletics. Many main campus first time freshmen (about 25% on average) participate in a sport. Recruiters will work on a one-on-one basis with coaches on applicant first time freshmen athletes.
5. Development of a show room in VCH that is available continually and reserved for use as a display room for those touring campus. Staging of the room and coverage of the cost of maintaining it as a show room will be borne by SEM. Partner with housing to develop consistently available group of rooms to host visiting student groups. Also consider development of other campus visit enhancements, like student ambassadors, or faculty 'demo' classes.
6. Change in housing process to allow only admitted students to enroll in housing, and establishment of priority housing dates to ensure that enrolled and admitted NMHU students have priority in securing on campus housing.
7. Development of summer on-campus programs – for example, bridge, dual credit, or athletics camps – to recruit high school populations through experiencing NMHU first-hand.

We will enhance recruitment of out-of-state first time freshmen with the following strategies:

1. Development of automatic admission agreements with Denver Public Schools, Colorado GEAR Up and other Arizona, Colorado, or Texas schools (particularly west Texas and the Rio Grande Valley), streamlining the admissions process for select first time freshmen, and packaging financial aid for these students. An example of such an agreement is attached as Appendix B. These agreements are reviewed annually.
2. Focus recruitment travel and staffing for out-of-state students on neighboring states of Arizona, Colorado, and Texas, particularly west Texas and the Rio Grande Valley.
3. Expand tribal partnerships and tuition discount or waiver agreements beyond New Mexico (for example, with southern Colorado tribes and the Muscogee Creek Nation in Oklahoma).
4. Enhance virtual campus visit presentation in addition to the on-campus visit enhancements for in-state students mentioned above, and prioritization of admitted students for campus housing.
5. Development of summer on-campus programs – for example, bridge, dual credit, or athletics camps – to recruit high school populations through experiencing NMHU first-hand.

We will enhance recruitment of transfer students with the following strategies:

1. Continue use of Transfer Evaluation System by registrar, with a goal of moving to a model for assessing transfer credits that prioritizes standardization and ease of use for students.
2. Explore increased institutional aid for transfer students.
3. Explore increased integration with center recruitment of transfer students, including utilization by center staff of Slate and Tutor Track, as well as development of recruitment goals and metrics by center.
4. Continue to explore partnership opportunities with CNM, the largest source of transfer students.

We will enhance recruitment of dual credit students with the following strategies:

1. Move toward in-school, in-residence teachers, modeling this approach on the successful pilot led by Dr. Rebecca Moore at West Las Vegas High School. Explore partnership with Robertson and other area high schools.
2. Explore development of dual credit virtual/remote delivery, particularly with tribal schools, and rural schools.

Graduate recruitment strategic initiatives support goal 1, and will be enhanced with the following strategies:

1. Systematic recruitment of NMHU undergraduates leading up to and upon completion of their undergraduate degree, both generally to NMHU graduate programs and to specific programs following their undergraduate degree path.
2. Expansion and increased utilization of international student recruitment partners (for example, Shiksha in India, Keystone in Europe, IAM360 in South Africa).
3. Expand awareness and use of tribal MOUs for graduate students, both in New Mexico and with out of state tribes with which we have established a MOU.
4. Increased institutional aid for incoming graduate students, in combination with exploration of using this in coordination or collectively with graduate assistantship funding.
5. Continues partnership with Wiley, pursuant to our contract with them, and refinement of collaborative processes and procedures to maximize the student recruitment and entry experience.
6. Explore and evaluate targeted GRE name buys for specific programs, with SEM providing funding of these name buys.
7. Explore interest of academic programs in developing workforce development, certification, credentialing, and micro-credentialing programs.
8. Continue and expand the international graduate scholarship, funded by a differential international graduate student rate.
9. Continue offering first 3 graduate credits tuition-free to NMHU undergraduates to encourage continuation of their education with NMHU graduate programs.

Marketing activities supported by SEM and in partnership with University Relations will support goals 1 and 2 with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Targeted online advertising partnership with NICHE to provide an online presence for both undergraduate and graduate programs, and to reach students searching for educational opportunities with our peer, competitor, and comparative institutions.
2. Continued expansion and refinement of Slate processes and tools, including automated, targeted, and proactive marketing and communications to all students in the recruitment pipeline and exploration of text communication streams, chatbot, and other modalities. Addition of a second CRM staff position is planned to support Slate optimization.
3. Continued partnership with Wiley to market programs pursuant to our contract with them.
4. Continuation and optimization of digital marketing campaigns including Slate integration of tracking and lead information from digital marketing, and review of inquiry data as it relates to marketing effectiveness.
5. Consideration of expanded investment in traditional marketing campaigns to raise general brand awareness for NMHU.

6. Continual improvement of NMHU website and social media presence as it relates to recruitment.
7. Use of multiple communication channels and modalities to communicate with potential and enrolled NMHU students, including D2L emails, text, and social media.
8. Continuation of recruitment partnerships for international students and evaluation of effectiveness.
9. Develop process for marketing and recruitment of students in new academic programs not covered by Wiley contract.
10. Consider student focus groups to obtain feedback on marketing effectiveness and messaging.

Admissions activities will support goals 1 and 2 with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Continue to evaluate and refine policy, process, and practice for conditional and provisional admission with a focus on maintaining integrity of admissions process while allowing for maximum ease of admission for students.
2. Continue and enhance responsiveness monitoring for applicants via Slate and continue to expand utilization of Slate in the application process, including with international student applicants.
3. Continued partnership with graduate dean on graduate process improvements, and troubleshooting responsiveness and other issues as they relate to graduate academic department processes.
4. Continued improvement of proactive management of holds and admissions needs for all students in the admissions and enrollment process.
5. Proactive timeline call/email/text campaigns for applicants not yet admitted in Slate.

Student Success Coaching will support goal 4 with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Establish timelines and standardize proactive outreach methodologies for student success coaching contacts with all students, and monitor data related to responsiveness and efficacy.
2. Develop staff capacity and competencies to assist with special student populations (Native American, International), and explore supporting additional populations (African American, LGBTQ) through the student success coaching office.
3. Continue and enhance proactive review and outreach for students having an outstanding balance prohibiting continued enrollment, and enhancing partnerships with financial aid and business office to work toward resolution of the balance for these students, as well as proactive management and outreach related to other holds.
4. Review process for student success coach outreach and intervention with students having academic progress or achievement challenges and holds.
5. Expanded use of TutorTrac system, both on main campus with key offices and services, as well as at center campuses, and data analysis to track responsiveness and effectiveness. Evaluate use of chatbot and other modalities for increased responsiveness.
6. Continued and enhanced integration of student success coaches with supportive services (HUE, ARMAS, writing center, etc.) and athletics coaches.
7. Review/implementation of suggestions from Adult 360 survey to better understand and assist non-traditional and adult students served by student success coaches.

8. Expand student success coaching model beyond first time freshmen and undergraduate population. Evaluation of the first SSC pilot with the School of Business population after two years to determine whether expansion of the model was successful and should be continued.
9. Explore partnerships with Campus Life and HU Cares on student wellness and other quality of student life issues.

Financial Aid will support all goals with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Review of the current institutional aid structure, including athletics, transfer, undergraduate, and graduate institutional scholarships, and exploration of coordinating institutional aid with athletic scholarships and graduate assistantships.
2. Review award, packaging, and communication processes, including new rolling awards process, providing aid for 8 week terms, packaging of aid for incoming students, and communication around scholarship acceptance, FAFSA completion, and aid for non-US-citizens.
3. Move packaging of institutional aid to January, regardless of timeline for establishment of tuition and fees.
4. Review financial aid office staffing model to ensure student focus, appropriate staffing capacity and competencies, and maximization of effectiveness and efficiency.
5. Continuation of financial literacy education initiatives for current and prospective students, and explore partnership with both internal (campus life, HU Cares) and external (Luna, high school populations) partners.

The Native American Center will support goal 3 with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Continue Native American Liaison focus on recruitment of students through partnership with tribes and pueblos, within New Mexico and out of state, as well as focus on main campus and Farmington center retention efforts.
2. Increased engagement with Farmington center Native American student population, our largest Native American student population, both in person and virtually, and in partnership with academic and other NMHU areas.
3. Conduct a campus life assessment for Native American students on main campus to better understand recruitment and retention factors for this student population
4. Assist in training student success coaches and recruitment staff in supporting Native students.
5. Continued enhancement of Native American Center physical location on main campus as social and supportive center for Native students.

The International Education Center will support goals 1, and 2 with the following strategic initiatives:

1. Designate, train, and integrate a student success coach as a secondary visa signatory/DSO to support International Education Director and International Student population.
2. Train SSC, Recruitment, and Admissions staff to support international students, with a focus on understanding the special legal, regulatory, and cultural challenges these students experience.
3. Continue to expand use of Slate to automate as much as possible the application process for international students.
4. Explore recruitment of International Baccalaureate students, potentially from United World College.

5. Expand marketing and recruitment partnerships with international student recruiters, and consider development of specialty international student recruitment opportunities – for example, partnerships with South African recruitment agents featuring our rugby program.
6. Explore a preferential international student rate for Canadian and Mexican students, particularly Indigenous populations in these nations.
7. Continue and expand the international graduate scholarship, funded by a differential international graduate student rate.
8. Explore creating financial literacy education specific to the international student population.

The above strategic initiatives will be evaluated at least annually, and any updates or changes to the four goals of the SEM strategic plan will be presented to the SEM strategic planning committee. The committee consists of:

Theresa Law, JD, CFRE, Vice-President, Student and Donor Engagement

Dr. Elisabeth Massaro, Faculty Senate Chair

Dr. Rebecca Moore, Professor, Social Work, Former Presidential Fellow

Dr. Brandon Kempner, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

Dr. Kimberly Blea, Dean of Students

Dr. Gloria Gadsden, Professor, Criminal Justice

Dr. Kevin Ensor, Assistant Professor, School Counseling

Dr. Benjamin Villarreal, Assistant Professor, English and Philosophy and Coordinator, Undergraduate Studies in English

Sean Weaver, Director, University Relations

Andrew Ehling, Director, Athletics

Benito Pacheco, Director, Strategic Enrollment Management

Emily Montoya, Director, Financial Aid

Tina Clayton, Director, International Education

Patrick Wilson, Director, Online and Extended Learning

Joe Gieri, Director, Information Technology Services

Leon Bustos, Interim Director, Highlands Undergraduate Enrichment (HUE) and Presidential Fellow

Keith Tucker, DBA, Accreditation Liaison

Dr. Henrietta Romero, Registrar

Dr. Spintz Harrison, Native American Liaison

Ricardo Martinez, Assistant Director, Admissions

Caroline Montoya, Assistant Director, Student Success Coaching

Valerie Valles-Pedroza, Visiting Professor and SWEEP Activities Director, Social Work

Ryan Aragon, Bursar/Student Accounts Receivable Manager

April Kent, Librarian

Vanessa Velasquez, Executive Assistant to the VP, SDE

In addition to this strategic plan, operational goals, metrics, and activities will be developed by SEM leadership and will be monitored and evaluated on an annual, monthly, or weekly basis as appropriate.