

Barbara Rodríguez serves as Interim Provost and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs at the University of New Mexico (UNM), the state's flagship R1 and Hispanic-Serving Institution. She leads the university's academic enterprise, including schools and colleges, branch campuses, enrollment management, student affairs, student success, faculty success and affairs, research, community engagement, and institutional analytics. Her leadership is grounded in a deep commitment to student access and success, faculty and staff excellence, and the role of a public research university in advancing opportunity and wellbeing across New Mexico.

Dr. Rodríguez brings a comprehensive understanding of UNM, shaped by her experience as a student, faculty member, department chair, and senior academic leader. As Senior Vice Provost, she contributed to the development of "One University," a central pillar of the UNM 2040 strategic framework, helping to advance a more coordinated and aligned approach across campuses, schools, and colleges. As Interim Provost, she launched BELONG (Building Environments for Learning, Opportunity, Navigation, and Growth), a strategic initiative designed to better align enrollment, academic planning, and student support systems to strengthen pathways into high-demand fields while sustaining excellence across disciplines.

A hallmark of Dr. Rodríguez's leadership is her ability to translate strategy into operational progress. She has advanced a coordinated approach to research and academic growth by fostering collaboration across schools, colleges, and campuses and encouraging the development of emerging areas of inquiry, including quantum science. At the same time, she has reinforced the central role of the humanities, education, and the arts. Her approach emphasizes building durable infrastructure that connects research, education, and public impact.

Supporting faculty and staff is central to her leadership. As Senior Vice Provost, she led the redesign of faculty systems, including the creation of the Office for Academic Personnel, and advanced policies that support recruitment, development, and retention. Her work includes improving hiring processes, advancing more transparent approaches to compensation equity, expanding faculty support programs, and leading complex labor negotiations, while strengthening shared governance and communication across campuses. As chair of the Department of Speech and Hearing Sciences and Director of Clinical Services, she expanded clinical programs to increase access to care for underserved communities while strengthening culturally relevant curriculum and supporting scholarly productivity.

Dr. Rodríguez's academic background is in speech and hearing sciences, with a research focus on bilingual language development in young children, particularly Spanish-English learners. Her work has contributed to understanding how language develops in diverse contexts and has informed clinical practice and educational approaches for multilingual populations. She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of New Mexico and her Ph.D. from the University of Washington. After completing her doctoral training, she returned to UNM as a faculty member, where she has remained deeply engaged in teaching, research, and service.

Throughout her career, Dr. Rodríguez has demonstrated a commitment to building institutional capacity in ways that are both strategic and grounded in community. She brings a collaborative leadership style, informed by experience across academic and administrative domains, and a strong belief in the power of public higher education to transform lives. Her work reflects an ongoing effort to position the University of New Mexico for long-term success—strengthening academic excellence, expanding access and opportunity, and ensuring that the university remains deeply connected to the people and place it serves.