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Wednesday Communiqué, 11/7/2012

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WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUE

November 7, 2012

The Year of The MOOC: The New York Times has a recent article that describes the most recent developments in MOOCs, including their potential and limitations: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/04/education/edlife/massive-open-online-courses-are-multiplying-at-a-rapid-pace.html?hp>

Foundations of Excellence Student Survey: UNM freshmen, tell us about your first year at UNM. All we need is 10-15 minutes of your time and your opinion about how well we are doing in making the first year of college a good foundation for your success. In return for your participation we will enter your name into a drawing for an iPad or one of five \$100 LoboCASH prizes. Check your LoboMail for a message from EBI with a link to the survey.

Teaching, Research, and Learning (contributed by Greg Heileman, Associate Provost for Curriculum): In a 1927 address, mathematician and philosopher Alfred North Whitehead spoke about the value of research universities: "The universities are schools of education, and schools of research. But the primary reason for their existence is not to be found either in the mere knowledge conveyed to the students or in the mere opportunities for research afforded to the members of the faculty. Both these functions could be performed at a cheaper rate, apart from these very expensive institutions." He continued, "The justification for a university is that it preserves the connection between knowledge and the zest of life, by uniting the young and the old in the imaginative consideration of learning....Do you want your teachers to be imaginative? Then encourage them to research. Do you want your researchers to be imaginative? Then bring them into intellectual sympathy with the young at the most eager, imaginative period of life, when intellects are just entering upon their mature discipline. Make your researchers explain themselves to active minds, plastic and with the world before them; make your young students crown their period of intellectual acquisition by some contact with minds gifted with experience of intellectual adventure." <https://webspaces.utexas.edu/hcleaver/www/330T/350kPEEwhiteheadunivfxtable.pdf>

Today we find the era of the teacher as performer, as the "sage on the stage," in its twilight—in its place, universities are experimenting with new and innovative teaching methodologies. Students today are able to learn in ways that were hardly imagined 20 years ago. At the same time, and at all levels of the educational system, accountability is preeminent, with universal agreement that the focus of teaching must be on learning outcomes, rather than on the teaching process itself. Our challenge, as a research-focused university, is to use or develop these modern teaching methodologies in a manner that supports the imaginative consideration of learning, in the spirit of Whitehead, while at the same time provably assessing their effectiveness. With this in mind, I would like to mention a number of opportunities related to the imaginative consideration of learning:

- **Teaching Improvement Grants.** Last week, the Faculty Senate Teaching Enhancement Committee announced this year's competition for faculty teaching improvement projects. The deadline for submitting proposals is **December 3, 2012**. I hope we will see innovative proposals that promote imaginative consideration of learning at UNM: http://oset.unm.edu/SupportingDocuments/TAG_CfP_Long_2013.pdf
- **The Flipped Classroom.** A recent teaching innovation is the idea of the flipped classroom, where students watch lecture videos online outside of class, and then use class time for discussion. See this recent article: http://chronicle.com/article/How-Flipping-the-Classroom/130857/?sid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en. Mentioned in that article is John Booske, Bluemke Professor of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Director of the Wisconsin Collaboratory for Enhanced Learning, who will give a talk at UNM on flipped classrooms, **November 26 from 3:30-5 p.m.** in the **Centennial Engineering Center Auditorium**. Here's a short talk Professor Booske gave on the Magic of Moving Magnets— it's not often that students applaud a lecture: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pevcjEWSLhk>.

- **Center for Effective Teaching.** After visiting a number of universities and investigating how the best universities across the country support and enhance teaching effectiveness, it is apparent that UNM needs to invest more into this area. With that in mind, we have initiated a faculty search for a preeminent scholar in the area, one who will lead a newly formed Center for Effective Teaching at UNM. You may have seen the ad for this position posted last week—please encourage outstanding colleagues to apply. In his book *Reshaping the University: New Relationships between Research, Scholarship and Teaching*, Ronald Barnett describes the need for such capabilities on campus as follows: "I therefore see learning in a research mode as creating in the learner's mind a connection between teaching and research. In parallel, the scholarship of reaching and learning—which consists of deep research influenced understanding by the teacher of the students' learning processes—may be seen as the way to bring about the inquiry-led learning by the student. Together, these two parallel processes constitute the essence of the teaching-research nexus."
- **OSET.** The Office of Support for Effective Teaching (OSET) at UNM, under the direction of Gary Smith, Professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences, has and continues to provide outstanding opportunities for faculty to improve their teaching. OSET will continue to operate and provide these services through the Center for Effective Teaching; however, by bringing OSET together with a number of other efforts on campus, e.g. online teaching training and graduate assistant training, we hope to create a critical mass on campus in this area, including world-renowned scholarship. Please note that there is one more OSET workshop this semester: November 14, 2012: A Semester in a Month: Successful Teaching & Learning during Intersession & Summer Session,

<http://www.unm.edu/~oset/Event%20Descriptions/Semester%20in%20a%20Month.html>

International Education Week: begins Monday, November 12 and will include a number of on-campus activities. It's co-sponsored by the Provost's Office, the Global Education Office, and the US Department of State. Former Ambassador and UNM alum William Itoh will speak, and the International Excellence Awards will be presented, at a luncheon on Tuesday, November 13 at 12 p.m. in the Roberts Room (Scholes Hall). Other information can be found at <http://studyabroad.unm.edu>.

Equity Adjustments: We are nearing the conclusion of the equity adjustment appeal process. I would like to remind all that the purpose of the equity adjustment was to attempt to correct internal inequities, and not to try to match our peers' salaries. The plan to address faculty compensation shortfalls is also being finalized and will be presented soon to the various Board of Regents committees.

Chaouki Abdallah

Provost & Executive Vice-President for Academic Affairs

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