

3-20-2013

## Wednesday Communiqué, 3/20/2013

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### Recommended Citation

Abdallah, Chaouki. "Wednesday Communiqué, 3/20/2013." (2013). [https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost\\_publications/52](https://digitalrepository.unm.edu/provost_publications/52)

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WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

March 20, 2013

*Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.*

—Rev. Martin L. King Jr.

Dear UNM Students, Faculty, and Staff,

Let me begin this week's communiqué by welcoming you back from Spring Break. I hope it provided a refreshing recess from your important work, a recess which will prepare us for the challenges still ahead.

**Civility in the Face of Hate:** Please visit President Frank's blog at <http://president.unm.edu/blog/2013/03/civil-campus-not-a-place-for-bias-and-hate.html> to engage in the dialogue about civility and to condemn the recent manifestation of hate and bigotry on campus. To quote from President Frank's 3.8.2013 posting: "A university is the ideal place for the complex issues we face in today's world to be discussed and debated. A university has the power to overcome cowardly expressions of bias and hate, and the ways in which we express ourselves are just as important [as] the positions we defend.... I hope we can all pledge to stand for the values of diversity, civility and respect in our engagement with one another."

**Students, Staff, and Faculty Surveys:** On March 18, some of you received an email to participate in a survey sponsored by *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. Now in its sixth year, the *Great Colleges* program recognizes institutions that have created exceptional work environments. In our first go around, we will benefit from the program's nationally-normed benchmark data and use it to improve. In addition, UNM is participating in a Student Experience Pilot Study, designed to learn about the experience of our students at the University of New Mexico, and how those experiences have influenced their overall perceptions of the University. This involves a survey distributed to a random sample of our freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors. If you are included in this random sample, you will receive an invitation encouraging you to take part in this survey. The survey is voluntary and you may decline the invitation, but if you receive the invitation, please take a moment to complete the survey—you will be representing not only your own views, but also those of peers who were not part of the random sample. We look forward to learning from the feedback you share, and making improvements based on that feedback in the future. The research partner in the Great Colleges program is ModernThink LLC, a leading research and consulting firm specializing in organization culture and workplace excellence. To ensure confidentiality, ModernThink will manage all aspects of the survey process and ultimately perform the analysis that will determine which institutions will be recognized. UNM will not be given any information that would enable us to trace survey data back to any one individual.

**The Cost of Higher Education and How to Fix Financial Aid:** Not so long ago, net tuition accounted for less than 25% of the cost of public higher education, while the states provided more than 75%. As recently as 2001, net tuition was a little more than 33% of the cost. In recent years, however, the balance has shifted quickly, and as of 2012 net tuition revenue is up to 47% of the total cost nationally (<http://chronicle.com/article/StudentsStates-Near-a/137709/>). As described in earlier posts, many of our students rely on financial aid in the form of the NM lottery scholarship as well as federal grants. All such sources are under stress, and unless fixes are enacted quickly many students will be shut out from attending UNM despite our comparative affordability. Recent national articles have proposed different solutions to the financial aid crisis, as described for example in [http://chronicle.com/article/Fixing-Financial-Aid/137593/?cid=cr&utm\\_source=cr&utm\\_medium=en](http://chronicle.com/article/Fixing-Financial-Aid/137593/?cid=cr&utm_source=cr&utm_medium=en). I am, however, intrigued by a proposal that calculates that the federal government can potentially make public higher education completely free, if it stopped providing any financial aid to those attending private (non-profit and for-profit) colleges. For more, see the recent article in the

*Atlantic:* <http://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/03/how-washington-could-make-college-tuition-free-without-spending-a-penny-more-on-education/273801/>.

**VPRED Finalist On-Campus Visits:** We are in the process of hosting the finalists for the position of Vice President for Research and Economic Development (VPRED). Dr. Vishwanath Prasad came to campus the first part of this week. If you attended the open forum, you may provide feedback at <https://esurvey.unm.edu/opinio/s?s=8565>. I encourage all faculty, staff, and students to attend the open forums for our remaining finalists. You can access information, and leave your feedback, for all of the finalists at [vprsearch.unm.edu](http://vprsearch.unm.edu).

**Infographic of the Day:** What if the earth's 7 billion people all lived in one city? How big would such a city need to be? The surprising answer is found at <http://www.fastcodesign.com/1665327/infographic-if-7-billion-people-lived-in-one-city-how-big-would-it-be>. Other interesting Infographics may be found at <http://www.fastcodesign.com/section/infographic-of-the-day>.

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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/>. Please also see the Provost's Blog at <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>.