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Wednesday Communiqué, 2/13/2013

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WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

February 13, 2013

E pluribus UNM: “*E pluribus unum*’ or ‘Out of many, one’ (alternatively translated as ‘One out of many’ or ‘One from many’) is a phrase on the Seal of the United States, along with *Annuit cæptis* and *Novus ordo seclorum*, and adopted by an Act of Congress in 1782. Never codified by law, *E pluribus unum* was considered a *de facto* motto of the United States until 1956 when the United States Congress passed an act (H. J. Resolution 396), adopting ‘In God We Trust’ as the official motto.” Today, I am proposing that we use ***E pluribus UNM*** to remind us that despite our many backgrounds, areas of expertise, responsibilities, and job functions, we must coordinate our efforts in order to succeed. At a time when universities are being criticized and blamed, we cannot afford to waste energy or resources, nor can we afford to let our egos, personalities, and historical grudges slow us down!

On Planning & Forecasting: As we continue to build our budget estimates, engage in our Responsibility-Centered Management (RCM) examination, and the UNM 2020 planning process, I am often reminded of the importance of collecting accurate data and information. I am also reminded of the futility of long-term predictions. The following anecdote, recounted in many publications, including *What’s Wrong with Expert Predictions*, is a good example: “When he was a young man, Kenneth Arrow, a future Nobel Memorial Prize winner in Economic Sciences, discovered that month-long weather forecasts used by the army were worthless, he warned his superiors against using them. He was rebuffed. “The commanding general is well aware the forecasts are no good” he was told. “However, he needs them for planning purposes.”

How do we Measure the Impact of Research? In its attempt to move to an outcomes-based funding formula, the State of New Mexico tried for two years to measure the impact of its research universities. In an earlier post, and on the provost blog, I discussed some potential research metrics. The discussion is continuing and I would like to encourage you to contribute to it through the blog, so that we can propose valid measures to the state in the upcoming year. A good [report](#) on what other universities are valuing is found at the University of Minnesota’s Digital Conservancy.

On Teaching: I would like to encourage all of you to support the teaching and learning enterprise at UNM by attending the [8th Annual Success in the Classroom: Sharing Practices that Work](#) conference, which takes place at the SUB on Wednesday, February 20. This event is hosted by the Office of Support for Effective Teaching (OSET) with sponsorship from many units, and features presentations by faculty and graduate students about innovations and challenges in teaching and assessment. The program of 40 oral and poster presentations includes presentations from instructors in nearly every college, as well as a luncheon keynote address titled “Shifting the Classroom from Teacher Centered to Learner Centered: It’s Easier than You May Think!” by Dr. Saundra McGuire, Assistant Vice Chancellor for Teaching, Learning, and Retention and Professor of Chemistry at Louisiana State University. Dr. McGuire is also conducting a number of workshops on strategies for deep learning instead of just earning grades for faculty, teaching assistants, and undergraduate students on February 20-21, and I encourage you to visit the OSET website or contact the office (oset@unm.edu; 277-2229) to learn more about these opportunities.

Speed Networking for New Faculty: In last week’s Communique, I invited you to a “speed networking” event for new faculty to be held today from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Unfortunately, that event has been cancelled.

ABQ The Plan: The City of Albuquerque would like your input on the ABQ the Plan projects—the Rio Grande Vision, the 50-mile Loop, and Route 66 improvements. Make your voices heard at the [City of Albuquerque Town Hall](#). Partnering between UNM and the City of Albuquerque started with the [CityLab](#) and should blossom into more joint projects.

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Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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