

Initial Comparator Research – University of New Mexico

(LMS = Blackboard, <http://learn.unm.edu/>. UNM Continuing Education partners with third-party vendors to provide online courses; those vendors supply the virtual environment. There is an effort currently underway to integrate non-credit offerings in the campus LMS, however; the office of New Media and Extended Learning is piloting test uses of Blackboard for courses in Continuing Education, English for speakers of other languages, and other UNM offerings that fall outside of the usual for-credit course rubric.)

General impression: UNM Continuing Education has a clearer mission from the university than does UO Academic Extension, but that mission is external-facing and community oriented; courses and programs offered online and offline are on a not-for-credit, professional and personal development basis. UNM's online for-credit options are offered through UNM Online; the statewide effort is anchored at the flagship campus in Albuquerque. Overall, while technology and learning are not fully centralized, faculty are provided with a consistently high level of customer service, and UNM's entry into the MOOC market hints at possible further innovation we ought to find instructive. There could be more peer learning amongst faculty, and the org charts hint at some possible behind-the-scenes tensions, but overall, they outpace UO.

1) What services does this institution's Extension unit provide to campus partners?

Very few. Continuing Education (UNMCE; <http://ce.unm.edu>) distinguishes itself from the rest of UNM; as the University's outreach unit, its entire focus is on non-degree continued education. It is also physically removed from much of the rest of the UNM campus, on the northern edge of the area, reinforcing its outward-facing character. (The medical units and the law school are to the immediate south, and the core UNM campus is further to the south of those.) They also have an extended network of satellite locations (<http://ce.unm.edu/registration/maps-locations.php>).

While much of what UNMCE offers is online, there is next to no intentional audience overlap with UNM's other online offerings. In fact, UNMCE does not use the local LMS, contracting instead to provide online courses and professional certificates through third party vendors. They currently provide content for Ed2Go (<http://www.ed2go.com>), Ed2Go Careers (subscription-based access to multiple online classes and a mentor) and SkillSoft (<http://www.skillsoft.com>).

UNMCE instructors are most often adjuncts in the truest sense of the term, teaching a course in an area of expertise in addition to holding down a traditional day job in a relevant field. There is no overlap between Continuing Education instructors and University faculty.

UNMCE has developed brand consistency through the creation of an expansive body of programming, and its online courses, in particular, speak to the need for professional, non-degree certification. While some of the individual online courses offered are clearly for personal development, such as introductory offerings on fiction writing or elder care, the bulk of what's offered are individual courses designed to enhance a student's work-

related skill sets, including options in business and finance, technology, grantsmanship and nonprofit management, digital and graphic arts, and languages other than English. This focus is also clear in their online certificate programs, which cover the culinary arts, health care careers, and wedding planning.

2) Where is digital education housed? Are there separate units for online learning and blended or hybrid courses? Are technology and pedagogy combined or separate? How much of this effort is centralized?

Non-credit digital education is generally the provenance of UNMCE, as explained above, though UNM's Center for English Language & American Culture (<http://celac.unm.edu/index.html>; roughly comparable to AEI at UO) is offering some English language learning classes online as well. For-credit digital education at UNM is, like UMass, both a local and a statewide effort. Unlike UMass, however, both campus-based and statewide audiences are served through UNM's office of New Media and Extended Learning (NMEL; <http://newmedia.unm.edu>).

NMEL coordinates UNM Online (<http://statewide.unm.edu/online>) and also offers a variety of services to enhance those hybrid courses which are being delivered on UNM's flagship campus in Albuquerque. While it doesn't manage classroom technologies (infrastructure is IT's purview), it is the home for online education for registered UNM students, whether those are in-residence students taking a class or two online or students finishing their degrees entirely through UNM's online offerings. Those courses are offered in coordination with UNM's academic departments.

Online degrees at UNM are almost universally referred to as "degree completion programs," generally implying that the UNM Online student has prior credit, be that from UNM or another institution. Offerings include bachelor's degrees in business, communications, dental hygiene, liberal arts, medical laboratory sciences, nursing, and radiologic sciences, as well as master's degrees in dental hygiene, education, engineering, nursing, and learning sciences/e-learning, a doctorate in nursing, and certificate programs in educational leadership or learning sciences. In addition to these organized degree (or "degree completion") offerings, individual UNM courses are offered in a wide variety of disciplines. NMEL clearly works with multiple schools and colleges across UNM.

In addition to serving as the official home for UNM Online, NMEL provides faculty training on the LMS and other software, online course development, evaluation, and instructional support, video capture and conferencing, webcasts and web conferencing, and media tools for use within the LMS. They manage several institutional software licenses for tools faculty might use in the classroom, and they offer Quality Matters as a service to their institution.

NMEL manages most aspects of educational technology that are immediately relevant to faculty success, particularly with regard to online or hybrid course offerings. It is worth noting, however, that NMEL is an effort that is organizationally disconnected from the University of New Mexico's Information Technologies division (IT; <http://it.unm.edu/>).

IT is divided into five internal divisions, including a classroom technologies unit and a customer support unit—both of which probably make direct contact with faculty seeking support for technology-enhanced pedagogy, but which do not exist to support the broader mission of digital education per se (<http://it.unm.edu/about-it/organization-chart.html>). IT's faculty support is focused on technology in general purpose classrooms and enterprise applications, such as e-mail, or testing and evaluation software. To be very clear: tech support for the LMS lives within NMEL, not IT.

NMEL's instructional design support and faculty training (which is much more extensive) no doubt extends at least in part from the fact that it is a service unit organizationally situated within Academic Affairs. NMEL is a piece of the portfolio overseen by the Vice Provost for Extended Learning (as is Continuing Education), who reports to the Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs (see <http://provost.unm.edu/committees-programs.html>). In contrast to both NMEL and UNMCE, the University CIO reports to the Executive Vice President for Administration and CFO/COO (see <http://evpadmin.unm.edu/directreports/organizational-chart.html>).

NMEL's support does not explicitly integrate pedagogical questions or training; it is exceedingly focused on their LMS. They do appear to have a working relationship with the University's Center for Teaching Excellence (<http://cte.unm.edu>). It is CTE that provides a variety of pedagogical workshops and training to faculty, including training on educational technologies such as iClicker. I would not say that technology and pedagogy are fully integrated at UNM, but they are playing nicely together.

UNM offers one MOOC, via Coursera; it's called "Traditional Medicine Without Borders: Curanderismo in the Southwest and Mexico." This is an interesting example of offering an item of particular regional interest to both the UNM community and the world at large. The course can be taken as a 2-week in-person intensive at UNM in the summertime, either for credit (managed via the UNM Registrar) or non-credit (managed via Continuing Education). The course can also be taken as an online UNM credit course on a semester-long basis, with several online sections open each term (these would be supported by NMEL). Finally, it can be taken as an eight-week Coursera course. This is an interesting model for further investigation (<http://curanderismo.unm.edu>), considering all of the parties involved, and the choice to market one body of content through multiple delivery models and to multiple audiences.

- How is this MOOC going?
- Is the idea of selectively curating content and presenting it in multiple venues a viable model for other institutions?
- Do the audiences for this material differ between methods of course delivery?

3) What structures, formal or informal, are in place to encourage pedagogical innovation on campus? Is there any effort to centralize such activity?

Pedagogical support at UNM is housed within the Center for Teaching Excellence. As such units go, this one seems relatively well funded and has an expansive sense of its mission; offerings include one-on-one or departmental consultations, collaborative peer

teaching observations, workshops on technology tools, diversity training, and community conferences and institutes that give UNM faculty opportunities to share best practices with one another. Annual awards and development grants are also given, though none have an educational technology focus.

UNM's most innovative product is probably its sole MOOC; the institution isn't a hotbed of pedagogical or technological excitement. That said, it does provide consistent support at a relatively high level, and its support units are working in collaboration with one another. And importantly, faculty teaching for UNM Online are given cohesive, robust instructional design support (see next section).

4) Where are instructional design and instructional technology housed? What pathways exist to guide faculty to instructional technology services? Is access to instructional technology support uniform across different faculty groups at the institution?

Instructional technology and instructional design support are housed at NMEL. Faculty who teach for UNM Online are always assigned a specific course designer and sometimes assigned a graduate student assistant, both of whom provide various levels of instructional support. A variety of training events are held each term. In addition to workshops, NMEL hosts Open Lab hours each week, during which faculty can use NMEL facilities and receive assistance with course development.

The initial development of an online course at UNM also follows a clear path. Courses are developed based on curriculum need at the departmental level; once approved by a department, there is a needs assessment, a designer is assigned to the project, and the course is supported as it runs (<http://newmedia.unm.edu/faculty/getting-started.html>).

Access to instructional technology support is uniform for campus-based instructional staff, including graduate student teachers. Support for online courses at UNM's branch campuses may be less uniform or less comprehensive. Faculty from the Gallup, Los Alamos, Taos or Valencia campuses who teach for UNM Online are served by part-time educational technology staff, who are often also teaching courses at those campuses—indeed, whose primary role at their campus may be instructional.

5) At what administrative level are digital education initiatives, endorsed, supported, or made a fundraising priority? For example, does the institution count, encourage, or otherwise track student enrollment or participation in digitally-inflected (hybrid, blended, tech-enhanced F2F) courses? What institutional investments have been made in hybrid and/or blended learning?

UNM Online seems to be growing. My guess is that a targeted approach to online course development has paid off financially, since it can serve both students already on campus and students elsewhere. UNM Online is definitely a higher institutional priority than UNM's online continuing education offerings (consider local LMS support vs. third-party vendor contracts, faculty qualifications), at least at present.

Program Spotlight – CE/DE/Online at AAU Public Comparators

UNIVERSITY OF NEW MEXICO
UNM Continuing Education / UNM Online

Summary: UNM Continuing Education and UNM Online are separate University units, with UNM Online one part of a larger for-credit distance education division, UNM Statewide. All distance and continuing education efforts are overseen by UNM’s Vice Provost for Extended Learning. UNM Continuing Education provides non-credit face-to-face and online instruction for communities external to the university. UNM Online is a statewide effort anchored at the flagship campus in Albuquerque, and serves degree or certificate-seeking students who are taking some or all of their credit-bearing courses online.

Scope: UNM Continuing Education serves 30,000 students annually (a number which includes both face-to-face and online delivery models). 950+ for-credit distance education courses are offered each year; this includes courses offered via UNM Online, as well as via ITV and correspondence. In addition to individual courses, UNM Online offers 7 undergraduate degrees, 8 graduate degrees, and 5 certificates, with an emphasis on degree completion for returning students. UNM Online also helps coordinate 6 MOOCs, which UNM offers in partnership with Coursera.

Formation: For-credit distance education has been offered through UNM Statewide (also known as UNM Extended University, or UNM Distance Education) since 1999. A reorganization in 2003 narrowed UNM Continuing Education’s mission to non-credit education only. In 2013, the two units were merged into UNM Extended Learning, but each has retained a distinct mission and audience.

Strengths:

- A single service unit (New Media and Extended Learning) administers UNM’s LMS (UNM Learn, a Blackboard installation), provides support to faculty teaching online, and manages registration and advisement for students enrolled in online courses.
- UNM faculty teaching for UNM Online are given personalized and comprehensive instructional design support, beginning with a holistic needs assessment
- MOOCs build upon either popular UNM Online courses or popular face-to-face classes, and regional research strengths
- Experimental effort to offer academic content to different audiences via multiple delivery methods: a class on curanderismo (folk healing) is offered as an in-person summer course for both degree-seeking and non-credit students, as well as a semester-long UNM Online course and a free MOOC via Coursera

Limitations:

- Continuing Education’s non-credit courses are offered in partnership with third-party vendors; the University’s recent transition to a new LMS (from WebCT to Blackboard in 2013) did not include non-credit courses