



THE UNIVERSITY of  
NEW MEXICO

Office of the Provost



*WEDNESDAY COMMUNIQUÉ*

**November 25, 2015**

*Hope is believing in spite of the evidence, and then watching the evidence change.*

–Jim Wallis

*I am grateful for what I am and have. My thanksgiving is perpetual.*

–Henry David Thoreau

**Thanksgiving:** Tomorrow, we celebrate Thanksgiving's day in the United States and Canada. Last week's Communiqué on hope in the face of tragedy generated much discussion that I hope we can continue online. Since then, we saw yet another terrorist attack in Mali, as well as many more unnecessary deaths in all parts of the globe, including our own. I also learned the story of [Adel Termos](#), a father who threw himself on a suicide bomber to save his daughter and countless others. It is him, and the others who have put themselves in harm's way, that I will be thankful for tomorrow. May your thanksgiving be perpetual.

**Easiest Decision You Will Ever Make:** The end of Fall semester is closing in on us quickly. The UNM Bookstore is preparing for textbook buyback to start on Wednesday, Dec. 2. Last year, the Bookstore was able to pay out close to \$300,000 to our students for their textbooks and they are trying to increase that amount by \$50,000 or more. Currently, only 44 percent of the Spring 2016 textbooks have been submitted by faculty to the Bookstore. Last month, I pointed out the correlation between turning in textbook orders to the Bookstore and helping students save money, and that prompted many of our faculty members to submit orders. The Bookstore team has been working to find ways to decrease the price of course materials and have seen good progress. The average price of Fall course materials for 2015 was down by 7 percent from Fall 2014, and down 11 percent from Fall 2012. In Fall 2012, our average price was \$87.21, and \$77.29 for Fall 2015. That is a substantial decrease despite publishers increasing textbook prices twice a year now. If you factor in how much the Bookstore is able to pay out to students for end-of-semester buyback, the average price decreases even more. So, if you have not already done so, please submit your textbook orders: it costs us nothing and it helps our students save money – at a time when everything else is costing them more!

**Dinosaurs are Getting Younger:** Nothing really prepares a faculty member to become an administrator – except doing it. I did, however, find [the experience of a dean of business](#) very informative, and it may help explain what deans (and other academic leaders) are facing today. My two favorite lessons from the article are that: (1) "Leadership is a privilege – and a challenge," and (2) "Teaching is a duty, not an option."

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