

Chapter One

An Introduction to Minnesota State University Moorhead

Every year, at Minnesota State University Moorhead (MSUM), students, faculty, staff, and administrators join together in a special ritual during our opening convocation ceremony and our commencement celebrations. Together, we proudly sing to our Alma Mater. It is a ritual not unlike those enjoyed at other institutions of higher learning. However, at MSUM, the lyrics of our Alma Mater poignantly note our University's heritage and future; MSUM is "ever changing, ever constant, ever true."

Indeed, since our humble beginnings 120 years ago, the MSUM has evolved, strategically overcoming challenges, adjusting to the shifting needs of the population we serve, and progressing toward our vision of the future. We have changed significantly over the years. But at the heart of all change is our steadfast commitment to our mission of excellence in teaching and learning; we develop knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship. When we sing our Alma Mater, we couldn't be more authentic – we are ever changing, ever constant, ever true. We are Minnesota State University Moorhead.

MSUM's story is one of thoughtful, strategic change. But it is also a story of commitment – to who we serve, who we are, who we are to become. We have used the self study process and this, the 2007 Self Study Report, as a way to document our path of intentional change, confirm our institutional strengths, and identify our institutional challenges.

As you'll find throughout this report, we have made remarkable progress in our process of intentional review and institutional change. But, as would be the case at any university, working toward and accomplishing institutional change comes at a cost – our faculty, staff, administrators and students are exhausted! Nevertheless, we embrace our campus strategic planning; we know that our transformation processes and outcomes poise MSUM to continue its future viability as a regional education leader.

We invite you to share MSUM's story.

MSUM's Institutional Profile

Located in Moorhead, Minn., MSUM is a vibrant learning community serving approximately 7,500 full- and part-time students. We offer more than 140 programs and majors, leading to associate, baccalaureate, master's, and specialist degrees. The University is one of 32 state universities and community and technical colleges which comprise the Minnesota State Colleges and University System (MnSCU).

MSUM was originally established in 1887 as a Normal School. The first ten students graduated from its two-year curriculum in 1890. In 1921, it became Moorhead State Teachers College, authorized to offer the four-year degree of Bachelor of Science in Education. The curriculum was expanded in 1946, and the official name changed to Moorhead State College in 1957. The

college was renamed Moorhead State University in 1975, then Minnesota State University Moorhead in 2000.

A Metropolitan Community Committed to Education

The City of Moorhead is located on the western-most border of Minnesota, on the bank of the Red River. Just across the river is our neighboring city of Fargo, N.D. The Fargo-Moorhead metropolitan community has a population of approximately 150,000. In addition to MSUM, three other colleges are located in Fargo-Moorhead communities: Minnesota State Community and Technical College Moorhead (MSCTC) and Concordia College in Moorhead and North Dakota State University (NDSU) in Fargo.

Together, MSUM, Concordia College, and NDSU, form the Tri-College University, a higher education consortium which became incorporated in 1970. The Tri-College University consortium allows the three institutions to share resources and classes.

Moorhead is located approximately 250 miles from St. Paul, Minnesota's state capital and home to the MnSCU system offices. No doubt about it—our physical location poses several unique challenges. First, as a “border” school, more than a third of our students come from North Dakota—with many from South Dakota as well. The demographics of our university more closely mirror those of North and South Dakota than Minnesota. In fact, while the population of the Minneapolis/St. Paul region is increasing, the population of traditional aged college students in our service area is declining, particularly in North Dakota. Second, when it takes four hours to drive to St. Paul from Moorhead, the interaction we can have with our MnSCU system officials and the state government is logistically more limited than we would like. The time and expense of travel to/from St. Paul takes away from important on-campus responsibilities for our faculty, staff, and administrators. We have increasingly used video-conferencing technology to take part in system meetings, but progress here has been slow.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System

MSUM is a member of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system. The system is made up of 32 institutions, including 25 two-year colleges and seven state universities. The system is separate from the University of Minnesota system.

The MnSCU system, created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1991, merged the State University System, the Community College System and the technical colleges, which were part of their respective public school districts, into a single system. The merger went into effect July 1, 1995.

MnSCU is governed by a 15-member Board of Trustees appointed by the governor with the advice and consent of the senate. Twelve trustees serve six-year terms — eight trustees represent each of Minnesota's congressional districts and four trustees serve at-large. The three remaining trustees are student trustees serving two-year terms — one each from a state university, community college, and technical college. The Board appoints the system's chancellor and presidents of the state colleges and universities. The Board has policy responsibility for system

planning, academic programs, fiscal management, personnel, admissions requirements, tuition and fees, and rules and regulations.

The Office of the Chancellor serves all the colleges and universities in the system. The chancellor and the system office represent the 32 colleges and universities to the Legislature, review and coordinate educational programs, oversee the credit transfer process, negotiate labor contracts, coordinate presidential searches and carry out the policies of the Board of Trustees. The present chancellor is Dr. James McCormick, who began his term with the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities on July 1, 2001.

As a member of the MnSCU system, we enjoy certain benefits and face specific challenges.

The system provides and encourages collaboration opportunities with system partners. For instance, Minnesota State Community and Technical College (MSCTC) has a campus in Moorhead. As our partner, we admit each other's students, engage in collaborative course offerings, and feature the Gateway program to promote transfer from MSCTC to MSUM. This program, provided by MSCTC, offers admission to applicants to MSUM who do not meet normal entrance standards. They provide instruction, including developmental coursework, on the MSUM campus. Gateway students may live in the residence halls. If they successfully complete this work, they are automatically admitted to MSUM. In fall of 2006, MSCTC began teaching a developmental mathematics course for Minnesota State University Moorhead student on our campus.

A series of regional meetings sponsored by MnSCU brings together faculty, staff, and students to discuss issues such as finances, business practices, and customized training. The System has sponsored meetings for staff training and contract training for administrators. They provide legal and contractual expertise that is invaluable to the individual campuses.

The system has become more and more directive over its lifetime. Recent moves have included imposition of common start dates for all institutions and standard business practices required of all. This has included a number of specifications including rules for financial aid and academic probation and suspension. Many of these are appropriate, but there are times when the failure to recognize that a university is different from a community college or technical college has led to a poor choice for one of the groups. In those cases where decisions are made democratically by all institutions represented, the seven universities cannot outvote the other 25 colleges. For example, a recent process to provide a standard measure of retention and student success for all institutions has been established. The two-year schools wished to define retention and student success based on the student's status (retained, transferred, graduated, not retained) as of the beginning of the term – being “retained” was the most important outcome to them. The four-year schools wanted to look at the status at the end of the term – being “graduated” was the most important outcome to them. Both of these stands are reasonable, as the mission emphasis of four-year institutions is graduation while that of the two-year colleges is mainly enrollment. The vote and subsequent choice by the System were to measure the student's status at the beginning of each term as the retention measure. This means that “graduation” status would be pushed back one term for every intermediate point in the six years that are tracked and that any graduates in the final term will remain uncounted as a “graduate” by the System's methodology.

On the same retention measure, the System decided to track all new students including non-degree seeking students (desired by the two-year schools) even though the four-year schools traditionally track only degree-seeking students.

Our membership in the MnSCU system sometimes minimizes our autonomy and makes it difficult to recognize our unique mission. At the same time, the system also provides avenues through which we can share information and resources with our colleagues, while also providing streamlined transfer opportunities and assistance and encouragement for development of distance programs through Mn Online for students within Minnesota. The system provides a number of granting and professional development opportunities through the Center for Teaching and Learning.

The Tri-College University

As noted earlier in this chapter, MSUM is a member of the Tri-College University, an educational consortium of MSUM, NDSU, and Concordia College. Our collaboration through TCU brings about several benefits:

Students can enroll in classes at each university, tripling the curricular options they have, while registering, receiving financial aid and paying tuition at their home institution, at their home institution rate;

Campus libraries share resources and coordinate purchasing to provide expanded holdings on all three campuses;

The proximity of these three schools, and the fourth at Minnesota State Community and Technical College, creates a community of scholars concentrated in a small geographic area. The array of academic, artistic, and cultural events plays an important role in the Fargo-Moorhead communities; and

Shared Academic programs in Nursing and Educational Leadership allow offerings not normally feasible for one institution, at least in the start-up stages when the risk of program costs exceed anticipated revenue is greatest. .

MSUM is a Collective Bargaining Unit Campus

Except for Administrators and confidential employees, University employees are members of specific state-wide bargaining units. The contracts for the teaching faculty (IFO) and service faculty (MSUAASF) are negotiated at the System level, although the State Department of Employee Relations (DOER) negotiates the health insurance terms, of the while contracts covering the remaining employees are negotiated state-wide by DOER.

With a unionized work force, the university faces limitations in hiring and firing decisions due to contractual agreements that allow position claiming in the case of clerical employees or provisions that require notice, at times more than a full year, if positions are to be retrenched or eliminated. Wage increases are mandated by negotiated settlements with little or no input from the University.

The Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) represents instructional faculty in the academic departments, as well as librarians, coaches and counselors. Department chairs are members of

this unit, which precludes them from assuming major administrative duties. Thus most faculty are supervised by deans. This unit's contract addresses area such as workload, pay, benefits, and tenure and promotion issues.

The Minnesota State University Association of Administrative and Service Faculty (MSUAASF) represent the service and administrative faculty. This includes many directors and associate and assistant directors in areas such as Residence Life, Student Union, Registration, Admissions, Financial Aid, Counseling and Career Services, and Information Technology.

The Association of Federal State County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) represents employees whose service is reported by the hour, such as general maintenance workers, office administrative assistants and clerical assistants in such areas as the business office, records office, library and departmental offices.

The Minnesota Association of Professional Employees (MAPE) represents general professional employees defined by State statute and includes accounting officers, lab specialists and most of the information technology employees.

The Middle Management Association (MMA) represents certain supervisors as defined by the State and includes building services foreman, chief engineer, payroll director and book store supervisor.

Minnesota Nurses Association (MNA) represents the nurses in our University Health Services.

There are also three plans that cover other employees who are not covered by collective bargaining agreements. The Managerial Plan of the State of Minnesota covers certain classified and unclassified managers such as the University's Comptroller and its Physical Plant Manager. Confidential employees such as those who work in Human Resources and for the President are governed by the State Commissioner's Plan. Finally, administrators such as the President, Vice Presidents and Deans are covered by the Administrators' Plan developed and approved by the Board of Trustees for the System.

All collective bargaining contracts are subject to approval by the State legislature.

MSUM's Accreditation History

Minnesota State University Moorhead was founded in 1887 as a normal school. It graduated its first two students in 1890 and was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools as a teacher training institution in the fall of 1913. It was dropped from the list of accredited institutions in the 1920's and 1930's but as it evolved in its mission and programmatic offerings, it was again accredited at the baccalaureate level in 1948. In 1960 it was accredited as a master's degree institution and in 1985 its status was changed to include accreditation at the specialist's degree level.

The most recent comprehensive visit was in 1997 with a focused visit in 2000. In 2001 tentative approval was requested of the Commission to establish a new degree site to allow programs in

accounting, business administration, finance, international business, marketing, and management to students on the Fergus Falls Community College (FFCC) campus with on-site visit done during the comprehensive visit for FFCC. Since that time, Fergus Falls has been converted into a unit of Minnesota Community and Technical Colleges (MSCTC).

In 2005, an Institutional Change Request to MN Online was approved to offer the RN to BS degree in Nursing; the Master of Science in Educational Leadership: General Leadership with Educational Technology; Teaching and Learning with Technology Certificate program; and BS in Operations Management through online delivery.

MSUM's Changes Over a Decade: 1997-2007

While the basic mission and degree offerings have remained stable, Minnesota State University Moorhead has undergone a number of significant adjustments since our last accreditation visit in 1997. The institution has also responded to changes in administration, increasing competition with institutions offering extension programs such as the University of Mary, Minot, and St. Thomas University, St. Paul, the number of students enrolled, and subsequent modifications in the budget. These factors are described in this section.

Students and Demographics

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Over the past ten years, our student body characteristics have not significantly changed. We have more female students than male students, in part because many of our larger programs, such as teacher education (23.4% of degrees awarded in 2003), social work (9.5%), art and music (8.6%), psychology and social sciences (7.2%), and health professions (6.0%) such as nursing, and speech pathology have traditionally been sought by women. In recent years, an increase in business majors (17.3%) has brought in more male students. Because of the strength of the programs in engineering, technology, physical science, and agriculture offered by our Tri-College collaborator, North Dakota State University, that have traditionally attracted male students, MSUM has not developed programs in these areas, but at times, has prepared students for their first two years under the "covered program" agreement with North Dakota State University. The percent of women students in recent years has been 59.4% (2005), 61.0% (2004), 62.9% (2002) and 62.8% (2000). Ethnicity will be addressed in Chapter 2, but the majority of our students, as are the majority of our regional population, are white and often of Scandinavian descent.

In 2004-2005, 38% of our new entering freshmen were from out of state, primarily North Dakota and South Dakota, 75% of the freshmen class lived in college housing, with only 2% age 25 or older. The average age of all new entering freshmen was 19. We know that 65% of undergraduates who graduated between July 1, 2002 and June 30, 2003 borrowed money and the average indebtedness was \$18,228. Most of our students come from rural areas and a significant number (15.7 % of 2005 entering freshmen out of 89% reporting) are first generation college

students. Our System defines underserved students as students of color, first generation college students, low income (estimated family contribution to the student's education is less than \$3,850, which makes them Pell Grant eligible), or those for whom English is not the first language. Data on fall 2006 entering freshman indicate 512 regular students out of 1082, with the remainder (52.3%) are in at least one of the under-represented categories. (Attach Table??)

Leadership

Dr. Roland Barden became president of MSUM on July 1, 1994. In addition to working with his three vice presidents, and his major external responsibilities involving various System meetings, Board of Trustees meetings, visiting legislators, attending a number of alumni events and all events, he has several offices that currently report directly to him. These are the Athletic Director, Director of Human Resources, the Alumni Foundation, Budget Officer, and the Executive Director of University Advancement who oversees printing and publications.

A number of MSUM administrators have come from the faculty, being selected after national searches. Searches for deans, in particular, over the past years have been hampered by the inability to offer tenure with the position. It seems especially problematic in searches for deans in the areas of education and business. Numerous attempts have been made, to no avail, to negotiate this benefit into the IFO Agreement or to convince the MnSCU System that some kind of tenure for deans should be included in the administrator's plan. However, administrators who have earned tenure as faculty at MSUM retain that benefit. MSUM has begun to use external consultants in some dean searches with some success.

The three major units are Academic Affairs, Student Affairs and Administrative Affairs.

Academic Affairs

Vice President Bette Midgarden had headed academic affairs since 1994. She came to MSUM in 1979 as a faculty member of the department of mathematics.

Dean Ronald Jeppson, Dean of Social and Natural Sciences since 1996, first served in 1981 as a member of the math faculty. Dean Kathleen Enz Finken was appointed Dean of Arts and Sciences in 2005, after service as associate dean for two years. She came to MSUM in 1993 as a member of the Art Department. She followed Dr. Peter Quigley who served from 2003-2005 and Dr. Virginia Klenk who came to MSUM to serve as dean in 1996, retiring in 2002 Both of the latter were hired from external sources after national searches. Dean Michael Parsons, recently of Florida International University, was appointed Dean of Education and Human Services in 2005, following a number of individuals serving from 1 to 3 years in this position. An external search firm was employed to aid in filling his position. Finally, Dean David Crockett is serving double duty as Vice President for Administrative Affairs, since he was re-appointed Dean of Business and Industry in 2005, following the retirement of the previous dean. He brings special skills to the position and is focused on bringing the School of Business from candidacy to accreditation by AACSB. Associate Vice President Judy Strong since 1997, rounds out the team. She was hired in 1969 in the Chemistry Department and served as Dean of Social and Natural Sciences from 1986-1997. Assistant Vice President for Assessment, Jean Sando, was hired in 2006. The position of Dean of Academic Services was dissolved. The position was

held by an experienced administrator and it was felt these would be overwhelming for a new administrator. So, Graduate Studies was transferred to the Academic Vice President, Continuing Studies to the Dean of Business, and Admissions to the Associate Academic Vice President. Then a Director of Instructional Resources was created. Brittney Goodman, hired as instruction and reference librarian in 1997, has filled this position ably since 2003. Les Bakke, Director of Information Technology and Data Privacy Officer has been at the University since 1972. This position is responsible for Library and for Instructional Media and Instructional Resources. Academic Affairs also includes the Registrar and Records Office, Directors of the Advising Support Center, Continuing Studies, Institutional Research, and Academic Support Programs.

Student Affairs

Vice President Warren Weise has headed student affairs since 1999. Warren joined MSUM in 1980, and was formerly Director of Comstock Memorial Union. Katy Wilson is currently Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs since 2005. She was hired in 1981, and served as Athletic Director from 1993 to 2003. Student Affairs works with a team of Directors from Financial Aid and Scholarships, Health Center, Counseling and Career Services, Student Support Services, Campus Security, Admissions, Comstock Memorial Union, Housing, International Programs and Bookstore.

Administrative Affairs

Vice President of Administrative Affairs since 1994 is David Crockett, who served as MSUM's Dean of Business and Industry from 1991 to 1993. Now that he is again serving as Dean, some of his reporting units, such as human resources and Information Technology have been transferred to other divisions. Remaining units include the Business Office, Building Services, Environmental Health and Safety, Parking, and Facilities and Grounds.

General Education.

Our previous general education program, Liberal Studies, was approved in 1992. It was modified significantly when MSUM converted from quarters to semesters in 1994-95. It was already in effect when the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum was established. The program consisted of 45 credits, at least 6 credits in each of the following divisions:

Division A, English Composition and Literature;

Division B, Natural Sciences and their Processes;

C, Behavioral and Social Sciences;

D, Western Tradition - Humanities and the Fine Arts;

E, Communicative and Symbolic Processes; and

F, Multicultural and Global Studies.

There was considerable choice in this system, although students were required to complete an approved course in mathematics and the year sequence in English in Division A. See Appendix xxx for more information about the Liberal Studies program and assessment processes. CAN WE PUT CHAPTER 4 PAGE 12-13 INTO Appendix?

The Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) was formed in 1994 by agreement with the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Community Colleges, the Minnesota Technical Colleges and the Minnesota State Universities. Under the original agreement, completion of a defined transfer curriculum at one institution enables a student to receive credit for all lower division general education upon admission to any other institution. If the student completes an Associate in Arts degree on one institution, they will be accepted by the receiving institution as having general education requirements completed. The System has promoted seamless transfer for students and continues to work on ways students may take courses at several institutions simultaneously. Areas include facilitation of registration, financial aid, and common start dates for institutions.

Under the current agreement, students may transfer courses in the MnTC competency areas without completing the entire program. There are specific numbers of courses that must be included in various competency areas and the total program must be at least 40 semester credits. The curriculum is to be designed by each institution to include ten competencies:

Written and Oral Communication,
Critical Thinking,
Natural Sciences,
Mathematics or Symbolic Systems,
History and the Social and behavioral Sciences,
The Humanities – the Arts, Literature and Philosophy,
Human Diversity,
Global Perspective,
Ethical and civic Responsibility,
People and the Environment.

See Appendix 2 for More Information on the MnTC. (or refer to resource room or <http://www.mntransfer.org/MnTC/MnTC.html>)

MSUM established equivalencies and a cross-walk to relate the competencies of the MnTC to our Liberal Studies program, but the differences between our program and the MnTC specifications tended to be confusing to potential students. The institution began complete review and revision of the general education program in 2005 to develop the Dragon Core, our new signature general education program. One of the initial discussions was the extent to which the new program would relate to the MnTC. It was finally agreed to build this program upon the competencies.

Dragon Core is designed to develop engaged students who are aware of their diverse world and physical environment and who know how to interact productively and ethically with others in today's changing world. The Dragon Core has three levels. The inner cluster is a sample of introductory courses and provides a base of knowledge - the foundation four:

Oral Communication
Written Communication
Critical and Multicultural Thinking
Mathematics

The middle cluster includes from three to seven courses that will extend and apply the competencies learned in the Foundation Four and integrate the skills within the context of academic disciplines found in competency areas DC 3-7:

DC 3 – Mathematical/Symbolic Systems

DC 4 – Natural Sciences.

DC 5 –History and the Social Sciences

DC-6 – The Humanities – the Arts, Literature, and Philosophy

DC 7 – Human Diversity

The outer cluster encourages students to take a broad view toward the world by giving them an understanding and perspective of the world and their immediate surroundings. Three courses from competency areas DC 8-10 and are offered at the upper level (300 or 400-level):

DC 8 – Global Perspective

DC 9 – Ethical and Civic Responsibility

DC 10 – People and The Environment

The new program, the Dragon Core, and its development s discussed in detail in Appendix 3.

The Dragon Core information may be found at CHAPTER 4, PAGES 16-22 AND

ASSESSMENT P 22-23? <http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/dragoncore/>

Program Changes – Majors, Minors and Certificates

Other programmatic changes have been made in recent years. Under the rules of our System, it is relatively easy for majors to provide curriculum alternatives, or tracks, for students. These may be proposed as options, in which 30 to 50% of the courses are shared and used in a common core, with curriculum alternative courses greater than 30% of the total number of credits in the major. Or they may be emphases, where more than 50% of the offerings are shared and used in a common core with alternatives of at least 9 credits. A number of departments offer emphases and options within their majors. For example, Biosciences offers a BA with emphases in biochemistry and biotechnology; ecology and evolutionary biology; and health and medical sciences. Music offers a BM with options in composition; jazz and studio music; keyboard performance; voice performance; wind instrument, string instrument or percussion.

New majors were approved in East Asian Studies, Gerontology, Athletic Training, Construction Management, International Studies, Film Studies, Operations Management, a generic BSN (previously our nursing degree was a R.N. completion program), American Multicultural Studies, Exercise Science, Women’s Studies, and Health Service Administration.

Minors were added in Art History, Coaching, Religious Studies, Film Production, Film History and Criticism, Health and Medical Sciences, and Health Services Administration.

A number of certificate programs were developed: A certificate and graduate certificate in publishing, certificate and graduate certificate in middle school education, certificates in preprimary education, Reading, and graduate certificates in Literacy Instruction, and Children’s and Young Adult Literature.

Majors dropped were Cytotechnology, German, French, Management Information Systems, and American Studies is pending. The Master's degree programs in computer science and Business Administration were dropped and the Master's in Music will be suspended. The TCU Master's in Nursing was also dropped as the program is now being taught at MSUM and at North Dakota State University.

It was also an era of department changes. The department of biology became the department of biosciences, Art became Art and Design, the Department of Speech Communications and Theatre Arts became the Department of Communications Studies, Film Studies, and Theatre Arts. The latter is now moving toward becoming three separate departments. Anthropology was removed from the Sociology-Anthropology-Criminal Justice Department to form a department of Anthropology and Earth Science leaving behind a department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. Departments have been transferred from one college to another occasionally. Economics and American Multicultural Studies were transferred to Social and Natural Sciences; Computer Science and Information Systems were transferred to Business and Industry, and Speech/Language/Hearing Science was transferred to Education and Human Services. The School of Business was formed in 2005 to better meet the conditions for AACSB accreditation. During his first year at MSUM, the Dean of Education and Human Services led the college in a major restructuring which is still in progress. The new structure includes a School of Education, School of Social Work, and the faculty are still working on the possibility of a School of Health Sciences to include Nursing, Athletic Training, Health Services Administration.

New Accreditations

Since our last NCA review, the School of business remains in candidacy for the American Association of Colleges and Schools of Business (AACSB) accreditation with an on-site visit planned for spring of 2008, the Department of Technology program in Construction Management has been accredited by the American Council of Construction Education. The Athletic Training Program has been accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Programs. The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education has accredited both the Bachelor of Science in nursing program and the Master of Science with a major in nursing program as part of the Tri-College University Nursing Consortium. MSUM will seek independent accreditation as the nursing consortium will dissolve on July 1, 2007, although we will continue to jointly schedule and share courses. The graduate program in Counseling and Student Affairs has accreditation for its Community Counseling and Student Affairs Practice in Higher Education programs by the Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs.

Building Projects

Over the past ten years, much has been accomplished in the area of renewal of our physical plant. That is discussed below under deferred maintenance. The campus now features a new Science Laboratory building attached to a remodeled Hagen Hall, now to serve as an associated office complex for science; A new dormitory, John Neumeier Hall, built to replace a dormitory that was imploded due to structural defects; Hendrix Health Center; a joint Police/Security Center Substation, built with cooperation of the City of Moorhead; remodeling of MacLean Hall,

Murray Commons, and Kise Commons, the campus dining area, were in progress during the summer of 2006. Remodeling has been completed for Nemzyk Field House, with Lommen Hall is next in line for extensive remodeling followed by King Hall. The library has had a number of improvements, but is in the queue for remodeling. The University, aided by the Alumni Foundation, has also made use of a former church located near campus, and has cooperated with MSCTC to purchase a former public school building to create the Minnesota Higher Education Center (MHEC), located just two blocks from campus. This facility is used to house several academic departments and is currently serving as a student wellness center pending construction of a new facility. At that point, the MHEC is scheduled be remodeled for permanent housing of the nursing department, speech/language/hearing/sciences and other health-related departments. It provides a unique opportunity for the nursing departments of MSCTC and MSUM to work collaboratively in close proximity.

Responses to 1997 NCA Team Concerns and Suggestions

The NCA evaluation team that visited MSU in 1997 raised eight concerns. However, when reviewed, the Readers Panel recommended three concerns, which were accepted by President Roland Barden. The three concerns identified by the Readers Panel were considered during a Focused Visit in 2000. The following indicates the concerns and also the comments made by the Focus Visit team in 2000. The team in 2000 expressed four concerns. Their comments are integrated into the following discussion. This team recommended a progress report after two years concerning deferred maintenance level and reserve level. The report was submitted and accepted.

Strategic Planning -Concern 1.

“Systematic and meaningful strategic planning processes are just now becoming part of the basic fabric of the institution. In the past, many issues, such as enrollment declines, have been dealt with in a reactive rather than a strategic proactive manner. The institution urgently needs to develop a broadly shared vision for its future and then to develop a set of quantifiable outcomes to assess its progress in achieving that vision. The sequencing of academic planning, strategic planning, strategic budgeting and facilities planning must be addressed. Finally the institution will need to develop the management information systems necessary to support this new strategic management paradigm.”

The 2000 team found that “A shared participation in all aspects of planning, budgeting and facilities planning was evident. Data obtained from the review of materials in the resource room and meetings conducted with a cross section of stakeholders supported these findings. The institution has made considerable progress since the last visit in 1997. The management information system at the campus and system level is of concern. Managers at every level do not have easy access to significant data for trend analysis, which is essential to strategic planning. The concern is not one that the University can easily solve...Chancellor Anderson and Vice Chancellor Baer...revealed that the development of a system wide database had not progressed as planned. Therefore data available to individual campuses is limited.”

The 2000 Team included two challenges with respect to this area:

The institution does not have access to data from a unitized system on campus and within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system that can serve as the basis for further development of the strategic planning process.

Although the institution has made progress with strategic planning, a need exists for the institution to align its conception of this activity with the System and national conceptual frameworks of the activity.”

The MnSCU System has implemented a state-wide data handling system for all campuses. This system has been implemented in stages and continues to develop. A number of MSUM employees have been active in providing input as the system was developed and stages were piloted. While we survived two years of inadequate data on new entering students as part of this process, the data available is now suitable for planning. Many efforts have been made to ensure the system maintains good collaboration with campuses in these developments. Some have been successful.

In addition, in 2004, the President created the position of budget officer who reports directly to him. As part of her duties, she has created and monitors a MIS database system used to track and plan both personnel and other budgets for academic affairs. She also provides leadership and tracking for strategic planning. Where the State of Minnesota financial monitoring system may be useful for accountants, the internal MIS system has revolutionized the ability of supervisors to monitor and model allocation of personnel resources. Budget information is regularly provided to the President’s Cabinet and Administrative Council. This system has now provided the basis for transfer of budget management of the colleges, once done by the academic vice president, to each dean. That process is almost complete.

As will be seen in Chapter three, the strategic planning process has evolved over the past ten years. In addition, the Minnesota State University System, through its Chancellor and Board of Directors has developed a process involving work plans which has further guided MSUM in its process. After working with separate strategic planning and strategic budgeting committees with initiatives available through the latter, the process has evolved into a single university and budget planning committee with members from all campus constituencies. The President re-allocates 1% of the budget annually to fund initiatives, proposed from each university division, and recommended by the committee to meet work plan goals. Initiative funds may be one-time funds or may fund base budget needs such as new positions. Divisions regularly report back to the committee on progress in meeting goals. In turn, the institution reports regularly to the Chancellor on progress in meeting work plan goals, which in FY 2007, includes quantifiable outcomes. Our strategic plan is currently being recast into the format corresponding to the Chancellor’s Work Plan for consistency. In addition the system wide database is now working adequately and is useful for planning data acquisition.

Enrollment –Concern 2.

“The evaluation team is very concerned that student enrollment has not yet been stabilized. Continuing enrollment declines have obvious budgetary and program ramifications. The institution urgently needs to develop a comprehensive enrollment management plan to focus its energy and activities in order to get this situation turned around.”

The 2000 team noted that “Through a variety of initiatives, the University in the period since 1997 has not only stabilized the enrollment but also achieved moderate growth...The team observed that administration and faculty have been involved in identifying the University’s market niche. These efforts have resulted in considerable success.” Their challenge was, “Although the institution has made progress with enrollment, retention and marketing which has resulted in a stable current budget, a need exists to increase the intuition’s reserve.

Enrollments have risen steadily since 1996 until recently. In the past two years, numbers of new entering freshmen have declined, although numbers of new entering transfers have increased or been stable. This is as expected given the demographics of our geographic regions, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Western Minnesota. See Chapter three for more discussion proactive measures taken to meet this new challenge under Evidence statement 2A-3 in Chapter 3.

Headcounts	F95	F96	F97	F98	F99	F00	F01	F02	F03	F04	F05
Undergraduate	6225	6053	6103	6308	6707	7044	7048	7265	7282	7211	7242
Graduate	416	353	372	349	340	374	383	418	413	431	410
Total	6641	6406	6474	6657	7047	7428	7431	7683	7695	7642	7652

Assessment - Concern 3.

“The institution has not progressed as anticipated with the implementation of its plan for the assessment of student academic achievement. Implementation to date is very uneven. There are few areas where a good start has been made, but there are many areas where the faculty have no knowledge of, interest in, or commitment to the program. The assessment of student academic achievement is not appropriately integrated with the regular academic program review process and the committees and others identified to lead the assessment effort do not have a good understanding as to how to proceed.”

The 2000 team noted, “Moorhead State University has made significant progress in the area of assessment of student academic achievement. All academic department assessment plans have been developed, reviewed and approved by the Institutional Assessment Committee. Most departments have completed initial rounds of data collection and are reviewing the information in relation to departmental plans and expected student outcomes. Departments are now entering the next phase, which links assessment and improvement. There appears to be a strong commitment on the part of both the administration and the faculty to continue to strengthen the assessment program and linking the findings to improvement of student academic achievement. Some departments already document changes in curriculum and reaffirmation of prior pedagogical decisions. Assessment is now a major part of the Program Review process...Moorhead State University must fully develop this feedback loop in a meaningful way in order to truly implement sound assessment of student academic achievement. One strong aspect with the Moorhead State University assessment plan is the role of the coordinator...a faculty member who truly understands both the importance of assessment and the importance of involvement of faculty in any successful program...The faculty attitude toward Moorhead State University’s assessment program is positive and cooperative. Faculty are fully involved and quite willing to work with the program.”

Assessment is discussed in much more detail in Chapter five. Assessment of student learning outcomes within departmental programs has become extensive and many instances of closing the loop to initiate improvements in instruction have occurred. We have a large proportion of faculty who possess both the knowledge and commitment to carry out effective assessment of student learning. This is indeed a natural and expected result, given the extensive agreement across the university that our students are our first priority. Good assessment is a key to effective learning. A number of accredited departments are now meeting both University and external agency requirements for student learning outcomes assessment with much success. As most accrediting agencies now have assessment requirements that are clearly similar to those of the HLC, what once was a conflict is now mutually reinforcing.

Assessment of our general education program has remained a concern in spite of a number of attempts to develop meaningful measures. See Appendix xxx (cited on page 12 of this chapter -- for discussion of assessment measures for the Liberal Studies Program.) MSUM's program in Liberal Studies was one in which students had a wide choice of courses within most categories of study. While learning goals were specified for each category, different courses made different contributions toward meeting those goals. Bringing in outcomes assessment after the program was in place has been a challenge. The institution was not content with selecting some external exams to test goals somewhat generically as we have held that assessment results should be sufficiently meaningful to lead to improvement of instruction.

Considerable progress is expected with the advent of the Dragon Core. MSUM has taken the opportunity to build in assessment as a component of the program. Requirements of the program are defined in terms of competencies and the methods and criteria for assessing these competencies were developed as a part of the program design. The program is required of all new entering freshmen in fall of 2006, will be required of all new entering transfers as of fall 2007 and will be required of all graduated by fall of 2009 or later. As a complement to this, new committees and structures to focus on student assessment have replaced both the Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment Committee and the role of assessment of learning of the Liberal Studies Committee. One new committee, Student Learning Outcomes Assessment, or SLOAC, deals with departmental assessment and the Dragon Core Assessment Committee working with a newly appointed Assistant Vice President for Assessment, who reports directly to the vice president for academic affairs, is designed to aid departments in continuation of their work and to serve as a major resource as the Dragon Core courses are developed and implemented.

<http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/dragoncore/assess.htm>

Deferred Maintenance

The 2000 team also cited a challenge related to deferred maintenance. “Although a comprehensive assessment of deferred maintenance exists, a need remains to reduce this liability.”

Considerable progress indeed has been made in this area. As indicated by the Progress Report submitted to the Commission in 2002, the University stood in 1995 with approximately \$45 million in deferred maintenance. At the time of merger of the three systems, the Board of Trustees was very concerned and ordered a system-wide study of deferred maintenance resulting

in an estimate of \$61 million for MSUM and \$499 million for the System. With the tremendous support of the MnSCU board of Trustees and Minnesota legislators, especially our local Senate and House representatives, significant improvement has been made. The Repair and Renewal is a part of the University budget, but the Higher Education Asset Preservation and Renewal (HEAPR) and Capital Bonding funds come from directly from the legislature based upon MnSCU requests.

Year	Repair and Renewal	HEAPR	Capital Bonding
1998	\$340,000	\$12,400,000	\$ 1,400,000
1999	740,000		
2000	740,000	3,000,000	5,100,000
2001	1,180,000		
2002	540,000	2,120,000	19,855,000
2003	540,000		
2004	740,000	2,600,000	10,000,000
2005	740,000		
2006	740,000	2,600,000	9,600,000
2007	740,000		
Totals	\$7,000,000	\$22,720,000	\$45,955,000
		Grand total	\$75,675,000

Budget Reserve

A final concern expressed in 2000, “Although the institution has made progress with enrollment, retention and marketing which has resulted in a stable current budget, a need exists to increase the institution’s reserve.”

The reserve fund is now stable at 3%, as required by the Board of Trustees. This fund has been built over a period of budget reductions and has required careful and thoughtful planning. The MnSCU Board of Trustees recommended a University reserve of 3% of the general operating budget for FY 2003 (essentially a cap) with the explicit purpose of minimizing the increase in tuition rates at the MnSCU Universities and Colleges. During a hearing of the Board’s Finance and Facilities Committee in spring of 2002, MSUM received special acknowledgement for both setting the 3 percent reserve requirement and for allocating other available funds to the general operating budget and thereby minimizing the increase in tuition for 2002-2003.

Remaining Concerns Found in the Team Report That Were Not Accepted

These issues will be addressed for completeness since they are in the copy of the team report provided for the visiting team.

Concern 4. Faculty Governance

“A system that excludes some faculty members from fully participating in the governance processes of the institution is a form of discrimination which simply cannot be tolerated in a university environment.”

MSUM is one of seven universities in the MnSCU system subject to the terms and conditions negotiated between the Inter Faculty Organization (IFO) and MnSCU. One of the features of our Agreement is that the IFO has the right to appoint University Committees in consultation with the President. Under law, those individuals who do not elect to join a union such as the IFO must still pay costs of bargaining the terms and conditions of employment. They are assessed a “fair share” of these costs but are not union members. The IFO does not appoint “fair share” faculty to committees. The team’s statement was in response to this practice. However, task forces may be appointed by the President in consultation with the IFO, and other committees, such as program committees are appointed by the President. Fair share faculty have, at times, been appointed to program committees and task forces by the President. This situation has been challenged through grievances and upheld. Thus it is a matter over which the university has neither choice nor control.

Concern 5. Quality of Physical Plant and Deferred Maintenance

“With the obvious exception of the business center, the quality of the MSU physical plant and deferred maintenance is a major concern.”

This was a very proper concern and has been addressed above.

Concern 6. Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness

“The 1986 NCA comprehensive evaluation team offered a concern that...there did not appear to be an appropriately rigorous evaluation of teaching effectiveness. This concern remains today. The new requirement for professional development plans and every four year evaluations of tenured faculty may begin to address this serious problem, if the problem is effectively implemented and monitored. However, the team’s review of some of these initial professional development plans found them to be not very meaningful; and team discussions with some senior faculty indicated their intent to totally disregard the program.”

MSUM believes that the team did not explore carefully the system for teaching evaluation that was in existence in 1996. Perhaps they were looking for a required form for faculty evaluation by students. The process is one following the collective bargaining Agreement, as it must be, and is discussed in more detail in Chapter five. A careful review of faculty files would have demonstrated that the development plan was developed with and approved by the immediate supervisor, i.e. dean, and that annual reports were filed by all probationary faculty with evaluation statements received from departments, department chairs, dean and Academic Vice President. Teaching was evaluated in part by a review of materials but also, for each faculty reviewed, deans invited groups of students who had taken courses from that person the previous term, selected at random, to come in to discuss their experiences with that instructor. The faculty member then met with the dean to discuss the evaluation and student comments. Comments were integrated into each dean’s evaluation. It is possible that the team was reacting to the fact that, at that time there was no provision in the Agreement for review of tenured full professors.

Since 1996, several changes have occurred. First, a revision of the IFO Agreement now calls for reports every two years from tenured full professors and clearly specifies that “for faculty with teaching assignments, the PDP shall include a process for student assessment” meaning student evaluation of faculty. (Reference Article 22, page 68 and Section C. Schedule and Section D, Subd. 1, first paragraph).

Second, following a grievance in which the administration’s practice of interviewing students as part of the evaluation process was upheld, the local faculty association and the administration developed an optional faculty evaluation form and process that faculty may use (reference). Faculty who use this process may add additional questions and are encouraged to do so. Those who opt not to use this process are then subject to the dean’s interview process used previously. Thus a standard evaluation form, while optional, is now available.
<http://www.mnstate.edu/acadaff/Departments/TeachingEval/procedure.htm>

Concern 7.

“The evaluation team did not find the broad understanding of the linkage of scholarly activity to graduate education and the quality of undergraduate programs that one would expect to find. . .MSU faculty must accept a greater responsibility for scholarly activity and the institution must increase efforts to encourage, support and reward scholarly activity that is shared beyond the immediate campus.”

We do not understand the basis for this comment. And it is a concern that was not upheld by the Readers panel. While “publish or perish” is not our requirement, a number of faculty have very respectable publication records and we are especially well known for research efforts with undergraduates in the sciences. At the time of the visit, there were a number of senior faculty, now retired, who were not well published but felt their major role was instruction. While we still feel our major role is instruction, all faculty must include scholarly and/or creative activity goals as part of their professional development and evaluation plan. They are evaluated based upon progress in their plan. While our process for evaluation of faculty is a part of our collective bargaining agreement, the process is thorough, sound and carried out carefully by the deans of the colleges who are the immediate supervisors of college faculty.

Concern 8. Institutional Advancement

“Institutional advancement and development. Is critical to the future success of the institution. The evaluation team is concerned that this is not now appropriately recognized organizationally and in the assignment of personnel.”

At the time of the last visit, the position of Director of Development was being filled internally. This was very soon after the President had been forced to declare financial exigency, severe retrenchments had occurred, and funding was scarce. MSUM agrees that institutional advancement is important. In 1997, after an external search, the President hired Doug Hamilton as Executive Director of Alumni foundation and University Advancement. After working with the MSU Alumni Foundation and its board of directors for several years, it was clear that the Foundation needed its own professional director. Hamilton is currently the Executive Director of University Advancement and Patrick Hundley, hired in 2004, is the Executive Vice President of the Alumni Foundation and chief Development Officer. a

Self-Study Purposes and Process

Preparation for the self study began in the summer of 2004 during the planning week of the Academic Affairs Council (AAC). The group discussed ideas regarding structure and membership of various committees. Each dean suggested faculty from his or her area as well as other campus staff who would be appropriate to help with the self study. Given the recent change in the criteria by HLC, it was deemed best to have one committee for each criterion and the steering committee, which would consist of the criterion co-chairs and a student representative.

During the fall of 2004, Vice President Midgarden discussed AAC's recommendations with President Barden. A number of individuals were contacted to explore their willingness to serve, and in the spring term of 2005, President Barden appointed Dr. Deborah White, Associate Professor of Sociology and Dr. Judy Strong, Associate Vice-President for Academic Affairs to serve as co-chairs for the self study steering committee. He also appointed co-chairs and members of each of the five criteria teams. The steering committee convened for the first time on March 2, 2005. Both co-chairs and at least one member of each criterion committee attended the HLC meeting in Chicago.

In June 2005, the steering committee met for a one-day retreat to discuss MSUM descriptors, challenges, and unique features, and to develop a list of themes and challenges. The group met monthly throughout the summer. A self-study publicity subcommittee was added. (See Appendix xxx for membership rosters and self-study plans.) Much time was spent developing the timeline and the data list that would lead to our electronic resource room. A website was developed. It was agreed that Dr. Susanne Williams would be the writer and Dr. Alan Sheets would do the design work.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, the steering committee and the criterion committees each met twice a month. Also in fall of 2005, the afternoon session of professional development day was devoted to the self study. In conjunction with this session, a survey was given on issues related to accreditation. Later in the fall at the all-staff meeting, the self study was also featured and group discussion on mission and goals were held to gather input. In the spring of '06, open sessions were held by each criterion team to gather information and share information. Representatives of the self study team spoke during individual college meetings. The purpose at these meetings was not just to inform but also to encourage input and, sometimes, gather input. Visits were made to the Student Senate, the AFSCME annual meeting, the meeting of student organizations. Again, several members attended the HLC Meeting in Chicago.

The steering committee held monthly meetings during the summer of '06 to continue work on the self study documents.

Finally, in the fall of 2006, both the steering committee and criterion committees continued to meet to complete the self study. All faculty and staff were invited to attend another professional development day. The morning session featured the self study, but focused how major campus initiatives are helping us to continue to meet our mission and to prepare for the future.

Presentations were given by key administrators related to planning, student success, marketing, and facilities. Then a fair was held featuring areas where faculty or staff could meet with members of each criterion team, any of the speakers, and other individuals involved in importance related activities such as Student Services, Admissions, the campus-community alcohol initiative etc. Discussions at this event, for which over 300 faculty and staff registered, were enthusiastic and positive. Registration for this event included a second survey of issues related to accreditation. At this time this event was held, the full draft of the self study was available to the campus community for review and suggestions. Thus, the campus community was empowered to provide comments and suggestions to the document before it was finalized. The committee was in complete agreement that this was a critical need for the self study document. The team also asked specific individuals to review the draft of the report given their unique knowledge and experiences. Drafts were sent electronically to the President, Administrative Council, bargaining unit heads, the President of the Student Senate. All were requested to share the document widely and ask for comments. A copy was also sent to our MnSCU liaison, Dr. Manuel Lopez. A special email address was provided for comments. A few comments were received.