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[Morris Hires First Senior Administrative Director of Institutional Effectiveness](#)

Summary: The appointment responds to the growing trend of evaluating effectiveness in higher education.

MORRIS, Minnesota (August 17, 2015)—The University of Minnesota, Morris announces the appointment of its first senior administrative director of institutional effectiveness, Melissa R. Bert. The position is funded with new dollars from the University of Minnesota system through a request made in the campus’s annual budget compact process and responds to the growing trend of evaluating institutional effectiveness in American higher education.

According to the [Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges Resource Manual](#), “institutional effectiveness is the systematic, explicit, and documented process of measuring performance against mission in all aspects of an institution.” The recent trend of attention paid to effectiveness results from “declining public funding, changing demographics...and a tough job market” as reported in a [2013 article by The Atlantic](#). To address these concerns and to better assess its own performance, Morris has created this new position in time for the upcoming academic year.

Morris’s senior director of institutional effectiveness will work closely with senior-level administrators and others to provide information and analysis that supports administrative decision making, strategic planning, assessment and program review, accreditation, and data relevant to federal and other grant applications. Working collaboratively with campus staff and faculty in data gathering and reporting, she also will assist campus constituents in using and interpreting institutional data while building campus capacity to access and use data related to institutional effectiveness.

“Bert’s education and professional background as well as the collaborative spirit she exhibited when visiting the Morris campus make her an especially good fit for this position,” says Chancellor Jacqueline R. Johnson. “In addition, her previous research, her experience in conducting complex research projects, and her interest in matters related to access and equity will serve us well as we ask and answer the questions that will lead us to be an even more effective institution than we currently are.”

Bert comes to Morris from the San Francisco Bay Area of California and has extensive experience in research, student affairs, and postsecondary teaching. She most recently served the Early College Planning Initiative, a program conducted by researchers at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education and Stanford University School of Education, in partnership with uAspire and Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority, as director of data and evaluation. Bert holds both a doctor of education and a master of education from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education as well as a bachelor of arts in psychology from the University of California, Davis.

Bert’s work will build on Morris’s already strong tradition of institutional effectiveness. [The campus has twice been named the most effective of Minnesota’s public four-year institutions by the Midwestern Higher Education Compact and is considered “highly efficient” as well.](#)

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