

February 18, 2009

TO: MSU Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders, and Board Members

FROM: David Fuller

SUBJECT: ¹Monthly President's Report

Current Topics, Issues, and Proposals

Open Forums on February 12

Campus-wide forums were held on February 12 to present information about the ten premier universities and the performance indicators with which to compare to Minot State's. Prior to the presentations there were updates on enrollment, legislative activities, priority action plans, and the showing of the Fox Channel's Economic Report featuring Minot State. At both sessions, participants were asked to complete a survey identifying top priorities for institutional improvement. The next steps are for faculty and staff to review and suggest performance goals/objectives.

Spring Enrollment

Enrollment figures for the fourth week census date showed that Minot State remained essentially the same as this time last year. Full-time student numbers had declined, but there were significant increases in strategic areas of interest, including Canadian enrollment, Native American, international, Ward County, off-campus sites, and Minnesota. Outlying counties within the Northwest section of the state continued to show declines. Unlike in previous years where online enrollments showed steady increases, the online enrollments showed a slight decline in the spring. Minot State continues to expand its recruitment and marketing in preparation for the new tuition model set to go into effect next fall.

Action Plan Priority Funding

A full list of the priority action plans receiving additional funding was distributed at the open forums. A few of those projects include: a new sabbatical program, support for the Foundations of Excellence for First-Year Students program, support for CASTLS, increased dollars for field-based learning travel, increases for diversity activities, support for international studies programs, and support for classroom upgrades.

Swain Hall

The costs for the renovation of Swain continue to escalate. The original estimate of \$7 million two years ago increased with architectural estimates of more than \$10 million. At the recent bid opening, the figures for a complete renovation are at \$13.1million. A meeting with the Swain Hall Building Committee last Friday was called to discuss the overrun and possible options for reducing the size and function of the building to bring the cost down. An amendment has been submitted to the Chancellor at the North Dakota University System to seek additional legislative

¹ The President's Report is a monthly summary of activities in the president's office and current issues affecting the campus. It is distributed widely to keep the community up to date on current initiatives and decisions. The report is provided at the monthly meeting of the University Cabinet, an advisory council comprised of all directors, vice presidents, and senate presidents. This report is distributed electronically to all faculty and staff, student leaders, the Board of Regents, Foundation Board of Directors, and Alumni Board. The report is also posted on the university's web site. Anyone interested in learning more about this information may contact the President's Office or the president directly.

support for the renovation. We are also hoping to seek additional dollars through the Stimulus bill to support the building project. Minot's legislators are fully aware of this significant cost overrun and are working with us to see if we can find solutions.

Geothermal Alternatives

The main coal boiler project and the estimated cost of \$10 million continue to be of concern to us as well. Recently, we have begun the process of investigating alternative energy sources and discussing the potential for a geothermal system. Alternative energy solutions have been discussed with Prairie Engineering and other engineering firms. A firm specializing in geothermal institutional systems was contacted. Two engineers from the company of M.E.P. in Wisconsin visited campus to review the infrastructure and to determine the feasibility of a geothermal system. Other sources of funding, including state and federal and private, have been explored for the boiler or the new alternative systems.

House Appropriations Committee Planning

Not yet scheduled but anticipated to be held in late February, the House Appropriations Hearing is expected to require more detailed budget and finance accounting information than the Senate Hearing held in January. We are currently working to collect information for that important hearing.

Minot Air Force Base Meeting with Commander

Dr. Rabe and I held a special meeting with Col. Westa, the commander of the MAFB, to discuss the service we provide to the Base and to seek information about how MSU can improve and expand its services. The commander expressed his high regard for Minot State and indicated that he is most willing to work with us to keep our relationship strong. Following our meeting, we visited the education building on the Base and the MSU offices. Another meeting with the director of the MAFB's educational programming has been scheduled.

Sabbatical Announcements

Two sabbatical applications were received for our new program to begin next year. The shortness of the application period limited the number of applications, but two outstanding applications were received. Dr. Shirley Cole-Harding's and Dr. Daniel Ringrose's application for spring 2010 sabbaticals were approved.

Federal Appropriation Proposals

Following my meeting with Senator Dorgan, Senator Conrad, and Representative Pomeroy in January and my discussions with them about our meth education program in RCJC, our autism program in NDCPD, and three additional projects, five proposals have been prepared and submitted for their review. In addition to the meth and autism projects, MSU is seeking support for a center for community research and service, a program in the new Health and Wellness Center, and an alternative energy project on campus, including geothermal and solar. We also received guidance on the Stimulus funding and eligible projects. A full list of MSU Stimulus projects has been developed to provide to our delegation and to the SBHE.

Center of Excellence Continued Planning

Weekly meetings have been held to continue to identify potential projects for the ND CoE program. Currently there are five projects under consideration.

Legislative Forums and Legislative Activities

Each Saturday the Chamber hosts a legislative forum. Representatives from our faculty, administration, and I attend each of these meetings to discuss MSU projects directly with our

local legislators and to participate in the discussion about other projects for the Minot area. These forums and conversations have been most useful in keeping us updated on bills. The Chancellor's Cabinet, a group made up of all vice chancellors and all presidents from the NDUS, has met weekly to review current bills and to discuss appropriations in support of the SBHE budget request. Many bills with the potential to impact MSU directly have been monitored closely, such as a bill seeking to shift tuition-setting authority from the SBHE to the legislature, a bill to allow concealed weapons on campus and one to prevent confidentiality in the early stages of a presidential search.

Health and Wellness Center

The architectural firm of EAPC has prepared design plans for the new center. We intend to take those plans to the Student Government Association this coming week to discuss the potential for support from student fees. An Op-Ed was published on Sunday to explain MSU's plans for the center. It is important that we provide specific information regarding the function of the center, its size, and its funding sources.

List of Selected Activities and Events in President's Office (since January 28, 2009)

January

- Hosted luncheon for Chester Reiten following his campus presentation
- Attended CTF Forum
- Center of Excellence meeting
- Chamber legislative Saturday forums
- Reviewed sabbatical application recommendations
- Federal appropriation proposal meetings
- Chancellor's Cabinet meetings
- Meeting to discuss Swain planning
- Hosted meeting with local legislators

February

- President's Staff weekly meetings
- Conference call with Dean Grosz regarding name change and other Bottineau matters
- Meeting with MAFB Commander, Col. Westa
- Visit to MSU's MAFB offices and classes
- MSU Foundation Board meeting
- Presented at the Senate Hearing in Bismarck regarding MSU-B's name change proposal
- Planning meeting for SIAS International 10th Anniversary event and graduation ceremony

- Chamber Military Affairs Committee meeting.
- Center of Excellence planning meeting
- Chamber Board of Directors Meeting
- Faculty Senate meetings
- Staff Senate
- Basketball games
- Planning House Appropriations Committee presentation
- Chancellor's Cabinet
- Conference call with Inner Earth consultants regarding geothermal
- Meeting with Staff Senate president
- Chamber legislative forums
- Spring official enrollment meeting
- Campus-wide open forums
- Swain Committee meeting to discuss bids
- Center of Excellence planning (continued)
- Chancellor's Cabinet conference call
- Meeting with Geothermal Consultants on campus.

Concluding Remarks

The legislative session and the many projects for which we are seeking support have been piling up almost as rapidly as the snow. We are being kept very busy. We remain encouraged about the positive financial picture of North Dakota and our Grow North Dakota tuition plan that will begin in the fall. All faculty and staff are working exceptionally hard and exceptionally well on behalf of our students and our communities. We are fortunate to have such good people working together for the good of Minot State. Minot State University is a great place to work.

David Fuller
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