

HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE - HIGHER EDUCATION POLICY AREAS

This memorandum summarizes the higher education policy areas suggested at the Higher Education Committee meeting on September 26-27, 2007, including information on related issues identified, previous and current initiatives, North Dakota University System proposed recommendations for action, and potential next steps.

Higher Education Policy Area	Related Issues Identified	Previous and Current Initiatives	North Dakota University System Proposed Recommendations for Action	Potential Next Steps for the Higher Education Committee Relating to the Proposed Recommendations for Action
Student preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aligning high school curriculums with college entrance requirements • Transforming grade 12 • Establishing institutional standards so prospective college students know what is expected of them • Providing counseling services to students in kindergarten through grade 12 • Providing remedial education 	<p>In September 2005, the State Board of Public School Education, State Board of Higher Education, Education Standards and Practices Board, and State Board for Career and Technical Education established a steering committee charged with developing a P-16 Education Task Force. The task force consisted of 38 members representing various levels of education, the business community, school boards, associations, state agencies, students, and parents.</p> <p>The task force agreed upon 6 goals and 26 strategies relating to improving education in North Dakota. The following are strategies relating to student preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish statewide requirements for high school graduation and college admission of 4 years of language arts/reading, 4 years of math, 3 years of science, 3 years of social/multicultural studies, 1 year of physical education, and 2 years of foreign language, career and technical education, or fine arts. • Develop a statewide data system to ensure all students are proficient through regular assessments and individual assistance. • Create a commission to develop on a continuing basis a common set of standards and expectations at all levels of education in North Dakota. • Increase the number of student-teacher contact days. • Increase the number of academic and career counselors to assist students and parents to set and achieve appropriate career paths and goals. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for a permanent statewide P-16 council • Align high school graduation requirements with college entrance requirements • Provide resources for comprehensive career advising • Recommend participation in the American Diploma Project • Partner with kindergarten through grade 12 schools to implement ACT's Explore-Plan-Act (EPAS) program to enhance student preparation for college and the 21st century workforce • Provide incentives to encourage students to take advanced college preparatory courses • Partner with kindergarten through grade 12 educators in statewide initiatives, such as Project Lead the Way, Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) pipeline, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive information from representatives of the University System and the Department of Public Instruction regarding the state's P-16 Initiative, including the status of the strategies identified by the P-16 Education Task Force and future plans • Receive information from representatives of the University System and the Department of Public Instruction regarding resources needed for providing comprehensive advising • Receive information from representatives of the University System and the Department of Public Instruction regarding efforts to align high school graduation requirements with college entrance requirements and efforts to encourage high school students to take advanced college preparatory courses • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding remedial education, including information as to who is being provided remedial courses--by subject, campus, and high school--and how North Dakota compares with other states

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Student retention and completion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ranking lowest in the region in student retention from the first to second year Ranking 35th in the nation in six-year bachelor's degree graduation rates Ranking 49th in the nation in the migration of college graduates aged 22 to 64 	<p>According to the North Dakota University System's <i>2006 Accountability Measures Report</i>, students who left University System institutions during the fall 2005, spring 2006, and fall 2006 semesters were asked to complete the ACT Evaluation and Survey Service survey. Approximately 390 students completed the survey, of which 39.3 percent were freshmen. Major reasons identified for leaving the institution included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decided to attend a different college - 33.9 percent. Wanted to move to (or transferred to) a new location - 18.1 percent. Desired major was not offered by this college - 15.8 percent. Health-related problem (family or personal) - 15.1 percent. Family responsibilities were too great - 9.2 percent. Accepted a full-time job - 8.2 percent. Conflict between demands of job and college - 8.2 percent. Tuition and fees were more than I could afford - 8.2 percent. Experienced emotional problems - 7.7 percent. Dissatisfied with my grades - 7.4 percent. Wanted to live nearer my parents or loved ones - 7.4 percent. Academic advising was inadequate - 7.4 percent. <p>The following are North Dakota University System action steps relating to the State Board of Higher Education's objectives for fiscal year 2008:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan an annual statewide articulation and transfer conference to discuss collaborative and transitional issues to enhance student retention. Explore articulation and transfer initiatives that would ease the transition for out-of-state students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support development of the statewide longitudinal data system to better understand student progression within and among institutions Provide resources to continue and expand systemwide initiatives that address student social and behavioral issues, such as the drug and alcohol consortium Provide resources for comprehensive career advising Support targeted initiatives on student preparation and affordability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive information from representatives of the Statewide Longitudinal Data System Committee regarding the status of implementing a statewide longitudinal data system Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the University System's action steps for fiscal year 2008 relating to student retention and completion Receive information from students regarding the reasons why students are dropping out after the first and second years of college and what the state can do to assist with retention and completion

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Affordability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of tuition waiver activity Likelihood that the lack of adequate financial aid may require students to quit their education or move out of state for higher-paying jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve information systems to support retention and progression. <p>According to the North Dakota University System's <i>2006 Accountability Measures Report</i>, tuition and fees at the University of North Dakota, North Dakota State University, and Minot State University were less than their regional counterparts. The average rates at the other University System four-year institutions were about the same as their regional counterparts, and the average two-year college rate was more than the regional average. Tuition and fees at University System institutions for the 2005-06 school year, as a proportion of median household income, were slightly higher than the regional average with the greatest difference occurring at two-year colleges.</p> <p>One of the University System's action steps relating to the State Board of Higher Education's objectives for fiscal year 2008 is to ensure affordability, including working with financial aid officers, the Bank of North Dakota, and others to identify unmet needs and barriers to student financial access to college.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider recommendations based on completed reports on financial access and textbook costs Examine data on North Dakota funding for needs-based financial aid and support additional state funding based on the results of the review Examine interrelationship of financial aid, tuition, and state funding Consider options which ensure access to a two-year college is available to all North Dakotans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the University System's action step for fiscal year 2008 to ensure affordability and recommendations resulting from studies on financial access and textbook costs Receive information from students regarding affordability
Accessibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivering education programs where the needs are 	<p>One of the University System's action steps relating to the State Board of Higher Education's objectives for fiscal year 2008 is to explore costs, benefits, and challenges of higher education centers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider recommendations based on the study of the higher education center concept Review results of adult learners study to ensure consistency with identified statewide needs Support funding for increased bandwidth demand for the delivery of programs Support funding for an e-Transcript initiative to ease the application and transfer process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the University System's study of higher education centers and adult learners and plans for an e-Transcript initiative
An appropriate higher education structure for the 21 st century	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whether the structure of the University System and the State Board of Higher Education match the needs and expectations of the state Level of bureaucracy within the University System, including the level of funding 	<p>According to the North Dakota University System's <i>2006 Accountability Measures Report</i>, the University System spent 57 percent of its total combined revenues and state appropriations (excluding auxiliary revenues) on core services (instruction,</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a competitive work environment within the University System, ensuring that high-quality faculty and staff will be available to provide timely and efficient responses to state needs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive information regarding the structure of higher education systems in other states Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the level of bureaucracy within the University

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	<p>spent on academic versus administrative costs</p>	<p>research, and public service), 15 percent on support services and student aid (academic support and student services), and 16 percent on administration (the president's office, business office, and budget office) and physical plant.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue support for centers of excellence • Consider recommendations for centers of excellence spinoff and expanded research activities • Consider a shared grant writing position • Acknowledge the role of comprehensive community colleges in providing occupational degrees, preparing students for transfer to four-year institutions, and providing workforce training 	<p>System, including the level of funding spent on academic versus administrative costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive information regarding centers of excellence
<p>A vision for and expectations of the North Dakota University System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proper vehicle for engaging stakeholders 	<p>The Higher Education Committee during the 1999-2000 interim through the use of a Higher Education Roundtable discussed shifts, trends, and realities that impact the state of North Dakota and the University System and developed expectations for the University System, recommendations concerning higher education in North Dakota, and accountability measures and success indicators that correspond with the expectations for the University System.</p> <p>The Higher Education Committee during the 2001-02 interim through the use of a Higher Education Roundtable reviewed plans for and accomplishments relating to the recommendations of the 1999-2000 Higher Education Roundtable, reviewed the state's New Economy Initiative and its linkage to the Higher Education Roundtable cornerstones and recommendations, and developed high-priority action items concerning higher education in North Dakota.</p> <p>The Higher Education Committee during the 2003-04 interim through the use of a Higher Education Roundtable reviewed the status of higher education in North Dakota, reviewed the progress made, current status, and further actions needed to enhance the economic and social vitality of the state and make the state more attractive for new business and business expansion, reviewed the impact of the Higher Education Roundtable on higher education in the state, and developed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize the roundtable process to assist with completion of the 2007-08 interim study and report • Create opportunities for open communication with all stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the current vision for and expectations of the University System • Convene a Higher Education Roundtable meeting

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		<p>recommendations for action by the Legislative Assembly, University System, executive branch, and private sector.</p> <p>The Higher Education Committee during the 2005-06 interim through the use of a Higher Education Roundtable received information on Operation: Intern, "soft skills" areas of education and training, and centers of excellence.</p> <p>One of the University System's action steps relating to the State Board of Higher Education's objectives for fiscal year 2008 is to collaborate with the Legislative Assembly and other key stakeholders to enhance the Higher Education Roundtable process.</p>		
Higher education funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding comparisons with other states • Whether the University System long-term financing plan and resource allocation model are appropriate • Appropriate accountability measures 	<p>The Higher Education Committee during the 2005-06 interim studied higher education funding and accountability. The Legislative Council selected and contracted with MGT of America, Inc., to assist with the study. MGT of America, Inc., concluded because of the difficulties implementing the ConnectND system, the University System did not have, at that time, the capability of collecting, retrieving, and using data on student enrollments by course, discipline, and level needed to support a funding formula; therefore, the current method of funding using peer comparisons was the most appropriate base funding methodology.</p> <p>MGT of America, Inc., also evaluated the University System's accountability measures and benchmarks in terms of appropriateness and adequacy and provided the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish benchmarks and goals for each measure. • Include data for each higher education institution in summary fashion in the University System annual performance and accountability report. • Reduce the number of accountability measures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide funding to achieve competitive faculty and staff salary levels • Support targeted funding to strategic initiatives • Provide adequate base funding support • Review capital asset needs • Monitor accountability measures • Utilize the roundtable process for continued review and refinement of the accountability measures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding funding comparisons with other states, including the possibility of receiving funding information from nontraditional sources • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding accountability measures, including any suggested changes

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the number of accountability measures is reduced, retain those measures for five or six years. • Include a measure of faculty productivity that is appropriate for each institution. 		
Effectiveness and efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesigning courses and transforming curriculum • Maintaining educational quality in a flexible environment 	One of the University System's action steps relating to the State Board of Higher Education's objectives for fiscal year 2008 is to reduce complexity through collaboration, including establishing appropriate user groups to examine issues and make recommendations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue strong support for ConnectND • Provide incentive or seed funding to encourage further collaborative programs and services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the University System's action step for fiscal year 2008 relating to reducing complexity through collaboration • Receive information from representatives of the University System regarding the level of flexibility that can be provided without jeopardizing institutional accreditation • Receive information regarding the National Center for Academic Transformation model for redesigning courses and transforming curriculum