SBHE Discusses Cost and Affordability

State Board of Higher Education members discussed the cost of higher education at the June 21, 2007, board meeting at the University of North Dakota.

SBHE member Bruce I. Christianson said that, in his six years on the board, student costs and student loan debt have increased considerably. Debt for a typical UND or NDSU bachelor’s degree recipient had increased from about $14,000 to $17,000 in 2000–01 to $22,000 in 2005–06. Tuition and fees for some UND and North Dakota State University students had risen almost 90 percent in the same period.

The board discussion focused on concerns about the impact of rising costs on students, especially low-income students.

Additional information related to this topic was provided to the SBHE at the May 2007 board meeting. Highlights of the 2007 Student Affordability Report follow, and the complete report is available on the NDUS Web site at: ndus.nodak.edu/reports/default.asp?ID=356

- Tuition and fees at MiSU, UND and NDSU are between 2.4 and 5.2 percent less than regional counterpart averages. Average rates at the other four-year universities are about the same as their regional counterparts. The average two-year college rate is $618 or 22 percent more than the 2006-07 regional average.
- NDUS tuition and fees, as a percentage of median North Dakota household income, are slightly higher than the regional average, except at the two-year colleges, which continue to be higher than the regional average.
- When comparing NDUS institutions (other than the two-year colleges) to peer institutions, generally North Dakota institutions are still more affordable for those families who have the least ability to pay.
- The total average 2006-07 estimated student cost is: $14,600 at UND and NDSU; $12,400 at MiSU; $11,900 at DSU, MaSU and VCSU; and $10,800 at the two-year colleges. Total costs include tuition, fees, room, board, books, supplies, travel and other miscellaneous expenses.
- During 2005-06, more than 75 percent of North Dakota students applied for various forms of financial aid, including federal and state needs-based financial aid, loans and other institutional aid.
- State grant funding for financially needy students, as a percent of tuition collections, has declined from more than 2 percent in 1989-91 to 1.19 percent in 2005-07. (HB1003 includes a general fund increase of $2.17 million for the State Grant program for the 2007-09 biennium.)
- The number of needs-based state grants decreased from 3,700 in 1999-00 to about 2,500 in 2005-06. In 2006-07, less than 17 percent of the qualified needy students who applied for a state grant received funding.

SBHE Reviews Progress on Goals and Objectives

The State Board of Higher Education made significant progress on its three long-range goals and seven 2006–07 objectives, according to a report provided by Chancellor Eddie Dunn at the June 2007 board meeting.

Dunn reported that, of the 116 major action steps aimed at achieving these goals and objectives, 110 were completed with most of the remaining six either underway or ongoing. In addition to completing this ambitious annual plan, he said a number of other accomplishments contributed to achieving board and University System goals.

Dunn cited several successes related to the 2007 Legislative Session, such as securing additional funding to address ConnectND challenges. He also said the board and system have made significant progress in increasing awareness of the importance of the University System in attracting, developing and retaining the human capital needed to create a brighter future for our citizens and our state.
SBHE Appoints Search Committees

Search committees to assist in the selection of presidents for the University of North Dakota and Dickinson State University have been named. Each committee includes representatives of the university, the community and the State Board of Higher Education.

In January 2007, UND President Dr. Charles Kupchella announced his plan to retire, and DSU President Dr. Lee Vickers announced his upcoming retirement in April 2007. Both presidents will retire sometime in early 2008.

A list of search committee members follows.

**UND Search Committee**
- Paul LeBel: chair and dean, School of Law
- Alice Brekke: assistant to the president, Budget Office
- Rick Burgum: president and CEO, Arthur Companies
- Bev Clayburgh: former SBHE member
- Duaine Espegard: SBHE member
- Jay Fisher: president, UND student body
- Glenda Lindseth: professor and associate dean, College of Nursing
- Doug Munski: president, Faculty Senate, geography professor
- Tim O’Keefe: executive vice president, Alumni Association and Foundation
- Myrna Olson: Chester Fritz distinguished professor of education
- Judi Pauket: community relations manager, Xcel Energy

**DSU Search Committee**
- Pam Kostelecky: chair and SBHE member
- Jami Arnold: past president, DSU student body
- Paul Ebeltoft: former SBHE member, attorney
- Hal Haynes: executive director, Student Life
- Roger Kilwein: chair, Department of Business and Management
- Dr. Corinne Kraus: assistant professor, physics
- Roberta Kudrna: administrative assistant, Division of Student Development
- Cheryl Lantz: assistant professor, nursing
- Marty Oderman-Gardner: director, Extended Campus and West River Teacher Center
- Jack Olin: former SBHE member, Dickinson Ready Mix
- Paul Steffes: CEO, Steffes Corporation
- Linda Steve: CPA and CFO, Medora Environmental Inc.
- Roger Ternes: director, athletics
- Pam Wilz: past president, Alumni Association
- Bill Goetz: chancellor, NDUS (ex officio)

Committee Recommendations Approved

Budget and Finance Committee recommendations approved at the June 2007 State Board of Higher Education meeting include the following:

**Policy Manual Revisions**

- **Introduction and First Reading**
  - 302.7: Budget, Audit and Finance Committee
- **Second Reading and Final Passage**
  - 340.2: Foundations
- The FY 2008 annual SBHE budget
- MiSU-B authorization to establish nonresident tuition rates at 150 percent of the resident rate
- Ratification of the chancellor’s action authorizing UND to seek Emergency Commission approval for a $1,515,259 line of credit from the Bank of North Dakota to cover expenses incurred as a result of the spring 1997 flood pending reimbursement appeals to FEMA.
In the spirit of the Roundtable on Higher Education, North Dakota University System colleges and universities share the following examples of their contributions to the economic growth, educational excellence and social vitality of North Dakota.

**Bismarck State College**

U.S. Energy Secretary Samuel Bodman recently designated BSC as the National Power Plant Operations Technology and Education Center. On May 18, U.S. Sen. Byron Dorgan announced the designation, which recognizes BSC as the premier national center of education and training for energy industry operators and technicians.

BSC received notice this summer that the Bremer Foundation is awarding a $68,400 grant to address the shortage of laboratory technicians in North Dakota. BSC plans a statewide initiative to provide career information and recruit students into the Clinical Laboratory Technician Program, the state’s only accredited two-year lab program.

**Dickinson State University**

Stark Development Corporation has committed nearly $250,000 to a two-year pilot program with DSU’s Strom Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The Talent Initiative Project will create a regional workforce development system intended to raise awareness about southwestern North Dakota and attract talented workers to the region.

Tamar Wright, a junior nursing student, was named 2007 Student Nurse of the Year by the Nursing Students Association of North Dakota. This marks the second time in three years that DSU’s nurse of the year has gone on to earn statewide recognition.

**Lake Region State College**

Dr. Sharon L. Etemad announced in May that she will retire as president of LRSC effective Jan. 4, 2008. Etemad has led the college since 1987. She joined LRSC in 1982 as associate dean of instruction and served as dean of instruction from 1984 to 1987.

**Mayville State University**

MaSU will receive $1.9 million from the Strengthening Institutions Program of the U.S. Department of Education. The grant will assist in developing and delivering academic programs and will help improve student retention. Distance learning capabilities and program offerings will be expanded. The grant will be distributed over five years, beginning Oct. 1, 2007.

**Minot State University**

MiSU President David Fuller and five academic visitors visited Scandinavia in June to establish international study partnerships. While there, Fuller and Dag Bjerketvedt, rector of Telemark University College in Norway, signed an agreement. MiSU established a partnership in January with Kristianstad University in Sweden and anticipates finalizing an agreement with Aalborg University in Denmark.

Fuller and David Gipp, United Tribes Technical College president, signed a three-year partnership agreement June 19. This accord eases transfer of credits by UTTC students to MiSU to attain four-year degrees and provides for exploration of academic program collaboration. MiSU has struck similar agreements with two additional tribal community colleges in the past year.

**MiSU-Bottineau**

The fourth annual Turtle Mountain Birding Festival was held at MiSU-B on May 18-20. Individuals from Alabama, California, Wyoming, Colorado, Maryland, Indiana, New York and North Dakota as well as Manitoba participated in the event. The Turtle Mountain Forest and J. Clark Salyer Wildlife Refuge were prime locations for the birders to add to their life lists.

**North Dakota State College**

In June, NDSCS students and faculty participated in a three-week course at the NDSU Center for Nanoscale Science and Engineering. Students in the laboratory instrumentation course, NANO 205, learned how clean rooms operate, how to work in them and how to use instruments found in high-tech industry settings.

NDSCS conducted a three-day diesel technology seminar for 23 high school faculty and guidance counselors in June. Funded in part by a North Dakota Career and Technical Education grant, the seminar highlighted the latest technology used in the agriculture, construction and trucking industries.

**North Dakota State University**

The NDSU Downtown building has received a “certified” rating through Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED is a building industry coalition that promotes environmentally responsible building.

The NDSU chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers defeated 42 colleges in the 16th annual National Student Steel Bridge Competition. This is the fifth time the chapter has won the national title.

**University of North Dakota**

The Engelstad Family Foundation pledged $20 million to UND to fund endowed chairs in medicine and engineering as well as more than 100 scholarships. UND also received $5 million from the late Louise (Sutton) Ferguson ’37, to fund high-achiever students and an anonymous $1 million gift for Division I scholarships.

The UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences Physical Therapy Program has been reaccredited for 10 years by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. The report included four commendations for the program and cited no areas of non-compliance, a rare phenomenon. The program offers a doctor of physical therapy degree.
Valley City State University

VCSU will receive a three-year $573,909 grant from the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian program. The funding will be used primarily to develop new graduate curriculum in library and information technologies that will be offered as a component of VCSU’s online master of education degree program.

The North Dakota Women’s Network named Dr. Ellen-Earle Chaffee Woman of the Year at the organization’s first annual meeting and award dinner June 15 in Fargo.

Williston State College

In March 2007, WSC received formal notification that the Institutional Actions Committee of The Higher Learning Commission voted to accept WSC’s application to join the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). This change in WSC’s affiliation status with The Higher Learning Commission changes their next reaffirmation of affiliation to 2014 – 15.

Consent Agenda Items Approved

Consent agenda items approved at the June 2007 State Board of Higher Education meetings include the following:

**Academic Consent Agenda**

UND: A request to offer an RN to MS nursing program within the existing graduate nursing program

**Financial and Facility Consent Agenda**

UND and NDSU: 2007-09 allocation of $260,000 ($130,000 each) from the Education Incentive Program for doctoral programs

MiSU: Ratification of the chancellor’s action providing authority to seek Budget Section approval to increase spending authority for the dome floor replacement project from $387,000 to $431,500

NDSCS: Ratification of the chancellor’s action providing authority to seek Budget Section approval to use about $350,000 from the steam line replacement project for a water and sewer line project

NDSU: Authorization to issue and sell self-liquidating, tax-exempt bonds not to exceed $12 million to finance construction of the Living Learning Center-West and renovation of Ceres Hall

UND: Authorization to replace the roof and repair damages on the Laird Core and Sample Library at an estimated cost of $230,000

VCSU: Authorization to proceed with a steam line project at an estimated cost of $2.2 million

WSC: Authorization to purchase nine acres in the Williston East Industrial Park from the Williston State College Foundation at a cost of $20,833

WC: Authorization to proceed with the construction of the Petroleum Safety and Technology Center at an estimated cost of $700,000

**Personnel Consent Agenda**

NDSU and UND: Tenure requests

**Upcoming SBHE Meetings**

- Sept. 20, 2007 MiSU
- Sept. 25, 2007 Joint Boards