

UNM–Los Alamos History

The University of New Mexico began its presence in Los Alamos in 1956 with the establishment of the UNM–Los Alamos Center for Graduate Studies. The Graduate Center has been in continuous operation since that time. It has a distinguished history of offering graduate degrees in scientific, engineering, management, and health-related fields. The first significant UNM undergraduate offerings in Los Alamos began with the establishment of the University of New Mexico Residence Center in Los Alamos in the fall of 1970. In 1973, the University of New Mexico Northern Branch College came into existence with Los Alamos as one of its campuses. In 1977, as a result of Legislative action, the UNM Northern Branch College was absorbed into Northern New Mexico Community College (NNMCC). In 1980, after a local referendum and BEF and Legislative approval, the Los Alamos Branch Campus of the University of New Mexico was founded. It began operations on July 1, 1980, in the Little Valley School on Orange Street. The new Director assumed his duties at that time, and several key NNMCC employees were transferred to the UNM-Los Alamos Branch College, which subsequently assumed the informal title of UNM–Los Alamos, abbreviated UNM-LA.

In October 1980, the Branch campus moved from the Little Valley School to its present site, 4000 University Drive. In January 1981, the staff of UNM–LA assumed, under a contractual arrangement, the daily operations of the UNM–Los Alamos Center for Graduate Studies from the Training Office of the Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the Director of the Graduate Center moved his office to UNM–LA. During 1982-83, the UNM–LA facilities were remodeled and expanded. The new UNM–LA facility was dedicated by the Governor of New Mexico, Toney Anaya, on January 6, 1984. In 1989, Mesa Gymnasium was acquired from the Los Alamos Schools and was remodeled to provide additional classrooms. The new, sixth building was opened in spring 1990. The Learning Resource Center, an addition to the existing facility, was completed in early 1996. It houses the Library, Tutorial Center and the Adult Basic Education Program. The remodeled Student Services Center was completed and opened in the summer of 2000. The graduate and upper divisions programs offered in Los Alamos are part of the University of New Mexico's Extended University, the institutions distance education program.

The mission of the center, in cooperation with Los Alamos National Laboratory and the Albuquerque and branch campuses of UNM, is the delivery of instruction in traditional face-to-face teaching, as well as through a variety of technologies, including televised programming via satellite, ITFS, video conferencing or the Internet.