



## Arizona Professional Land Surveyors Association

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New Mexico State University  
College of Engineering  
Deans Office  
Goddard Hall Room 202  
1100 South Horseshoe  
Las Cruces, New Mexico 88003  
ATTN: Dr. Lakshmi Reddi, Dean

RE: Future of Surveying Engineering Program

Dear Dr. Reddi;

It is with best wishes and kind regard that I congratulate you on your appointment as Dean of the College of Engineering. Having just assumed the position I am sure this most recent issue was not the way you envisioned your new path beginning. However, sometimes those in the role of leadership often do not have the convenience of being able to set their own course. Yet here we are.

It has come to the attention of our Association that NMSU is planning on closing the Surveying Engineering Program based in part; as being not self-sustaining. In the short term this may certainly be true. By comparison with other departments within the College of Engineering; historically it might have also been true. However; I will submit to you that the reason the enrollment numbers have been low is because our industry is the midst of paradigm shift from the technician minded surveyor to the professional minded surveyor. As the industry sees the technology and tools become more sophisticated; our focus has changed. With that change the surveying profession is seeing less need for technicians and more need for professionals. We are on the cusp of a shift in this profession not seen since Surveying and Civil Engineering split in the late 1960's.

NMSU is one of two accredited institutions in the southwestern United States; that have a surveying/surveying engineering program. Ending the program now; because of financial sustainability would be in my opinion a short sighted mistake with lasting unintended consequences. First I would like to address the financial sustainability. When considering financial sustainability; as a businessman it does not make much sense to have several departments duplicating the curriculum or different colleges for that matter. In those instances, where it exists; it should be consolidated. Second, as far as I am aware NMSU College of Engineering is not a part of the Western Exchange Program with Arizona. Therefore, Arizona residents whom do not have a university in state that offers surveying cannot go to NMSU and pay in state tuition. This puts NMSU at a great disadvantage compared to Cal-Poly Fresno. If NMSU could enter into the Western Exchange Program; recruitment in Arizona would be and could be beneficial. A close review of where the Surveying Department Alumni are now living and working you will find the majority are in neighboring states where the salaries higher.

In closing, and on a personal note, I am a '95 graduate from the Surveying Program at NMSU. I was raised in a family of surveyors. I can most assuredly tell you experience alone will not suffice in today's environment to make a professional surveyor. It takes a strong combination of education to reinforce foundational experience. NMSU did that for me. I would like to see NMSU continue to provide that superior level of education to future generations of prospective surveyors in the future. Thank you for your time and consideration

Regards,

Daniel R. Muth PLS, Chairman  
Arizona Professional Land Surveyors Association