

December 15, 2010

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

FROM: David Fuller

SUBJECT: ¹Monthly President's Report

Current

Legislative Preparation and Hearings

Minot State University hosted and sponsored three legislators' meetings. A hosted reception for all local legislators to present current projects, a student-organized function to present students' comments and issues, and a faculty hosted event for legislators were held on campus in the last month. The events offered legislators information about our university's projects and the opportunity to discuss the upcoming legislative session.

Presentation to Office of Management and Budget

Each of the university presidents was asked to make formal presentations to OMB and to respond to questions about fiscal efficiencies, collaboration, and specific institutional projects. Minot State University's presentation provided examples of our fiscal responsibility, cost-savings efforts, and collaborations. Our compensation task force results were shared, and with it, the request to continue to support increased salaries. A detailed report on our ranked geothermal project and request was distributed and reviewed to emphasize the fiscal and environmental benefits of the system.

Governor's Budget Recommendation

Among many line items, the Governor recommended a 3% increase in salaries (compared to the SBHE's 4.5% request), a 1% contribution from that salary increase to retirement, a reduction in the equity dollars awarded to each campus, and a \$5 million performance incentive pool. That performance pool will be used to fund institutions who demonstrate increased completion rates and graduation rates. A commission will be appointed to define the criteria and to award funds from that pool. Our geothermal request for \$5 million was not included in the governor's recommendation. The SBHE will consider which items in the original requests should be supported and advanced. We will urge the SBHE and local legislators to continue to advocate for the support of the continued development of the geothermal system.

Northern Sun Intercollegiate Athletic Conference

Last week I travelled to Bemidji and Duluth to meet with the new chancellors of those universities and to familiarize them with Minot State University and seek their support for the upcoming board vote for our membership in the NSIC. The meetings went well. I have continued to stay in touch with the other presidents in the conference, sending them copies of Connections and speaking to them directly at conferences and by phone. The NSIC team visit to our campus went exceptionally well. I heard often from the team members how impressed they were with our campus, our academic programs, and our facilities. The vote by the board of directors of the NSIC is scheduled to occur on January 20, 2011.

¹ The President's Report is a monthly summary of activities in the president's office and current issues affecting the campus. Since no University Cabinet meeting was held in November, this report covers two months instead of one. The report 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.

Great Plains Community Research and Service Center

Neil Sharpe and Paul Markel have agreed to serve as co-chairs of our new program. The Department of Education, through the help of our Washington Delegation, most notably Senator Dorgan, secured a first-year award for \$950,000. We have been meeting regularly to review the grant requirements and to discuss potential projects and marketing. Recently our co-directors were interviewed on Merle Pepcorn's Prairie Public radio program.

Hobson's International Consulting Visit

A representative from this consulting firm visited campus and met with faculty, staff, students, and members of President's Staff regarding directions for our international program. A report is expected in the near future.

Geothermal Project

The test wells have been drilled on Allen Field. It is still anticipated that the 450 wells for the first area of our geothermal system will be installed this spring. We met with the MEP Associates' engineers about the well field and other details. Professor John Webster was able to join the meeting to discuss the potential for student monitoring of the system and the potential of an alternative energy curriculum or series of courses focused on geothermal energy. Another possibility being considered is to make available the field for a new competition track which could be installed above the well fields.

Administration Building Renovations

The University Cabinet reviewed and discussed possible renovations to the Administration Building at its October meeting. Architectural drawings were distributed and members of the Cabinet were encouraged to review the drawings and submit ideas, suggestions, and concerns to their respective vice president. The preliminary plan is to convert the first floor to a student service center, to include enrollment management, admissions, the registrar's office, financial aid, and other services to provide for a one-stop shopping concept for students. Revised architectural plans will be distributed at the Cabinet meeting today.

NCATE

The Teacher Education program recently was visited by the NCATE evaluation team and evaluators from North Dakota. The initial findings were positive. The department is currently responding to a few specific concerns expressed by the team. Congratulations to our department and the many faculty and staff who worked hard in preparation for this visit and review.

Campus Open Forums

The two open forums held in November included general discussions about campus topics and issues and a presentation of the budget Minot State is submitting as a part of the SBHE proposal to the legislature. Copies of the written and oral comments made by participants at the meetings have been distributed to the Cabinet. Both forums were well attended and involved considerable discussion.

Academic Advising

As a part of our continued efforts to increase our retention and graduation rates and to respond to state-wide calls for improving these performance measures, I am working with the retention committee, the new advising coordinator, the VPAA, and the executive committee of the Faculty Senate to define principles and a system to strengthen our advising system on campus. I wrote a letter defining the needs and identifying steps necessary to strengthen academic advising on our campus. This letter was presented to the Faculty Senate for its review and endorsement.

Faculty Workload strategies

In response to a variety of concerns expressed about some faculty members' workloads, I asked Selmer Moen, Cheryl Nilsen, and Patti Fedje to meet with me to review a list of 20 strategies to address these concerns. These strategies are currently under consideration by the executive committee. We'll meet in January to review and revise accordingly the strategies before bringing the recommendations back to the deans, chairs, and Faculty Senate.

Grow North Dakota analysis

This flat-rate tuition plan, which went into effect at the beginning of this current academic year, was examined by our enrollment management office, marketing, finance office, student affairs and residence hall offices, and institutional research office. The results indicated that the plan is working well and has led to increased enrollment in targeted areas. I have asked our recruitment office, marketing office, and student affairs office to bring back proposals for additional support and activities this year and next.

Residence Halls

Our residence halls are nearly full this semester, and the prospect for future growth is now strong. The Beaver Ridge Plaza now being constructed to the east of the campus, the Greek houses, future apartment planning, and a potential new Campus Heights are under consideration to meet these new demands for housing on campus.

Recruitment

Based on the analysis of the current enrollments and the results of the Grow North Dakota plan, our recruitment office has arranged for Noel Levitz to visit us to offer us guidance about developing an enrollment management plan. The plan will include target enrollment goals for specific areas on campus and for the total campus. With a plan, we should be able to set goals for residence halls spaces, classroom utilization, and academic program quality enhancements and directions.

TRIO Implementation

Dr. Jenkins and the search committees have completed their searches and hired highly qualified staff members for our new TRIO program. The TRIO offices will be housed in the current locations of the Jones Room and the food services offices. Those areas are being remodeled and renovated. The Jones Room will be relocated to the third floor of the Administration Building to provide for space for TRIO.

Veterans' Service Center

In the last year, the number of veterans seeking direct support from our offices has increased significantly. Our Financial Aid office, for instance, has raised concerns about the need to provide veterans more support. In the past six months we have been looking at other institutional models for veterans' centers on campus and have been considering developing a center connected to our student success center. Funds are available through existing resources and through the student affairs office to support a center director. A draft job description has been developed and circulated for review. A decision will be made soon about when and how to proceed.

Registrar's Position

Two additional candidates are on campus this week. Interviews are being conducted, including open forums with presentations and meetings with various constituencies. The search committee will be convening soon after the last interview to make a recommendation.

Wellness Center Bids and Construction Plans

The accepted bids for the general contractor (Roer's Construction), mechanical (Mobray and Sons), and electrical (Main Electric) came under our identified budget authority. The contractors indicated construction will begin by March 1, 2011. The building is to be completed within 14 months.

Inaugural Wrestling Meet

The return of wrestling to Minot State, after nearly a 30-year hiatus, began with a dual meet with the University of Mary. With a large turnout and a recognition event of the donors who made the return possible, the night could not have been better with the Beavers winning the dual meet with this Division II institution. Our team and new coach were well received by the campus and our wrestling community.

AASCU Meeting in Charleston

This presidents' conference included a variety of useful events. The meetings I attended included special sessions on international program growth, strategies to address the impact of the economy on the institutions, veterans support centers, federal and legislative updates, and keynote speakers addressing the political changes and the impacts on higher education. I was also able to meet with a number of presidents from the NSIC to discuss our membership bid.

Discussion with BSC about expanded role for MSU on BSC Campus

A couple of months ago Larry Skogen, the president of BSC, and I discussed MSU's presence on the BSC campus and considered other opportunities for growth in programs and enrollments. In response, we arranged a meeting at BSC with Dr. Skogen and his staff and MSU staff. We had a productive discussion about programming, marketing, and increased presence on the BSC campus. Plans are now being considered.

Joint Meeting of Senates' Executive Committees

Last week the three executive committees (Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and the Student Government Association) met with members of President's Staff to discuss current topics, initiatives, and issues. The agenda included the search for the new VPAA, a potential new associate vice president for academic affairs, academic advising, renovations in the administration building, the veterans' center, Division II athletics, various building projects, child care, housing pressures, Greek life, CEL financing, international education, and the Governor's budget. Brief reports were provided on each, with time set aside for questions and discussion.

Centennial Committee

A well-represented steering committee has been formed. Its first meeting was held to discuss its charge, the objectives to engage the work of subcommittees, and the timeline for work to coordinate and monitor campus activities in support of our centennial in 2013-2014. A task force had been formed to research other centennial projects and to suggest potential initiatives for our own. That report was provided to the steering committee at its first meeting.

Collaboration with Dakota College at Bottineau

A joint meeting of DCB dean's council and MSU's President's Staff has been scheduled to identify potential collaborative programs. The Passport Program and our joint work in nursing are two of the most recent collaborations.

List of Selected Activities and Events in President's Office (since October 13, 2010)

October

- Meeting with Faculty Athletic Representative
- Sodexo meeting
- Minot Area Development Corporation Board of Directors meeting
- Presentation to MSU for Green ND Award

- Visit by Representative Pomeroy staff member
- Discussion with SGA legislative representative regarding hosted legislators' social on campus
- Discussion regarding salary administration plans from CTF
- Meeting with Red and Green editor
- Music faculty recital
- Meeting with VPAA and Faculty Senate president and vice president to discuss strategies regarding workload
- Meeting with Staff Senate president
- VPAA Search Committee meeting
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting
- Staff Senate
- Discussion with developers for Beaver Ridge Plaza
- Etiquette luncheon
- Visitation by Northern Sun Intercollegiate Conference team
- Office of Management of Budget presentation regarding MSU budget in Bismarck
- Foundation Board of Directors meeting
- Great Plains Community Research and Service Center meeting with co-directors
- Meeting with VPAA and deans
- Visits with Hobson's consultant regarding international programming
- Phone conference with Chancellor
- Discussion with Kathy Aas regarding XCEL and our geothermal project
- Presentations to student athletes during half time of football game
- Men's club hockey game with DCB
- Dakota Bowl in Fargo Dome
- Native American Awareness Week events
- Meeting with NCATE visiting team chair
- Registrar candidates interviews and forums
- NCATE team exit interview
- Pre-bid meeting for Wellness Center
- Meeting with John Webster regarding geothermal project
- CEL open house
- MEP Associates meeting to review geothermal field and project
- Native American taco sale
- Meeting to discuss Centennial meeting
- Great Plains Community Research and Service Center meeting
- Wrestling program social prior to inaugural meet
- Inaugural wrestling match with U Mary
- Staff Senate president
- Student Government Association president
- Meeting with Lisa Borden King to discuss University Diversity Committee budget and activities
- Minot Symphony Orchestra
- Study Abroad faculty presentation
- Compensation Task Force objectives discussion
- Attended presentation by Lisa Feldner, the distinguished alumni program
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting
- Faculty Athletic Representative meeting
- Wellness Center bid opening
- Visit to Dakota College at Bottineau; to meet with Deans' Council, meet with community leaders, open forum with all faculty and staff, and attended open house to honor Dr. Kihle
- Stopped by and greeted students and faculty at the Freezin' for a Reason event on Broadway
- Meeting with City Manager regarding city building fees
- Faculty Senate meeting
- Chamber of Commerce Showcase of Business event at State Fair Center
- Office Hours for Students
- Meeting with Great Plains Center's co-director
- Discussion with a coach
- Meeting with Red and Green editor
- BADM discussion
- Hosted social for local legislators to discuss MSU budget and projects

November

- Follow up with VPAA and Faculty senate representatives regarding workload strategies
- Meeting with Dr. Nordquist regarding NCATE and CD
- Retention Task Force meeting
- Building project reviews and EAPC
- Campus-wide open forums
- Interviews with candidates for TRIO program
- Veterans' students meeting
- Choirs concert
- State Board of Higher Education meeting in Grand Forks
- Meeting with Faculty Senate president
- China update with Kevin Harmon
- Meeting with campus representatives to discuss military support strategies
- EAPC architectural meeting to discuss 2011 projects

- American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) meeting in Charleston, SC.
- Meeting with Dr. Jenkins and Dennis Parisien to discuss Native American Cultural Center and activities
- Meeting at BSC with President Skogen and staff and members of MSU staff regarding increased opportunities for MSU at the BSC campus

December

- Chancellor's Cabinet meeting in Bismarck
- Travelled to Bemidji and Duluth to visit with new chancellors regarding our application for NSIC membership
- Student Athletic Activity Committee (SAAC) luncheon
- Meeting to discuss coaches' salaries and comparisons
- Interview by student writer
- Alumni Association Board meeting
- Luncheon with MADC president
- Trinity Health Christmas social
- MSU Band and Choral concert
- Trip to Stanley to meet with donor
- Communications Disorders faculty candidate
- Follow up meeting with VPAA and John Webster regarding geothermal project

- Meeting with Senate Executive Committees from Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, SGA, and Presidents Staff to discuss issues and projects
- Interview on KMSU
- MSU Jazz Ensemble Concert
- Welcome to Lethbridge College deans
- Staff Senate president meeting
- SGA president meeting
- Meeting with William Isaacson
- Attended Dr. Isaacson's presentation to a class
- Meeting with representatives of the Registrar's office to discuss Registrar search
- Meeting with VPAA and Graduate Dean
- Meeting with president of Faculty Senate
- Attended Campus Players performance of the Velveteen Rabbit
- Chancellor's Cabinet conference call
- Registrar candidate forum and meeting
- Centennial Committee meeting
- Preferred Travel agency meeting
- Landscape review for pedestrian corridor to Cook Hall
- Holiday Party for campus
- Chamber Community breakfast with legislators

Concluding Remarks

I continue to be so appreciative of the good work and many efforts from our faculty and staff and students in advancing the goals and vision of the university. At this time of year we are given many opportunities to see first-hand the results, from wonderful and recent choral and band concerts, theatre performance, outreach activities into our community, classroom presentations and speakers, athletic events, and to countless other activities that demonstrate so well our university engagement, dedication to students, and support for our place and community. This semester has been a time to recognize the results of our notable growth, the adjustments we need to make to accommodate that growth and the special efforts of our faculty and staff that deserve our thanks and appreciation. Thank you to all who work hard for our university and who support us in so many ways.

Happy Holidays and Merry Christmas!

David Fuller
December 15, 2010