

DATE: December 5, 2012

TO: Hamid Shirvani, Chancellor of the North Dakota University System  
William Goetz, Former Chancellor of the North Dakota University System

FROM: David Fuller, President of Minot State University and Dakota College at Bottineau

SUBJECT: Report on Developmental Leave

This report covers the 30-calendar day developmental leave I completed in June 2012, allowed by State Board of Higher Education Policy 701.2. My original proposal was submitted on March 3, and subsequently approved by Chancellor Goetz. The proposal is included in the appendix.

### Rationale for Leave

First, I intended to use this time in part to reflect on the current status of higher education and its direction. Specifically, I was interested in reading recognized works on higher education, teaching and learning, leadership, and current issues affecting debates, policy, and considerations of change. Second, I wished to use this brief time for an intellectual “breather,” to take time to read widely and deeply, write, and think about topics of professional interest, such as in my own interests in the scholarship and writings of Henry David Thoreau. I also intended to read poetry, collections of essays, and catch up with my reading of unread Harper’s and The New Yorker magazines, as well as back issues of Liberal Education and Change.

Notably enthusiastic and albeit quite ambitious, I also hoped to explore other areas of interest that might present themselves during that time. For example, one digression I did take (although I hadn’t intended to specifically before I left) was to contemplate further the idea of place, particularly the meaning and challenges of life in the Great Plains—a puzzling place dear to my heart and central to Minot State University’s strategic plan, Vision 2013.

To do all of this in 30 days was no doubt unrealistic but worthy and attractive nonetheless. My goal was to pursue those professional and scholarly interests and consider what I might do to affect change for the better for my campuses, for my own professional growth and improvement, and to rekindle the flame of the curiosity and learning that represents the essence of what higher education should be imparting every day to students. That goal seemed worthy enough for these 30 days.

### Report<sup>1</sup>

While there are a variety of books, essays, and articles that I read during this leave, I had no particular purpose, thesis, or argument in mind, other than my own interest in reading and contemplating their meaning and relationship to what I do currently. I wanted to enjoy the time afforded to read full texts closely—to have fun learning, reflecting, and considering what I do for a living and how I might improve the way I serve as a president of Minot State and Dakota College at Bottineau.

I trust that the primary topics of my reading (represented in the main headings below), the titles of the texts, my notes for each work (paraphrased and verbatim selections from the texts), and my comments will offer a reasonable sense of what I learned and perhaps accomplished in the end.

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<sup>1</sup> Attached at the end of this report is a selected bibliography of works read and consulted.

## 1. Higher Education

### Titles of Selected Works Read and Consulted

Andrew Delbanco, College: What it is, Was, and Should Be

Notes:

- Colleges are not in dire shape; concerns expressed are “age old” complaints. Minority students need support and assistance. Critical values of liberal education are now at risk at most institutions. College improves potential for student transformation.
- College should guide, not coerce. Ultimate outcome is to achieve self-knowledge; develop “qualities of mind and heart” for “reflective citizenship.” College should help students discern unethical behavior and illegitimate appeals. Aim is to train for democratic citizenship. College should help people know how to enjoy life, to learn how to contemplate. Must open doors to the rich, middle class, and the poor. Importance of character development. Fostering critical and analytical intelligence. Education, as Emerson maintains, is to draw out the soul. Solving problems and sustaining curiosity. Contributes to “man’s moral and intellectual health” (N. Hawthorne). Learning to respect and aid each other (Newman). Best and deepest moral training (J. Dewey). Importance of “lateral learning” (interdisciplinary study). Community service role; volunteerism; Citizenship and devotion to the public good.
- Small class sizes. Truth emerges through discussion and debate. Not instruction but provocation (Emerson).
- Growing marginalization of humanities. Problem with obsessive concern with test scores; limited predictive value. Tests and grades signify little about a “student’s overall potential to make a positive difference in the world” (Psychologist Robert Sternberg). Concern about the rise of the idea of meritocracy and class (i.e., meritocracy is built on notion that selective achievements, hard work, and intelligence leads to success; represented in Robert Young’s futuristic fiction). Academic ethics a rising concern. Growing poor/rich distinctions in higher education. Dismantling of the American professorship; growing number of part-time faculty. For-profit institution and question of quality. Grade inflation. No Child Left Behind failure to depend on test scores. Student debt, rising costs, Pell grant reductions, student preparation, need for K-12 partnerships.
- Need for collaborative work between faculty and administration. Graduation rate improvements must arise from improved student support: mentoring; apprenticeships. Potential for improved instruction through digital enhancements in classes. Hybrid courses and deliveries. Potential high-tech colleges of the future. Training of new Ph.Ds with proven abilities to teach and support student learning.

Derek Bok, Our Underachieving Colleges

Notes:

- Knowledge is splintered; little effort now to integrate knowledge bases. Incoherent. Not capable of addressing larger questions; failures to link separate disciplines. More

students than ever are going to college; more interest than ever in going to college to make money. Little prospect that states will succeed in improving performance by imposing performance measures.

- Needs for focusing on critical abilities of communication; critical thinking, moral reasoning, preparing citizens; living with diversity; global awareness; breadth of intellect; citizenship and moral development. Insisting on hiring higher qualified “teachers.”
- Most problems are not being seriously addressed. Failure to counteract fragmentation. Sacrificing liberal arts for vocational training. Casual treatment of educational purposes. Neglect of basic courses. Ignorance of research on teaching. Reluctance on the part of academic leaders and boards to undertake systematic effort to improve education. Issues of teaching and learning remain off the radar. Public concern primarily with college costs, accessibility, and graduation rates, and not teaching and learning. If boards and trustees ignore the subjects of teaching and learning, there may be little ability to press academic leaders to address essential issues in need of reform. Boards can urge a “process of self-scrutiny and innovation and give it greater legitimacy.”
- Requires a clear vision for undergraduate education. Need to discuss pedagogy. Need to pay attention to what happens outside the classroom (i.e., how the subjects relate to societal needs). Need for faculty experiments with new methods; evaluate academic programs and encourage innovation. Real improvement “requires the initiatives and skills of academic leaders.” Presidents should call upon their “colleges to undertake an ongoing process of evaluation, experimentation, and reform.” Experiment with innovative “teaching methods.” Expand community service programs; improve student evaluation and learning assessment. Insist on hiring new faculty focused on “writing instruction, communications; problem-based instruction.” Support research projects on effective learning. Critical need for professional development.

Parker J. Palmer, and Arthur Zajonc, The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal

Notes:

- “The thing being made in a university is humanity...[W]hat universities...are mandated to make or to help to make human beings in the fullest sense of those words—not just trained workers or knowledgeable citizens but responsible heirs and members of human culture” (Wendell Berry). Promoting the value of integrative education. Learning how integrative education “helps students move past fragmentation and develop a sense of motivation and purpose in the world.” Integrative education aims to “think the world together” rather than “think it apart, to know the world in a way that empowers educated people to act on behalf of wholeness rather than fragmentation.”
- “Underlying the idea of a university—the bringing together, the combining into one, of all the disciplines....” Central question: “How can higher education become a more multidimensional enterprise, one that draws on the full range of human capacities for knowing, teaching, and learning?” Bridges the gaps between the disciplines; forges stronger links between “knowing the world and living creatively in it, in solitude and community.”

- “Beyond academic and research excellence, universities have forgotten their main purpose, which is to help students ‘learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings’” (Harry Lewis). “We speak together far too seldom about our aims for the education of our students. And when we do talk about pedagogy, it is too often on the most basic level of skills and content distribution requirements.”
- Needs for “seeking the insight and skillful means necessary to encourage forms of teaching and learning that honor the complexities of reality and our multiple ways of knowing, weaving it all together in ways that contribute to personal well-being and to the common good.” “[Zajonc] argues that as educators increasingly focus on basic skills like writing, critical thinking, and numeracy, we too often fail to address issues that are equally central to the life of young adults concerning purpose, core values, and direction in life.” “Practice of deep speaking and listening on which good conversations depend.” “We not only know more but see differently and become another human being through transformative experiences.” Students need formal opportunities to pursue experiential learning in college; recommends “contemplative pedagogy.” Need for creating conversations to address disconnects. Develop a culture strong enough to support generative dialogue around significant ideas.
- “Proposes a conversational trajectory that starts with stories, moves into theory, and emerges in action.” “The new physics encourages an epistemology that knits together the observer and the creative world.” Requires model for contemplative inquiry, including (1) respect, adopt a positive, ethical orientation toward your object of study; (2) gentleness, or approach the object without distorting it or considering it in extreme conditions; (3) intimacy, become intimate with the object of study; (4) vulnerability, learn to be comfortable with not knowing, with ambiguity and uncertainty; (5) participation: invite us to go deeper, join with the other; (6) transformation by the experience; (7) imaginative insight; knowing as a kind of seeing, beholding, moment of creative insight.” “Compassionate action is fostered in students when they learn not only with the intellect but also with the heart.”

Comments:

These and other works repeated and highlighted concerns about the “disconnects” in our profession. Those disconnects appear to arise from philosophical differences, political schisms, competing purposes (e.g., economic/vocational versus liberal education and citizenship), competing funding and incentives plans, governance and control, learning assessment and measuring performance, productivity and efficiency, and so on. The myriad debates and myths about higher education, as noted particularly in these three works, revolve primarily around the notion of productivity and the time-honored commitment to individual growth and learning.

The prominent calls for accountability either focus on measuring and documenting productivity or assessing individual learning and growth. Unfortunately, neither one is done very well. Regional accreditors have attempted to strong-arm campuses and faculty to adopt effective means of assessing learning since the early 90s. And legislative bodies and the public, for one reason or another, have attempted to strong-arm higher education to document and prove their productivity. The disconnects noted in these works and others, as well as in the public discourse, are widened because our efforts have failed to force higher education to prove its productivity in corporate or economic terms or to prove the extent to which learning occurs using liberal education measures. That appears to remain a critical need today.

The rifts between the two camps are widened over the failure to “prove” higher education’s worth beyond anecdote and often ill-informed pronouncements by people who really don’t understand higher education but think they should control it.

A clear message that I glean from these works is that higher education is essential for the life and welfare of our society, not only in terms necessarily of workforce training, filling jobs, or bolstering the economic condition of our graduates or the society. What these three books emphasize in dramatic and compelling terms is the critical importance of quality learning and citizenry. The disconnects and fragmentation that are mentioned in these works result from the fact that we have lost sight of higher education’s focus and purpose, which is learning in all of its manifestations (critical thinking, ethical behavior, integrity, high-order communication, morality, sensitivity to diversity and global cultures, and basic altruism). Clearly, the strong call for years for accessibility and the compelling statistic that people with college degrees earn more over a life time has led to an inordinate growth in higher education. Many of these new students come unprepared for the rigors of these studies.

The advice coming from these writers is clear: unify and integrate our disciplines, refocus our efforts on the “soul” of our learners as human beings, direct resources and efforts to innovative teaching and learning, professional development, and develop assessment models to help us understand how we can improve learning for the good of all of our students and our lives. These writers do not advocate for productivity funding models and exclusion. Simplified and poorly understood retention and graduate-rate data are not the best means of measuring or rewarding performance. I gather from these writers that if the focus is redirected to quality learning, support, mentoring, innovative learning practices, and research into effective teaching and learning, that the phenomenon of graduation rates would be displaced with a focus on the priority of an educated and effective citizenry. It’s easy but misleading to calculate graduation rates or retention rates with a simple IPEDS cohort model. It’s not so easy to advocate for the education of individuals who will graduate and lead meaningful lives. I gather that this is the crux of the messages in these three books.

## **2. Leadership**

### Title of Selected Work Read and Consulted

Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence

Notes:

- “Great leadership works through emotion.” “Great leaders move us. They ignite our passions and inspire the best in us.” Traits: trust, respect, good moods, laughter; cooperation.
- Domains of Emotional Intelligence: 1) self-awareness (understands how their feelings affect their job performance; 2) self-management; 3) social awareness (empathy; knowing how others feel; calming fears, assuaging anger); 4) relationship management.
- Basic Ingredients of Effective Primal Leadership: emotional self-control; displays honesty and integrity; transparent and open; trustworthiness; optimism; empathy; inspirational, sincere interest in developing others; resolving disputes, teamwork and collaboration.

- Leadership manners and styles: moves people toward shared dreams; impacts a positive climate; builds buy-in or consensus; gets valuable insight from employees; affiliate style: most concerned with promoting harmony and fostering friendly reactions; nurturing.
- Needs for “understanding the powerful role of emotions in the workplace sets the best leaders apart from the rest.” “Activate an atmosphere of cooperation and trust.”

Comments:

I read this book with an admittedly cynical eye. Corporate leadership books rely on business cases and models and often recommend “easy” steps outlined in linear models for success, which imply generic solutions to problems. Problem solving pervades these and other corporate leadership books, and this book is no exception. However, I was intrigued and interested in the role of emotion in leadership.

In my experience as an academic and institutional leader, I am well aware of the emotions and perceptions that affect the extent to which faculty and staff contribute and work toward (or against) the betterment of our institutional or departmental aims. As an undergraduate student and graduate student and later as a teacher, faculty member, and department chair, I assumed that I knew higher education, so I was not as inclined to pay much attention to how my students felt about the rigor of an assignment or how my colleagues “felt” about an announced, for example, closing of a faculty lounge or parking lot.

Since then and now that I have spent nearly ten years as an academic vice president and nearly ten years as a president, I have a much different take on the emotions of our profession, our students, our faculty and staff, and our other constituents. Maybe it is my role as president that has opened my eyes, or perhaps it is my age, but I now recognize and admit that I don’t have all the answers. Listening to and caring for others seems much more workable and effective. When I was a vice president at a private college in Wisconsin, I remember well a proclamation by our professor of environmental ethics and his assertion, when speaking of his classroom and his students, that he knows his craft. That struck me because anyone who knows teaching and the vagaries of learning is not one who will proclaim that he knows his craft. It is not that “knowable” in such confident terms.

This book helped confirm the fact that I don’t know it all, that people (students, faculty, and staff) know a great deal and deserve to be consulted and heard as partners in our common enterprise of higher education. As soon as they are avoided, not included, or dismissed, or patronized, their emotions and their reactions can cause irreparable damage to purposes and working conditions. There is also a presumption that their voices, knowledge, and perspectives are valuable, irrespective of the extent to which it contradicts my judgment or that of others.

Our time-honored principle of shared governance in higher education articulates the need for such a democratic environment and decision-making process. Decisions need to be made and that must fall on a genuine shared and understood process. What this book underscores is the legitimate need for respect, communication, sympathy, empathy, and the ability to set a common vision with others. These are “human” qualities well worth my attention.

Although based on corporate examples, the insight into the impact of emotions and decision making is valuable for those of us in higher education, who must attend to our profession’s principles governing teaching and learning and the corporate realities of the business of our campus and system.

**3. Issues and Policies**

Titles of Selected Works Read and Consulted

- a. Schneider, Carol Geary. “President’s Message: Where Completion Goes Awry; The Metrics for ‘Success’ Mask Mounting Problems with Quality.”

Notes:

- “the intense national commitment to increased college attainment needs to be matched by an equally intense focus on quality...” “Unfortunately, however, the completion agenda is steaming ahead without setting either goals or markers for educational quality.” “Learning-intensive programs and pedagogies that, evidence shows, can simultaneously lift both completion rates and student achievement of key skills.”
  - Credit-hour dilemma. “The term ‘quality’ is scarcely mentioned” in policies that direct the nation’s work on completion and productivity. “The real message seems to be ‘more degrees, cheaper and faster’ with no questions asked about what the degree represents.” “Credit hours tell us absolutely nothing about what students are even doing in a course, much less about their levels of achievement.”
  - “The student possesses a credential” but no proof that the student has experienced a “rich portfolio of learning.” Refers to the Lumina Foundation’s work on the Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP), which provides “quality” markers. “It makes preparation for democracy—civic learning—an expected component of all degree programs.” “It calls for students to integrate their learning across disciplines, in general education and majors, and to apply that learning to complex, unscripted questions.”
- b. Humphreys, Debra. “What’s Wrong with the Completion Agenda—And What We Can Do About It.”

Rhoades, Gary. “The Incomplete Completion Agenda: Implications of Academe and the Academy.”

Notes:

Humphreys

- “College access and completion have been stunningly stratified by income and by community of origin for years.” “At least three out of four students who make it to campus are underprepared to succeed there (ACT 2011), and many need serious remediation to bring their skills and knowledge up to college levels.”
- “The enormity of the challenge posed by these obstacles would seem to call for greater investment in both K-12 schooling and, especially, public higher education in order to increase the numbers of students prepared for and graduation from college.” But “the completion agenda has morphed into a more-completion-at-less-cost agenda” in the states. “Whereas society and the economy need ‘more and better,’ policy leaders are trying to deliver ‘more and cheaper.’”

- “An enormous part of the completion agenda has been directed exclusively at increasing ‘on-time’ completion rates.” Refers to Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and Lumina Foundation’s efforts to increase completion rates and data collection; and increase effectiveness of remedial programs and learning strategies.
- Many of these graduation programs and efforts “rest on the simplistic assumption that the causes of low graduation rates are primarily a matter of neglect, lack of awareness, misplaced priorities or incompetent leadership.” Must attend to serious “quality of learning shortfall that threatens to get even worse if we maintain an exclusive focus on completion and efficiency.” Funding must “be shifted in order to invest in proven strategies that increase both student achievement and rates of completion.”

#### Rhoades

- “the completion agenda is incomplete. It is an unfunded mandate to do more with less. Moreover, the agenda does not address the key educational, social, and economic challenges we face. It offers no mechanisms for enhancing quality, reducing non-meritocratic social stratification, or building a new economy.” “The completion agenda will increase already substantial college achievement gaps between social classes and ethnic groups.” “It is time to prioritize quality, equitable educational opportunity, and the creation of strong intellectual workforce.”

#### Comments:

Echoing the books reviewed earlier, these articles focus exclusively on the challenge of balancing the need for increased college completion with the strong need for graduating well educated and prepared students. A strong message coming from these articles and others is for state policy makers and campuses: and that is, there should be a concerted effort on the part of both to direct increased resources to quality learning and practices and to workable plans for helping students progress to and complete their programs. As mentioned earlier, the graduation rate figure is not the aim. The aim for our resources and efforts should be on ensuring that our educational programs and services are strong and effective.

#### **4. Scholarship**

*Henry David Thoreau*

#### Titles of Selected Works Read and Consulted

- Andrews, Barry. “Transcendental Learning: A Review.”
- Dubrow, Julie. “Saving the Land: Thoreau’s Environmental Ethic and its Influence on Mabel Loomis Todd and Millicent Todd Bingham.
- Thoreau, Henry David. Recent and past issues of the Concord Saunterer; the Thoreau Society Bulletin, and selected primary texts, including Walden, Maine Woods, “Walking,” and other essays.
- Robbins, Bonita. “Remember Mary Sherwood.”

#### Comments:

I was pleased to have the time to reread “Walking,” for instance, and think further about his notions about the wild and the values of walking, or sojourning, as he called it. The concept of the wild is particularly



meaningful for education in that it implies creativity, curiosity, life-long learning, and independence. I am reminded about the in-depth sense of learning and education that pervades Walden. Thoreau's insistence on the practice of deep reading, writing, contemplation, and learning makes his account at Walden Pond a fine illustration for students and others about what quality living and learning means. The articles dealing with Transcendental Learning, environmentalism, and even the curmudgeon and life-long follower of Thoreau, Mary Sherwood, helped me rethink and appreciate even more his comment in "Walking," that "in wildness is the preservation of the world." When he taught school with his brother John at the Concord Academy, he exemplified the meaning of quality learning, reading, experiential learning, writing, and inquisitiveness—all characteristics of what all of us should be nurturing in our campuses. Without sounding too melodramatic, I would venture to say that what we do, or should do, in higher education is to set a goal to preserve our world through imparting the notion of wildness to our students and helping them understand their crucial role in helping reach that goal.

### *Poetry*

#### Titles of Selected Works Read and Consulted

- a. Berry, Wendell. Leavings.
- b. Keillor, Garrison, ed. Good Poems: American Places.
- c. Oliver, Mary. New and Selected Poems: Vol. One.
- d. Ryan, Kay. The Best of It: New and Selected Poems.

#### Comments:

I don't necessarily like writing about poetry. Poetry—good poetry—doesn't need summaries or interpretations. I spent many hours during my leave, particularly in the early morning sitting on the deck and looking across the water and watching the birds and listening to the sounds, reading poems from these books, such as this poem from Wendell Berry:

#### Like Snow

Suppose we did our work  
like the snow, quietly, quietly,  
leaving nothing out.

### *Place and the Great Plains*

#### Titles of Selected Works Read and Consulted

- a. Frazier, Ian. Great Plains.
- b. Hylton, Wil S. "Broken Heartland: The looming collapse of agriculture on the Great Plains."
- c. Jenkinson, Clay Straus. Message on the Wind: A Spiritual Odyssey on the Northern Plains.

#### Comments:

We need to know our place, not in the sense of knowing where we belong in a social class or some sort of hierarchy, but in the sense of where we are connected, what we're a part of, what do I do to contribute, and where exactly do I live. Born and raised in Nebraska in the Great Plains, working and raising my

family in South Dakota, and completing my career in North Dakota, I know who I am and where I am based on familiarities of farm smells, giant skies, dust and moisture in the wind, cows, solitary trees, abandoned farm houses, and common-sense people who generally are nice and caring and staunch. Our MSU Vision 2013 refers to a sense of place because students should appreciate, know, and contribute to the welfare of their place. Getting to know a place—its problems, values, strengths, and challenges—depends on smart and sensitive students who are willing to pitch into this ethic. The article about the Broken Heartland raises silently and in a foreboding way the loss of water in the great Ogalala Aquifer (I used to swim in the full Platte River, whose source was that aquifer until which time the intensified irrigation systems ran it dry). The advent of countless wind turbines, in Hylton's view, reveals a worrisome trend for farmers, our water system, and our way of life in the Great Plains. Drive to Bismarck and see all the windmills spinning. Our students would be well served in thinking about this and working to do something about it, just as they should be aware of the advent Walmart's initiative to buy local.

Service learning, civic engagement, internships, experiential study trips, and so on not only complement well the required insights and knowledge from our classes, but also help students deal with what many observers and critics of higher education call the "disconnects." One knows how to integrate one's life with that combination. Frazier and Jenkinson give us a birds-eye view of the Plains to put all of this in perspective. I am reminded of Kathleen Norris' question she posed about the Dakotas: are we in the middle of nowhere or are we in the center of the universe? That's an interesting perspective to ponder for all of us who devote our lives to education and this place, who live here.

#### Summary Remarks and Conclusions

In the end, I think I have had fun, and I have been able to understand what I need to do to be a better and more effective leader, with a clear focus and reaffirmation about what is important in higher education and the values that underscore my own reasons for devoting my whole professional life to it. This 30-day period helped me think about it free from the perpetual demands of my job, which often prevent me from reading anything deeply and thoughtfully and, to use an highly inaccurate metaphor to describe my place and experience on the Plains, to see the forest despite the trees.

Finally, thanks to my wife Nancy whose encouragement has been invaluable as always. I would be remiss not to say thanks to my executive assistant, Deb Wentz, for keeping things going so well in the office. I am very grateful for her dedication and assistance. She is an invaluable colleague. I also want to thank former Chancellor William Goetz, the State Board of Higher Education, and the staff and faculty of Minot State University, particularly Dick Jenkins for stepping in for me on President's Staff, and Ken Grosz at Dakota College at Bottineau for giving me this wonderful opportunity.

While I chose not to apply for this leave following the requisite completion of five years in service because of the demands of our strategic planning work on campus and other demands such as the Souris Flood in 2011, I did choose to apply at the completion of my eighth year of service and very glad that I did. As challenging and demanding and rewarding as a job of president is and as difficult as it seems to be able to "get away," I recommend that my colleagues consider seriously taking advantage of this opportunity.

### Selection of Works Read and Consulted

- Andrews, Barry. "Transcendental Learning: A Review," Thoreau Society Bulletin, Number 278, Summer 2012; pp. 1-3.
- Berry, Wendell. Leavings (Counterpoint: Berkeley, 2010).
- Bok, Derek. Our Underachieving Colleges (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2006).
- Delbanco, Andrew. College: What it Was, Is, and Should Be (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012).
- Dubrow, Julie. "Saving the Land: Thoreau's Environmental Ethic and its Influence on Mabel Loomis Todd and Millicent Todd Bingham," Thoreau Society Bulletin, Number 277, Winter/Spring 2012; pp.5-6.
- Frazier, Ian. Great Plains (New York, NY: Picador, 1989).
- Goleman, Daniel. Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee, Primal Leadership: Learning to Lead with Emotional Intelligence (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).
- Halpern, Dan. "Citizen Walmart: The Retail Giant's Unlikely Romance with Small Farmers." Harper's Magazine, July 2012, pp. 36-43.
- Humphreys, Debra. "What's Wrong with the Completion Agenda—And What We Can Do About It." Liberal Education, Winter 2012; pp. 8-17.
- Hylton, Wil S. "Broken Heartland: The Looming Collapse of Agriculture on the Great Plains." Harper's Magazine, July 2012, pp. 25-35.
- Jenkinson, Clay Straus. Message on the Wind: A Spiritual Odyssey on the Northern Plains (Reno, Nevada: Marmarth Press, 2002).
- Keillor, Garrison, ed. Good Poems: American Places (New York, New York: Viking Press/Penguin Group, 2011).
- Lynn, Barry C. "Killing the Competition: How the New Monopolies are Destroying Open Markets." Harper's Magazine, February 2011, pp. 27-34.
- Oliver, Mary. New and Selected Poems: Vol. One (Boston: Beacon Press, 1992).
- Palmer, Parker J., and Arthur Zajonc, The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2010).
- Rhoades, Gary. "The Incomplete Completion Agenda: Implications of Academe and the Academy." Liberal Education, Winter 2012; pp. 18-25.
- Robbins, Bonita. "Remember Mary Sherwood," Thoreau Society Bulletin, Number 277, Winter/Spring 2012.

Ryan, Kay. The Best of It: New and Selected Poems (Grove Press: New York, 2010).

Schneider, Carol Geary. "President's Message: Where Completion Goes Awry; The Metrics for 'Success' Mask Mounting Problems with Quality." Liberal Education, Winter 2012; pp. 2-5.

Thomas, Wayne M. Walden Today (New York, NY: Park East Press, 2011).

Thoreau, Henry David. Recent and past issues of the Concord Saunterer; the Thoreau Society Bulletin, and selected primary texts, including Walden, Maine Woods, "Walking," and other essays.

Ureneck, Lou. Cabin: Two Brothers, a Dream and Five Acres in Maine (New York, NY: Viking Penguin: 2011).

Selected Magazines: including among others recent and past issues of Harper's Magazine and The New Yorker.

## Appendix

### Proposal for Development Leave, Submitted to Chancellor William Goetz, March 3, 2012

I am writing to request approval for a development leave as described in State Board of Higher Education Policy 701.2. I have followed the procedures outlined in policy and recommended in your email of January 31, 2012.

#### Eligibility

I have completed nearly eight years as president of Minot State University and Dakota College at Bottineau. While I understand that a developmental leave is available after five years, I have chosen not to pursue such a leave until now because of major projects and obligations that needed my attention.

#### Rationale

My rationale can be explained in two parts. First, what I need right now is concerted time to reflect on the current status of higher education and its direction. Recently I held an all-campus convocation to talk about Vision 2013 and to envision what will happen after 2013. In view of the considerable changes impacting higher education generally and the competing tensions occurring in our state, I believe that this is a good time for those of us in leadership positions to reflect on these changes and attempt to understand them for their meaning, contrarities, and presumed impact on one's campus. I would like the opportunity to consult current leadership scholarship, examine studies of new directions and strategies for change, and to focus on specific opportunities and best practices related to teaching and learning, civic engagement, interdisciplinary study, financing, and personnel empowerment.

The second part of my rationale underlies the first. I would also hope to use this brief time for an intellectual "breather." I think a very useful purpose would be to allow some time away from the intensity of our 24/7 schedule and to permit a luxury of reflection and contemplation afforded by what one might call deep reading (not superficial and hurried) and writing. I would like to pursue a subsequent balance to those professional challenges impacting our work as presidents on our campuses. The other rationale is to allow time for returning to my own scholarly interests with Henry David Thoreau and literature in general. I would very much enjoy the opportunity to read Thoreau scholarship which I have neglected over the past eight years, and see what's been going on in my field.

To fulfill that larger goal in 30 days is no doubt unrealistic but inherently worthy and attractive. I need concerted and extended time to contemplate those questions free of the interference and conflicting demands ever present in my daily life as a president. I hope to bring those issues—both professional and scholarly-- within focus and consider what I might do to affect change for the better for my campus and to rekindle the flame for my own scholarly interests.

#### Purposes and Objectives

A point of my remarks to the campus in January was to highlight the need to think outside of ourselves. Citing Wendell Berry and David Orr, I explained their concerns that higher education continues to move away from its roots of service and public good. Those writers maintain that economic pressures for workforce development and performance have caused us to move away from our inherent responsibilities to learning, civic service, and engagement. From Berry's point of view, our institutions have been as well affected and subsequently weakened by our own self-interests. I see that every day at MSU, self-interest that continues to reinforce a so-called silo mentality and to distance individuals from an interest in thinking about the common good of the institution and the community at large. I am also

keenly aware of the general conflict between many constituencies and stakeholders of higher education. This issue and others deserve reflection, reading, and planning.

#### Specific Objectives

1. Read at least three books on presidential leadership.
2. Read a list of scholarly articles on a university's role in civic engagement and service and economic development.
3. Begin a draft of an essay on presidential leadership, with the aim for future publication.
4. Explore current Thoreau scholarship.
5. Read other selected books and essays addressing other subjects of interest.

#### Outcomes

1. Identify key action steps for the new institutional vision (Beyond 2013)
2. Identify potential steps for collaboration between Minot State University and Dakota College at Bottineau.
3. Articulate thoughts regarding special alignments between the MSU plan, the direction of the city of Minot, and the North Dakota University System.
4. Return with a sense of renewal as president and as a scholar.
5. Make a presentation to my colleagues on the Chancellor's Cabinet, and give a full report to the SBHE about the leave and my activities.

#### Proposed Time Frame for Leave (30-calendar days)

June 1-June 30, 2012

#### Arrangements during Absence

- Depend on my executive assistant to continue to handle office contacts and correspondence.
- Arrange for Dr. Grosz to continue to serve in his capacity as Dean, with full knowledge of my availability to respond to non-routine calls and issues.
- Arrange for Dr. Richard Jenkins, the senior member of my president's Staff, to handle daily needs in my office (i.e., signatures, calling meetings of the staff when needed, attending NDUS functions in my place, serving in my absence at campus and city events, while continuing to serve in his primary role as vice president for student affairs)
- Be immediately available by email and phone to answer non-routine questions from DCB and MSU. I would ask my assistant and others to be fully empowered to handle all routine transactions, but to contact me if there are any questions or special needs.
- Remain on call to return to the campuses on immediate notice in case of an emergency. I will be able to return within seven hours if necessary.

Thank you for your consideration of my proposal for a developmental leave. If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.