

# **Curriculum Terminology Project**

## **Statement of Purpose/Introduction**

UNM serves the citizens of New Mexico by offering a wide range of opportunities for higher education in a variety of settings. These programs range from certificate programs in vocational fields through bachelor's and master's degrees, graduate certificates, professional degrees, and doctoral degrees. The richness and complexity of these offerings is an important aspect of UNM's educational identity.

The University of New Mexico operates in a complex legal and regulatory environment that requires clarity and consistency of terminology to ensure that we describe programs and report degree awards accurately. The university's catalog and other published materials shape the expectations of students as to the degrees we offer and the subjects available for study. The university has a public and legal responsibility to offer the degrees it advertises.

The university reports information on degrees awarded to a variety of external agencies, including accreditation bodies, to comply with regulations and to support claims of quality and standing. The National Center for Educational Statistics maintains the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) to which we annually report all degrees awarded. The New Mexico Commission on Higher Education, as mandated by the Legislature, approves our graduate degree programs before degrees can be offered and requires reporting of both undergraduate and graduate degree completions. It is important that we report our degree programs externally as we portray them internally.

A review of current materials reveals inconsistencies in terms describing similar units of curriculum that make accurate reporting difficult, that may mislead students, and that complicate advising, especially for advisors at remote sites with limited access to faculty. The terms "degree," "major," and "concentration" are used in confusing ways. Subdivisions within programs are titled differently—one discipline's concentration may be equivalent to another's emphasis. Terms such as "subfield" and "track" are used differently from discipline to discipline. In the student records system, some concentrations within majors are coded as separate majors. And, there are areas of inconsistency between printed materials and information on the web.

In order to bring clarity, consistency, and predictability to UNM's curriculum documents, the Curriculum Terminology Task Force has developed the attached glossary of standard terms for describing academic programs. Consistent use of this or a similar set of terms would provide clear guidelines for faculty developing programs, enable students to better navigate the catalog, and help advisors find and interpret information more easily.

Curriculum Terminology Task Force:

Elizabeth Barton (HSC)

Mary Jo Campbell (Department of Physical Performance & Development)

Karen Carlson, Co-chair (College of Nursing, Dean's Office)

Mark Chisholm (Institutional Research)

Jep Choate (Office of the Registrar)

Lois Griesbaum (Office of the Registrar)

Jerry Hall (Department of Civil Engineering)

Mariana Ibáñez (Office of Graduate Studies)

Wendy Marsh Kappy, Co-chair (Institutional Research)

Darlene Lucero (Office of the Registrar)

Wanda Martin (College of Arts & Sciences, Dean's Office)

Phyllis Mingus-Pepin (Los Alamos Branch Campus)

Kathleen Sena (Office of the Registrar)

Nancy Uscher (Office of the Provost)