

**Office of the President  
Minot State University  
Report to Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders,  
University Cabinet, Alumni, the Foundation Board, and the MSU Board of Regents  
February 21, 2007 \***

**Current Issues and Topics**

- Spring Enrollment: Official Third Week Report

Minot State University reported a head count of 3,386 students, a 3.6 percent decrease from last spring's official count of 3,512. The decrease was marked by a drop of 258 or 21 percent in the total number of students aged 25 and older. MSU counted 1,201 older-than-average students compared to last year's 1,459. Students under age 25 were up 132, from 2,053 to 2,185. Other highlights of MSU spring 2007 enrollment include:

- The number of Native American students grew from 115 to 137, an increase of 16 percent.
- The number of Canadian students grew from 222 last year to 242 this year, an increase of 9 percent. It is the fourth year in a row that this population has seen an increase since a decline that started in 1994.
- Enrollment from most of the contiguous states and provinces improved. Most notably, students from Montana increased from 96 to 121 and students from Manitoba increased from 35 to 43. These gains were offset by a loss of 14 students from Minnesota.
- The total number of graduate students increased from 276 to 297, a growth of 7 percent.
- Enrollment in e-learning delivery, including online and N.D. Interactive Video Network (IVN) courses, increased 6 percent, from 1,299 last year to 1,380 this year.

The decreases were disappointing but not unexpected in light of the fact that the economy and the job market are good and when that is the case, enrollment in higher education typically declines. It was encouraging to see an increase in the number of traditional students. Other encouraging signs include areas where the university has been investing recruitment resources and efforts, namely graduate students, Native American students, and Canadian students. With our challenging regional demographics and added competition for students, enrollment in our market and area will continue to require our attention and work.

- North Dakota Legislative Session

House Bill 1003: North Dakota University Base Budget

This bill passed the House on February 15 on a vote of 65–26 and now will be reviewed by the Senate. The House Appropriations Committee amended HB 1003 to include serious reductions in the University System's base funding. Funding was added to support special projects but was not directed to support core functions, such as

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\* 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 also 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.

faculty and staff salaries and critically needed base support for the ConnectND system. The bill provides for a cap on the 2007-2009 tuition rate of no more than 5%. It also reduces base funding, such as a \$6.7 million dollar reduction in the base funding from the recommended amount in the executive budget. A reduction of \$4.2 million was made with the reduction in the executive recommendation for 5% and 5% faculty and staff salaries reduced to 4% and 4%. Another \$2.2 million was reduced from the SBHE budget for contingencies and emergencies. There were additions made to the general fund allocations as a result of the reductions in the salaries and other executive recommendations. Those additions were special projects, which included funding for our Dome floor (\$387,000) and Swain (additional \$4.0 million for a total of \$6.5 million for the \$7.0 million project). HB 1003 also was amended to include a requirement for an interim legislative committee to study higher education productivity, with the aim to find ways to increase productivity, to build a more cost-effective system, and ways to reduce student demands on the system.

- Vice President for Advancement Search and Appointment

The search committee completed its review of three finalists for the Vice President for Advancement. Following the recommendation from the committee, Mr. Marv Semrau was offered the position and accepted, with a starting date of March 5. A Minot native, Marv has been the sales manager for Lowe's Printing for 19 years. He was a co-chairman of the successful \$6 million capital campaign to build the Minot Family YMCA located in southwest Minot and is a steering committee member for the YMCA's new \$3 million capital campaign. He is also presently involved in raising funds for the North Dakota Cowboy Hall of Fame. Currently, Mr. Semrau is chairman of the Minot Planning Commission and is a previous chairman of the Minot Area Development Foundation. He is a board member of the Minot Family YMCA and the Minot Public Schools Foundation. Other community involvement includes being a member and past president of the Minot Kiwanis Club, the Minot Y's Men's Club, and the Minot Y's Men's Rodeo. Prior to joining Lowe's Printing in 1988, he worked for Young America retail stores for 20 years. Semrau earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from North Dakota State University. Mr. Semrau brings with him extensive experience in fund raising and in community service. He will serve our university exceptionally well as a results-oriented leader, an individual who collaborates effectively with faculty, students, staff and key volunteers, a person who focuses on excellence and growth, and a strategic thinker and planner.

- Chancellor Search

This past week the search committee, on which I serve, met to interview the two finalists for the position: Mr. William Goetz, the Chief of Staff for Governor Hoeven, and Dr. Paul Keyes, the Provost for Governor's State University in Chicago. After special meetings with the presidents, the NDUS staff, and the search committee, the committee recommended that both names be forwarded to the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). The SBHE will meet on February 23 to identify the new Chancellor.

- Northern Great Plains Research and Development Institute

A proposal was recently submitted for federal support for a \$2.0 million project titled the Northern Great Plains Research and Development Institute. To help develop the student of the future and to meet these high expectations for the university, the Northern Great Plains Research and Development Institute will function as the means to facilitate the objectives of Minot State University's new vision. Coordinated and directed by the institute, these objectives will allow students, faculty, and regional partners to conduct rigorous study of local systems and provide strong and engaging learning experiences and development outcomes. Hands-on study, service learning, civic activities, internships, volunteerism, experiential learning activities, and other practices will connect the

learning of the classroom with the needs, problems, and experiences of civic life and place. The institute will encompass two major components: a research function to conduct undergraduate, graduate, and faculty research focused on issues and problems associated with the Northern Great Plains and local area; and a development function to disseminate information, offer grant writing support, engage in service learning, and other civic engagement activities focused on the development and growth of the local place.

- Board of Regents New Members

Recommended and approved by the Membership Committee and the Executive Committee of Minot State University's Board of Regents, invitations were sent out to a list of prospective members. We have received notices from 17 individuals who have accepted the invitation to become an MSU Regent. We are very pleased with the people who have agreed to join the BOR and to serve the university. An orientation is being planned for March.

### **List of Selected Activities and Events (since January 24, 2007)**

- Center of Excellence meeting with Mayor, President and Chair of MADC, and campus representatives to identify potential projects and discuss progress.
- Attended Chamber's Business After Hours
- Hosted dinner at home for Gala guests from SRT
- Participated in weekend IVN interviews of Chancellor semi-finalists.
- Regular meeting with students in the Beaver Dam.
- Attended Diversity Committee meeting.
- Participated in a meeting with the Student Association and members of the Greater Expectations for Minot (GEM) group to discuss potential organization on campus.
- Met with Steering Committee of MSU's Higher Learning Commission Self-Study
- Attended North Central Association Board meeting in Chicago
- Met with search committee for the Vice President for Advancement and discussed charge and schedule.
- Met with a variety of people regarding a potential proposal to support a major program for civic engagement at MSU.
- Met with MSU-Bottineau administrators to discuss potential collaborative projects.
- Attended the North Dakota Tech Expo meeting and luncheon
- Attended the Chamber Legislative Saturday morning forums; meeting with local legislators to discuss bills related to higher education and MSU.
- Participated in weekly Chancellor Cabinet meetings to discuss legislative topics and amendments.
- Wrote and submitted a white paper for the Northern Great Plains Research and Development Institute (a proposal for \$2.0 million federal funding).
- Hosted faculty breakfast in Fisher Room.
- Participate in Connect ND Executive Director Search Interviews
- Attended the funeral of Roger Odell
- Participated in Minot High School MSU recruitment event

## **Concluding Remarks**

We are pleased to welcome our new Vice President for Advancement, Mr. Marv Semrau, who will begin his duties on March 5, 2007. We are also pleased to congratulate Ms. Kristen Warmoth, who has recently been appointed as the new dean for CEL. The legislative session has been busy, with many proposals to the legislature for projects and support. We are happy to receive recommended support from the House for our Dome floor and additional dollars above the \$2.50 million in the executive recommendation for Swain. Our local legislators have worked hard to seek support for these important capital projects. While it included support for the dome floor and Swain, HB 1003 was particularly disappointing to those of us who see the critical need for increased dollars for faculty and staff salaries. The reduction in the executive recommendation for salaries was a true set back at a time when we need to be significantly increasing salaries. There are a considerable number of questions raised by some vocal legislative critics of the State Board of Higher Education. The issues of the past year linger and affect deleteriously, I'm afraid, the decisions to support higher education and our individual universities and colleges. The Roundtable, which is an outstanding initiative to unify higher education and to set responsive goals and to remain accountable, is not getting the support it deserves. The added language to HB 1003 about a study to evaluate higher education is of special concern, especially in light of the progressive model set by the Roundtable.

Our Higher Learning Commission self study is proceeding deliberately to meet the schedule for preparing the report. It is especially important that all of us contribute to and participate in this work. A re-accreditation with HLC requires input from all of us.

Again, thanks to all of you for the exceptional efforts you make on behalf of our students and their learning.

David Fuller  
February 21, 2007