

**¹President's Monthly Report
Minot State University
April 16, 2008**

It has been a busy and very productive time on campus, with numerous activities and projects contributing to our students' learning and to our university's future. Two of particular note for the campus were: the visit by the Higher Learning Commission team and a positive preliminary report and the all-campus Employee Appreciation Luncheon, which recognized the good work and efforts of many of our campus members. We are now rapidly approaching the end of the semester and our Commencement Ceremony on May 9. We can be very proud of the way our campus prepared for a successful HLC visit and for our request for continued accreditation.

Current Issues and Topics

Higher Learning Commission Team Visit

The visiting team conducted interviews with many people on and off campus, carefully reviewed resources and other information, and concluded its visit with an exit meeting to offer preliminary and positive findings. Preliminary findings indicate that the team will be recommending that MSU met all five criteria for accreditation. The Steering Committee did an excellent job preparing a self-study report and hosting the team members. The team will be recommending one follow-up action, which is for us to prepare a progress report on our efforts in recruiting and retention.

Maintenance Building Relocation

I reported earlier that MSU had purchased the True Value Building and was going to move it to the north end of campus to house our physical plant operations. However, we learned that the cost of moving that building doubled and made the use of that building impractical. We calculated that it would be less expensive to install a new building than it would be to set up the used one. We are still planning on proposing to the state legislature the construction of a new maintenance facility.

Alumni meetings in Arizona

MSU representatives and I traveled to Arizona for alumni and friends events. One of the events, which attracted a large group of visitors, was a gathering in Scottsdale, which was hosted by the Mayor of Scottsdale, Ms. Mary Manross—a 1969 graduate of Minot State University. We met many alumni and friends who are very supportive of our university and its future.

Vision 2013 Action Steps and meetings with campus groups

I was planning to meet with each of the major units on our campus to seek feedback on our proposals for Vision 2013 action steps and to solicit ideas about other areas on campus needing support and attention. In view of the completion of our HLC visit and the many other events occurring between now and the end of the semester, I decided to postpone meetings until the

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 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.

beginning of the fall semester. Work is proceeding to identify premier universities in the Great Plains and to examine their performance standards and achievements.

Center of Excellence proposal: Great Plains Knowledge and Data Center

MSU is still waiting to receive the required match information and a written confirmation that the arrangements to purchase the equipment for InfoTech are acceptable.

Annual Budget

Our finance office has been working hard to put together the final details in the budget for the State Board of Higher Education (SBHE). The SBHE has submitted an initial budget request asking for a 53% increase in funding for the system. Requested increases include 7% salary hikes for each year of the biennium, deferred maintenance support, added dollars for need-based scholarships, support for collaborative recruitment activities, equity funding, and full parity funding for each institution. Parity funding is the amount used to support institutions in the cost of maintaining operations, which includes, for example health care, inflationary increases, and salaries. For MSU, a formula for state funding distribution indicates that we should receive 65% of the amount needed to support those parity increases. In the last two biennia, MSU has received approximately 53% of the dollars, which required us to identify other institutional dollars to support parity increases. An example would be the salary increases of 5% authorized by the SBHE. In the last biennium, MSU had to fund 47% of that increase, with the state contributing 53%. Full parity funding would mean that MSU would receive the full 65% of the parity costs.

The requested budget increase might sound exorbitant, as it was reported recently in an editorial in the Minot Daily News, but it is important to keep in mind the amount of dollars we receive to compete with our peer institutions. The eleven institutions in the system are funded on an average of approximately 55% of their identified peers. In other words, institutions similar to a state institution in size and mission have been selected as representative peers for comparison. Minot State University receives support equal to 66% of the average of its peers, while another university in the system is funded at the level of 41%.

Since we compete on a national and international basis for faculty and services, it is important that budgets are bought more in line with our peer institutions.

Assessment Day

Jillian Kinzie, a professor at the University of Indiana in Bloomington and co-author of Student Success in College, visited campus on April 15 to discuss the MSU results on the National Survey of Student Engagement and the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement and to participate in dialogue with faculty and staff about how we can improve learning and success of our first-year students. Her opening address identified a number of features from the NSSE and FSSE results that indicate our strengths and areas needing improvement.

National Basketball Tournament

My wife Nancy and I had the fine opportunity to drive to Sioux City (eight hours from Minot) to watch our women's basketball team win two of their opening games in the national tournament and to narrowly miss winning a third. We also drove to Branson, Missouri (another eight hours south of Sioux City) to watch our men play in the opening round of the men's national tournament. The men played an excellent game against a very skilled Northwestern College team and narrowly lost. It is a notable achievement for our basketball program for both the men and women to qualify for the national tournaments. I should add, too, that there was a dedicated group of MSU fans at each game. Our cheerleaders were able to make it to both games and

“wowed” the crowd by their cheers, handsprings, and pyramids (although I get a bit nervous when they form in three-level pyramids!). Congratulations to our athletic department, coaches, and our student athletes for representing Minot State University so well.

Minot Public School and Minot State University Social and Conversation

Recently Minot State hosted a meeting with the teachers and staff of the Minot Public Schools in our newly renovated atrium in the Student Center. The social began with announcements and refreshments, and then concluded with small-group discussions between faculty and teachers from the same disciplines. The professors and teachers discussed common issues and challenges in their respective areas. The meeting was one of many events we are scheduling to collaborate with our partners in the Minot Public Schools.

List of Selected Activities and Events (since February 27, 2008)

February

- Wellness Center meeting
- Faculty breakfast
- Ft. Berthold CC follow-up meeting
- Chat with students in Beaver Dam
- Emergency Operations Plan committee meeting
- Meeting with History Department to discuss centennial activities
- NDUS Student Recruitment Task Force meeting
- Faculty Senate meeting to discuss shared governance white paper
- Student Social Work Organization Spring meeting welcome
- Lunch with community member
- Faculty Senate president meeting
- Marketing discussion

March

- Legislative Agenda Task Force meeting
- Staff Breakfast
- Center of Excellence meeting with Shane Goettle and community members
- Business After Hours Event at MSU
- Attended alumni events in Arizona
- Tenure Committee meeting
- Attended men’s and women’s national tournament games in Sioux City and Branson, Missouri.
- ND Symposium on Autism Conference welcome
- Student chat in Beaver Dam
- Meeting with Alcohol Consortium state team and Karin Walton
- Presentation to the Young Professionals at a noon luncheon.
- Meeting with Sias International University officials
- Faculty Senate meeting
- President’s Staff meeting
- Staff Breakfast
- Dakota Athletic conference call
- Meetings with Arts and Sciences Dean candidates
- Minot Public Schools and MSU Social in atrium of Student Center; welcome.

- Employee Appreciation Luncheon
- Planning and Budgeting Council meeting
- National Student Speech Language Hearing Association Conference welcome
- Lunch with community leader
- Higher Learning Commission Accreditation visit and meetings

April

- State Board of Higher Education meeting in Bottineau
- Honors Dance and Pow Wow welcome and attendance
- Appreciation event for the HLC Steering Committee, subcommittees and others
- MSU at the Mall event
- Board of Regents Executive Committee meeting
- BOR Campus Life Committee meeting
- Faculty Senate president meeting
- Faculty breakfast
- Meeting with area legislator regarding Swain
- Welcome to Market Place for Kids event in the Dome
- Meeting with Staff Senate President
- BOR Public Relations Committee meeting
- Chat in Beaver Dam
- Trinity Board Meeting
- Welcome and presentation of awards to Math Track meet in the Dome
- BOR Strategic Planning Committee meeting
- Athletics spring event
- President’s Staff all-day meeting to discuss budget
- Presentation to Great Plains scholar recipient
- Traveled to Minnesota to meet with Commissioner for the Northern Sun Conference; visited St. Cloud State University.
- Meeting with area legislators regarding state funding priorities.
- NDUS CIO Search Committee meeting
- Chamber Board of Directors meeting
- Assessment Day events

David Fuller
April 16, 2008