Central New Mexico Community College
School of Skilled Trades & Arts

THEA - Advisory Committee Minutes, Fall 2025

Date: 10/1/25

Number of Attendees: 16

Called to order: 2:05 pm

Adjourned: 2:51 pm

Chairperson: Carly Preston

Recorder: Katherine Meagher

Location: Zoom

Members present from industry: Henry Avery- Albuquerque Little Theater**, Sara Ice-** UNM**, Riley Lewis-** Vortex/Adobe Theater**, Elsa Menendez-** CABQ**, Melodee Saiz-** APS

Members present from CNM: **Katelyn Attanasio**- CNM Ingenuity, **Dani Belvin**- Associate Dean, **Shannon Flynn**- Instructor, **Sionna Grassbaugh**- Interim Dean, **Samuel Kerwin**- AVS, **Bridgit Lujan**- PT Instructor, **Leonard Madrid**- PT Instructor, **Katherine Meagher**- ATA, **Dodie Montgomery**- PT Instructor, **Margaret Ortega**- WCS, **Carly Preston**- Instructor/Chair

Next scheduled meeting: TBD

I. Welcome/Introductions: Meeting started at 2:05 pm. Introductions were had.

II. Minutes: Minutes from Spring 25 were accepted.

III. Reports:

1. **College Updates:** Sionna gave college-wide updates. She reported that enrollment at CNM is over 19,000 and is expected to increase as the year continues, mostly due to late start courses. Enrollment in Skilled Trades and Arts is up 8% from Fall 25 and further growth is expected, especially as many of our classes started on September 22nd. Enrollment numbers are very close to exceeding pre-COVID enrollment, using a benchmark of Fall 2019.

   The new Ted Chavez Trades and Technologies Center (TTC) had its grand opening in August and started holding classes on September 22nd. This project cost about $57 million and was built in order to provide better access to trades education and address the growing needs of the local workforce. The center is designed for hands-on, practical learning and features multiple outdoor training areas so that students can experience similar working situations as they would in the workforce. The new TTC building will house our administration offices as well as our Carpentry, Welding, HVAC, Plumbing, Electrical, and Mechatronics programs.

   The RioTech campus also opened for classes this fall, providing instruction to high school and adult learners. Programs at RioTech include Carpentry, Plumbing, Welding, Digital Media, and Electrical. In the future, there are also plans for our Film and Digital Media programs to move to the Albuquerque Railyards (in partnership between MAC and the city) as well as a new building in Rio Rancho to house our Automotive and EV programs. The west wing of the old Ted Chavez (TC) building is slated for demolition starting in January 26. Until the new Rio Rancho campus is done, Automotive and EV will remain in the east wing of the TC building.

There are also plenty of part-time faculty position that have been posted or will be posted soon. We encourage our partners to look into these postings and share them with anyone they think could be interested!

CNM will be implementing more short-term certificates and micro-credentials in order to provide flexible and focused learning options for students. This means that students will be receiving targeted skill development within weeks or months, as opposed to traditional degrees that take multiple years. Micro-credentials will validate certain skills and/or competencies and can be stacked for students to build a larger, better professional portfolio. This should help students with quickly upskilling, reskilling, or even switching careers in a fast-changing job market. Both these micro-credentials and short-term certificates are industry-aligned, affordable, and recognized by employers as a sign of proactive learning and specific expertise. We do value input from our advisory committee as we implement these credentials- your feedback on this will be valuable!

2. **Enrollment and Graduation rates:** Dani reported on the enrollment and graduation rates in the Theater program. There were 4 graduates in last academic year- she said that we are looking at increasing those numbers. The main challenge the program faces is that many Theater students transfer to other colleges part-way through their time here and do not stay to graduate. She said that they are currently working on better engagement strategies to show students that they have a place here and can pursue their Associate's Degree.

   There are currently a total of 323 students enrolled. She mentioned that most of these students are not purely Theater majors- most students enrolled in the Theater program are students who are satisfying a Fine Arts requirement. The most popular major amongst these students is Business. This also shows the disparity between enrollment numbers and graduate numbers, but also shows that Theater has a very diverse base of students as well as the importance of the Arts! About 2/3 of students are full-time, while the rest are part-time. Dani also noted that the Theater program sees plenty of returning students who are looking to try something new and build a new skill. She also shared that there is now a new full-time faculty member, Shannon Flynn, who specializes in Technical Theater.

   Carly stated that she is thrilled to have Shannon! Theater also recently hired a new Instructional Support Tech- this has been a great help for the upcoming show, "Mud". "Mud" will be running from 10/23 to 11/2 this fall term. Carly said that they are taking a theater for social change approach as "Mud" has elements of sexual assault, gun violence, and other such themes. She is hoping to have community discussions after the Sunday matinees of the show. She praised the cast and crew of the show and said that the crew is excited for the work. Currently, they are also in the process of confirming the charter for the drama club. Theater also had their very first student complete an internship this past summer. This student directed a show for a Valencia theater and it was fantastic!

3. **Equipment:** No updates for this term.

IV. <u>Old Business</u> NA

V. <u>New Business</u> Margaret of Workforce & Community Success (WCS) gave a quick presentation highlighting their work between WCS and our community partners. She emphasized the importance of advisory committees and how they help CNM align our programs with industry needs. She said that employer engagement with WCS is continuing to increase significantly each year and that they exceeded their target goal in said engagements, with a 3% increase from the 24-25 school year to Fall 25. She also spoke about student internships- the goal is for all students to have a work-based

learning opportunity (such as job shadows, internships, micro internships, etc). 254 interns were placed this year with 84 employers partnering with CNM for these internships. 95% of these internships are paid through NM Higher Education Department (HED) funding and about 2,592 learners have received scholarships for training resulting in industry-recognized credentials. She also mentioned that 44% of employers receiving these interns were private companies non-profit organizations, not large businesses, so our local workforce is reaping the benefits of these programs!

Skilled Trades and Arts still has room to grow- the goal is to get manufacturing to grow which should be possible with employer help. WCS can coordinate job shadows, lab tours, and internships with employers to meet their needs. She also mentioned that WCS will be focusing on Manufacturing Month this October and is planning activities in order to increase awareness in our programs and help students with their career plans. She encouraged any interested parties to contact WCS at employersupport@cnm.edu and to fill out the survey available on the Agenda page provided via email in order to provide feedback! A survey link will also be emailed to the entire committee at a later time.

Katelyn CNM Ingenuity discussed contract trainings with employers. Business owners can contact Ingenuity to hold special trainings that focus on up-scaling. This training will be funded by Ingenuity and they can help with specific classes. Ingenuity has also been working with the department of Workforce Solutions for apprenticeships. Please contact Katelyn Attanasio (kattanasio@cnm.edu) if you are interested in working with Ingenuity. She also mentioned that the Fuse Makerspace is introducing Fiber Arts soon. Ingenuity is looking for people with experience in heavy-duty sewing machines and sergers- please contact Katelyn if you are interested in helping with this!

Carly talking about learning outcomes and curriculum. She said that learning outcomes haven't changed and neither has the curriculum. Dani did mention that they are looking at expanding Dance class offerings, but this won't go into effect until next year. She also mentioned the importance of continuing the partnership that Theater has with the Film program, especially since Film will be moving to the Railyards. The Railyards facility will have a sewing lab, a make-up space, a fabrication lab, and a construction mill. There will also be a small, 100-seat screening room with a stage. All of these spaces could be a great use to Theater and their students. Updates on the Railyards will be forthcoming.

VI. Reports from Industry Members: Dodie reported that she was cast in a feature film in major supporting role on location. This is her first foray into not being home and shooting a project elsewhere! She reported that this was an amazing experience and that she got the role by using the same audition techniques that she teaches. The film will be releasing in the spring or summer of 2026- she will try to keep us updated.

Elsa gave CABQ updates. They are currently in the second cohort of the Artists at Work program. Artists at Work started during COVID and has been going for 5 years w cohorts all over the country. It was made to identify artists and get them employed with benefits, all while focusing on regional economics. The program expanded so that cohorts last 18 months. Artists at Work has approached CABQ and now has 4 of our artists, one being a theater artist. CABQ is also working with UNM to publish a BIBER (Bureau of Business and Economic Relations) report. The last report came out 7 years ago and it reminds funders & supporters of the impact of artists and creatives in the community. The new report should be coming out soon. Elsa emphasized the importance of arts and recommended that our students sign up for their newsletter. She also encouraged instructors to invite students to think about collaborating with and utilizing City Arts entities as a resource and partner. She mentioned the Albuquerque Museum as an example as the Museum is expanding the ways in which they work with the community, including utilizing theater-oriented performances and opportunities. She said that classes could go to museum, much like PAPA high school has done in the past. Contact Elsa or the education team at the museum if you are interested in such an opportunity.

Leonard announced that he has several plays opening this season, including one at the Hispanic Cultural Center opening this week and another produced by Blackout Theater. He also produced four works at the Santa Fe Playhouse last year. He said that this shows that a lot of theater companies in New Mexico are producing works by New Mexico play-writes in New Mexico theaters to tell New Mexican stories- this is a fantastic development! He also mentioned that ENMU is introducing a program for students to help support local play-writes in the state.

Sara announced that she is working on costume design for show called "Paper Walls." She is working on this project with an LA-based production company. She also gave updates on theater at UNM. They have one more weekend of "Somewhere" in Blackbox X space and they will be opening "Little Shop of Horrors" at the end of the month for Halloween.

Riley gave updates on the Vortex theater. They are holding one of Leonard's shows this weekend! They are also entering their 50th season in January, opening with "A Midsummer Night's Dream." He said they are always needing crew members and operators- every tech department needs help. They have an ongoing strike team every show with a stipend of $10 per hour- they are hoping to increase this to $15. Vortex is also looking at running a shadowing program with lighting and production- could be valuable for students!

Melodee from Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) talked about APS' efforts to bring trades and arts into schools. One of these efforts are the Albuquerque Academies at three different high schools. These academies will be promoting engagement in trades & arts and supporting students in career pathways. She also spoke on the partnership APS has with United Way in order to speak with more middle schoolers, especially 8th graders. In the spring, United Way held career exploration events at Van Buren, Hays, and Wilson middle schools, working with over 300 8th graders and community employers. They will be holding more of these events on October 16th at Jackson Middle School and October 22nd at Kennedy Middle School. These events should help get students engaged with trades & arts and give them an idea of what it is like to be work ready and how to conduct oneself. Please share all productions and events with Melodee so she can share this information with APS high schools. She also invited committee members to be speakers for career events!

VII. <u>Adjournment:</u> Carly thanked everyone for their time and loves to see this committee continue to grow. Theater is collaborative after all! Adjourned at 2:51 pm.