

**Office of the President
Minot State University
Report to University Cabinet and Campus*
December 21, 2005**

Happy Holidays! This is the last report for the 2005 year. I have included below the list of current activities since the last meeting of the University Cabinet, a number of major topics and issues, and a list of key future events.

Report of Current Activities (since November 16, 2005)

- The State Board of Higher Education met in Fargo on November 17. In addition to the regular items on the Board agenda, the two topics that generated the most debate were the Fighting Sioux logo and the Chancellor's International Recruitment proposal. A number of audience participants expressed concern about the use of the logo. After hearing the comments and discussion, the Board voted to support UND's appeal and to recommend continued discussions with the Native American community. The Chancellor's International Recruiting project led to a 5-3 vote to approve. Those in support of this project believed that the project would result in substantial increases in international students on the 11 campuses; those opposed were concerned about the high price tag, the heightened bureaucracy, and the practice of hiring and paying agents to recruit.
- My plan to meet for lunch with individual legislators from the Minot area to discuss Minot State and to anticipate the next legislative session continued on December 1, at which time I had a productive conversation with Representative Larry Bellew.
- Although the master planning workshops on November 28 and 29 were cancelled due to the architects' travel difficulties, the workshops rescheduled on December 5 and 6 were well attended and very productive. The architects, led by JoAnne Kissel from Clark Enersen Partners, presented three options for master plans and sought feedback from the faculty, staff, students, and community members who attended the meetings throughout the two days. Guided by the feedback they received, they will return in January/February to present one recommended plan. The three plans are on display in the Student Union atrium. Links to the presentation and for submission of comments are available on the MSU web site. After clicking on "What's Happening," you will find the link "MSU Master Planning" under the subheading "Points of Interest".
- Kiwanis requested that I make a presentation to their service club on December 6. The topic of my presentation was the university's strategic planning and the results from our focus groups and open meetings.
- Orlin Backes, Jerry Stai, and I traveled to Bismarck on December 6 to meet with the Governor, the Lt. Governor, and the Commissioner of the Commerce Department. The president of Artspace, the Artspace project director, and another associate joined us for the meeting. The meeting led to a number of good suggestions about how our proposal could be strengthened and made more competitive.
- On December 7, I held one of my bi-monthly open meetings, called "Chat with the President," with students in the Student Union.

* This report includes selected University activities. It is distributed to the University Cabinet at its regular monthly meeting, and it is also forwarded to faculty, staff, and student leaders, members of the Board of Regents, and Alumni Board for their information. If anyone wishes to learn more about any of these items, he/she should contact the president at 858-3301 or in the President's Office in the Administration Building.

- Last week I hosted another breakfast for campus members and community members. These breakfasts alternate between a small number (usually 5-6) of staff, a group of faculty, and a group of community members. On December 13, I hosted a breakfast for new faculty. There is no set agenda for these meetings; I usually ask participants to introduce themselves and to explain how things are going and what the university can do to improve its services. My long-term goal is to host breakfasts that will eventually include all of our faculty and staff.
- My wife and I enjoyed hosting our annual holiday party on December 13. The “Five of Us,” a singing group including our own Eric Furuseth and our former staff member Hardy Lieberg, sang Christmas carols while people enjoyed talking to their colleagues and eating the food prepared by Chartwells. We also enjoyed listening to our own music students playing holiday songs on the piano. We had a good turnout of faculty, staff, and retired employees.

Other:

- Budget and Student Fees are to be submitted to the Board by January 25, 2006
- Centers of Excellence and Artspace: The revised centers of excellence proposal for Artspace was submitted last week. The revised proposal incorporates details that should strengthen our case for the support from the state. The Commission will review our initial proposal and send us suggestions prior to the final submission date of January 9, 2006
- Planning and Budgeting Council Meeting and review of campus survey results: the results from the survey (the one that requested the top three qualities of our 2013 graduates) distributed to all faculty, staff, and students were compiled, reviewed and discussed by the Planning and Budgeting Council. The qualities and proposed statements describing our graduates of 2013 will be shared with the campus during the January 9 convocation.
- Student resolution and plan for noon-hour service: In response to a Student Association resolution for the business office, student housing, financial aid, student health, and the records office to stay open during the noon hour, the staff in those respective offices graciously agreed to adjust their schedules to provide this additional service to students. I want to thank those offices for their willingness to respond to this request.
- Dr. Ron Royer was recently appointed as the Higher Learning Commission self-study coordinator for Minot State University: Dr. Royer will begin immediately to make preliminary plans for the self-study and to make recommendations regarding the membership of a self-study steering committee. Minot State has requested that the team visit occur in the spring of 2008.
- MGT on campus on January 12: The MGT consultants have been hired by the legislature to work in cooperation with the State Board of Higher Education to analyze the long-term finance plan and the current peer model for campus funding. Team members from MGT will be on campus January 12 to interview MSU personnel regarding the peer institutions identified for Minot State.
- Records Office: Currently we are working with Lisa Johnson and others to review our staffing and to identify support needs in Records. ConnectND has created many challenges for our Records Office, including additional responsibilities for staff and the need for general training of faculty and staff on campus.
- A.J. Automotive and the environmental study: The Phase I environmental study of the property has been completed. The results show that there are not any specific environmental issues with the property that would prevent our Foundation from proceeding with the plan to purchase the property. We are proceeding to complete the

purchase by February 1. As a reminder, this property is the area designated for the location of the proposed Artspace facility, which is dependent on the funding of the centers of excellence proposal.

- Transition plan for Student Union: The specific plans for various office moves and improvements have been reviewed by a local architect and recommendations have been provided to guide the moves. The various moves include: those associated with the renovation of the student union ballroom, the move of the housing office to the first floor of Dakota, the Student Association Offices to the renovated ballroom area, the student activities director office to an office across from the existing ballroom, the advancement and alumni offices to the area now occupied by housing and residence life, and the newly expanded and restructured enrollment management office to the area now occupied by advancement. Included also is the plan to move the Post Office to a renovated area at the east end of the Student Union Atrium. Many of these changes require a transition plan beginning with the move of residence life to the first floor of Dakota, which is now under construction.
- Trip to China: As reported in the earlier report, the plans to visit SIAS International University are now confirmed for February 11-19, 2006. Dr. Lee, Stephanie Witwer, Mayor Curt Zimbelman, Jerry Chavez from the Minot Area Development Corporation, and I will be visiting this university to develop a cooperative agreement for student and faculty exchanges. We will also discuss potential economic development opportunities for Minot and the northwest region of North Dakota.
- PeopleSoft and ConnectND on campus: Continued concerns about the pressures on our staff with this new system are voiced frequently. The President's Staff and the University Cabinet will attempt to determine the extent of the problems and to identify short-term and long-term solutions. Frequent anecdotal problems are identified that suggest that the pressures on our staff are not subsiding. Whether it is additional training, additional staff, or something else, we plan to determine what we can do to make this new system work effectively.
- Building projects: The construction in Crane Hall, the Student Ballroom, and the first floor of Dakota is now underway. The bids for each project came in significantly higher than our original estimates. In some cases we had to scale back the projects. All in all, I am very pleased that we'll be able to proceed to complete these much needed projects on campus. The plan is to have each completed by the start of the fall semester 2006.
- Naming of rooms in Student Union: The dining hall, the snack bar, and the new student activity center have received new names thanks to all faculty, staff, and students who participated in the contest to name these facilities. The Student Association reviewed the top five names for each facility and made the selections. Soon the new names will be released. We'll also be able to install new signage identifying these areas as we work to make changes to the Student Union. All of these changes to the Student Union are being made in response to our commitment to our "students first" value.

Future Plans for Spring Semester

- President's Staff retreat on January 5
- Convocation on January 9 in Ann Nicole Nelson Hall
- Open meetings at 8:00 and 10:00 on Monday, January 23
- Master planning workshop tentatively in February
- Meet with historians regarding Centennial project
- April Board meeting on the MSU campus, Thursday April 6

Final Comments

With the exception of the unexpected snow storm on October 5, this fall has been marked by beautiful weather, many wonderful activities and events on campus, frequent and obvious signs of continued first-class instruction in our classrooms, and many indications of our commitment to keep students first, so that they can Be Seen, and Be Heard. It has been a wonderful fall semester—and that's due entirely to the outstanding work of our faculty, staff, and students. Thanks to all of you! See you next year.

David Fuller
President
December 21, 2005