

**November 16, 2011**

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

**FROM: David Fuller**

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

## **Current**

### Continued flood recovery initiatives

We continue to hold weekly open forums, arranging for special presentations (e.g., city of Minot, IRS representative) and listening to our faculty and staff about the flood recovery. Rob Anderson, our ombudsman hired to assist faculty, staff, and students, continues to address housing needs, follow up on inquiries about financial assistance, arrange for guest speakers to attend our forums, and working with campus organizations to provide special help.

### Flood recovery financing and proposals to the Legislature

A list of expenditures and costs were compiled and presented to our local legislators at the recent special meeting of the legislature. We will continue to seek legislative support for the costs the university incurred, including our housing needs, the impact of the enrollment decline, and marketing initiatives.

### Review of child care options

The cooperative arrangement developed with the YWCA to partner in a child-care facility has not materialized as of yet. A number of factors delayed the YWCA's work on this partnership, including the challenges presented by the flood. We are still hopeful that the plan we developed together will still be realized. A few initiatives for child care have been envisioned by some community leaders but nothing has been proposed at this point. Minot State University remains committed to the partnership with the YWCA and to potential plans for developing a drop-off center for children of MSU students. If a facility can be secured and a plan for financing developed, we are certainly open to continued conversation about this critical need for our campus and the community.

### Graduate Program

Since early last year, we have been discussing potential changes to the position of the dean of the graduate college and sponsored programs. Dr. Rabe, Dr. Cresap, and I considered other alignments if the position of a grants officer were to be separated from the responsibility of the graduate dean. The impetus for these discussions was centered on the need for an enhanced grants and contracts office. The Great Plains Community Research and Service Center, which was funded last year, included in its budget funds to support a grants officer. Envisioning a partnership with this center, we considered ways to develop a grants service, including a grants writer, grant monitoring, and support personnel to provide our campus with a range of grants

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<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 October, 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 the President's Office or the president directly.

services. Dr. Cresap has provided our campus outstanding service as the sponsored program dean, but her time was limited with the responsibilities required in her role as graduate dean. A variety of options were explored, such as combining the graduate dean position with a new role in adult programming. Another option, which I mentioned at my open forum in April, was to combine the graduate dean position and an interdisciplinary studies dean to advance our growing need for interdisciplinary study initiatives on campus. Another idea was to create an associate vice president for academic affairs with a variety of roles, including the dean of graduate programs. With the new vice president for academic affairs not yet on board during that time, we decided to put these discussions on hold until the new VPAA arrived in June. Unfortunately, the flood and our focus on recovery since Dr. Koczon's arrival have put most initiatives on hold, including the consideration of the graduate dean position. The plan to combine graduate and adult programming was discussed with Dr. Cresap, and she indicated her interest and willingness to consider this combination. However, shortly thereafter, Dr. Cresap announced that she intended to resign her position as dean and return to full-time teaching.

I asked to meet with the graduate council last week to explain the status of these discussions and to correct erroneous information about a proposal to combine graduate admissions and enrollment services. At that meeting we asked for suggestions and thoughts about this position and the role of the graduate office. Based on the input, Dr. Koczon will work with the college deans, the graduate council, and others to continue to pursue options for the position and to conduct a search to replace Linda before the end of this academic year.

I do want to thank Linda for her outstanding service as the graduate dean and dean of sponsored programs. She oversaw the work of the graduate office well, and she was responsible for assisting with the development of major grant proposals that have been funded, including our Title IV and Title III proposals, as well as a variety of earmark grants secured for the campus.

#### Enrollment plan

The Higher Learning Commission, following the recommendation by the visiting evaluation team in 2008, required Minot State University to develop an enrollment management plan and submit the plan in a mandatory progress report to the Commission by October 1, 2011. Our report included explanations of the variety of enrollment management initiatives undertaken since 2008, including our student success center, the Title IV student support services program, the Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning, a new advising coordinator, upgrades to our enrollment management office, changes in our admission requirements, the Grow North Dakota Initiative, the Passport Program, new scholarship awards such as our Great Plains Engaged Scholar awards, and other initiatives. We also included information showing our progressive increases in enrollment and the significant increases in our graduation and retention rates until this fall. The recent downturn in enrollment as a result of the flood was explained in the report. The Commission accepted our report without reservation, noted our commendable progress with enrollment and retention, and acknowledged for the record the impact of the flood in Minot.

#### Long-term strategies for housing

Housing remains a critical issue for the community and Minot State University. We are discussing options with local developers and identifying areas on and around campus that are suitable for future housing. With the immediate needs finding affordable housing for students, we are also cognizant of long-term housing needs to accommodate future enrollment growth and expansion. The best option for us at this point is to work closely with developers to collaborate in housing initiatives on our campus and in the surrounding area. The Beaver Ridge Apartment Complex, which was completed in October, and the Foundation's Beaver Suite Complex to be

located to the west of our campus and completed by next July are two such initiatives that we have participated with developers to support our growing housing demands.

#### Marketing enhancements and plans

Marketing of our university has expanded significantly in the past few years, especially since the advent of the “Be Seen Be Heard” slogan and the development of the broader plan to improve the recognition of our university in the state and beyond. Our marketing committee and director have been working with the same company to review and assess our plan. The flood has created an immediate need to intensify the communication and advertising to highlight the strength of our programs and to encourage potential students to consider enrolling. We have allocated additional dollars to marketing to address this need. We also plan to seek additional funds from the legislature to support increased marketing of Minot State University. Following their respective floods, for instance, the University of North Dakota and Valley City State University sought and received additional dollars from the legislature to support increased recruitment and marketing.

#### College 2020

Last year the University Cabinet met for a day-long retreat to discuss future challenges and opportunities for the university. The Cabinet was sent a Chronicle report titled “College 2020,” which identified future trends and projections for changes in higher education. I summarized these trends and points in the Open Forums I held last April and asked the members of the Cabinet to discuss this report with their respective areas. In the near future I will be calling together the Planning and Budgeting Council to review the impact the flood has had on our university’s planning for the future, to discuss the Chronicle report, and to make plans for campus forums and focus group meetings to solicit input from faculty, staff, and students about the strategic direction of the university beyond 2013.

#### Faculty workload concerns

Last year Selmer Moen, Cheryl Nilsen, Patti Fedje, and I worked to determine what could be done to address general concerns about workloads. The anecdotal concerns seemed to focus on additional advising loads, committee assignments, overloads, and additional departmental expectations and assignments. The deans, chairs, and the VPAA compiled information about actual assignments and expectations for each faculty member. The result of this analysis showed that some but not all faculty are indeed loaded heavily with advising and committee assignments. The conclusion that was drawn was that the distribution of advisees and committee assignments should be done more fairly and equally across the campus. As a result of this analysis, recommended initiatives were prepared, discussed with the Faculty Senate Executive Committee, and eventually reviewed by the full Faculty Senate. The senate acted on these initiatives, endorsing some, referring others to faculty committees, and acknowledging the need for better departmental oversight and to more equally to make assignments. I received the updated list of proposed solutions and will discuss these with Dr. Koczon and the Faculty Senate leadership. The confirmed list of policy changes and new guidelines for local workload oversight will be developed and reviewed by Faculty Senate.

#### Board of Regents fall meeting and focus on flood recovery

The MSU Board of Regents met in September for their regular fall meeting. The BOR committees were asked to discuss the flood and recovery issues facing the university. Each committee recommended steps the university should consider to take during this recovery period. Most of the recommendations focused on affordable housing needs and strategies. Dr. Robert Boyd from UND also addressed the board and discussed UND’s recovery initiatives and offered suggestions to MSU. He again emphasized that this recovery is a multi-year process and that we

should keep focused on enrollment and personnel issues this year and at least the following two years. He believed that Minot State University has taken appropriate steps but remain vigilant in its work to address issues in the next two years.

#### CETL second-year evaluation

William Campbell, the evaluator for our Title III CETL program, completed the evaluation of our second year. He concluded that the project has met or exceeded all of its year-two objectives. He acknowledged the impact of the flood on the institutional budget and advised that the university continue to work to assess the program and to investigate means of seeking additional external funding. The evaluation underscored the many successes realized by CETL.

#### Master planning and property

We have asked the architectural firm EAPC to review our master plan and potential properties that might be available near campus. We are awaiting the report on this review to determine what additional steps we need to take to deal with our lack of space for future expansion. As you know, the Foundation acquired the property on which the Beaver Ridge Plaza has been located, and acquired the Mt. Vernon Building two years ago. The property to the west of the campus is now being used to build the Beaver Suite Complex, a 32-apartment building. We continue to receive inquiries from property owners south of University Avenue to see if the university is interested in purchasing property. The MSU Foundation is serving as the contact for those inquiries. Augustana Lutheran and Faith United Methodist churches are discussing the future of their respective organizations. We have expressed our interest in considering these properties if the price is affordable and if the churches wish to sell or relocate, but at this time there are no offers or agreements.

#### President's Staff Retreat

In the first week of October, members of President's Staff met for a full-day retreat to discuss in detail enrollment projection and marketing initiatives, housing shortages and future development, and institutional financing and budgets. Following a review of current information, we decided to support: one-time recruitment initiatives, including a full-time international recruiter; a budget to increase marketing; a plan to support working with local developers to pursue potential housing initiatives; and a plan as to how we would handle the \$1.4 million deficit this year through postponing where possible major purchases, reduction in equipment purchases, and realizing reductions through dollar savings on positions not filled this year. President's Staff will meet again in January to review spring enrollments and the financial plan.

#### Dean of Admissions and reporting change

Following the flood, President's Staff decided to increase support for recruitment and retention initiatives to deal with the current enrollment drop and projected decreases in the next two years. President's Staff decided to move the position of dean of admissions as a direct report to the president, with reporting requirements to President's Staff. In that move, additional recruitment initiatives were approved, an international recruiter and office assistant to process application, and additional marketing dollars. Now reporting to the President, this position will participate in President's Staff and be able to provide regular updates on enrollment management. The title of the dean of admission has been changed to the original title from four years ago when it was called the assistant vice president for enrollment management. There is no change in the current salary, just a change in reporting and title.

#### Trinity nursing partnership

Trinity and Minot State University have been in negotiations on a partnership agreement in nursing. Trinity Health expressed an interest in working with Minot State to increase the number

of nursing graduates and thus to respond to the increased demand for medical services at Trinity. Our nursing department developed a plan to increase the number of nurses accepted into a cohort from 18 to 24. In turn, Trinity agreed to pay \$1 million over a five-year period to support MSU's addition of new nurses and an office assistant to cover the increased student load. A part of that plan depended on Trinity providing masters-prepared nurses to cover clinical responsibilities. At present we are continuing to meet with Trinity to work out the arrangement for the clinical support. The expanded cohort has already been accepted into our program.

#### Review and reconsideration of change in Area A Design for the geothermal heating/cooling project

With the recent budget estimates for the full geothermal system increased from the original \$16.2 million to approximately \$27 million, we have decided to expand what is currently referred to as Area A (Wellness, Dome, Swain, and the GBO Library) with three additional buildings. The plan is to stay close to the amount of dollars we have already raised to support this expanded area. The expansion should realize considerable utilities savings, but this system would depend on a hybrid of geothermal and natural gas. The MEP engineers are currently analyzing the cost savings and preparing an engineering plan for the expanded Area A. Rather than installing a "loop" field around campus, this system would have a direct line from the well field to a central location and secondary lines to the building in this area.

#### Homeland Security Certificate proposal and funding

The new security company, EID Passport, has approached MSU with the proposal to participate with them in an Homeland Security program. This proposal envisions that MSU would work with EID and our own Criminal Justice Department and Center for Extended Learning to offer non-credit certificates for security training. We have also reached out to Senator Conrad to seek his support for this venture. A proposal is currently under development, which will be shared with the campus for review.

#### Walter Piehl Prairie Public video screening

A reception and a Public Broadcasting video screening of a special feature on Walter Piehl was held recently in Ann Nicole. The screening event was well attended and offered the opportunity to highlight one of our distinguished professors. At that event, I announced my support to the idea of establishing the Walter Piehl Art Gallery on our campus, to honor and highlight the work of Walter as a distinguished artist of place in the Great Plains. This initiative will be designated as an objective for our Comprehensive Campaign for program and campus improvements.

#### Slaaten Center remodeling and dedication

Recently our College of Business held a ribbon cutting for the new Slaaten Center in Old Main. Through a generous gift from Doris Slaaten, the College of Business has been able to renovate existing classrooms and to establish cutting edge technology labs, meeting rooms, and student work centers.

#### Visit to Washington DC

Last month I visited Washington DC to meet with Senator Conrad regarding EID Passport Homeland Security collaboration, to meet with former Senator Dorgan to discuss private foundation funding for our geothermal projects; and to meet with geothermal officials at the U.S. Department of Energy. I was also able to visit and meet with General David Jones, for whom the Jones room is named, in Sterling, Virginia, and share with him information about MSU.

### Joint Meetings of the Executive Committees of the Senates

Recently members of President's Staff held a joint meeting of the Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, Student Government Association executive committees. The meeting included brief updates and an opportunity to seek information and share suggestions about campus operations.

### Veterans Day Events

Minot State University supported three different events in honor of Veterans Day. The Native American Cultural Club held a special event for Native veterans. Later that day our Veteran's Office director coordinated a Veterans Day program in Aleshire. And on Veterans Day, MSU invited the community to use Ann Nicole Nelson Hall as the location for the general community celebration of Veterans Day. All events expressed strong support and appreciation for the sacrifices and service of Veterans on this special day.

### Developing infrastructure proposal to present to the City

We are in the process of developing a proposal to submit to the City in the anticipated call for proposals for Minot infrastructure improvements. We are interested in seeking support for the completion of our athletic field, with a new press box, general landscaping and building entrances, and some refurbishments to our Dome.

### Native American Awareness Week

Annette and her students coordinated a successful awareness week. The events I attended were most interesting and informative. It is so important for all of us to learn more about this culture and to appreciate their traditions and challenges. This week gives us that opportunity.

### University Diversity Council

Lisa Borden-King is the chair of the council and has established worthy goals to advance the mission of this council. The council is looking at developing a diversity survey to assess attitudes and issues, continuing to pursue initiatives in support of safe spaces on campus, and to identify other objectives to raise the awareness of diversity.

### Chamber Board of Directors Meeting Hosted by MSU

Yesterday morning Minot State University hosted the monthly meeting of the Chamber Board of Directors. During the meeting I was able to make a presentation detailing features of our university. I gave a general overview of our mission, background, demographics, major programs, and recent initiatives. I also discussed the impact the flood has had on so many of our people on campus and what we are doing to assist in their recovery.

### Chancellor's Cabinet meeting topic

During last week's Chancellor Cabinet meeting in Bismarck, the president of the state board of higher education and the chair of the budget and finance committee of the board presented a proposal on creating efficiencies in the university system. We were informed that the university system will be holding to a flat funding model, which means that we will receive no additional funds beyond what was funded last year. Not knowing what the legislature will decide about a performance-based funding model, the president of the SBHE noted that any proposals for additional projects or initiatives this coming year will need to include a plan to find efficiencies and savings in an institution's current budget before bringing the proposal forward for approval by the SBHE and eventually by the legislature. The presidents asked many questions and requested additional information about this model.

### Interim Higher Education Committee meeting

Two weeks ago the Interim Higher Education Committee met in Bismarck. This committee is a legislative body charged during the off year in the biennium with reviewing and identifying directions for higher education in North Dakota. The chair of the committee arranged for four national presenters to discuss models from other states. The primary focus on these presentations was on performance-based funding. The legislature continues to work with the NDUS to arrive at a workable performance model for the institutions.

### **List of Selected Activities and Events in President's Office (since September 21, 2011):**

#### **September**

- President's Staff meeting with NDUS attorneys regarding legal services
- President's Club luncheon for members who have donated \$1,000.
- Meeting with potential leader for capital campaign
- KMOT interview regarding official fall enrollments
- Red and Green editor meeting
- MSU Block Party event
- Meeting with potential capital campaign leader
- One-on-one monthly meeting with SGA president
- Supervisor training workshop
- Meeting with Foundation Board member regarding idea for landscape plan
- Meeting with flood ombudsman
- Meeting with potential capital campaign leader
- Golden Awards event and presentation
- Board of Regents fall meeting
- Minot city facilities committee meeting
- Homecoming parade
- Homecoming tailgating and game
- Athletic Hall of Fame Banquet
- President's Staff weekly meetings
- Dean's Council meeting to discuss academic advising initiatives in colleges
- Meeting to discuss Title III grant and funding
- Meeting with potential capital campaign leader
- Hosted picnic and meeting for Student Government Association
- Weekly open forum regarding flood and recovery; presenters from the city of Minot
- One-on-one weekly meetings with members of President's Staff
- Governor's Reception for Norsk Hostfest
- Meeting with Bremer Bank officials regarding geothermal financing
- Architectural planning meeting on the opening of 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue
- Meeting with EAPC regarding long-term property plans
- Interview at Hostfest booth with Joel Heitkamp regarding MSU's flood recovery efforts
- Meeting with flood ombudsman
- Athletic meeting regarding compliance
- Volunteered to greet visitors to the Norsk Hostfest

#### **October**

- Welcome to the US-Nordic International Conference on Developmental Disabilities banquet
- President's Staff meetings
- One-on-one meetings with members of president's staff
- Dakota College at Bottineau Homecoming parade, alumni luncheon, and game
- MSU football game and welcome to military official for the coin flip
- Meeting with local legislators to discuss geothermal project
- Weekly flood open forum
- Meeting with potential residence complex developers
- Interview at KCJB
- Hosted facilities management picnic at home for all staff
- President's Staff retreat at Vegas Hotel
- Chamber Business After Hours at State Fair
- Visited Notstock
- Meeting to review Trinity agreement for nursing collaboration
- Luncheon with director of Department of Commerce and staff member
- Meeting to discuss Homeland Security proposal

- Meeting with MEP Associates president (geothermal engineering company)
- Faculty Senate meeting
- Hosted picnic at home for all members of the administration and finance programs
- Meeting with human resource director regarding enrollment management reporting to President's Staff
- Meeting with Title III consultant; and dinner
- Red and Green interview
- Wellness Center meeting
- Flood open forum
- Etiquette Luncheon
- Sodexo directors meeting
- Walter Piehl special reception in Student Center
- Special recognition of Walter Piehl and showing of the Prairie Public video
- One-on-one meeting with president of Staff Senate
- Red and Green editor
- Barnes and Noble annual report and meeting
- Slaaten Center remodel and grand opening presentation and open house
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting
- Open forum
- Office hours for students
- MSU Jazz Ensemble
- Washington DC: meeting with Senator Conrad regarding EID Passport Homeland Security collaboration, meeting with former Senator Dorgan to discuss private foundation funding for geothermal projects; two meetings with geothermal officials at the U.S. Department of Energy; and visit and meeting with General David Jones in Sterling, Virginia
- Attended theater's performance of the Crucible
- Visit to a university in Indiana as a part of a Higher Learning Commission Consultant-Evaluator Team evaluation
- Trinity Board of Directors Two-Day Retreat at Riverdale
- MSU/UND basketball game to provide flood victim relief
- MSU Bands Concert
- Photography for Connections
- Meeting with COB dean and chair
- Meeting regarding city collaboration
- MSU soccer game versus Great Falls

## November

- Open forum for flood recovery
- Great Plains Community Research and Service Center
- Student issue
- MSU Choirs Concert
- New faculty breakfast meeting
- Meeting with president of faculty senate
- Enrollment management meeting
- Meeting to discuss graduate programming
- Meeting with city official to discuss child care services
- Joint Executive Committee meetings of Faculty Senate, Staff Senate, and Student Government Association
- Wellness Fair
- Meeting to discuss City of Minot initiatives
- Military Affairs Committee meeting at the MAFB; presentation to base commander a plaque commemorating 50 years of MSU service to the MAFB
- Human Resource director meeting
- Faculty Senate meeting
- Meeting to discuss faculty senate survey
- Meeting with KK Bold regarding Souris Valley Animal Shelter web site
- Meeting with MEP Associates regarding Area A design and funding
- Volleyball game with Black Hills
- Attended Rick Watson and Larry Woiwode presentation in Aleshire
- Chancellor's Cabinet meeting in Bismarck
- Meeting with VPAA, Graduate Dean, and Enrollment Services Dean
- Weekly open forum with faculty and staff regarding flood recovery
- Meeting with Executive Committee of Faculty Senate
- Special meeting with the Graduate Council
- CEL Open house
- Native American Cultural Awareness presentation by Duane McGillis and a panel presentation on Native issues
- Meeting regarding performance enhancement equipment
- Fry Bread Taco Sale in Old Main
- Continued discussion about Trinity's nursing partnership and funding
- Dinner meeting with Board of Regents member
- New Staff Breakfast



- Native American Veteran's event and welcome
- Noel-Levitz consultant meeting
- Meeting with Public Information director
- Presentation to Retired Faculty Group at Grand International
- Coffee with Board of Regents' member
- Participated in and welcomed MSU Veterans Day ceremony
- Minot Symphony
- President's Staff meetings
- Meeting with sociology faculty member regarding sociology club's plans for city open forum
- EID Passport Ribbon Cutting Event and brief words about MSU
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting; hosted by MSU; presentation on MSU
- Flood open forum
- Great Plains Community Research and Service Center meeting

### Concluding Remarks

This year continues to feel like a wait-and-see year. The severe impact of the flood and the many demands people are facing reveal that many are waiting to hear about recovery efforts, flood mitigation plans, and federal and state assistance. We are waiting to hear about whether many who were displaced will find suitable and affordable places to live. We are waiting to see how the many challenges in the community will impact our own enrollment in the spring and later next fall. While many of our people on campus are taking responsible and worthy steps to recover, there are still a lot of questions that we are waiting to get answered.

As a university we have shifted a great portion of our attention from Great Plains performance indicators to housing pressures, helping our faculty and staff deal with inevitable issues caused by the flood, determining how we can deal with a large budget shortfall, and considering strategies that might help us recover lost enrollments and revenues. While continuing to do a very good job teaching our classes and serving students, we're also waiting to see what decisions are made about performance based funding in the upcoming legislative session. There is a lot of waiting to see how things will turn out this year. One thing we know for sure and one thing we do not need to wait to understand is that we have a lot of good people around here, many facing huge challenges, who are addressing problems head on and helping one another during a rough time.

David Fuller  
November 16, 2011