All Staff Forum Minutes  
Tuesday, November 16, 2010  
11:30-1:00, MHC 1304 and TMH 252  

Members present: Linda Dorn, John Barron, Margaret Cahill, Liz Dussol, Nate Rolloff, Kim Schumann, Sandy Schwartz, Kay Wimer, Tony Lewno  
Absent: Jerry Sweeney  

Carissa and Linda made an introduction of themselves and the councils.  
Fr. Malone gave the welcome and blessing.  

Dr. Susan Huber gave an update on the academic side. UST is currently going through the 5th external accreditation since 2008 for the Grad schools. We should know in spring or sooner the result of the latest accreditation, but the outlook is very promising from comments made by the committee. Graduate enrollment at best is flat, several colleges have not met their targeted enrollment. However many schools have met goals and undergraduate is at a high which helps keep us afloat overall. She introduced Chato Hazelbaker as Interim Director of Graduate Marketing. He stated that we already have in place fantastic programs, now we just need to market them more. This position is a coordinator that will maximize resources. Google is one area we are planning to implement advertising as well as some other routes such as possibly LinkedIn, etc.  

Dr. Mark Dienhart gave update on the state of the university. A few specifics: we have a large freshman class which is good news, the visible construction projects are continuing, and US News and World report ranked us higher again this year. We are trying to move forward yet in this Great Recession. $14 trillion has been lost by families in this recession, housing has declined, thus peoples plans have changed. Affordability is a key component we need to look at. We are an enrollment driven institution. We are now at the midpoint for MN Private Colleges for pricing/cost to attend. We are in the 1/3 of universities established before 1900 that have survived. We are now over $404 million on our capital campaign of $500 million of which we have 2 years left. We still have many challenges ahead of us but we will continue to face them and overcome them in time.  

Mark Vangsgard spoke on the financial state. He quoted, “This is the budget that if we achieve it will allow us to keep our jobs”. There is great importance in the budget. We hit our budget but didn’t hit it in a very clean way. There were more costs in areas that we didn’t plan for but other areas were able to adjust to cover for it luckily. While our endowment had declined by about 20% in 2008, we are back on the road to recovery and have gained about 8% back. We only had a 3.5% change from FY10 to 11 for comprehensive educational cost. We are now 8th among MN Private Colleges. Graduate tuition has hit a plateau over the past few years now. We are at our debt capacity at this point so we don’t have further building plans, aside from current projects that are in progress. FY11 Operating Expenses are $193 million, $111 being compensation, $29 million fringe benefits and $53 non-compensation. Part of our plan has been to use more internal resources to be more efficient overall. Such as using our own catering and service
center. There was a benefit dependent audit, external purchasing is more strict, physical plant now does day cleaning of buildings rather than 3 shifts.

Dr. Susan Alexander talked about Diversity. The departure of Lawrence Potter has left a big question mark and there are changes in replacement policies so we are attempting to leave that position open for 1 year as well. We are looking for an internal person to work 1/3 of a position as the director of diversity. The climate of the university is the responsibility of the university as a whole, not just this department.

Edna Comedy spoke on HR initiatives. The dependent audit recently conducted raised some questions so she will address that. There is a fiscal responsibility to control cost which is what we are trying to do. We are self-insured so we need to be our own auditors. We have a legal obligation to ensure all employees and dependents covered are eligible to receive coverage. Ineligible dependents add costs. Our plan covers 1207 employees and 1211 dependents and spouses at an annual $4100 per dependent. Not all that were incorrectly on the plan were “cheating UST”. The auditing company stated that typically 1/3 lack the understanding of the plan, 1/3 forgot to make required changes, 1/3 were intentional. Going forward we will require proof of dependent eligibility.

Questions:
Will we have Christmas week off again? Fr. Dease will have to answer that.
Will there be a children’s Christmas party? Yes, Dec. 18th.
What are the trends of actual vs. budget expenses. The past few years we have under-budgeted but this past year we have several hundred dollars unspent.
A question was raised concerning tuition remission for unions. The status for tuition remission for each union is negotiated each year.
Are there any goals for online learning? Sue Huber said there is a plan in place but it may change as needed. It can depend on the niches in the community. Some areas already have an online pedagogy while others are looking to create one. We will definitely move forward with online learning, it’s just a matter of how.
How soon can we plan to see a return on investment on accreditation? We would like to see it immediately but it can take some time. Many of the factors are out of our hands.

Respectfully submitted,
Nate Rolloff