



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUE

June 27, 2012

Explaining the Equity Adjustments: When I was named Interim Provost, I was made aware (personally and institutionally) of faculty pay inequities within particular disciplines at UNM. Such inequities were sometimes attributed to gender or racial issues, and at other times to personnel issues or the recent freeze on compensation. As a first step, I asked deans and department chairs to provide us with salary information in a consistent format, focusing on time from degree as the first order measure of salary inequities. In the case of “apparent inequities,” chairs were asked to explain or address them using performance as the main justification, while paying special attention to gender and race. With the strong support of Past President Schmidly, President Frank, and the Board of Regents, I requested and received approximately \$950,000 (in addition to a \$100,000 retention fund) to address the immediate internal inequities. In addition, the schools/colleges were able to come up with about \$400,000 to add to the equity pool.

While the original requests from the chairs and our own reviews suggested that correcting all salary inequities would require upwards of \$4 million, the \$1.3 million acquired (see below for the arithmetic) will go a long way towards addressing some or all of the more severe cases this year (beginning July 1). I want to emphasize that everyone involved in collecting and evaluating the data had the best intentions and put the interest of the faculty as their primary concern. Of course, it is possible that errors were made in our calculations, or some relevant factors were overlooked. For that reason, we have set aside \$100,000 of the total equity plus retention fund to respond to compelling appeals. Faculty members will have the opportunity to appeal their equity allocations through a process that will go through the chair, the dean, and a soon-to-be-appointed faculty committee before it comes to Academic Affairs. The appeal process is being vetted through the administration, deans, and the faculty senate.

Explaining Future Compensation Plans: In addition to this equity adjustment process, the Board of Regents has tasked me with developing a compensation plan that can address internal as well as external salary issues (including equity, inversion, compaction, and comparison with aspirational institutions). This will necessarily be a multi-year plan and will require all members of the university community to work together to identify sources of funding (new money as well as savings from internal efficiencies) and to appropriate the funds in a fair but performance-based fashion. Our last survey showed that we lag our HED peers (main campus salaries) by around \$10 million. President Frank has been an active champion of this initiative and the Board of Regents has expressed its strong support for implementing a well-thought out and justifiable long-term compensation plan.

UVA Story: Many of our faculty colleagues have been closely following the saga at Thomas Jefferson’s university (see for example http://chronicle.com/article/What-If-Sullivan-Is/132517/?cid=at&utm_source=at&utm_medium=en.) As you may know, President Sullivan resigned then was re-instated yesterday. The discussion within the University of Virginia has broad implications on the role and future of universities as seen by the various constituents. For example, many of you are aware of the so-called 100,000-classroom talk as described in: http://www.ted.com/talks/peter_norvig_the_100_000_student_classroom.html.

I will include this topic as a blog entry for our discussion at: <http://provost.unm.edu/communique/index.html>.

It is About Investment: At a time when funding for higher education, science, and research is under attack, it is time to note that even from a purely economic point of view, investing for the long term in education and research is the right thing to do. The recent blog by Fareed Zakaria makes the point very clearly.

<http://globalpublicsquare.blogs.cnn.com/2012/06/21/how-government-funding-of-science-rewards-u-s-taxpayers/>

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