

**¹Office of the President
Minot State University
Report to Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders,
University Cabinet, Alumni, the Foundation Board, and the MSU Board of Regents
June 20, 2007**

Current Issues and Topics

Scandinavian trip

From June 1 to 9, a group of Minot State University administrators accompanied the mayor and other city officials and residents as a part of a Minot-Skien sister city delegation that visited Norway and other Scandinavian countries. In addition to participating in the sister-city delegation, our MSU staff traveled with a purpose to visit universities in Norway, Sweden, and Denmark. Visits and discussions with Telemark University in Norway, American College of Norway in Moss, Ostfold University College in Halden, Norway, Kristianstad University in Sweden, and Aalborg University in Denmark. Discussions with the universities focused on student and faculty exchanges, study tours, study abroad, and Scandinavian studies curricula.

Student tragedy

While in Norway, we learned of the terrible tragedy involving the death of one of our first-year students, Anita Knutson from Butte, N.D. Anita was found dead in her apartment in north Minot on June 4. She had completed her first year at Minot State University and was majoring in elementary education. The police continue their investigation. Speaking for all of us at Minot State, we are extremely saddened by this loss of one of our students. We have extended our deepest condolences to Anita's family.

Centers of Excellence proposal

Minot State University continues to work with Info-Tech, the Minot Area Development Corporation, and SRT on a proposal for the next round of COE applications. Proposals are due to the Department of Commerce on July 27, 2007.

United Tribes Technical College partnership agreement

On June 12, MSU's deans, vice president for academic affairs, public information director, and multicultural services director joined me at a ceremony to sign a partnership agreement with United Tribes Technical College. The partnership describes 2+2 articulation opportunities in criminal justice, addiction studies, and business management, student and faculty exchanges, and cultural cooperation between our institutions. This partnership agreement with UTTC follows new partnerships with Ft. Berthold Community College and Turtle Mountain Community College signed earlier in the year.

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 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.

Master plan

At the end of May the master plan architects from Clark Enerson Partners, the firm that has been working with MSU for the past two years, completed and presented the final version of the new master plan. Over that two-year period, the architects have visited campus frequently and conducted open forums with campus and community members regarding the long-term planning of the campus. The new plan specifies the building of a new wellness center, opening 11th Avenue, incorporating new building and institutional signage, adding walkways and green spaces, and incorporating in the design themes that are focused on a sense of place. The architects also presented plans for the renovation of the Student Union atrium, building signage, and preliminary designs for a comprehensive landscaping plan.

Cemetery meeting

Complementing the new master plan, preliminary ideas have been suggested about ways to highlight the relationship between the Lutheran Cemetery and our university campus. A meeting with the church council was recently held to discuss ideas for lighting, maintenance, historical markers, a border fence, and other initiatives to help us integrate the cemetery proper with the plan for the campus. The church officials are reviewing these ideas and plan to hold another meeting with the university.

Broadway and University lighting

The city of Minot has agreed to work with the university to assist us in installing distinct lighting on Broadway and on University and to allow us to participate in the landscaping. The intention is to make the university visible from Broadway and to incorporate designs into the plans to give those areas an appearance special to the university.

Planning and Budgeting Council work on proposed action plans

The seven teams of faculty, staff, and students charged with studying one of the Vision 2013's strategies and identifying specific action plans completed their work and submitted their list of plans to the council. The PAB Council began its review of the action plans and its work to prioritize action steps to occur within two years and later. These plans will be shared and discussed with the President's Staff and the University Cabinet.

Swain Hall

Following the good news about the state appropriation of \$6.3 million dollars to renovate Swain Hall, the Swain Task Force met to continue planning for the academic programs to be included in that building. The Community Bowl consultant hired by the city of Minot released a report recently recommending that Swain could be used as a second basketball court to accommodate state basketball tournaments and other venues requiring two gymnasiums. The university met with the mayor and the president of the city council to explain that Swain Hall had been funded by the legislature with the express purpose of housing academic programs.

Community Bowl discussions

The consultant's report also suggested that the community bowl be designed to accommodate athletic uses by the university and the local high schools. It is our intention to continue to work with city officials and the community bowl task force to support the construction of the community bowl on the MSU campus.

Dome floor

The contractor's bid to replace the Dome floor exceeded by \$12,000 the amount of \$387,000 authorized by the North Dakota legislature. Currently, we are planning to seek special authority to commence with the construction at the higher costs.

Higher Learning Commission self-study progress

Writing teams are working on chapters of the self-study report this summer with the plan to prepare a final draft of the study before the beginning of the academic year. The draft will be shared with the full campus and input will be solicited prior to completing the final report at the end of the fall semester. Good progress is being made on the drafts.

Fall applications and enrollments

Compared to this time last year, our enrollments currently are showing a 5% decline. Applications continue to show an increase, however.

Residence hall occupancy numbers

Our first-year student numbers are showing a notable increase over the numbers from last year, although the returning student numbers show a slight decline. With the new policy to require first-year students to reside on campus, it is not unexpected to see the increase in the freshmen numbers.

List of Selected Activities and Events (since May 16, 2007)

- Participated in two-day Xcel Advisory Board meeting in Minneapolis.
- Met with mayor, City Council president, and representatives from the university to discuss community bowl and use of Swain Hall.
- Met with the master planning architects on campus to discuss landscaping, campus design, the Student Union renovation, the Broadway project, and Swain. The final master plan was completed and submitted.
- Meeting with the president of the Minot Area Development Corporation to discuss potential projects and the Centers of Excellence proposal.
- Met with Ron Royer and Dick Jenkins to review a draft of Criterion I of our self-study report.
- Traveled to Scandinavia June 1-9, 2007, to participate in the Skien-Minot Sister City delegation and to meet with universities to discuss potential international partnerships with MSU.
- Participated in the formal signing ceremony for a partnership with Telemark University College in Norway.
- Visited Aalborg University in Denmark and met with officials to discuss a potential partnership and the details of student exchanges.
- Attended the Dakota Athletic Conference Board of Directors Meeting (presidents of the member institutions) in Bismarck.
- Traveled to United Tribes Technical College in Bismarck to participate in a formal signing ceremony for a partnership between our respective institutions.
- Board of Regents Executive Committee meeting.
- Completed and submitted to HLC the formal Consultant Evaluator report for a team evaluation of an institution in Nebraska
- Planning and Budgeting Council meeting to review action plans submitted by seven campus teams.
- Attended the meeting of the Minot Area Development Corporation Board of Directors.
- Met with the dean of MSU-Bottineau to complete his performance evaluation.
- Attended a performance of the Summer Theatre's first musical.
- Attended Chamber of Commerce Board meeting.
- Welcomed the new president and the vice president of Bismarck State College on our campus, accompanied them on a campus tour, and discussed our offerings in Bismarck and other potential cooperation.

Concluding Remarks

As is the case with most summers, the time is flying by and the start of our new academic year is quickly approaching. Our new freshman orientations and registrations have begun and the reception by students and parents alike has been very positive. Summer school is in full swing now, as is our College for Kids program and a number of athletic camps. Our Summer Theatre's first performance for the year began with Li'l Abner in the outdoor amphitheatre and, with the exception of a couple of rained-out shows, the performances have been well received with large crowds. The Janet Wentz Memorial Art Exhibit is also running on campus in our Hartnett Hall gallery. As you can see, the campus is very busy with many events and with the anticipation of a new year starting in August.

David Fuller
June 20, 2007