



WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ

April 15, 2015

Focus Groups on Sexual Violence: The University of New Mexico is committed to providing all community members with a safe campus environment free from sexual harassment and sexual violence. UNM has increased efforts over the past year to prevent sexual violence, increase campus awareness, and provide survivors with the resources and support they need. Campus administrators and Department of Justice (DOJ) staff are working together to create opportunities next week for open discussions with students, faculty, staff and community members about sexual harassment, including sexual assault and other types of sexual violence. More information, including a schedule for the focus groups, can be found [here](#). I encourage you to participate in the focus group sessions Tuesday through Thursday next week, April 21-23.

Funding Higher Education: During UNM's budget summit last Friday, the Board of Regents voted on next year's budget (some of the results can be found [here](#)). The UNM budget is complex and depends on revenues from the state of New Mexico, tuition, fund raising, and funded research. It is difficult to provide a simple picture of the finances of UNM or of any public higher education institution. Each year, the State Higher Education Executive Officers (SHEEO) association attempts to do so by publishing the "State Higher Education Finance" report. The [12th such report](#), for fiscal year 2014, provides analysis of higher education financial trends at the state and national levels. It is the gold standard of such analyses and clearly illustrates trends in funding higher education. Nationally, the report indicates that educational appropriations by student Full-Time Equivalent have continued to decrease. While the report does not focus on UNM specifically, but rather on New Mexico generally, it shows that the state's public higher education appropriations have decreased by 23.7 percent since the recession. As state appropriations decrease, students and their families shoulder more of the cost of higher education.

Demographics and High School Graduation in NM: New Mexico's High School [graduation rates](#) hover around 70 percent. The actual number of NM High School graduates will hover between 19,000 and 21,000 students for the next decade. About 13,000 of those graduates are college-bound and UNM is the destination for about one fourth of them. This, in effect, is the pool of our freshman class.

Decision Making in the Face of Uncertainty: A recurring theme in this Communiqué is the challenge of making decisions with imperfect information. As a researcher, I was trained to examine and re-examine all possible sides of a theory in order to reduce uncertainty and to proceed in the safest possible way. This approach is common to faculty researchers. In "Provost: Experiences, Reflections, and Advice From a Former 'Number Two' on Campus," by Larry A. Nielsen, he describes this feature of faculty, that they want to be absolutely confident that all possible paths have been examined before committing to one. This, [by the way](#), is why some trial lawyers say to add a day of deliberation for each professor in the jury box. Rarely, however, do we have the luxury of time and clarity when dealing with the fast-moving pace of the modern university. In such cases, as described [here](#), making a decision requires "getting comfortable with the unknown" and "reducing uncertainty where you can."

Advisor Awards: The Provost's Committee for Advising (PCA) is looking for nominations for this year's Advisor Awards. There will be two awards given this year by the PCA for Excellence in Advising and Outstanding New Advisor. I encourage you to nominate the excellent advisors in your college. More information on the nomination process, and access to the easy online form, can be found [here](#). The deadline is next Wednesday, April 22.

National Student Employment Week: Colleges and universities across the nation are celebrating National Student Employment Week, April 12-18. The [week's events](#) include a carnival, Summer Job and Internship Fair, and the Student Employee of the Year Awards. Please help us recognize our excellent student employees this week and show your appreciation for all of their hard work.

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Provost & Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs

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