Minot State UNIVERSITY

STRATEGIC PLAN NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2016

The initiative to develop Minot State University's new strategic plan was announced to the MSU community during the August 2015 Convocation.This announcement was followed by several working sessions with the President's Staff that led to creating a plan for developing a new strategy and organization of the team to work on it.

A New Strategic Plan: Research and Brainstorming

The Strategic Committee Project Council has been project planning and conducting research to aid in developing the new strategic plan. This research included focus group sessions that were held during December and an online survey in February. It consisted of 14 different area groups: Board of Regents, CoB Advisory Board, Entrepreneurship Club, University Cabinet, MSU students, MSU faculty, MSU staff, Minot Area Chamber of Commerce, Beaver Boosters, Human Services, MSU alumni, MAFB, Minot High School students, school counselors and principals. This month's newsletter lays out what data has been collected to this point and what trends are emerging.

TENTATIVE CALENDAR

STAGE 1: (Nov. 1 – Feb. 14)
Research and brainstorming
- Form the committees
- On-campus research (focus groups, surveys, data collection)
- Community meetings (community, schools, legislators, Minot Air Force Base, etc.)
- Brainstorming sessions with faculty and staff
- Work in sub-committees and wrap-up session
- Meeting with Supervising Committee to refine the initial results

STAGE 2: (Feb. 15 – April 15)
Strategy development
- Further development of strategy document
- Strategy document refined and finalized
- Initial work on implementation plan

STAGE 3: (April 16 – May 13)
Implementation plan and publicize
- Refine final details of the plan and implementation schedule
- Publicize MSU's new strategic plan

Focus Group Summary

Time Traveler Summary:

Higher Education
Flexibility is key.

There are several unpredictable factors about the future that could greatly impact developments like political/economic climate (funding model, budgets) and global security (terrorism). Depending on how these turn out, they will initiate the chain of events differently.

Main trends

Technology and Security
- People will use technology more and will easily switch between technology tools. As a result, they will have more choice in educational opportunities, but also it may lead to some problems related to the lack of social interaction.
- Cybercrime will be more prevalent; better technology will be needed to prevent it. Physical crime will not change.
- Everyone will be more dependent on the Internet. Failures in the Internet will affect the real world to a much larger extent than today.
- In security and terrorism, uncertainty exists as to whether recent developments will prevail. If they do, everyone will see an impact on their lives, including higher education and the economy.
- North Dakota will not become any safer, but it won't be less safe either.

Economy
- The current economic situation and oil prices are unpredictable. If stagnation is not overcome, everyone will be challenged with the need of improving efficiencies.
- Funds that are available from the state and the federal government will probably remain the same for another year or two; but, depending on the economic situation, these funds may be reduced in the future.
- Currently individuals are increasingly accumulating debt, to a point that it cannot be serviced. We must find a solution to the growing individual debt or risk its effect on the performance of higher ed.

Future of Higher Education in North Dakota
- More technology
- Modularity
- More blended/mixed approach
- Credit for experience
- More centralized system
- Fast track/ in and out
- More cooperation with local institutions and businesses
- Less students on the campus
- More cooperation and specialization among the System institutions
- More diversity
- Academic programming driven by the job market
- Gen Ed and Common Core will evolve
- Universities driven to reduce debt of future students

MHS Summary:

MHS Students
Two groups of 20 students each
- First choice university: UND (19), NDSU (10), MSU (5)
- Most important criteria for selecting the university: cost, attractive location, relevance and quality of academic programs
- The offer from the university is perceived as package (including everything) that is a key to their perception of value
- In their perception: NDSU is premium (quality provider for high price), UND is value (exciting, quality for reasonable price), MSU is economy (MSU is inexpensive)
- UND is more value than it seems (UND has very good first year incentives)
- MSU campus is not attractive and Minot is not attractive either – very quiet
- The MHS students receive very little communication from MSU
- Their knowledge about MSU was very limited. The students could name only two programs from MSU: nursing and business

MHS Principals and counselors
- One group of 7 principals and counselors from MHS
- The group was friendly, supportive and open with their communication
- See an important role for MSU in community of Minot
- Recognize MSU for the teaching expertise
- MSU still attracts the largest group of students from MHS
- Minot State is seen as "bunch of departments" with their own rules, standards and goals that often contradict each other
- MSU communication is inconsistent and insufficient

- Would like to see more involvement in their athletic events and in their athletic programs. More recognition of their success could be helpful
- They see the need for more standardized approach to dual credits
- MSU has attractive tuition, but the lodging and food are expensive for the quality offered
- Criticized lack of incentives for the students from Minot
- If the students don't want to live with their parents the offer from MSU is expensive

Party Summary:

MSU
External groups are very critical about MSU, while internal groups very positive about MSU.

Positive feedback
- Nice personality
- "Cool kid"
- Friendly to everyone
- Easy going
- Feminine - cares
- Open to anyone – no strict admission criteria

Potential improvement areas
- MSU doesn't belong to any group of universities in N.D. It isn't big, but it isn't small either
- Academic offerings are weak, generic, inflexible and outdated
- Lagging behind in technology
- Unable to complete all degrees online

- Relatively quiet, "wimpy kid"
- Superficial - hiding our problems, "pretending"
- Not very athletic
- Lack of distinct features

Other Factors

Environment
- N.D. – one of the youngest states
- N.D. – one of a few states organically growing
- Steady population of N.D. high school graduates looking for college
- N.D. students looking for incentives to study in N.D. institutions
- Increasing competition from other schools in the System
- Competition from the institutions out of state
- Expected change in the funding model of the NDUS
- Future of N.D. budget
- Limited offer of weekend/evening attractions in Minot compared to Fargo and Bismarck

Three distinctive areas from Focus Group research:
- Transparency (vs. superficial, pretending)
- Flexibility, responsiveness, technology
- Distinct features

Next steps:
- SWOT Analysis
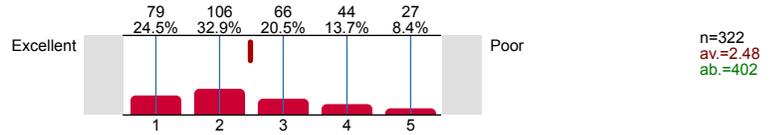- Goal and objectives session
- Mission and vision session

Online Survey Summary

Below are the results of our online survey that was conducted from February 1st – 18th
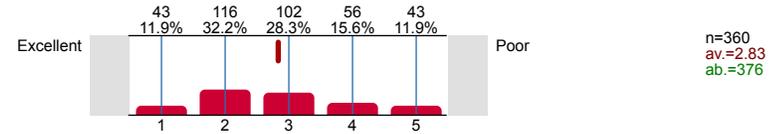## We received 753 responses
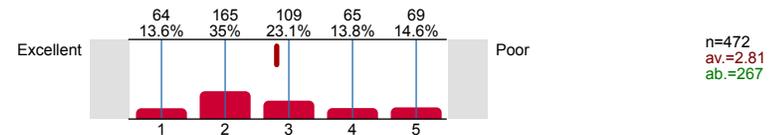
2.2) Acceptance of transfer credits

	128 29%	157 35.5%	85 19.2%	46 10.4%	26 5.9%	
Excellent						Poor

n=442
av.=2.29
ab.=293
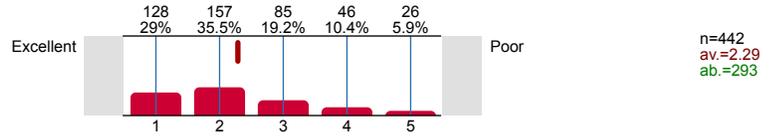
2.3) When applicable, acceptance of credit for prior experience

	79 24.5%	106 32.9%	66 20.5%	44 13.7%	27 8.4%	
Excellent						Poor

n=322
av.=2.48
ab.=402

4.1) Quality of residence halls

	43 11.9%	116 32.2%	102 28.3%	56 15.6%	43 11.9%	
Excellent						Poor

n=360
av.=2.83
ab.=376

4.2) Quality of food services

	64 13.6%	165 35%	109 23.1%	65 13.8%	69 14.6%	
Excellent						Poor

n=472
av.=2.81
ab.=267

4.3) Quality of wellness facilities

	236 51.1%	158 34.2%	54 11.7%	12 2.6%	2 0.4%	
Excellent						Poor

n=462
av.=1.67
ab.=274
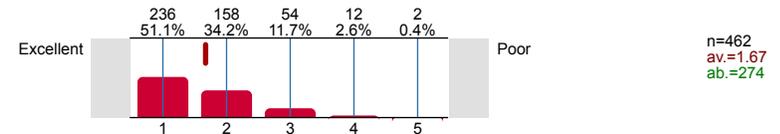
5.1) MSU has a safe campus environment

	215 35.2%	334 54.7%	56 9.2%	5 0.8%	1 0.2%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=611
av.=1.76
ab.=129
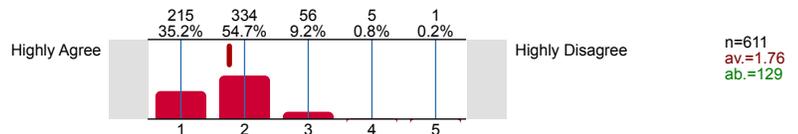
5.2) MSU is known as a high quality institution

	145 21.4%	333 49%	144 21.2%	47 6.9%	10 1.5%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=679
av.=2.18
ab.=56
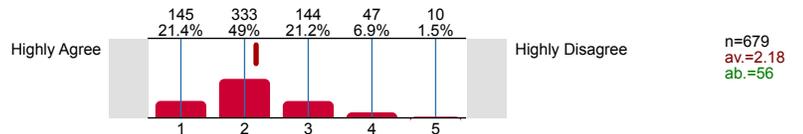
5.3) MSU is known for its affordability

	326 47.5%	277 40.4%	65 9.5%	12 1.7%	6 0.9%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=686
av.=1.68
ab.=51
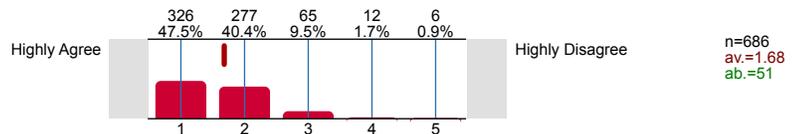
5.4) MSU is known for its active, vibrant campus and student life

	83 13.9%	201 33.7%	206 34.5%	95 15.9%	12 2%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=597
av.=2.58
ab.=141
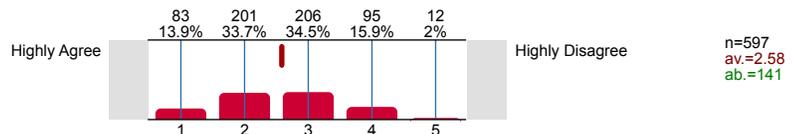
5.5) MSU's athletic programs attract students

	76 13.7%	198 35.6%	169 30.4%	79 14.2%	34 6.1%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=556
av.=2.63
ab.=183
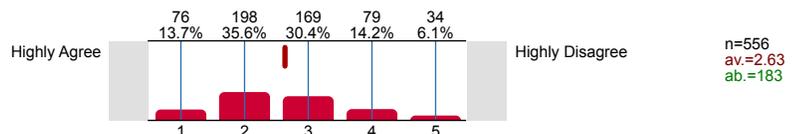
5.6) MSU's academic programs offer small classes taught by experienced faculty

	234 36.8%	321 50.5%	70 11%	9 1.4%	2 0.3%	
Highly Agree						Highly Disagree

n=636
av.=1.78
ab.=95