



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

October 1, 2014

The Sacred Cows of Higher Education: In 2002, a consulting firm working mainly with independent (private) schools put out an [interesting document](#) on the challenges of financial management. By substituting “universities” for “independent schools,” the introductory paragraph would read as follows: “For universities all sources of income and expense are like the various points on a waterbed. If you push down on one area, the other areas pop up. There are ‘trade offs’ to budgeting decisions in the operations of universities. How do universities analyze these tradeoffs and make appropriate financial management decisions that support the mission and vision of the University?”

Boards and constituencies are struggling to fund the missions and visions of their universities by making choices among various sources of income and expense. Income sources include: 1) Tuition and Fees, 2) Total Enrollment, 3) Giving of all kinds, 4) Business Profit Centers, and 5) Class Size. Expenses include: 1) Salaries (faculty, staff, graduate and teaching assistants, and student employees), 2) Plant Operations, 3) Program Operations and Development, and 4) Financial Aid. These are the nine levers that can be manipulated. The article makes it clear that modifying one potentially affects all others. Depending on your own views and priorities, you may recommend pushing or pulling one or more of the nine levers, while holding others fixed. No matter what choices are made, however, the other sources of revenue and expenditure will certainly be affected, as will the performance and constituents of the University at large.

On Communication (again): Following up on my posting from last week, and given the many family members and friends who continue to forward me related stories, I thought it timely to recommend [the article](#) in The Atlantic that describes how some are attempting to stop rumors from spreading online. In fact, [a new website](#) tracks information and misinformation, and uses software algorithms in an attempt to separate the two.

Title VI Grant for Latin American Scholarship: The UNM Latin American & Iberian Institute (LAI) was awarded Title VI National Resource Center (NRC) and Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowships grants from the US Department of Education. Over a four-year cycle, from 2014-18, the LAI will receive just over \$2 million in support of Latin American scholarship at UNM. The NRC Program provides grants to language and area studies centers. The FLAS Program provides fellowships to meritorious students training in less-commonly taught languages. LAI Executive Director Susan Tiano, Amanda Wolfe, and the entire staff and faculty associated with LAI deserve praise for the success of the application. The award is an important part of our national reputation, and will keep UNM front-and-center in conversations about scholarly work on Latin America for the next several years.

Do Academics Really Stink at Writing? Here is [the question](#) posed by Steven Pinker in The Chronicle of Higher Education: “Why should a profession that trades in words and dedicates itself to the transmission of knowledge so often turn out prose that is turgid, soggy, wooden, bloated, clumsy, obscure, unpleasant to read, and impossible to understand?” After dismissing a few explanations, he argues that academics have few incentives to write well.

UNM@125 Movie: The UNM documentary [UNM@125](#) premiered last week at the Hispanic Cultural Center. The outstanding production, presented by the Alumni Association, was the work of Arcie Chapa, Dr. Tobias Duran, and the UNM Center for Regional Studies. I thoroughly enjoyed the representation of our University’s rich history, and I encourage you to watch it as well. There will be future viewings in the Student Union Building.

Pocket Archivist: For another experience of UNM history, I encourage those of you with access to an iPhone or iPad to download and try out the [UNM Pocket Archivist](#). The app was the work of Terry Gugliotta, UNM archivist, and student Torran Kahleck.

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