

**Office of the President  
Minot State University  
Report to Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders,  
University Cabinet, and the MSU Board of Regents  
November 15, 2006**

As in other reports, I have included below the lists of current topics and activities since the last meeting of the University Cabinet on October 18, 2006. Unfortunately, I cannot include all events and issues and cannot do justice to the many things going on right now on campus—music recitals, theater performances, athletic events, building and renovation projects, class projects and honors, and others. Last month I announced that I would be holding an open conversation with anyone who wishes to attend to discuss any of these items or anything else about the university. Since I will be in Washington DC on Thursday visiting our congressional delegation, I invite you to attend the “open conversation” at 4:00 P.M. on the afternoon of November 15. We’ll meet in the Multicultural Center at the south section of Buckshot’s. If you have any questions about any of these topics and other campus issues, please contact me directly.

**Current**

- Open Forums: Budget and University Finances  
On Monday of this week we held two campus open forums to discuss the institutional budget and finances. Ron Dorn provided a PowerPoint presentation showing current revenue and expense projections. His presentation and the ensuing discussion also focused on the integration of the CEL budget and the appropriated budget. With the increased enrollments in CEL, particularly in our on-line courses, the need to integrate the two budgets has been more pronounced. Other topics discussed were: the percentages of state support and tuition totals over the past 30 years, variables affecting the budget (utility costs), the competition for students and the need for stepped up recruitment, institutional marketing, the growth in grants and sponsored program awards, and collaborative enrollments.
- SBHE Budget and 21%  
The State Board of Higher Education’s budget proposal requests an additional \$63 million, which is equivalent to 21% of the state budget. While institutions are not permitted to lobby for specific budget allowances from the state, the SBHE encourages all presidents to encourage the state legislators to support the budget request and to explain the reasons for the need for this increase. Three notable reasons are: 1) to keep tuition from increasing above 5%, 2) support a 5% salary increase to address the low salaries, and 3) to provide support for the growing deferred maintenance expenses on campus. The North Dakota Student Association appeared before the SBHE at the last meeting to seek support from the Board to keep tuition increases low.
- Master Planning Implementation  
The preliminary draft of MSU’s master plan will be the focus of discussion and review by the Master Planning Steering Committee in the near future. The committee will be asked to make recommendations on the draft, prioritize recommended initiatives, and to develop a plan for financing and a schedule for completing the projects.
- Brad Botz Resignation  
Brad Botz, Minot State University’s Vice President for Advancement, has tendered his resignation effective December 1. I have appreciated Brad’s quality work and dedication to Minot State University. He has undertaken a number of positive

initiatives, such as enhancing our fund-raising efforts, reinstating the faculty and staff payroll deduction plan, starting departmental phonathons, and supporting the establishment of friend-raising golf outings in regional communities. He has also strengthened relationships with MSU alumni. I wish him the best in his future endeavors. The search for a new vice president for advancement will begin immediately, with the hope of the position being filled in April. Dr. Dick Jenkins, who served for 12 years in the dual role of vice president for advancement and student affairs, will assume the interim duties of advancement until a replacement is appointed.

- Recruiting Services

Dr. Gary Rabe has informed me that a search will begin for an assistant vice president for admissions and recruiting services. This position is a reconfigured from what was vacated upon the resignation of Stephanie Witwer. Dr. Rabe will appoint the committee and share the job description upon his return from China.

- Strategic Plan

The new abridged publication of the MSU Vision 2013 has been printed and received. The University Cabinet, the vice presidents and deans, and the chairs of the respective senates will be given copies of the plan and have the opportunity to discuss the distribution and implementation of the plan prior to the January faculty and staff convocation. Faculty and staff at the convocation will be asked to work in designated team to offer recommended action plans for the seven major strategies of the plan.

- State Board of Higher Education Meeting

The State Board of Higher Education met in Dickinson on November 9. The meeting included quite a few items on the agenda. For instance, the North Dakota Student Association met with the board to urge members to keep tuition increases down. Curriculum proposals were acted upon. The Stage II proposal from Bismarck State College to offer a four-year degree in energy management was approved. The Board did not approve a mission change but did authorize the college to offer the four-year degree program and upper-level courses in energy management. The Cornerstone Reports and this year's Cornerstone Alignment Plans were approved. Further, the Board approved the search committees and profiles for the search for the Mayville and Wahpeton presidents and the Chancellor of the North Dakota University System.

### **Schedule of Activities (since last University Cabinet meeting on September 20)**

- October 18: Chat with students in the Beaver Dam
- October 19: Hosted an "After Cabinet" conversation with faculty and staff in the Multicultural Center; attended the North Dakota Chamber regional meeting in Minot; continued with our visits with the media at the KMOT studio.
- October 20: Welcomed students and parents at the MSU Campus Preview Day in Ann Nicole Nelson Hall.
- October 23: Met with the chair of the NCATE focus team; participated in the KXMC media meeting at the KX studio; met with the Native American Advisory Committee to prioritize objectives for this year; hosted the welcome dinner for Rector Yucel Yilmaz, the president of Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey.
- October 24: Participated in the signing ceremony to join in a partnership with Kadir Has University; attended the NCATE exit interview; visited Ft Berthold Community

College and met with faculty and administrators to discuss articulation issues and a partnership agreement.

- October 25: Attended the Chancellor's Cabinet meeting in Bismarck.
- October 26: Hosted a new staff breakfast in the Fisher Room; participated in the regular "chat" with the students in the Beaver Dam; met with the Community Bowl consultant; met with the Dean of MSU-Bottineau and the president of Williston State College to discuss ideas for cooperation; attended the presentation and demonstration of Chinese cooking and culture in the Multicultural Center.
- October 30: Participated in a meeting with the history department faculty to discuss ideas for the 2013 Centennial Project.
- October 31: Hosted a new faculty breakfast in the Fisher Room.
- November 1: Attended the Hispanic celebration event in the Multicultural Center; called and held a meeting with the Institutional Diversity Committee to discuss mission, charge, and purposes; participated in a conference call with the Chancellor's Search Committee.
- November 2: Traveled to Stanley and Tioga, to meet with school officials and to tour their facilities.
- November 3: Met with the Marketing Director Search Committee to discuss the status of the search for a new director.
- November 6: Attended events scheduled as a part of the Native American Appreciation Week; met with the Alcohol Consortium directors and campus participants.
- November 7: Chaired the Connect North Dakota Oversight Committee.
- November 8: Met with the Faculty Promotion Committee to discuss new strategic plan; attended the Trinity Board meeting; called a meeting with Minot representatives who are planning to be a part of a delegation to travel to Skien, Norway, one of my purposes is to meet with university officials in Norway, Denmark, and Sweden to discuss potential partnership agreements with MSU.
- November 9: Attended the State Board of Higher Education meeting in Dickinson.
- November 13: Scheduled and hosted two open forums for faculty and staff to discuss finances and other issues.

## **Concluding Remarks**

With Thanksgiving rapidly approaching, all of us are staying busy and preparing for the end of the fall semester. Our Higher Learning Commission Steering Committee and many others across campus are hard at work conducting analyses and preparing our self study. This work is taking an inordinate amount of time and will continue to require all of us to participate actively in the self-study process. I am most appreciative of the work of Dr. Ron Royer, the committee, and many others who are contributing to this important effort. The recent elections have presented us a good opportunity to meet and discuss higher education and Minot State University with current and new legislators. The upcoming start of the legislative session will require frequent trips to Bismarck and the close monitoring of the bills and activities. Our aim is to support the SBHE's budget request and to urge legislators to fund the request at 21% of the state budget. It is important for all of us to seek that support, so that we can, among many things, keep tuition increases down and address in more responsible ways the need for higher salaries for faculty and staff.

The national elections and the results will no doubt lead to significant changes in national policy. Increased support for financial aid is critical for us and our students. The U.S. Secretary of

Education Spelling Commission's report on higher education will intensify discussions about the need for significant changes in higher education, particularly in the areas of accessibility, accountability, and K-12 preparation. That report and the results of the latest election will continue to raise the specter of higher education on the local and national levels.

In view of all that is occurring on the local and national levels, I am confident that Minot State University is positioned well to continue to provide high quality support for our students. Again, thanks to all of you for everything you do each day to demonstrate our commitment and devotion to student learning and success.

David Fuller  
November 15, 2006