

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

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Campus Assembly

Campus Governance

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10-24-2023

### Campus Assembly minutes 10/24/2023

Campus Assembly

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#### Recommended Citation

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Campus Assembly  
University of Minnesota Morris  
October 24, 2023 @ 11:40 am  
Via Zoom

I. **Chancellor's Remarks.**

I had the honor of being part of a roundtable a little more than a week ago while I was on the Twin Cities campus for the October Board of Regents meeting. It meant missing an hour or so of the Regents meeting, but I think the time was definitely well spent. Aside from the guests and reporters along one wall, the table itself was pretty small: a couple of distinguished faculty researchers in Twin Cities colleges, a rep from Cargill and one from Polar Semiconductor, the vice chancellor for Equity and Inclusion for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, the president of Hennepin Technical College, and one Twin Cities graduate student in chemistry—and me. Just to my right was Vice President for Research Shashank Priya, who invited me, and next to him was Senator Amy Klobuchar, and then the director of the National Science Foundation, Sethuraman Panchanathan. I only had a few minutes to speak at the table and informally afterward, but I hope that I made the case for how well our campus both encourages ALL of our students toward creativity and innovation in and beyond the sciences and prepares them remarkably well for world-changing further study and careers. I mentioned the recent recognition of one of our faculty as a Fellow of the Geological Society of America (Keith Brugger), the NSF grant that professors Sylke Boyd and Peter Dolan received in partnership with their Twin Cities colleague, the HMMI inclusive excellence grant that several faculty are involved in to develop ways to make the content of the introductory science experience more inclusive, our participation in the Sloan Foundation funded partnership with UMN College of Biological Sciences to build pathways to graduate programs for Native American students, our licensed alcohol and drug counseling pathway and the critical connections that our faculty in psychology are making with and for students in research and toward careers, and the large group of our students who as part of our American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) student organization participated in this year's national AISES conference in Spokane (I had to talk fast).

We are an impressive group, with a remarkable mission and record of success in so many forms. I am so grateful to the faculty and staff of this campus who focus so much of their energy and their time on helping to open doors for students. Vice President Priya let me know later that the NSF director was favorably impressed by what we what we achieve and what our students accomplish. Thank you.

The roundtable invitation is not in isolation. We are in a period of greater interest in collaboration and cooperation across the University of Minnesota's campuses and colleges than I've seen in my more than two decades at Morris, with interest in promoting the University of Minnesota as a SYSTEM and in building opportunities that make clear to students, faculty, staff, and external audiences that there are definite and distinct benefits to being part of the UMN system.

The extraordinary visit we had from the College of Education and Human Development earlier this month is one of the best recent examples of this. The dean of the college, three associate or assistant deans, the chief development officer, the chief financial officer, the human resources director, the innovation and partnership officer, and the director of the child development lab school (like the college's dean, one of our alumni), plus a host of faculty and graduate students visited our campus from Wednesday evening until Friday afternoon and engaged with our faculty, staff, and students. I really think the strength of this investment in terms of time and people is unprecedented, and the incentive for research collaborations is, too—I hope we have some of you moving forward on the research collaborations that were discussed, and thank you to all who were part of making this visit such a success.

Both the NSF roundtable and the CEHD visit also highlighted the need for and the power of mentoring, something that I think Morris staff and faculty do exceptionally well. Mentoring has been and very much should continue to be a central and distinctive strength of this campus. Both the NSF and the CEHD events also highlighted our campus as a place that cultivates innovation, a characteristic that I think is directly related to that strength in mentoring and could become even more prominent.

I took similar messages to conversations with Governor Walz the day before the NSF roundtable, when he and his wife welcomed me along with members of the board of regents and the other UMN chancellors to their temporary home at Eastcliff. I found myself in the somewhat surprising situation of having a fairly extended conversation with just the governor and president Ettinger, at which I, of course, said as much as I could about the remarkable work happening at this place.

And a few days before all these events in Minneapolis, I had the chance to talk about some of the same things when we hosted on campus a visit from the Minnesota House of Representatives Bonding Committee. We gave seven legislators and six staff members a tour of our top Higher Education Asset Preservation and Replacement (or HEAPR) funding requests, including the improvements in accessibility that we need to make especially for the MRC building, then hosted a dinner at which we and two other groups from the area gave presentations (I will say that I thought all three of the presentations were really worth funding).

Reaching back a little farther, shortly after our September Campus Assembly, we hosted two of the new Regents for their onboarding visit to campus, which they enjoyed and learned much from. Among the most important take-aways from their visit was the undergraduate research testimony to what makes this place distinctive and remarkable. I saw several of you at the Oyate hallway poster session, which was great, both in terms of the research presented and the audiences who were in attendance. While all of the students did a great job, one project in particular caught a regent's attention and led to the student, Gavin Zempel, being interviewed by Jay Kolls and then featured in a story on KSTP news.

Everything I just named helps raise the profile of this campus and, in turn, I hope it helps both with the number of students who want to come here and complete their degree here and with our own pride in the work we're doing. I know we have challenges; I know you all are working hard. I hope as you do so that you also keep in mind how much of a difference the work you're doing can make and does make.

To build further on the successes we have and to increase, we hope, general awareness of the University of Minnesota Morris and its assets, we will be elevating in the coming weeks our three-year pathways to degree. This has been a long time in coming—you can see that if you go back and check Assembly minutes—and the three-year plans began, as many of you will recall, with requests to discipline coordinators. The plans we received were then reviewed and, if I had questions about them, I met with the discipline coordinator; then Behmler staff and our student worker went through and made sure that each of these plans could actually work, at least with the current schedule. As I've said before, these truly are *sample* plans, snapshots of *one* pathway. Each student and each year will involve changes and, at times, creative thinking by advisers. I already know many of you who excel at this kind of thinking anyway—Jess Larson, I'm thinking of you and all the ways I know you've found to help students complete their degree, and I know Jess is just one of many. Check what courses are offered online at other UMN campuses, and to go back to my point about system collaboration, faculty might also consider offering an online course that conversations with system colleagues or advisers think would meet a need for them.

One further point of collaboration, on a different front: I have an update from our vice chancellor for finance and facilities Bryan Herrmann regarding the UMN system PEAK initiative (Positioned for Excellence, Alignment, and Knowledge). We have four people who opted (their choice) to move into PEAK operations centers, meaning they will be working for the system rather than for our campus individually—two in finance, one in HR, and one in marketing and communications. We are the pilot for PEAK implementation in finance and in HR, so we're starting about a month earlier than the rest of the

system. For staff who engage in purchasing, for instance, we will be starting to use the new system on November 6—it's a process, though, and not a sudden, all-at-once shift. There will be adjustments for staff who have work that is moving off their plates and to the operations centers, and we'll be figuring out in the coming weeks how their responsibilities will shift.

In the nearer future, the formal inauguration of me as chancellor is this Thursday, as I am sure you already know, and once again it will bring a lot of guests to campus, including some highly influential ones. While the ceremony's purpose has to do with my role, the day is really planned as a celebration of you. You are the University of Minnesota Morris, and what you do at and for this institution is worth elevating and celebrating. I hope that you can pause for at least a little while and celebrate together being part of the UMN Morris community.

II. **For Action.** From the Steering Committee. Approve minutes from September 26, 2023 Campus Assembly Meeting.

Request from Jenn Goodnough's FCC report: change SL to "senior leaders."

Approved with update.

III. **For Information.** From the Kapemni Program. Presented by Sylke Boyd.

The Kapemni program is an NSF-funded Minnesota partnership to foster Native American Participation in Astrophysics. Morris participants are Peter Dolan and Sylke Boyd, with TC faculty. Program is aiming to change that in the STEM fields, for us Physics is the focus, creating a pathway for Native American students to graduate programs. Kapemni is a Native American word, specifically a Dakota word, meaning to twist and rotate. The symbol is two tepees that touch on the apex, so whatever happens on earth, also happens in the sky, a pathway for the spirits to pass.

November 8th: double event from the Kapemni Program. Jim Rock will be conducting a workshop on Native American sky knowledge and Vuk Mandic, McKnight professor at the Twins Cities campus - public lecture.

IV. **For Information.** Student Affairs office updates. Presented by Sandy Olson-Loy, TJ Ross, Dave Israels-Swenson, Matt Johnson.

Student Affairs mission: *Student Affairs' programs and services develop student potential, foster student learning, persistence, and success, create a diverse inclusive community, and extend the UMN Morris liberal arts mission beyond the classroom.*

Last spring Student Affairs shared information with Campus Assembly on some of priority work in addressing current issues in student life – student mental health, building connections across differences through dialogue, and our robust civic engagement and community engagement programs.

Primary focus areas for 2023-2024:

- Advancing the UMN Morris strategic plan:
  - *developing integrated strategies to build an optimal and sustainable student body size*
  - *improving student retention and participation*
- Fostering Student (Re)Engagement:
  - *boosting student connections, meaning making, persistence, and success*

Aligned with these priorities, we will share a few key initiatives, highlights, and progress in:

- Residential Life

- Student Activities
- Intercollegiate Athletics

We've been guided in our work by the research and insights of Jillian Kinzie from Indiana University of Indiana who joined us on campus in late May and remotely in our August professional development day. This slide features some keys to student reengagement as we emerge with new understandings from the pandemic.

### **Fostering Student (Re)Engagement: Pandemic as Turning Point**

- Creating more structured opportunities for student reflection – to find meaning and value in their education and their way back to engagement. Research shows We are all more mindful of what we value and what gives us purpose.
- Building structured and informal opportunities to deepen interpersonal connections can help normalize the social dimension of learning. Human connections and relationships matter more than ever to quality education.
- Re-doubling efforts to redress systemic racism, injustices, and resulting inequities / making success possible for all students.
- Creating flexibility in learning processes & demonstrating learning gains while holding students accountable can help lower student stress and increase student agency.
- Enacting education and engagement holistically by designing student-centered operations that address students' unique academic and personal needs.

Other presenters: TJ Ross, Director of Residential and Community Life - highlights from the residential part of our residential liberal arts college mission; David Israels-Swenson, Sr. Director of Student Activities, Health and Wellness; Matt Johnson, Director of Intercollegiate Athletics.

### **Who lives on campus?**

95% of all first year students  
50% all enrolled students

Students who live on campus their first year have higher GPAs and are more likely to graduate from UMN Morris.

### **Community Development Plans: a focus on student engagement.**

Start of the Year events in every hall in the first two weeks of the year.

Plus traditional programming like the annual Homecoming Tug-o-War.

### **Building Intentional Engagement opportunities with residents.**

CA connections made / sociograms conducted in the first month.

Mapping connections, identifying resident support needs, linking students with resources.

### **New all-hall initiatives:**

- Meditation rooms  
Thanks MCSA, EDI, & NASS.

- Kitchen kits with basic cooking tools. Thanks MCSA.

### Residential Life: Educational Benchmarking '23

#### Areas of long-time success:

**Safety and Security:** 91% agree 6.5/7 Rank: top 3

How safe students feel in their room, hall/apartment, with their possessions in their room, or walking on campus at night.

**Community Environment:** 87% agree 6.2/7 Rank: top 4

To what degree do residents living nearby respect students' study time, sleep time, privacy, property?

#### Areas of focus and growth:

**Sense of Community:** 81% agree 5.9/7 Rank: top 20

Do students trust, respect, and feel accepted by other students in their living area?

**Personal Interactions:** 76% agree 5.5/7 Rank: top 35

To what extent has living on campus enhanced students' ability to meet other people, live cooperatively, resolve conflicts, and improve interpersonal relationships?

(Up from 2021: 4.9/7 = 66% agreement level. Rank:  
229/321)

### Student Activities, Conferences, and Events

First year students who join at least one student organization persist to the following year at higher rates than their peers.

New Students	Engaged Students Persisting	Not Engaged Students Persisting
Fall 2018	85.4%	65.3%
Fall 2019	79.4%	76.8%
Fall 2020	84.5%	76.3%
Fall 2021	72.3%	70.8%
Fall 2022	81.7%	68.9%

Students who join at least one student organization are more successful academically.

Semester	GPA of engaged students	GPA of students not engaged
Fall 2018	3.146	2.937

Fall 2019	3.166	2.978
Fall 2020	3.220	3.061
Fall 2021	3.304	3.134
Fall 2022	3.254	3.062
Fall 2023	3.220	3.028

**Even campus event attendance shows a positive correlation with academic success.**

<b>Attended at least this many events</b>	<b>Average GPA</b>
0	2.679
1	3.117
2	3.129
3	3.146
4	3.172
5	3.189
6	3.213

Student engagement is rising to near pre-pandemic levels.

This fall we launched our new Campus Connection system to track student engagement. Participation has been strong.

As of October 5, 2023:

**42%** of students have attended at least one event tracked in Campus Connection:

- 53% of first year students
- 40% of Sophomores
- 40% of Juniors
- 35% of Seniors

Based on admit year.

55% of students are a member of at least one student organization.

### Intercollegiate Athletics

#### Quick Facts and Figures:

- 19 NCAA Division III Sport Teams
  - ALL non-scholarship
- Currently 329 student-athletes
  - 32% of students
  - v. 294 in Fall 2022
- 3.13 Cumulative GPA, 2022-23

#### Three things to know for Fall 2023:

1. Free admission: all home sporting events for students, faculty, staff, and retirees and their families
2. Never miss an event: subscribe to Cougar Athletic schedules on your G-Cal
3. Cougar Days of Giving yielded more than \$36,000 in private gifts for athletics in the 2 days - (more than all of FY23). And more than \$45,000 to date

#### 2022-23 Student Athletes Report:

- 99%: my academic needs are considered by my coaches
- 98%: athletics environment encourages athletes to achieve academic goals
- 95%: faculty and staff support my participation in athletics
- 98%: I'm aware of mental health resources
- 97%: athletics fosters an appreciation for life-long health and fitness

#### Student Engagement & Persistence:

- New first-year Welcome Week student athlete gathering
- Cougar student athletes persist and graduate at higher levels than peers.
- Record high grad rates in 2023!
  - 73% in 6 year grad rate for SAs
  - Above 66% each year for 10 yrs

#### Discussion:

- Appreciation of all the data. Question: presentation showed correlation between engagement and student groups and academic success but correlation is not causation. Do we have data showing the directionality or a more complex relationship between those bits of data?
  - We have looked at some studies from other universities. Our size makes this more difficult. We will continue to look for those opportunities.
  - If we look at the data through academic alerts and faculty entering course data we would



find that the students who are not engaged academically are also less likely to be involved outside of the classroom. One of the keys to making Morris work is to get connected. We recommend for people try to connect with 2-3 things

- Question: What about students who are working? They are not connecting in their classes and they are likely not running students groups. Just trying to get some sleep at some point. These engagement numbers may reflect other issues in their life that are probably reflecting in their engagement in academics and student life.
  - The other way we need to look at this is that even those students that are struggling, we have seen that if they are able to participate in an engagement activity they have taken a step forward. This does help with retention and finding that sense of belonging and community.
- Update, athletics fundraising project is currently over \$46,000.

#### V. Campus Committee Reports.

Elena Machkosova for Faculty & P&A Affairs Committee.

FACPAAC discussions mostly focused on two issues:

- Feasibility of FPDD and other professional development work as a part of the committee workload
- Student recruitment and retention efforts by faculty and staff

The charge of overseeing professional development was added to FACPAAC after elimination of the professional development committee in 2019. After a thorough evaluation, we reached a unanimous agreement that the current setup for supporting this event is unsatisfactory. The committee has no time to do any other professional development coordination either. We looked into proposing to reinstate (in some form) the professional development committee, but, based on our email discussion with Consultative committee, this doesn't look like a promising direction. The alternatives that we are planning to discuss with Consultative and with the Dean's office include adding more members to FACPAAC (since our charge increased), streamlining available administrative support, and creating some summer stipend options for PDD organizers who work over the summer. We are also looking into whether the recent typical date and format of PDD work well for our campus.

In terms of recruitment and retention efforts we plan to meet with VC Bert to discuss the effectiveness of the efforts by faculty and staff, as well as data from exit interviews with students. The goal of the conversation is to see data on what's working, what doesn't, and what the main barriers are.

Lisa Bevevino for Membership - Committee still seeking full slate of students from MCSA, looking for full names and contact information; we want students involved and coming to our meetings.

#### VI. All University Reports.

Wes Flinn, campus representative on Committees on Committees noted the need for participants to fill vacancies. These are important roles, and UMN Morris reps often carry all the weight of a non-TC viewpoint. Please help us fill some vacancies.

#### VII. Announcements.

- Thank everyone that came for the presidential search committee and provided useful information from the search firm, which is still taking feedback (link in chat).
- REMINDER - TAKE ENGAGEMENT survey (see emails for detailed instructions)

Survey Dates - October 16 - November 3

- Please remember to come to the Inauguration festivities—and thanks to an anonymous donor, those attending the ceremony will receive a free lunch ticket.

VIII. **Adjournment.**

Meeting was adjourned at 12:40

# Student Affairs

## Campus Assembly Updates

*Student Affairs' programs and services develop student potential, foster student learning, persistence, and success, create a diverse inclusive community, and extend the UMN Morris liberal arts mission beyond the classroom.*



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Driven to Discover<sup>SM</sup>

# Student Affairs

Primary focus areas for 2023-2024:

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- Fostering Student (Re)Engagement:
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Initiatives, highlights, and progress in:

- Residential Life
- Student Activities
- Intercollegiate Athletics



# Fostering Student (Re)Engagement: Pandemic as Turning Point

- Creating more structured opportunities for student reflection – to find meaning and value in their education and their way back to engagement. We are more mindful of what we value and what gives us purpose.
- Building structured and informal opportunities to deepen interpersonal connections can help normalize the social dimension of learning. Human connections and relationships matter more than ever to quality education.
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- Creating flexibility in learning processes & demonstrating learning gains while holding students accountable can help lower student stress and increase student agency.
- Enacting education and engagement holistically by designing student-centered operations that address students' unique academic and personal needs.

"Tracking Student (Dis)Engagement Through the Pandemic: What Colleges & Universities Can Do to Foster an Engagement Reset" by Jillian Kinzie, Ph.D

# Residential and Community Life

## Who lives on campus?

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50% all enrolled students

Students who live on campus their first year have higher GPAs and are more likely to graduate from UMN Morris.



*2023 Tug Winners  
David C. Johnson Independence Hall residents*

## Community Development Plans: a focus on student engagement.

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*Skyfactor Educational Benchmarking, spring '23.  
289 institutions, UMN Morris: 40% response rate, 7 pt. scale with 7= strongly agree.*

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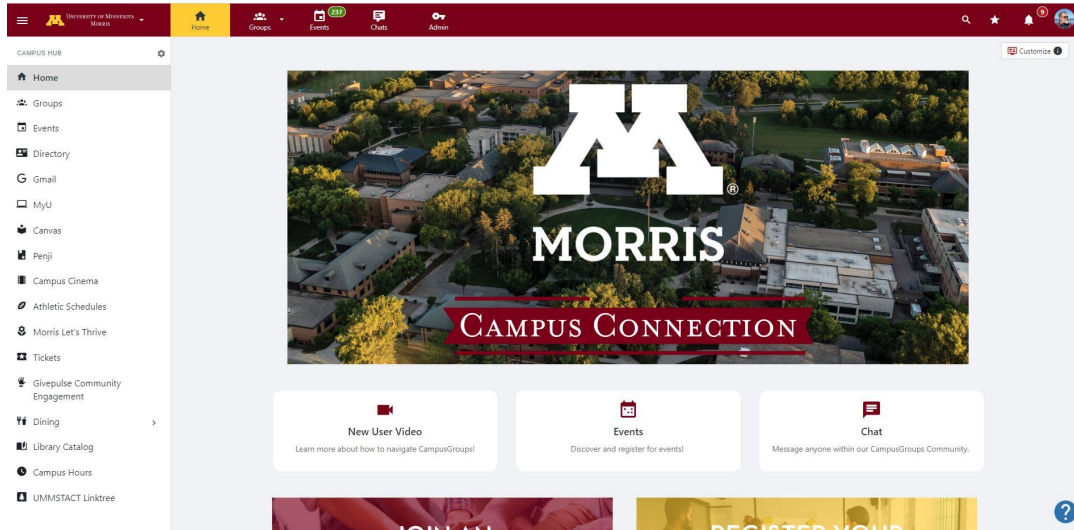
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# Discussion

