

How Investing in Faculty to Improve Student Experience Can Build Institutional Trust



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Welcome

The idea of thriving is everywhere in higher education right now, particularly when we talk about what we imagine for our students.



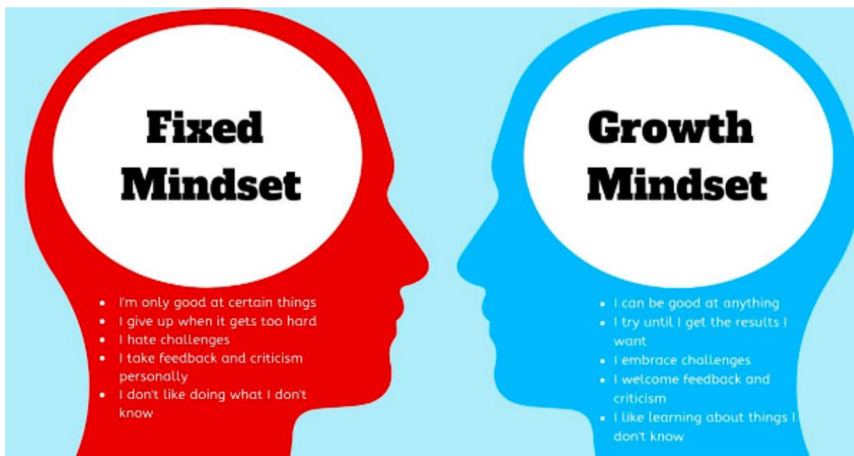
What does thriving look like for *faculty* in the classroom?

Objectives for Today

- Attendees can identify steps to scaling a professional development program where both faculty and students are central to the experience
- Attendees can describe how institutional investment in faculty development on equitable learning environments can build student and faculty trust

From Mindset 1.0 to Mindset 2.0:

Students and Faculty and the Institutional Learning
Environment



A **growth mindset** is the belief that intelligence can be developed. Individuals with a growth mindset understand that **abilities can be grown through hard work, the use of effective strategies, and help from others when needed.**

A growth mindset is contrasted with a fixed mindset: the belief that intelligence is a fixed trait that is set in stone at birth.

SEP Mindset 1.0: Mindset Reset

- False Dichotomy; either-or
 - ▶ It's a fixed mindset!
 - ▶ Leads to labeling self/others
- Something that exists only in people's heads
 - ▶ The "fix" is focused on the individual
 - ▶ Overlooks the importance of the learning environment

What Kind of Mindset Do You Have?



I can learn anything I want to.
When I'm frustrated, I persevere.
I want to challenge myself.
When I fail, I learn.
Tell me I try hard.
If you succeed, I'm inspired.
My effort and attitude determine everything.



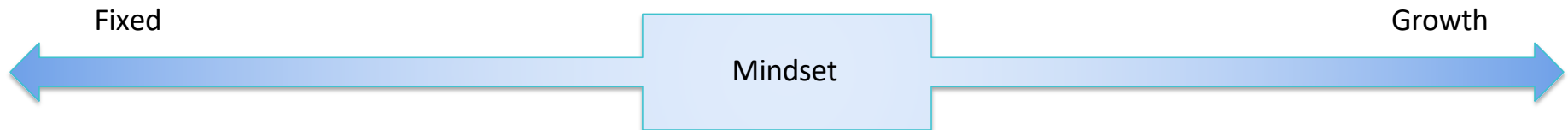
I'm either good at it, or I'm not.
When I'm frustrated, I give up.
I don't like to be challenged.
When I fail, I'm no good.
Tell me I'm smart.
If you succeed, I feel threatened.
My abilities determine everything.

Created by: Reid Wilson @wayfaringpath ©©©© Icon from: thenoanproject.com



Mindset 2.0: The Mindset Continuum

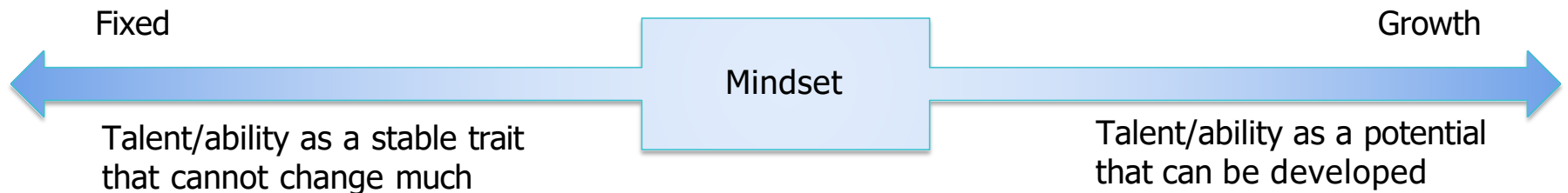
People really “have” both mindsets:



We move between the mindsets based on “situational cues” in the local environment

SEP Mindset 3.0: Mindset Culture

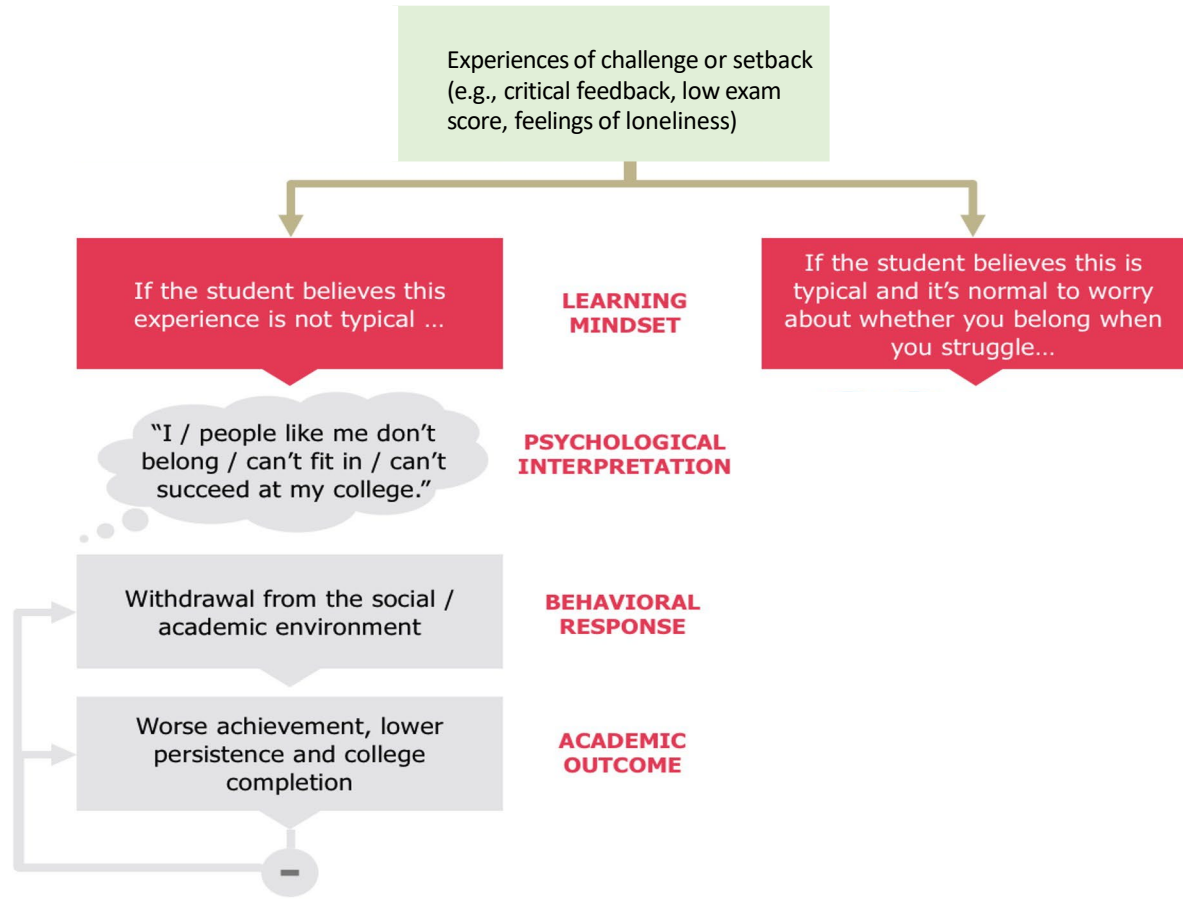
Beliefs of **powerful people** in a setting – like instructors, advisors, administrators, supervisors, or bosses – about our talents and abilities



Mindset culture is expressed through what we say and do, our norms, policies, practices, and interactions with students



STUDENT



INSTRUCTOR

Instructor experiences challenge or setback, (ex. Low student engagement or performance)

If the instructor believes that students are not college-ready and that the institution expects gatekeeping ...

I can't teach this kind of student; they can't do this work

Instructor withdrawal into content delivery and fixed mindset about student ability

Instructor feels under-valued in the institution



Low student outcomes, achievement gaps, dissatisfaction with institution based on assessment of "low quality of student"

Instructor experiences challenge or setback, (ex. low student engagement or performance)



Improved student outcomes & improved trust in institution

If the instructor believes that teaching is developed over time and knows that the institution offers resources to support students and instructors ...

It is common to go through challenges like this and overcome them.

Instructor participates in development opportunities and is recognized for effort to improve student outcomes

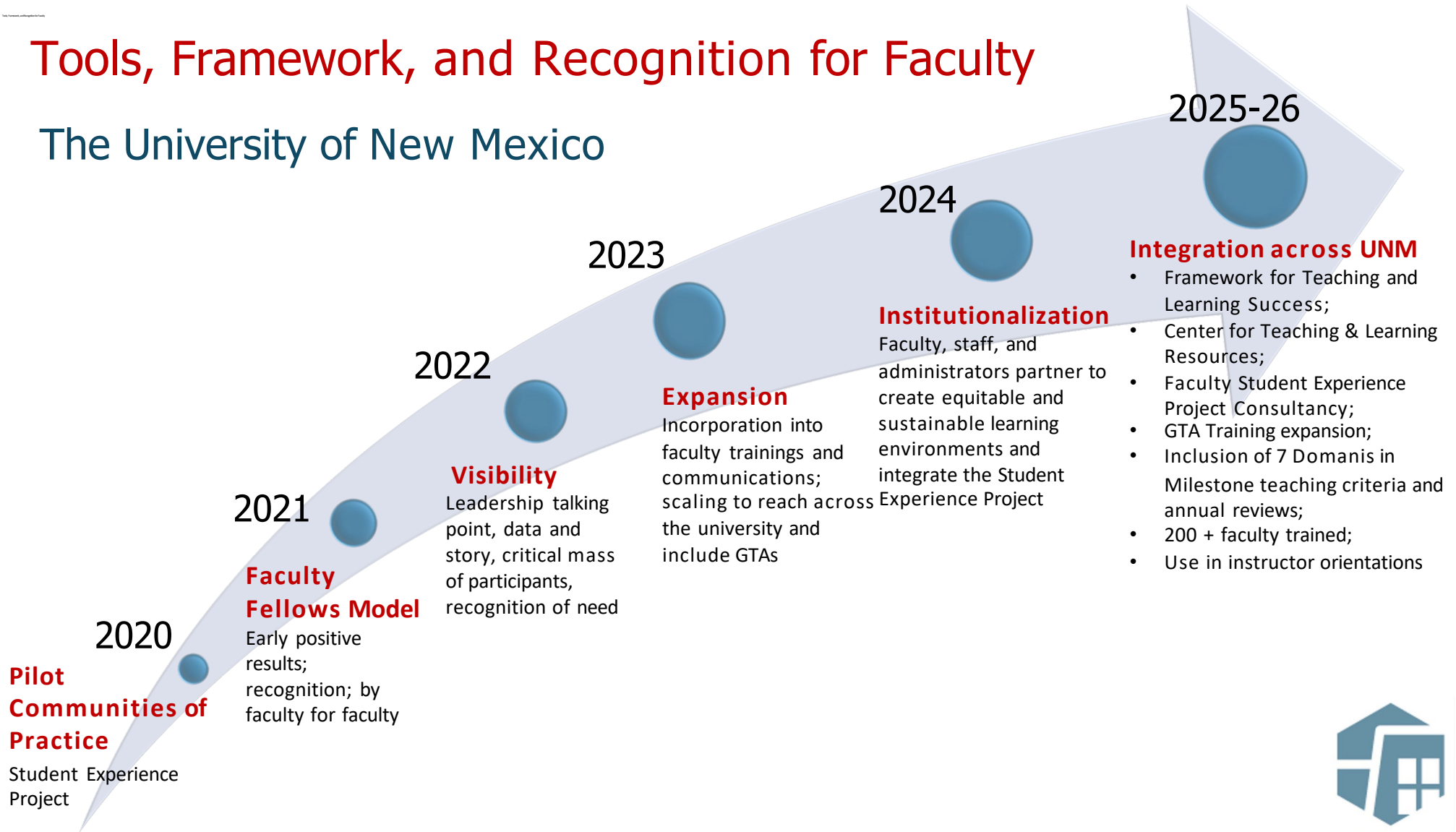
Sustained engagement in social & academic environment/development.

Steps to scaling a professional development program
where both faculty and students are central to the
experience

UNM Case Study

Tools, Framework, and Recognition for Faculty

The University of New Mexico





Example: UNM Student Experience Project, 2019-present

- 200 faculty across 13 colleges/schools/branches trained to date (\$300-\$1,000 stipends)
- During grant period, student academic performance and retention improved for students in SEP classes
- The UNM SEP has informed a cultural shift in instruction and advising, fostered new education research and grant-funded pilots such as Graduate Teaching Assistants as Agents of Change (Sloan/USU), and helped inspire the UNM Framework for Teaching and Learning Success:
<https://ctl.unm.edu/framework/index.html>

UNM Student Experience Project




Core Components:

- Faculty community of practice with opportunities to engage in person, online and asynchronously
- Ascend survey of student experience as formative feedback tool for faculty with disaggregated view of student experience
- Evidence-based practices developed by faculty for faculty: <https://studentexperienceproject.org/resources/>
- Low-lift: ready-to-implement strategies and guides

UNM Student Experience Project (2025-2026)

UNM Student Experience Project (2025-2026) ↗



This Canvas Site is designed to be a resource for you to easily find SEP resources, connect with the community of SEP fellows to get feedback and share your expertise. Please start by navigating to the SEP Modules below and complete the assignments in the 'to do list'.

[SEP Modules](#)

Catch up on the SEP assignments by checking what is still outstanding here:

- [Revised syllabus submission](#)
- [Attendance and late assignment policies discussion board](#)
- [Inclusive assessment strategies discussion board](#)
- [Course messaging strategies](#)

And coming up:

[SEP Final Reflection](#) due December 17th

Optional! [Documenting your UNM Student Experience Project Participation to receive formal certification \(optional\)](#) (complete before January 15th)

Quick links (modules most relevant to this time period!)

- [Resources from trainings and community of practice meetings \(PowerPoints, handouts etc\)](#)
- [Measuring student experience: Ascend in action!](#)
- [Feedback to foster academic engagement and growth](#)

SEP Contact

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6d You are currently logged into Student View

Resetting the test student will clear all history for this student, allowing you to view the course as a brand new student.

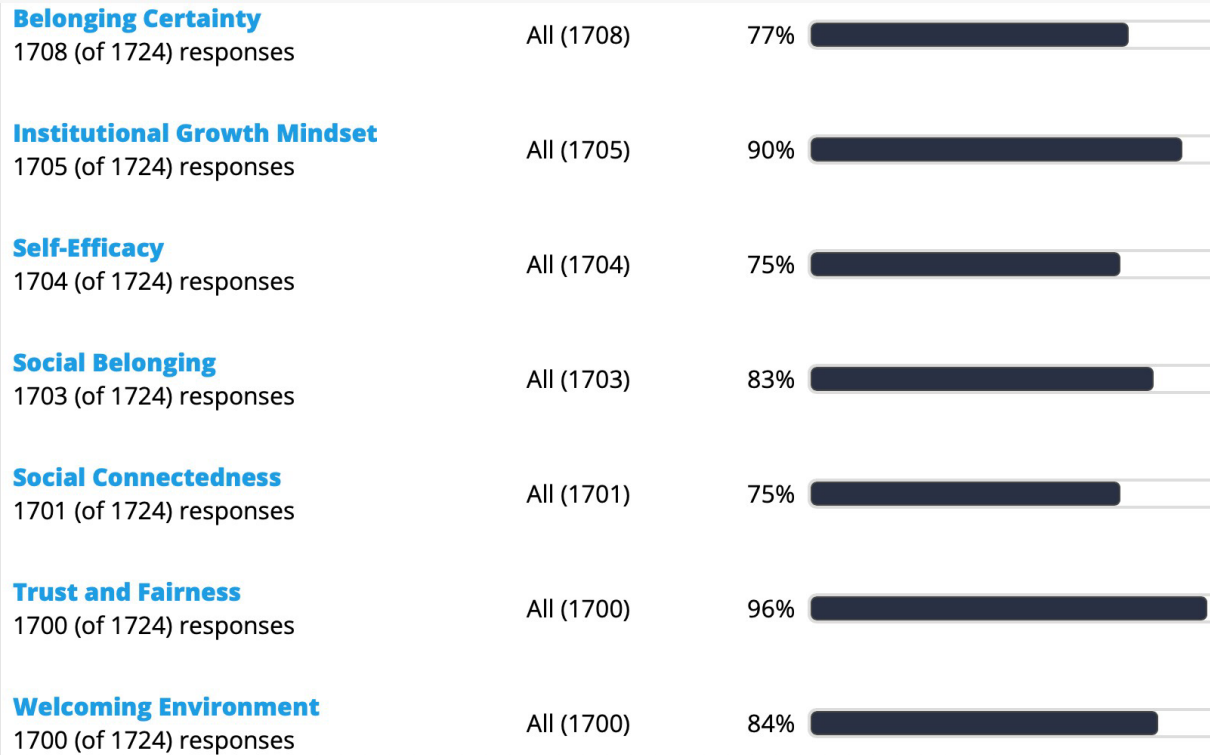
Reset Student Leave Student View

1. Faculty Community of Practice

- Orientation occurs in 2 pre-semester sessions
- Canvas Shell Greet SEP Fellows and organizes work
- Weekly messages keep Fellows on Track
- Monthly community of practice builds culture change and connection
- Reflections and discussion board facilitate progress
- Instructors can gather their reflections and other work into a portfolio for a SEP recognition that can be used in milestone teaching evaluations

2. ASCEND survey provides feedback on student experience

 [Home](#) >  UNM Network Fall 2025 > [Report](#)



“Just having data to look at in real time was amazing!”

“The highlight was when I saw my scores go up quite a bit at the end of the semester, which I believe was due to their work with each other...”

3. Evidence-based practices developed by faculty for faculty with assessment from researchers

Example: the syllabus review

The syllabus review is one example of providing faculty with resources that have been developed, vetted, and used nationwide

What in a syllabus inspires trust?

How does providing an institutional opportunity for faculty to redesign the foundational document for their teaching build trust?



Syllabus Review: Six Core Questions

1. Does this syllabus communicate that the instructor has a “growth mindset” rather than a “fixed mindset” about students’ abilities?
2. Do the messages in the syllabus communicate that it is normal to be challenged by course material, and that this is not a sign that a student is not capable of learning or does not belong in the course?
3. Does the syllabus communicate that the instructor and the instructional team care about students’ success?
4. Does the syllabus communicate that diversity is valued in the classroom?
5. Does the syllabus normalize challenges that students often face in college, and connect students with resources that can support their overall well-being?
6. Does the syllabus communicate that using academic resources is a standard part of succeeding?



Syllabus Review: Six Core Questions

Growth Mindset Syllabus Example: This example syllabus contains policies and messages that are attuned to students experiences around *growth mindset*, *sense of belonging*, *care*, that *diversity is valued* and that *challenges are normal and use of resources is standard part of success*

Instructor: [Name of Instructor] (pronouns: she, her, hers)
Instructor@school.edu

Student Drop-In Hours: My student drop-in hours are Mondays and Wednesdays, 10am – 12pm in our classroom zoom room. If you cannot make it to my regularly scheduled drop-in hours, email me to set up a different time that works for us both. I will hold extra drop-in hours before each midterm exam, so check the course website for dates and times.

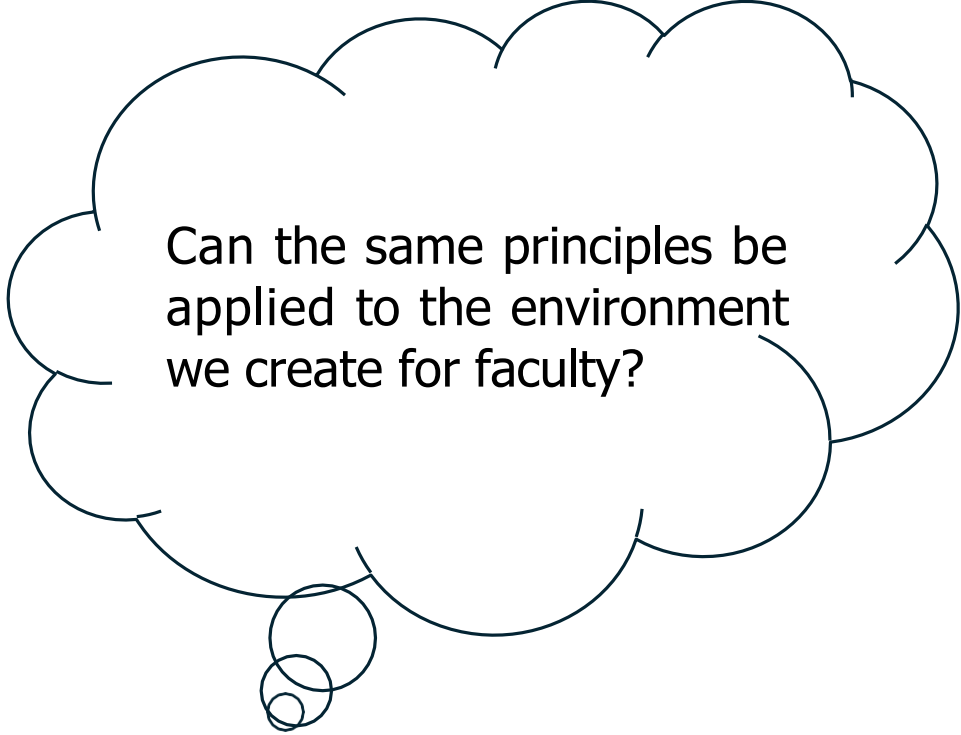
About Your Instructor: I became fascinated by math while going to university. I was intimidated by math at first, and after I got the lowest grade I had ever had on my first midterm, I wondered if I was cut out for this field. However, I accessed tutoring services and put in some extra hours, and I earned a significantly higher grade on the final. In time, I developed a passion for the subject, even doing a PhD. I hope to share that passion with you.

Contacting me by email: At some points in the term, my inbox gets quite full, but I do want to hear from you. If you email me and don't hear back from me within two business days, please send a follow up email. I will appreciate the gentle reminder.

Student Experience Project

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Faculty Experience . . .

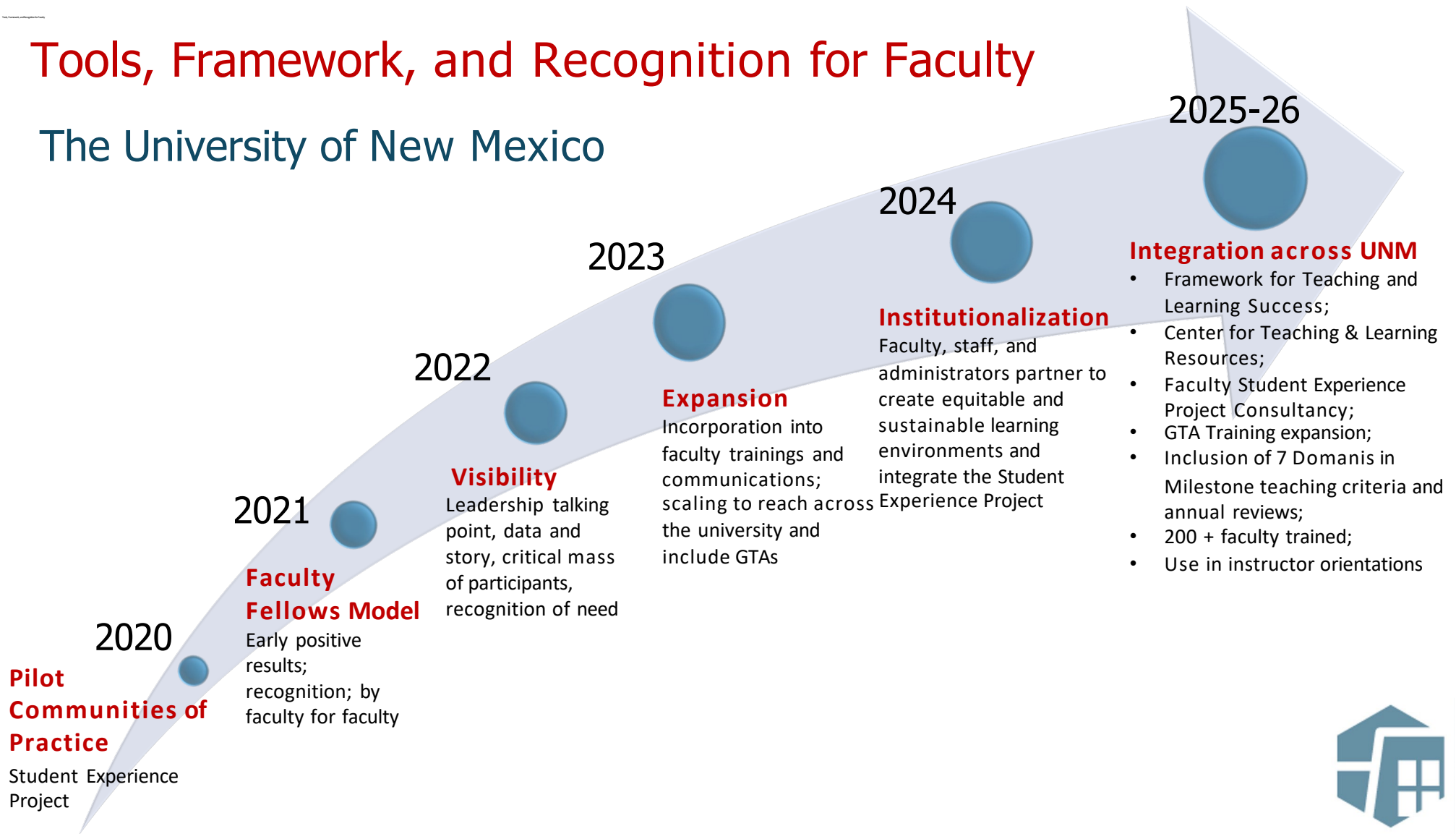


Can the same principles be applied to the environment we create for faculty?

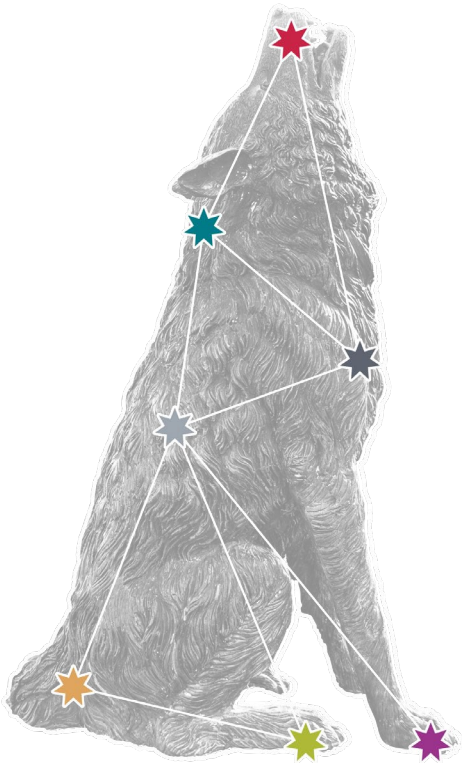
Improving Faculty Outcomes to Strengthen Institutional Trust

Tools, Framework, and Recognition for Faculty

The University of New Mexico



Collaborative, Faculty-Led Process for The Framework for Teaching and Learning Success



Iterative revisions and solicitation of
extensive feedback

Process led by faculty for faculty and
students

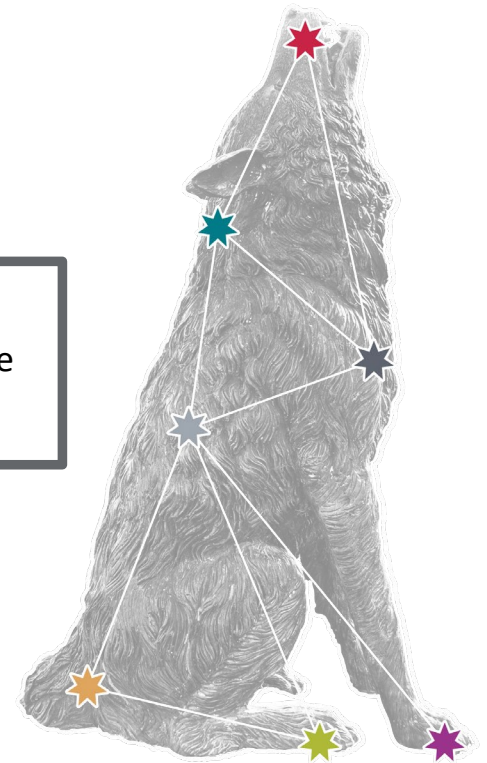
Faculty Senate Adoption Spring 2025

Availability of related teaching development
resources

In Milestones, Recognition and Awards

Tools and Recognition for Faculty Teaching

Framework for Teaching and Learning Success

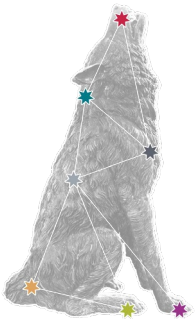


<https://ctl.unm.edu/framework/index.html>

EMBRACE A CULTURE OF GROWTH

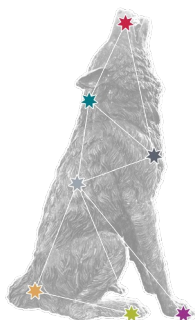
A growth mindset, which includes adaptability and resilience, benefits students, educators, and administrators by encouraging curiosity, problem-solving, and lifelong learning, while fostering an environment where challenges can become opportunities.

EDUCATOR ACTIONS	LEARNER ACTIONS	ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS
<p>Set clear expectations and meet students where they are.</p> <p>Use growth-mindset language.</p> <p>Encourage curiosity and a willingness to explore.</p>	<p>Embrace challenges.</p> <p>Try varied strategies to discover what works.</p> <p>Approach learning with curiosity and cultivate lifelong learning habits.</p>	<p>Champion formal and informal professional development in curriculum and instruction.</p> <p>Welcome innovation, experimentation, and reflection.</p> <p>Model a culture of growth and foster continuous improvement. Support processes, such as program assessment and review, that contribute to this culture.</p>



<https://ctl.unm.edu/framework/index.html>

Demonstrate support > build trust



Instead of relying on subjective ideas of demonstrations of 'excellence in teaching', we can now provide a framework of common language developed for and by faculty and experts

The UNM Framework for Teaching and Learning Success is being incorporated in Teaching Awards, Faculty Annual Reviews, and Faculty Milestone Reviews

We propose that trust grows when faculty are provided with support and relevant resources.

In Your View:

How might trust be built at an institution?

What opportunities can be leveraged to build trust?

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-

Extra slides

1. SETTING THE CLASSROOM CLIMATE

CHANGE IDEA	RESOURCES	MY PLAN (SOME EXAMPLES BELOW)
Review and rework syllabus (Over the summer)	Resources https://library.studentexperienceproject.org/bundles/s/ep-faculty-professional-development	ex. remove “negative expectations” language
Creating an inclusive classroom: Welcome message and ice-breakers (introduced in the August SEP pre-semester session)	Resources https://library.studentexperienceproject.org/bundles/s/ep-faculty-professional-development	ex. Week 1 Zoom meeting included randomized break out rooms of 6 students. Students were given prompts to discuss interests outside of Genetics material.
Rebrand office hours		ex. Office hours are re-named “drop-in hours” in the syllabus.
Learn to use Co-Pilot Ascend and decide how to administer (introduced in the August SEP pre-semester session)	https://library.studentexperienceproject.org/bundles/s/ep-faculty-professional-development	

2. INCLUSIVE ASSESSMENT & GRADING PRACTICES

Give major assignment and return grade within the first four weeks of class		ex. Exam 1 was returned with Wise Feedback at the end of Week 3.
Use Wise Feedback (introduced in the orientation, developed in the September Community of Practice meeting)	Resources	
Use UNM Faculty Early Alert Student Referral	UNM Faculty Early Alert Student Referral	

3. GROWTH MINDSET & LEARNING TO LEARN

Use Wise Feedback and Exam Wrappers (introduced in the orientation, developed in the September Community of Practice meeting)	Resources https://library.studentexperienceproject.org/bundles/s/ep-faculty-professional-development	ex. Exam wrappers used for exams 1-3. Collected student reflections through discussion boards in Learn
Provide resources to support growth mindset and self-efficacy	Resources	ex.-Shared my story of my first Organic exam ex.-Posted 3 videos of students in class (peers) working examples of homework questions

4. PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL ENVIRONMENTS

Use diverse images, examples and stories -active	Resources	ex. Podcasts from diverse scientists are linked in each material section in Learn
Inventory existing physical and virtual environments		ex. discuss messaging on departmental website with colleagues
Incorporate best practices for remote learning in courses	UNM CDL Resource	ex. Discussion boards are used for students to pose questions to each other.

Timeline of UNM SEP Practices with Just-in-Time Monthly Meeting aligned with expectations for fellows



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Courses



Calendar



Inbox



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Commons



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Wednesday, September 13 Update for SEP Fellows

Joseph Suilmann

1 Section

Sep 13, 2023 at 3:31pm

Excerpt from a Wednesday Message

Hello Everyone,

It was great to see many of you last week at the first SEP STEP meetings (see the recording of [Friday's SEP STEP](#), if you weren't able to attend. You may also want to view the recording if you attended in person, as we ran out of time to cover the material you'll find around minute 30 of the recording). We debriefed on our first CoPilot Ascend reports and surveying experiences and discussed plans around the first major assessment in the course. This message will provide some answers to Copilot FAQs and more detailed resources for scaffolding that first assessment.

Ascend Survey Results

Now a total of 1866 students have participated in the Ascend Survey 2023 - thanks for your efforts to get students

Our community of practice meetings highlighted students that showed up in several classes. Last week's message highlighted some resources to support students... In addition, take a look at this recent Science article...

As a community, our strengths are 'Trust and Fairness' and 'Institutional Growth Mindset' – both very high numbers and excellent ways to start the semester. This speaks volumes about the care and effort with which you have approached your syllabi and setting an inclusive classroom climate - thank you! Belonging certainty was our lowest score at 67%, reminding us that although our students are experiencing our classes positively at the moment, this is a fragile state that may change easily in response to adverse events, for example, receiving a lower score than hoped on the first assessment. As a reminder, students from marginalized groups tend to be most impacted by these adverse events.

Ascend FAQs

- **How do I find a participation list so I can give my students credit or extra credit?**
 1. Log into Ascend and click on the 'participation' tab on the left hand menu
 2. Click 'view by student' which should appear in blue at the top right of the screen.
 3. Choose the class and the survey and then click 'view'

“Our community of practice meetings highlighted both the high percentage of students with basic needs insecurity and the equity gaps for these students that showed up in several classes. Last week’s message highlights some resources to support students... In addition, take a look at this recent Science article...”



Account



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Calendar



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Help

Home

Announcements

Assignments

Discussions

Grades

People

Pages

Files

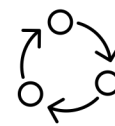
Syllabus

Modules

View All Pages

Gallery Includes UNM SEP Fellows (with scroll down) to support recognition across campus

SEP Community Gallery



Former Fellows like Evan contribute to the next year's CoP



Saurabh Ahluwalia
Finance and Innovation
SEP Fellow 22-23



Evan Ashworth
Communication & Journalism
SEP Fellow 22-23



Nina Bar-Giora
UNM Taos, Education and
Career Center

“The highlight of my experience in SEP has definitely been the community of other instructors here at UNM. I gained a lot from conversations with the other SEP fellows in both face-to-face and online modalities.”

canvas.unm.edu

myUNM | The University of New Mexico

UNM Student Experience Project (2023-2024)

Assignments: UNM Student Experience Project

UNM

UNM Student Experience Project (2023-2024) > Assignments

63 Students

Home

Account

Announcements

Assignments

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SEP Fellows complete reflections throughout the semester

- Revised syllabus submission
Due Aug 13, 2023 at 11:59pm
- Your first Ascend report
Due Sep 6, 2023 at 11:59pm
- Your first major assessment
Due Oct 4, 2023 at 11:59pm
- Collaborating with advisors
Due Nov 8, 2023 at 11:59pm
- SEP Final Reflection
Due Dec 13, 2023 at 11:59pm

“The connection I was able to make with students, the community I was able to build in all my classes, has been the highlight for me. The students clearly responded to SEP practices.”



Transformation at UNM seeded by SEP

- Strategic Plan UNM 2040 uses SEP language
- Semester guidelines from Academic Affairs refer faculty to SEP resources
- All institutes and training for faculty, including new faculty, include SEP sessions
- Many Graduate Teaching Assistants receive SEP training
- The SEP has become a recognized indicator of commitment to pedagogy in promotion and tenure portfolios
- The Faculty Senate adopted the UNM Framework for Teaching and Learning Success and the Center for Teaching and Learning offers parallel faculty development resources
- UNM is engaging in retention project partnerships connected to the SEP relationship
- Faculty Student Experience Project, starting Fall 2025, focuses on providing resources to high enrollment courses
- SEP faculty fellows are viewed as resources and experts by their peers
- Two large introductory classes cut DFWs in half by relying on the SEP
- Our second largest major, Biology, engaged in a complete redesign aided by faculty and GTA SEP involvement.
- The teaching atmosphere is positive and has moved from hand-wringing to strategy.