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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 1/25/08

SPONSOR Powdrell-Culbert LAST UPDATED _____ HB 285

SHORT TITLE UNM Africana Studies Faculty Initiative SB _____

ANALYST Haug

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY08	FY09		
	\$392.2	Recurring	General Fund

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Higher Education Department (HED)
University of New Mexico (UNM)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

House Bill 285 appropriates \$392.2 from the general fund to the Board of Regents of the University of New Mexico for the Africana Studies Faculty Initiative.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS

The appropriation of \$392.2 contained in this bill is a recurring expense to the general fund. Any unexpended or unencumbered balance remaining at the end of fiscal year 2009 shall revert to the general fund.

A request was submitted by UNM in the amount of \$392,150 to the New Mexico Higher Education Department for review, but is not included in the Department's funding recommendation for FY09.

The HED's evaluation table of FY09 Research and Public Service Projects provided to the LFC classifies this project as a "breach" of the Higher Education Formula. Reasons for this classification decision are not provided. (LFC Report 07-20, Higher Education Department Review of Selected Research and Public Service Projects, January 12, 2008, Table 4, p76.)

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

The HED states:

UNM’s Research and Public Service Project (RPSP) request for the Africana Studies Faculty Initiative notes that there are currently four full-time staff members: program director, lecturer, program coordinator, and a currently vacant office manager position. The UNM website indicates an additional emeritus faculty member. The appropriation in House Bill 285 would support the addition of five full-time staff. The RPSP request denotes that the African-American Studies Department would leverage this funding with other UNM funding to be able to hire up to nine new staff members.

The RPSP request also notes that in the past two years, the African-American Studies Department has developed a new curriculum, established a study abroad program, increased course enrollments, built UNM’s newest distance learning facility, and secured resources to expand the Charlie Morrissey Research Hall holdings and research activities.

UNM states that Africana Studies is one of New Mexico’s most important conduits to the multivariate Black communities that comprise the African Diaspora—Africa, the United States, the Caribbean, Central America, South America, and Europe. Given its direction and scope, Africana Studies is the only such academic program in the State. Africana Studies is a vital component of UNM’s College of Arts and Sciences. In recent years, the program has been reorganized and a new curriculum is being installed to support a stronger academic mission and vision. This curriculum provides students with the opportunity to explore the history, culture, and politics that have shaped the African Diaspora. Africana Studies strongly endorses the nationally recognized need to promote global awareness of and sensitivity to multicultural issues in today's interdependent world. These hires would provide the baseline faculty that the program needs to meet these important goals. These hires are directly related to the State’s efforts to foster strong teaching, research, public service, and providing a broad based education for our students.

GH/mt