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## Wednesday Communiqué, 3/28/2012

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## WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

March 28, 2012

**Academic Planning Series:** Dr. Larry Faulkner will be our fourth Academic Planning Series speaker. Dr. Faulkner was the twenty-seventh president of The University of Texas at Austin. Since January 31, 2006, he has been the President of the Houston Endowment Inc. Dr. Faulkner will speak on Friday, April 6, 2012 at 3:30 p.m. A press release with additional details is forthcoming.

**Rankings:** Last week, I mentioned the US News graduate rankings and neglected to mention a few well-ranked UNM programs. I went back to the source and found the following examples: Photography (5<sup>th</sup> out of 20 ranked programs), printmaking (17<sup>th</sup> out of 21), Computer engineering (68<sup>th</sup> out of 91), Nuclear engineering (15<sup>th</sup> out of 18), Earth Sciences (39<sup>th</sup> out of 108). If interested in the full list, please request one by clicking [here](#).

**The Lobos Take Manhattan:** The following write-up is from Dr. Block, the chair of the Music department at UNM. “The UNM Choirs were in NYC for a Lincoln Center premiere of a Requiem we had commissioned. I was there and it was an incredible performance with a standing ovation in New York City of all places in the hall inhabited by the New York Philharmonic. As someone growing up in NYC with countless experience with the top artists in music, theater, film, and ballet, not to mention the proliferation of art museums and galleries, I can tell you that this was indeed a special performance that is hinted at in the review below. It was a shared billing but one knows when a packed house holds its breath and in unison jumps to its feet that something extraordinary was just experienced: <http://www.nyconcertreview.com/blog/?p=1908>.” A couple of photos from the event may be found at: <http://provost.unm.edu/photo-gallery.html>.

**How Long is the Coast of Britain?** That was the question posed by B. Mandelbrot, as he was trying to model self-similar curves and natural objects. His 1967 paper by that title led to the field of Fractals, and spawned many applications and industries. One of Mandelbrot’s insights was to note that your measurements are only as accurate as the measurement device.

**An Assertion Is Often an Empirical Question, Settled By Collecting Evidence:** In her response to the 2011 Edge.org annual question, Dr. Susan Fiske, the Eugene Higgins Professor with the Department of Psychology at Princeton University stated, “The most important scientific concept is that an assertion is often an empirical question, settled by collecting evidence. The plural of anecdote is not data, and the plural of opinion is not facts. Quality, peer-reviewed scientific evidence accumulates into knowledge. People's stories are stories, and fiction keeps us going. But science should settle policy.”

**Art Meets Science:** The Art of Systems Biology and Nanoscience is an annual event sponsored by two of UNM’s interdisciplinary research centers, The Spatiotemporal Modeling Center ([STMC.health.unm.edu](http://STMC.health.unm.edu)) and the Cancer Nanotechnology Training Center ([CNTC.unm.edu](http://CNTC.unm.edu)). This year the event will be at 333 Montezuma Annex in the railyard area of Santa Fe on March 30 and 31. The event will feature talks by distinguished biological, computational, and nanoscientists as well as an exhibit featuring the stunning scientific visualizations and animations of artist-in-residence Graham Johnson. The UNM community is cordially invited to attend this free 2-day event. Registration is required for the private receptions preceding the evening lectures. For details see <http://stmc.health.unm.edu/the-art-of-systems-biology-and-nanoscience.html>.

**Entrepreneurial Impact of Universities:** How do we measure the impact (economic, cultural, etc.) of universities on their communities and beyond? I have long maintained that it is shortsighted to measure the (short-term) impact by only considering the number of graduates in specific areas. Attached is one attempt to measure the entrepreneurial impact of one fairly known Northeastern university:

[http://www.kauffman.org/uploadedFiles/MIT\\_impact\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://www.kauffman.org/uploadedFiles/MIT_impact_full_report.pdf)

Sincerely,  
Chaouki Abdallah, Provost & Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs

A PDF version of this communiqué is available at: <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>. Your feedback and input are welcome at: [provost@unm.edu](mailto:provost@unm.edu) or at the electronic town hall: <http://connectu.unm.edu/>.