

Northern New Mexico College History, Mission, and Organization

Northern New Mexico College will continue to work toward becoming a regionally recognized comprehensive university creating a culture of quality student learning that addresses student and employee needs while maintaining the community college mission.

Mission

Northern New Mexico College is a Hispanic and Indigenous serving institution dedicated to student achievement and the advancement of our community. Northern emphasizes issues of sustainability inclusive of social and economic justice, diversity, the environment, and service for the common good.

Values Statement

The values of the cultural landscape as well as the individuals who teach, learn and work at NORTHERN have shaped the values of NORTHERN throughout its history. Our values provide a frame of reference for all manners of decision---making on our campus. They contribute to the general atmosphere of the College and guide us in our teaching, our pursuit of knowledge, and our public service.

History of NORTHERN

Northern New Mexico College and its mission have always played an integral role in the State of New Mexico's goal to provide educational opportunities for its residents.

- In the early 1900's the New Mexico Territorial Legislature determined that a facility was needed as a "normal school" with a primary function of training teachers for the State's Spanish speaking population. The Spanish American Normal School at El Rito opened its doors in September 1909, and celebrated its centennial as Northern New Mexico College.
- When the New Mexico Territory applied for statehood in 1912, the State Constitution, Article 12, Section 11, identified the Spanish American Normal School as one of ten educational institutions which would be supported by the state. The Spanish American School provided both secondary and post---secondary educational programs.
- In 1953, the State Legislature changed the name of the institution to Northern New Mexico State School and, mandating that the institution provide training not available in public schools, implemented a secondary school curriculum. Six years later, the Board of Regents renamed the school Northern New Mexico College. NORTHERN continued to teach grades 7-12 along with the new college curriculum.
- By 1961, the College was offering two-year programs in business education, general studies, and selected vocational programs. Technical-vocational programs proved popular and enrollment increased due to a school-operated transportation system which allowed the population from the surrounding rural villages to attend the school.
- In 1969 the high school curriculum was transferred to a newly created public school district and the curriculum at the College was limited to technical-vocational course offerings. One year later, the Board of Regents again renamed the school the New Mexico Technical-Vocational School to indicate the change in course offerings.

- Operating under its new name, the Technical-Vocational School expanded its curriculum and faculty, and developed a campus in Espanola, approximately 30 miles from El Rito. The school assumed the Practical Nurse program from St. Vincent's Hospital in Santa Fe. As educational needs in northern New Mexico evolved, educators and legislators identified a need for a more comprehensive delivery of educational services. In 1976 a task force was created whose membership included representatives from the New Mexico Technical-Vocational School, the University of New Mexico, and local school boards and citizens to assess the feasibility of establishing a community college. The task force recommended that the University of New Mexico-Northern Branch (at Santa Cruz) be dissolved and their academic course offerings be combined with those of the New Mexico Technical-Vocational School. The Legislature accepted this recommendation and provided for the expansion of the institution's mission.
- The Board of Regents soon accepted the new mission of the institution, renamed the institution Northern New Mexico Community College, and began combining existing programs, philosophies, and procedures in order to establish a comprehensive community college.
- The new institution was headed by a president appointed by the Board of Regents. The programs to be offered by the new institution included associate degrees in various academic and occupational disciplines, certificate-granting programs in occupational studies, special interest courses granting continuing education units (CEU's), and other courses offered for no credit.
- In 2004, legislative approval and accreditation was extended to Northern, permitting it to be the first community college in the state of New Mexico to offer a four year degree, a BA in Elementary Education.
- In 2005, legislation was enacted which permitted the college to offer four---year degrees in any programs deemed necessary and appropriate. Northern New Mexico Community College was renamed Northern New Mexico College.

Administrative Organization

The President of the College is appointed by Board of Regents and is directly responsible to them. As the chief executive officer of the institution, the President directs the administration in carrying out College policy, and has the authority to assign and reassign administrative duties.