



PRESIDENT'S WEEKLY PERSPECTIVE

Good afternoon.

"I would rather have questions that can't be answered than answers that can't be questioned."

- Richard Feynman

Some of you might have learned this past week of the "discovery" of an article by Winston Churchill about Alien Life. The story resonated with me for a variety of reasons: first, it is a case study of Feynman's statement above, second, it speaks to the value of a politician engaging very lucidly in a scientific discussion, but most importantly, it resonated with me because the article was not recently discovered! In fact, and as described in [whole passages](#), as quoted by Dr. Livio in *Nature*, mark it as a variant of Churchill's essay, "Are There Men on the Moon?" published by London's *Sunday Dispatch* on 8 March 1942. In 1975 it reappeared in volume form in *The Collected Essays of Sir Winston Churchill*. This speaks to our intellectual laziness when even a simple online search could have saved embarrassment to many who referenced the "recent discovery" of the article but also suggests that we can all benefit from critically reviewing what we read and hear, and more broadly, how we can benefit from engaging with those who hold different points of view.

#YouAreWelcomeHere

The word "welcome" – you see it at our doorsteps, our state borders and at hubs of travel around the globe. "Welcome" is the most universal word used to express a greeting to a guest or newcomer upon arrival. Colleges and universities across the country are showing support for their international students and diversity using the hashtag #YouAreWelcome on social media. Joining a number of other Universities, the UNM Global Education Office and University Communication and Marketing created a [#YouAreWelcomeHere video](#) that sends a clear message to our international community that we support them and appreciate their contributions to our campus. I thank the students, staff, faculty and community members who made this possible. At UNM, you, as well as your ideas, talents, and dreams, are all welcome here.

Second Campus Forum Held on North Campus

Many thanks to the UNM Health Sciences Center leadership and those who attended, the second campus forum today held on North Campus. In order for me to best serve UNM, it is critical to have your perspectives, concerns and questions heard, acknowledged and answered. I am committed to continuing with engaged dialogue among all of our many, yet equally important, constituencies and creating opportunities to facilitate meaningful interactions.

Unified Spring 2017 Commencement Ceremony

As part of our commitment to gather the entire University community, UNM will hold a single commencement ceremony for undergraduate and graduate students this spring. The change will not preclude schools and colleges having their own celebrations. The [Spring 2017 Commencement ceremony](#) is scheduled for Saturday, May 13, 2017 at 9 a.m. in WisePies Arena, a.k.a. The Pit.

UNM Night Documentary Series

Channel 5.1 will be airing a series of documentaries this Thursday night at 7 p.m. as part of [UNM Night](#) (7 - 9 p.m.). The series celebrates UNM's rich and colorful history, in conjunction with major anniversaries on the UNM campus. All three films were produced by Aracely Chapa, Interim Director of the Center for Regional Studies, which funded the programs. POPEJOY@50 will be followed by ZIMMERMAN@75 and UNM@125.

Chaouki T. Abdallah

Acting President

Follow me on Twitter [@chaoukita](#)

There is so much more that happens on the UNM campus than can be conveyed in a weekly message. To find out about the latest stories and events, please visit the [UNM Newsroom](#), the central source of news and information for the UNM community.