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Wednesday Communiqué, 8/8/2012

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WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

August 8, 2012

Financial Health of Universities: A recent study claims that many universities are on a financially unsustainable path based on two metrics: decrease in equity and increase in expense. UNM turns out to be one of the “sustainable” ones according to that study: <http://www.bain.com/publications/articles/financially-sustainable-university.aspx>.

More on MOOCs: For those of you who are violently anti-MOOCs, it might be interesting to watch the TED talk by one of the co-founders of Coursera. One of the most interesting aspects of such courses is the research capability built into student learning that they may afford us based on the law of large numbers (discussed in the last 5 minutes of the talk). This is yet another example of the secondary effect of a new technology.
http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_koller_what_we_re_learning_from_online_education.html.

Student Success Summit Sept. 19 (<http://success.unm.edu/>): The Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year is an initiative that will take place on the UNM Main Campus during the upcoming academic year. The primary outcome of this project is an evidence-based action plan for institutional change and improvement in order to increase the quality of the first-year educational experience at UNM. We expect this plan to produce improved retention rates for our freshmen class, place students on a solid trajectory towards graduation, and demonstrate national leadership in the area of student academic success. This self-study is being led by a team from Academic Affairs, Student Services, Enrollment Management, University College, and will involve the whole UNM community. It will be conducted in collaboration with the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education. The Foundations of Excellence process involves a campus-based task force organized around nine Foundational Dimensions® and related performance indicators. I will be discussing one dimension each week in my upcoming communiqués.

New Faculty Orientation: After many years of shrinking tenure-track faculty ranks, UNM’s incoming class of new faculty will be one of the largest in many years. More than 80 new faculty members will be joining our ranks as assistant, associate, & full professors. Please assist me in welcoming and, more importantly, providing them with the tools to succeed. Next Tuesday, August 14, the GetSeT and ReSet event will take place and all faculty are invited to attend. For more information see <http://www.unm.edu/~oset/SupportingDocuments/GetSetReSet.html>

Bedtime Math: One of our HSC colleagues, Dr. Marie Lobo sent me a link to the attached <http://bedtimemathproblem.org/>. For those of you with young kids, add another enjoyable activity to your bedtime reading.

Rubén Blades: One of my close friends recently pointed out a new segment on NPR that asks listeners and guests to name one song that inspired them, changed them, or taught them something about their parents. This particular one is from a prominent Broadway composer (Lin-Manuel Miranda), and refers to a great Blades song “El Padre Antonio y Su Monaguillo Andres”. The interview and the song are found at:
<http://www.npr.org/2012/08/02/157868874/learning-from-rub-n-blades-shadowy-poetics>

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