



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
OFFICE OF LEGISLATION AND CONGRESSIONAL AFFAIRS

09/02/2009

The Honorable Jeff Bingaman  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Bingaman:

I am pleased to inform you that REGENTS OF NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY GRANTS -- OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, has been selected to receive funding under the STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS - HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM (031S). This grant will be in the amount of \$574,578.00 for the period 10/01/2009 through 09/30/2010. It is anticipated that the grant will be for a total of 5 year(s). Accompanying this letter you will find both an explanation of the purpose of the STRENGTHENING INSTITUTIONS - HISPANIC SERVING INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM and a brief description of the activities that will be funded under the grant to REGENTS OF NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY GRANTS -- OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,.

The contact at REGENTS OF NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY GRANTS -- OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, is:

ROSE CARLSON  
REGENTS OF NEW MEXICO STATE UNIVERSITY GRANTS -- OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT,  
1500 THIRD ST.  
GRANTS, NM 87020  
(505) 287-6678

The grantee will be notified officially of their selection by the Department in the next few days. Please feel free to share this information with the grantee and others as you see fit.

I hope you find this information useful. If the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs can provide any further information in this regard or assistance in any other matter, please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff at (202) 401-1028.

Sincerely,

Gabriella Gomez  
Assistant Secretary,  
Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs

Reference Grant Award Number: #P031S090069

NEW MEXICO

## **Purpose of the Program**

The purpose of this program is to expand educational opportunities for, and improve the academic attainment of, Hispanic students; and expand and enhance the academic offering, program quality, and institutional stability of colleges and universities that are educating the majority of Hispanic college students and helping large numbers of Hispanic students and other low-income individuals complete postsecondary degrees.

## A B S T R A C T

New Mexico State University-Grants Campus (NMSU-Grants) in Grants, New Mexico, is a two-year public community college within the New Mexico State University system, offering transfer-oriented Associate of Arts and Science degrees, Associate in Applied Science degrees, and occupational certificates. NMSU-Grants serves Cibola County (pop. 27,285) in Western New Mexico, a rural, isolated area with a majority-minority population (34% Hispanic, 41% Native American). With just 10% of adults holding bachelor degrees and family poverty rate of 31%, area residents look to NMSU-Grants as a first step out of hardship. Subsequently, institutional enrollment has nearly doubled since 2004, with particular increases in web-based courses.

Serious institutional gaps, however, prevent us from acting as a gateway to high-demand educational programs and careers, particularly for our growing number of Hispanic, at risk students. Despite area demand for professionals in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) fields, and STEM transfer opportunities at our parent institution NMSU-Las Cruces, just 3.6% of our Hispanic students have declared STEM majors (fall 2008). Since 2003, only 21 of our Hispanic students have transferred into NMSU Las Cruces STEM degree programs.

While students increasingly look to the web for educational access, NMSU-Grants faculty have not been systematically trained in web-based instruction and tools. As a result, haphazard development of web-based courses has depended upon a few faculty with expertise, leaving gaps in online and blended courses (online didactic content, on-ground laboratory instruction) leading to STEM degrees. Fewer than half of Associate of Science degree requirements are offered in web-based formats, and STEM courses are under-represented among online and blended courses. Meanwhile, infrastructure deficiencies, including outdated science instrumentation, technology limitations, and inadequate facilities, undermine our ability to connect Hispanic, low income students to effective STEM learning environments.

NMSU-Grants therefore proposes *Connecting To STEM: Identifying the Path*, to deliver extensive faculty development in web-based instruction, supported by Faculty Studio tools and resources and resulting in the redesign/conversion of a host of core General Education and STEM courses to highly-effective online and blended (online didactic content coupled with on-ground lab instruction) formats. Newly developed online services – including Online Advising, Online Orientation, Online Quick Connect (academic Early Alert), Online Library Resources, and Online Career/Transfer Resources, built upon improved technological infrastructure, will be accessible wirelessly and from updated computer labs on campus, as well as from outreach center labs throughout the region. Updated science instrumentation and a newly-developed Environmental/Chemistry Lab will support blended STEM curricula, including newly developed introductory courses in Environmental Technology, Energy Technology, and Engineering Technology – areas of STEM career growth in New Mexico.

<i>Student Profile</i>	
Headcount	1,251
Minority	83%
Hispanic	38%
Female	67%
Part Time	77%
Avg. Age	28
Working	71%
Low Income	77%
First Generation	72%
<i>Faculty Profile</i>	
Total Faculty	55
Hispanic	9%
Master's Degree	53%
Avg. Age	50
Fac./Student Ratio	1/17

Total Five-Year Request: \$2,872,518

Year 1 Request: \$574,578