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Subject: Campus Update

Colleagues,

As we are now well in to the start of the semester, I thought it would be a good time to update you on a few things around and relevant to our campus community:

1) What may go without saying is that the new STEM building is open and in full use. What you may not know, however, is that faculty and students alike are finding that the active-learning design and cutting edge learning environments of the building are living up to and exceeding expectations. Enthusiasm from everyone in the building is off the meter and we can be proud to now have a building which offers our campus considerably more teaching space and enrollment capacity while doing so through the best learning environment in our entire state if not region.

2) Budget forecasts for the state continue to trend behind on anticipated revenues so there is little doubt that all North Dakota state agencies will experience a mid-biennium budget rescission. That of course is never good news, but NDSU is in arguably the best financial position it has been in for decades if not its entire history, and we anticipate being able to accommodate the situation with much less felt consequence than many of our sister institutions.

3) While an interesting level of attention (and misinformation) has been focused to my recent trip to India and Malaysia, the trip itself was as intended and hugely successful. As you probably know, India in particular faces a stymieing challenge in terms of the number of individuals desiring a college education and the lack of capacity to accommodate them. That challenge only gets worse at graduate levels. Indian and Malaysian students who can navigate the challenges of qualifying to enter and remain in higher education must demonstrate extraordinary academic abilities and we sought to take advantage of that as an opportunity.

Our trip had a three-fold purpose. The first was focused on students already attending Indian and Malaysian universities and to encourage potential graduate study, at both masters and doctoral levels, through NDSU. The second focus was on creating collaborative research and scholarly activities between Indian and Malaysian universities with NDSU, bringing new breadth and scholarly productivity to those involved. And the third, complimenting and capitalizing on the first two, was to continue elevate NDSU's visibility and accessibility in Indian and Malaysian education communities. As suggested above, those countries produce some extraordinarily well prepared young people, coming from environments where English is the instructional language and countries with very flexible repatriation policies (in other words, graduates have the potential to stay in our state after graduation).

Before we left for the 23 hours of flight time home from Malaysia, we were already receiving application inquiries from a wide range of potential future students. Similarly, faculty we'd met with were being introduced to potential scholarly partners here. In short, the trip was a home run not just for NDSU but our entire state...as well as many new partners in India and Malaysia!

I can also report that the local community is extremely supportive of these efforts. In fact, I have been informed that private individuals from the community have volunteered to pay the difference between coach and business class. We are extremely fortunate to work with such supportive collaborators as we address workforce needs in North Dakota and our region. I want to extend my personal thanks to these generous individuals and to the very many of you who have been so kind in expressing your support over the years.

4) We've received preliminary drafts of the NCA accreditation report for NDSU. While not yet final, it appears we'll have a positive outcome and confirmation of the great work being done here across the university and its activities. In fact, we remain and continue to climb in the ranks of the nation's top 100 colleges and universities and that's because of the work and contributions you make to our success.

Dean Bresciani

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