

**March 21, 2012**

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

**FROM: David Fuller**

**SUBJECT: <sup>1</sup>President's Report**

## **General Overview**

### **Current**

#### Open Forums to Discuss Budget Shortage and Strategies

Brian Foisy and I held three one-hour meetings with the campus to explain the projected budget shortage and the strategies we are planning to undertake to address the shortage. We explained the reasons for the shortages, and the plan to reduce our base budget by 6% to meet the approximate \$2 million shortage. We outlined a plan to address this shortage in two years, with 3% budget reduction in each year. All budget supervisors have been asked to examine their budgets and identify funds to meet their targeted amounts.

The shortfall does not allow us to meet the average 3% salary increases approved by the SBHE. As a result, we decided to reduce our budgets to identify enough dollars to award the average 3% increases. Further, we will make a proposal to the legislature to ask that budget deficit that we have experienced as a result of the decrease in our enrollment is covered. Other strategies include: continuing the soft freeze on all hiring and technology purchases, reducing adjunct and overload costs, eliminating some open positions, and developing an early-retirement plan (those proposals have already been distributed to eligible employees). It appears that the budget supervisors have taken reasonable steps to address our shortfall. I believe that this plan will allow us to respond to this budget need in a way that will have the least impact on our campus. Through this process, we have pledged to maintain the quality of our offerings and programs and not to terminate any benefitted employees.

#### Dickinson State University

The problems uncovered at DSU have focused primarily on administrative failures to monitor international partnerships and registrations. The SBHE and the new president, DC Coston, have taken appropriate steps to identify the causes of these partnership and registration errors. The situation at DSU is unfortunate, as the localized problems at that institution has caused notable damage to DSU's reputation. Some news media accounts have referred to DSU as "diploma mill," which is an unfair portrayal of this institution. All institutions in the system have been asked to examine their international partnerships and operations as a result of these disclosed issues at DSU. In response, Minot State staff and administrators have examined closely our own

---

<sup>1</sup> 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 February, this report covers two months instead of one. The report is distributed widely to keep the community up to date on current initiatives, pending projects, 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 his/her respective senate or senate president, the President's Office, or the university president directly.

processes and operations and have found no violations or abnormalities in the way that our international program is handled or managed.

#### Briercrest Partnership

We recently signed a partnership with Briercrest College. This partnership will include opportunities for Briercrest students to complete three years of designated classes at their school and two years at Minot State to complete programs in social work, addiction studies, psychology, and communication disorders. Previously our College of Education and Health Sciences had signed a similar partnership in elementary education.

#### Passport Program meeting

Members of Dakota College at Bottineau and Minot State University met to review the progress of the Passport Program. The remedial classes, the enrollments, retention, and attrition data were discussed. Both institutions continue to monitor this program to ensure that the students are provided appropriate support.

#### Withdrawal of City Facilities Application

Minot State University applied to the City Facilities Sales-Tax program to request support for the renovation of Herb Parker Stadium and the refurbishing of the Dome. The \$6 million request made note of the role Minot State plays in our community's economic development and the many ways that people from the community and from elsewhere use the university's facilities. The first-reading proposal was approved by the City Council, but it became clear prior to the second-reading vote that the timing of our proposal was not appropriate in view of the flood damage to the city's infrastructure and homes. I decided prior to the second review to withdraw our proposal. Our plan is to resubmit our application in the future at which time the city has been able to more fully complete its recovery from the devastating flood.

#### Studies in the Community and the Environment

With the resignation of the director for SCE in the fall, we decided, in light of our budget challenges, that it would not be prudent to move forward to rehire the position and to implement SCE at this time. If our enrollment recovers and our budget shortfall is addressed in the future, we will review the potential for reconsidering the major. In the meantime, the central SCE faculty committee will consider a grass-roots program of professional development and support to integrate community and environmental topics in our existing majors and program. One member of that committee attended a workshop that explained how some campuses have integrated these topics across the curriculum.

#### Geothermal Update

The architectural firm overseeing the geothermal project is moving ahead to expand the original area from four buildings (i.e., Dome, Wellness, Swain, and Olson) to include Moore Hall and Memorial. This six-building area, referred to as expanded area A will be fully supported by the geothermal system for the original budget of \$9.35 million. Future developments could include two other geothermal well fields to support the remainder of the campus, or an hybrid system to include a decentralized system of natural gas units in each of the remaining buildings. At present, the Allen Field well field is nearing completion. Piping for the new system will run from the well field down to Wellness and into 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue. In the summer, 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue will be demolished to lay the geothermal piping from the Wellness Center to the west to the GB Olson Library, and to the east to Memorial.

### AAC&U Meetings in Washington DC

I attended the AAC&U annual conference to participate in the President's Trust meetings (an invited group of presidents who serve in an advisory capacity to the president of AAC&U). This conference brings together public and private universities and colleges devoted to the liberal arts.

### Walter Piehl Gallery meeting

We have begun the initial planning to design and fund-raise for an art gallery on campus in honor of our own Walter Piehl. The intention to proceed with this planning was announced in conjunction with the Prairie Public documentary on Walter shown on our campus last fall. A fundraising campaign, which will be a part of our capital campaign, will seek support for this gallery. The location of the gallery is yet to be determined pending plans for the maintenance facility and the planning for a new arts facility.

### National Energy Summit Presentation

I was invited to speak at this Summit held in New Town. Recently a panel of university presidents spoke about the initiatives that are being taken to address the expanded energy industry in North Dakota.

### Planning and Budgeting Council meetings

Two meetings of the Planning and Budgeting Council have been held to discuss the plan to continue the conversation about the future direction of MSU. I announced at the spring convocation my intention to hold "real conversations" to discuss planning beyond 2013. That term comes from the poet Wendell Berry, who called for the need for many to conduct real conversations to overcome the barriers presented by disciplines and special interests. The Council has developed a plan to hold a series of conversations to seek input from people on and off our campus. These meetings will probably begin in the fall.

### Meeting with Deans and Chairs regarding budget

We held meetings with the deans and chairs to summarize our budget challenges and plans to reduce our expenditures. The reasons for the shortfall and the recommended strategies to address these shortfalls were discussed.

### Grant Shaft's directive to begin work on finding efficiencies in our budgets and campuses

The president of the State Board of Higher Education announced his intention to ask the campuses to identify efficiencies in our budgets and to reduce expenditures. His plan includes, for example, needs to reduce the number of hours required for graduation, low-enrolled courses, and identify other efficiencies in areas outside of academics. Budget requests to the SBHE will be required to show related efforts to find efficiencies.

### Opening 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue planning and schedule

The planning and staging to open 11<sup>th</sup> avenue is underway now that the avenue will be demolished to make way for the geothermal piping. The architects from Clark Enerson Architectural firm who conducted the full review and developed the master plan in 2006 outlined a number of campus initiatives, many of which have already been completed (Student Center renovations, Swain Hall, Wellness Center, and the monument sign and landscaping). This recommendation to open 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue was presented and discussed at open forums with the architects in 2006. Following the forums, the master planning steering committee approved the general plan and its many features for the campus. Since then, 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue has been used as a staging area for the construction of Swain, the renovation of the athletic field, and the construction of the Wellness Center. The plan is now to sequence the opening of the avenue, starting with information meetings with affected buildings to explain the schedule and impact on

the buildings operations, the demolition of the avenue to lay the geothermal piping, and the completion of the renovation in phases from the east of the campus to the west. The project will begin shortly after commencement and completed in phases, with full renovation completed by the spring of 2013.

#### Business After Hours at MSU's Beaver Creek Café

MSU hosted the recent Chamber Business After Hours in our new dining service area. Over 190 people attended this event and observed our new service and many other improvements in our Student Center.

#### New Chancellor

Dr. Hamid Shirvani, a president in California, has been named the new chancellor for the North Dakota University System. Dr. Shirvani brings many years of successful experience in higher education. His diverse training and experience working with different-sized campuses and with system offices will serve him well here. We look forward to welcoming Dr. Shirvani and his family to North Dakota.

#### North Dakota Budget Section presentation

Brian Foisy and I made a special presentation to the North Dakota legislators and explained the challenges we have faced as a result of the summer flood. We explained the serious and difficult challenges that our faculty, staff, and students faced and continue to face, and we informed them of the steps we have taken to avoid direct damage to the campus. We also explained that Minot State University reached out in many ways to help our city and community during this disaster. Brian outlined the expenses we have incurred as a result of the flood, from infrastructure damage, loss of revenue, and additional expenses to address special needs with housing. He informed the Budget Section of these expenses and explained that we will be returning to the full legislature during the Biennial Session next January. We hope to seek support from the legislature at that time.

### **List of Selected Activities and Events in President's Office (since January 20, 2012):**

#### **January**

- Souris Valley Animal Shelter Board of Directors meeting
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting
- Formal Presentation to City Council for City Facilities Funding
- One-on-one meetings with president's staff members
- Discussion about Studies in the Community and the Environment status
- Meeting to discuss proposal to City Council
- Interim Higher Education Committee meeting in Bismarck
- State Board of Higher Education conference call
- Faculty Senate meeting
- Meeting to discuss advising
- President's Staff special meeting
- Meeting to discuss Compensation Task Force plans for this year
- Wrestling matches
- Advisor development workshop
- Meeting with DCB and MSU personnel to discuss Passport Program
- President of Staff Senate
- NAC Lecture on Peru
- American Association of Colleges and University Annual Meeting in DC
- Special Breakfast meeting with George Kuh to discuss VSA
- AACU President's Trust meetings
- Basketball games
- Hosted Governor's Unveiling of new Strategic plan
- Presentation to the ND Department of Commerce Economic Development Foundation Board
- Planning and Budgeting Council
- Souris Valley Animal Shelter Membership committee meeting
- Special Chamber of Commerce Board meeting to discuss flood mitigation plans
- Meeting with the Compensation Task Force
- Held Student Office Hours
- Meeting with regional director of Sodexo

## February

- KMOT Interview
- National Energy Summit Presentation in New Town
- Meeting with student to discuss concern
- Walter Piehl gallery planning
- KNDK Radio interview about flood recovery
- Faculty Senate meeting
- Athletic training accreditor meeting
- Meeting with parents of students
- Meeting with Distinguished alumnus, Paul Johnson
- Enrollment management dean
- Souris Valley Animal Shelter Membership meeting
- Chancellor's Cabinet meeting in Bismarck at BSC
- Staff Senators
- Office Hours for Students
- President of Student Government Association
- Minot Area Development Corporation Annual Luncheon meeting
- SBHE board member visit
- Meeting with student regarding admission standards
- Luncheon to begin conversations about 2013 and Beyond
- KXMC interview regarding Herb Parker proposal
- Wellness Center planning meeting
- Meeting with Deans and Chairs regarding budget
- Brian Foisy and budget reviews
- Assist AD for compliance candidate
- Luncheon meeting with Briercrest staff to sign partnership agreements
- Great Plains Center for Community Research and Service meeting
- Special SBHE conference call
- Beaver Lodge meeting
- Foundation Board meeting
- President of Faculty Senate
- President's Staff all-day meeting
- Meeting with original members of Vision 2013 Planning and Budgeting Council to discuss 2013 and beyond
- Faculty Senate
- Business After Hours at Hess Corporation
- Communication Disorders accreditation site visit
- Athletic Compliance officer candidates
- Telephone conference with Chancellor
- Higher Learning Commission Team Visit to Arkansas
- SBHE Meeting in Wahpeton
- Dress for Success presentation in Beaver Dam
- BIT presentations in the Slaaten Center
- Interview with Amy Dalrymple with the Fargo Forum
- Red and Green editor meeting
- Luncheon with Steve Peterson

- Meeting with the Assessment Committee regarding the CLA instrument
- Budget meeting with deans
- Meeting with Roger Kluck to discuss building projects
- Music and Poetry Celebration for Black History Month in Anne Nicole
- Meeting with Conni Ahart
- Keynote presentation to the noon Rotary
- Meeting with the CETL director
- President's Staff meeting to discuss budgets
- Interviews with NDUS Chancellor candidates in Bismarck
- Conference call with Vice Chancellor Glatt and Chancellor Goetz regarding budget deficit
- Visit to Chet and Joy Reiten

## March

- Three one-hour campus forums to discuss budget shortage and responses
- Meeting with Enrollment Management Assistant VP
- Meeting with CASCLS director
- Luncheon meeting with president of the MSU Foundation Board
- Meeting with Joe Alme
- Faculty Senate
- Attended Interim Higher Education Meeting in Bismarck
- Minot Symphony Orchestra concert performance.
- Continued meetings with original Planning and Budgeting Council members to discuss 2013 and beyond
- Scheduled office hours with the president
- Meeting with Minot Public Schools Superintendent
- Meeting with local legislators
- Chemistry magic show
- Faculty recital featuring Adam Estes, and Dianna and Erik Anderson
- Regents Executive committee meeting
- Centennial committee meeting
- Studies in the Community and Environment meeting
- Shanxi visitors planning meeting
- Meeting with president of SGA
- Visited honors class to hear presentation on community project
- MADC board of directors meeting
- Red and Green editor
- MSU hockey player
- Planning and Budgeting Council meeting
- North Dakota Business magazine editors
- Attended performance of Sweeny Todd
- Conference call with EID Passport
- Discussion meeting regarding expanded Area A for Geothermal
- American Council of University President's Climate Commitment meeting
- IVN meeting with Chancellor and presidents from DSU, WSC, BSC, and Minot State

- Spring Break
  - Conference call with Chancellor
  - Presentation to North Dakota Budget Section regarding MSU flood impact and budget
  - President of Staff Senate
  - Interview with Andrea Johnson regarding budget forums
  - Geothermal system meeting with MEP
  - Walter Piehl Gallery planning
  - 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue planning and sequencing
  - Meeting with Jonathan Wager to discuss centennial book
- Conference call with Chancellor
  - Presentation by Red Cross to Minot State
  - MSU hosting Business After Hours in Beaver Creek Café
  - Heather Smith
  - President's Staff meeting
  - Chamber Board of Directors meeting
  - Staff Senate meeting
  - Meeting with local legislators
  - 2020 and Beyond Minot meeting at Grand International

David Fuller  
March 21, 2012