

**<sup>1</sup>Office of the President  
Minot State University  
Report to Faculty, Staff, Student Leaders,  
University Cabinet, Alumni, the Foundation Board, and the MSU Board of Regents  
January 16, 2008**

Greetings to everyone and welcome to the start of the New Year. I hope that your holiday season was a joyous and rewarding one. Although we miss our students in late December and early January, we are nevertheless able, with this extra time, to focus on projects requiring more concerted attention. Some of those are included below for your information. If there are any questions about the current topics described below, please call me directly. Thank you.

**Current Issues and Topics**

Spring Convocation and presentation by George Kuh

On January 7, we welcomed Dr. George Kuh from Indiana University to our campus. He visited us upon our invitation to deliver the keynote address and to lead workshops throughout the day with faculty and staff regarding key terms and concepts (i.e., engagement and place) in our strategic plan, Vision 2013. Dr. Kuh is a nationally recognized scholar and spokesperson for engagement in higher education. He has been instrumental in developing and administering the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which has received considerable international attention as a means to measure the extent to which students are actively engaged in learning, on campus, and in the community. The value and concept of place is directly connected to the concept of engagement. In an article that he co-authored with Kathleen Manning, "Making Place Matter to Student Success," Dr. Kuh introduces six conditions related to place that matter to student success. During his presentation and his workshops on our campus, Dr. Kuh reported on Minot State's NSSE scores, interpreted the scores, and recommended steps we should take to raise the bar on student success and learning. According to Dr. Kuh, Minot State University can be prepared to significantly increase engagement and attention to place as defined in Vision 2013. Dr. Kuh challenged our campus to consider proven practices from universities that have been able to achieve high levels of excellence in student engagement and academic excellence.

Title III, Strengthening Institutions Grant Proposal and Planning

Bill Campbell, a consultant and grants director from the University of Wisconsin--River Falls, visited campus on January 7-9 to take part in the convocation discussions and workshops, and then to lead workshops with university faculty, staff, and a special team to envision the planning and writing of a major Department of Education, Title III grant proposal. Mr. Campbell is an experienced and successful writer of Title III grant proposals, a reader and evaluator of Title III grant applications, and an experienced grants office director. The workshops and the examination of the Vision 2013 action plans revealed a need for a new center on campus focused on engagement, experiential learning, and teaching. This concept was forwarded by a number of people on our campus. The outcome of this proposed center is to strengthen campus engagement, student retention, and professional development. Internships, service learning, advising, an on-campus work program, career counseling, and a tutoring program will be incorporated into this center. A Title III grant applicant is eligible to apply for a five-year project, with up to \$500,000 awarded each year to support the project. Proposals are due in March.

---

<sup>1</sup> 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 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.

### Community Bowl

The Community Bowl Committee, a group made up of a variety of members from the community of Minot, has decided and recommended to proceed with the construction of a community bowl on the Minot State University campus. The committee members travelled to St. Cloud State University to see the community bowl and all-weather bubble and to discuss the facility with officials. The committee has also been given the go ahead to collect 2,700 signatures on a petition to allow the measure to be placed on the general election ballot. Committee members are currently working to collect the required number of signatures. Funding for the community bowl has been discussed at length, with options for a sales tax increase, a hospitality tax, or securing funds through a surplus in the Northwest Area Water Supply Project (NAWS). Other communities, such as Bismarck and Aberdeen (SD) have developed community bowls. Dickinson is now proceeding with a similar plan. It makes considerable sense for the entire community to provide a facility in which our community schools can cooperate for the mutual use.

### Turtle Mountain Community College Collaboration meeting

Recently officials from Turtle Mountain Community College (TMCC) and Minot State University met to identify specific projects to complete as a part of our partnership agreement. Shared degrees, cultural exchanges, administrative cooperation, and other activities were agreed upon. These initiatives will help us take a meaningful step toward collaboration.

### Vision 2013 Action Steps

At the convocation on January 7, the final version of the action plan was distributed to all faculty and staff. I explained to the campus that we will now proceed with the work to identify and fund priority projects. An open forum will be scheduled either before the end of January or the first week of February to discuss the recommended projects and to seek campus input. The presentation will include steps to reduce institutional spending, to examine ways to consolidate and shift resources, to identify major grant programs to support initiatives, to seek federal and state legislative support, and to use institutional resources to underwrite priority action steps.

### Swain Hall

An architectural firm hired to design and coordinate the construction of Swain has conducted a careful review of the space, met with the Swain Hall task force to learn about anticipated uses, prepared a preliminary drawing of the facility, and developed a clearer understanding of the available square feet. The task force will work directly with identified programs to refine the recommendations before seeking full-campus input. Ideas for Swain were discussed at an open forum with faculty and staff in November.

### Wellness Center planning

An architectural firm has been appointed to assist the campus in considering locations, uses, sizes, and construction costs. Options for funding have been considered, including the use of a student fee, the anticipated completion of a revenue bond project, private fundraising, and potentially seeking state funds to support aligned academic spaces.

### Potential Collaboration with Ghana

From a recommendation from Chancellor Goetz, an institution in Ghana has contacted Minot State University to explore potential collaboration in teacher education and in other areas. A telephone conference is scheduled with these representatives to discuss their interests and Minot State's abilities to collaborate.

### Visit by South Korean delegates from Pai Chai University

In December, representatives from Pai Chai University in Daejeon, South Korea, visited Minot State to discuss potential collaboration. Both Pai Chai and Minot State representatives were interested in continuing to consider potential collaborations and partnerships.

### Student Center renovation and update

The renovation of the Student Center continues. A new floor, painted walls, furniture, computer kiosks, a renovated book store, a new entrance to the swimming pool, and the construction of a new welcome center and post office have nearly been completed over the holiday break. Minot State has also contracted with a regional artist muralist from Ft. Berthold, Mr. Ryan Burr, to paint major murals in our international center and in the hallway leading to the multicultural center. We are planning to hold a major open house and a Chamber After Hours event on campus to highlight this renovation.

### Lights and banners on University Avenue and Broadway

New decorative lamps have been installed and lighted on the north side of University Avenue. The new lamps and posts include new MSU banners to showcase our campus. New lights and banners have also been installed on Broadway.

### Broadway monument sign

The new design for the primary MSU monument sign on Broadway has been revised and refined by Walter Piehl, a faculty member from our art department. This design has been submitted to the landscape architects. A campus-wide announcement to all faculty and staff and student leaders was sent out before Christmas asking everyone to come by the President's Office to see the new design and offer input and suggestions. Many campus members came to the office and offered their comments. At the January 7 convocation, all faculty and staff were reminded to look at the design (which was hanging on the wall of the convention center) and offer their last-minute comments and suggestions. The comments have been supportive of the design and the plan to move forward to discuss the design with the architects and sign company.

### President's Staff Retreat

The members of the President's Staff held a full-day retreat on January 11. The agenda and discussion included: identification of key opportunities and challenges facing the university, a presentation on academic and non-academic service program reviews, institutional research, overview of the Wellness Center planning and funding models, a report on the progress on the community bowl project, continuing interest in wrestling and women's soccer, and the status of the task force recommendation on NCAA Division II; a utilities cost analysis and projection through 2013, an update on budget and expenses, a presentation on the analysis of MSU donations and fundraising, and a report on public information activities (assignments for editorials for MDN, a public information advisory committee, and the common calendar). The staff discussed proposed structures for enrollment services and priorities for recruitment and retention. The final topic of the day involved a consideration of major legislative priorities and initiatives for the campus. Suggestions, which came from campus discussions and the Vision 2013 action plans, include: a wellness center incorporating wellness activities, possibly with nursing, student health facilities, geriatrics curricula; a new business facility to house the business college, a new entrepreneurial program, energy and petroleum curricula and initiatives; a new arts facility; the new interdisciplinary program focused on studies in the community and the environment; the relocation and building of a new maintenance facility on the north end of campus; a field-based campus; enhanced security measures, and a new mind-brain research center.

### Center of Excellence proposal: Great Plains Knowledge and Data Center

The GPKDC partners met before the holidays to discuss the terms of the contract that were prepared by a local attorney. The contract describes the responsibilities of each partner, the governance of the center, and accountability expectations and reporting processes. The discussion of that meeting and a subsequent meeting with representatives from InfoTech, MADC, and MSU continued to focus on the ownership and purchase of the data equipment. Because of security needs and assurances to provide to InfoTech clients, InfoTech has continued to insist that they own the equipment and have exclusive rights over the use of the equipment. MSU proposed that it would use CoE funds to subcontract for InfoTech employees and services in the amount of the cost of the equipment, so as to provide InfoTech the leverage to purchase the equipment. InfoTech indicated that subcontracting is not feasible at this point. The president of MADC suggested that he see if it is possible to gain authority for MSU to sub-grant the equipment to InfoTech. The partners are awaiting information on this proposal.

### Higher Learning Commission Self Study

The HLC evaluation team is scheduled to visit our campus from March 31-April 2. The Self Study Committee has completed all reviews of the self study report. The report, an abridged version, and other information will be published and distributed to campus soon. The committee and other teams are working to prepare the resource room and to prepare for the visit. The committee will be visiting each unit on campus to review the report, respond to questions, and provide information about the visit.

### **List of Selected Activities and Events (since December 19, 2007)**

#### **December**

- Meeting with Great Plains Knowledge and Data Center partners
- Board of Regents orientation for new members
- David and Nancy Fuller's holiday party for the Regents, Alumni Board members, and the Foundation Board members
- State Board of Higher Education meeting
- Annual meeting of the Norsk Hostfest Advisory Board

#### **January**

- Spring Faculty and Staff Convocation; with keynote speaker Dr. George Kuh
- Title III grant workshop and forums conducted by visiting consultant
- Workforce Summit Meeting at the Grand International Inn
- Trinity Board meeting
- NDUS Chief Information Officer Search Committee meeting to review applications and narrow field
- Meeting with Odney Advertising regarding new marketing plan for Vision 2013
- Visit by Senator Byron Dorgan to campus; and meeting to discuss earmark projects and Vision 2013
- Presentation debriefing by visitors to Sias International University
- Discussion with Ron Merritt from the Park District about potential collaborations with the university
- President's Staff full-day retreat at the Sleep Inn Conference Center
- President's Staff weekly meeting
- Rotary meeting
- Chamber Board meeting to report on recommended topics provided by the special meeting on campus
- Meeting with the Student Government Association president
- Meeting with North Dakota State Senator

### **Concluding Remarks**

The convocation on January 7 with the presentation by Dr. George Kuh offered the campus a clear sense of our goals for engagement and the meaning of an institution focused on a stewardship of place. The goals of the meeting were to foster continued dialogue about Vision 2013 and its key terms and to seek guidance from Dr. Kuh as to how MSU and all of its members will be able to raise the bar on academic quality and expectations for engagement. The dialogue and the participation revealed and enthusiasm for the directions the campus has defined to meet its Vision 2013 goal. Preliminary reports show that our spring enrollment is up over this time last spring. Our spring semester is starting off well, with many exciting initiatives and directions for the benefit of our students and their learning.

David Fuller