

III. Institutional Priorities: Morris

UMM: A Public Liberal Arts College

UMM aspires to be the best public liberal arts college in America and seeks to offer students of outstanding ability and motivation an intellectually liberating learning experience. This experience requires a faculty dedicated to significant scholarship and excellent teaching. As an exemplary public liberal arts college, UMM is:

- committed to offering access to an uncompromising experience in liberal learning, taught by a superb faculty. The UMM curriculum is traditional in basic shape, but innovative in many of its particulars. UMM is committed to offering access to outstanding students who, for financial, historical, or cultural reasons, might not feel they could attend similarly excellent private liberal arts colleges.
- dedicated to providing a full and rich campus life experience for students.
- committed to its region and people and intends to maintain and enhance its national status even as it strengthens its deep regional links.
- reflective of the diversity of UMM's "public," in the region, state, and nation.

UMM was rated in U.S. News in 2002 as the number four public liberal arts colleges in the nation, the only national caliber public liberal arts college in the Midwest. The 2000 reaccreditation report of the North Central Association described UMM as "a model liberal arts college."

Planning

UMM has developed a planning process which is both strategic and consultative. Each year, the senior administrative team (chancellor, vice chancellors, associate vice chancellors) undertakes a strategic planning exercise which consists of:

- review of University mission
- environmental scan
- appraisal of institutional strengths and weaknesses
- establishing priorities.

Each administrator brings forth three or four priorities for her/his area, and the group determines up to five top strategic goals for the coming year. The goals of the prior year are re-evaluated, renewed, dropped, or revised. The results of this planning process, in turn, inform the work of the campus-wide Campus Resources and Planning Committee, which acts on specific planning and resource issues and formulates periodically a multi-year campus plan.

Building on the prior year's plan, for the 2001-02 academic year, the strategic priorities of the Morris campus fall into four areas, articulated below: visibility, resources, recruitment/retention, and communication.

Visibility

Success in virtually all critical priority areas demands heightened visibility for UMM, in a variety of settings and for several constituencies. Measuring visibility, particularly in a comparative sense, is a difficult challenge, but one UMM intends to confront.

Marketing

UMM plans to create and implement an integrated institutional marketing plan. To do this, a position which would pull together the range of fragmented marketing efforts currently in place – in admissions, fund raising, etc. – has been proposed. During fall 2002, in cooperation with the Office of the Vice President for University Relations, plans were initiated to bring a marketing consultant to campus. *MEASURE*: Create an integrated marketing plan during the 2002-03 academic year.

Current Efforts and Results

Several publications have been revamped, and work continues to upgrade the quality of others, especially but not exclusively in admissions. UMM has become a partner institution to Minnesota Public Radio. An ad hoc cross-functional team has begun the analysis and planning of a marketing effort. UMM has recently been cited again as the top public liberal arts college in the entire Midwest. Enrollment is at a good level and has been modestly rising over the past half-dozen years. *MEASURES*: Fund raising has exceeded expectations and should meet and exceed the Capital Campaign goal. Enrollment should continue to grow toward 2,000 with quality remaining steady or improving.

Outreach

The interdisciplinary Center for Small Towns of UMM (supported in part by a \$217,000 three-year grant from the Blandin Foundation) is only one of a host of outreach efforts, which heighten the campus's service presence and visibility in the community and region. UMM is developing a leading service-learning program, a strong presence in public radio and TV (with the production of two popular television programs), and work in local schools (e.g., TREC – Teaching Reading Enabling Children – program, etc.) *See Appendix I.*

Resources

UMM remains seriously underfunded, in both endowment and annual operating funds, in comparison to comparable liberal arts colleges of the first rank. Among the members of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges (of which UMM is a founding member), fund revenues for FY2000 ranged from \$29,552,000 to \$113,471,000 with UMM at \$29,610,000 (FYE student population ranges in this group from 617 to 5,839). To fulfill its mission, UMM needs to increase substantially its resource base, both from public and private funds. To that end, UMM will:

- meet and exceed its Capital Campaign goal, revised upward in 2000 from \$2.5 million to \$6 million. *MEASURE*: exceed Capital Campaign goal by raising at least \$7.5 million by 6/03.
- provide adequate instructional facilities. A new science building was completed in 2000 and in January 2002 a 60,000 sq. ft. renovated old science facility was opened. Funding is sought for an \$8 million rehabilitation of social science classroom and office space in the Social

Sciences Building. Funding was approved by both the Minnesota House and Senate in the 2002 session, but vetoed by the Governor. The renovation is currently ranked #3 on a supplemental capital appropriations list being prepared for the 2003 Legislature. This project is part of a new emphasis on preservation of UMM's Mall as a National Historic District.

MEASURE: secure funding for Social Science Building renovation.

- seek through the Compact process increased University support for scholarships, faculty salaries, student/faculty research, and marketing efforts. *MEASURE:* negotiate successful University Compact, one which provides increased resources for these key areas.

Recruit and Retain Outstanding Students and Faculty

UMM is unwavering in its core mission of bringing together inspiring faculty and remarkably capable students.

- Plans call for growing modestly to 2,000 students, while maintaining very high admissions standards. *MEASURE:* over 1,910 students by fall 2003; continue to demonstrate the highest student satisfaction evaluations within the University of Minnesota. *See Appendix II for additional measures of student success and satisfaction.*
- Recognizing the importance of scholarships to recruit and retain excellent students, UMM plans to continue to develop a more robust scholarship program, emphasizing both entering and returning students. In 2001-02 the vice chancellor for academic affairs created a retention task force, whose recommendations will be considered and implemented. *MEASURE:* add to the number of presidential scholarships; meet Capital Campaign goal of \$2 million for recurring scholarships; implement task force suggestions.
- UMM has successfully created a diverse student body: approximately 15 percent of students are students of color; 8 percent are American Indians. The campus supports a strong minority student program, an annual World Touch Cultural Heritage Week, the "Campus of Difference" program for all students at orientation, and a large range of events and organizations for students of color and GLBT students on campus. The goal is to maintain the level of diversity on campus, to remain a leader in campus diversity within Minnesota, and to try to increase the representation of traditionally less represented groups, e.g., Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, etc. UMM also seeks to improve the campus climate for students of color. *MEASURE:* show continued improvement on U-wide measures of student satisfaction by minority students; maintain or increase current proportion of students of color.
- UMM's biggest challenge to faculty recruitment and retention remains spousal employment. Imaginative and productive solutions to this problem are being explored, especially in joint/shared academic appointments. *MEASURE:* add at least one new shared position each year.
- Although departing UMM faculty have not left their jobs primarily for higher salaries, that is commonly a secondary factor in faculty attrition. A faculty salary plan which establishes some rational link to faculty salaries in the Twin Cities and at other top national competitive liberal arts colleges is needed. *MEASURE:* the development, in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, of a UMM long range faculty salary plan to ensure competitive compensation and to find funding for such a plan.
- UMM has shown, and will continue to show, relentless efforts to develop and improve its academic programs. All first-year students enroll in a required freshman seminar. All attend,

with their families, an opening convocation. In recent years, new majors have been added in anthropology, statistics, and women's studies. Three new faculty positions have been added as part of the University's freshman seminar initiative. Lab support personnel have been added in the sciences. Temporary positions have been converted to tenure track. The most important goal is now faculty resource support: there has been a dramatic lag in support funding for the college for over a decade. *MEASURE*: substantial increase (at least 5 percent) in academic support funding.

- UMM has begun to develop and promote an ambitious plan to send all UMM students abroad, as a group, during the May term between their sophomore and junior years. During the coming academic year, widespread consensus concerning this plan will be built on campus, and funding for it will be sought from a variety of sources. *MEASURE*: have in place by fall semester of 2004-05 a plan to take all UMM sophomores abroad in May 2006.

Communications

To be more efficient, productive, and humane, UMM needs to articulate its identity as a college, to tell the story of its accomplishments and the successes of its graduates, and to improve internal conversations. These communications efforts are particularly important at a point of dramatic transition in the central administration of the University, and in the executive and legislative branches of Minnesota state government. The communications plan includes:

- defining its range of constituencies, both internal and external, including students, faculty, and staff on campus, the local and regional community, alumni, friends, legislators, central administrators, regents, etc.
- re-examining the nature of its communications and the most important messages it seeks to share with each of those constituencies.
- devising and revising strategies for most effectively communicating the messages to be sent.

OVERALL MEASURE: eliminate duplication in communications; show a heightened morale and sense of participation on campus; successfully communicate UMM's unique history, mission, and record to all appropriate constituencies. In 2002, UMM is ranked by U.S. News as 4th among the "top five public national liberal arts colleges;" UMM will maintain and seek to improve that national ranking.

Clearly, these four top priority areas do not include all the college seeks to accomplish in the coming year. It is UMM's goal, however, to make measurable progress in each of these key areas. Further, it is important to note the deep and important ways in which these goals are indivisibly linked to each other. Higher visibility will result from better communications and will improve recruitment and retention efforts and garner increased institutional resources. The plan presents a powerfully integrated agenda for advancing the college.

Appendix I
UMM...Serving the region

UMM provides a variety of educational opportunities for citizens of all ages and interests.

- Continuing education and summer session classes for all ages
- Creative Study Institute for talented youth
- Summer scholars program for high school students
- Summer workshops for teachers

UMM serves area communities while providing learning experiences for students.

- Girls' Circle, dedicated to enhancing self-esteem, openness, and positive growth in girls, grades 4-8.
- Campus Compact
 - Tree planting in Morris by first-year students during orientation
 - Window washing, carving pumpkins, raking leaves by student athletes
 - Snow shoveling for seniors by student organizations
 - Presentations of opera vignettes to local schools and retirement facilities
- Center for Small Towns projects
 - Helping school districts
 - Strategic planning
 - Developing Web sites
- 300-400 students working in schools through teacher education programs each year
- After-school tutoring by French students for Morris elementary students
- Teaching Reading Enabling Children (TREC)
- Ambassadors for Cultural Exchange
- Science Sensations
- Voter registration on and off-campus

UMM is a willing and cooperative partner in city, county, and regional projects that will benefit the citizens of west central Minnesota.

- Partner with the Morris Area School District, Stevens County, and the City of Morris to create the Regional Fitness Center, a center for recreation and fitness for west central Minnesota
- Media Services Productions
 - Prairie Yard and Garden on Pioneer Public Television
 - Minnesota: Rivers and Fields (collaboration between UMM Media Services and Minnesota Corn Growers Association, the Agricultural Research Institute, the West Central Research and Outreach Center, Pioneer Public Television)
 - Produce high school academic challenge program on Pioneer Public TV
- Research collaborations
 - USDA Soils Lab scientists with UMM faculty such as Gordon McIntosh (physics) and Dian Lopez (computer science)
 - Projects include City of Morris snow plow routes, the area's prairie waters, and deformed frog research
- Herman (MN) Iron Pour: a permanent iron sculpture is made and left in Herman every year
- Red Cross Bloodmobiles

- Holiday Food Drive for Stevens County Food Shelf/Trick or Can: in 2000, collected over a ton of food for the food shelf

UMM plays an important role in providing or hosting cultural and educational experiences for the citizens of west central Minnesota.

- Science programs for kids
 - Science Sensations: science demonstrations by UMM students for elementary school children
 - Science demonstrations at local supermarkets
- Art-O-Rama: two-day art-filled weekend by Art Club with elementary kids
- Big Friend/Little Friend
- Children's theater production: about 3,000 (total) elementary kids attend 13 performances of the show each year
- Ice Cream and Lollipops: Children's Art from the Community exhibit
- Performing Arts Series and other music and theater offerings; gallery exhibits
 - Free residencies, workshops, and classroom visits by visiting Performing Arts Series artists and Convocations Series speakers
 - Bringing important artists/entertainers to this region, e.g., Maya Angelou
- Special exhibits: AIDS Memorial Quilt, Girls and Girlhood exhibit
- Art Club Holiday Sale
- Christmas Carol Concert and Jazz Fest open to community

UMM provides facilities, expertise and resources.

- Tiger Sharks/Morris Area Schools have use of the swimming pool
- Individual students coach local and area youth programs, and work for private and public sector organizations
- Physical Education Center is the site of area high school sports tournaments (volleyball/basketball) and guest athletes like the Harlem Globetrotters
- Graduate/in-service professional development for educators
- Faculty experts/speakers, moderators
- Business incubator
 - Info-Link (Internet provider)
 - WC Environmental Consultants

Appendix II

Measures of Student Development and Campus Life at University of Minnesota, Morris

Who are UMM Students?

- 80 percent from Minnesota, with the remaining 20 percent from 29 other states and eight countries
- 65 percent from rural communities
- 58 percent are women
- 16 percent are students of color. UMM leads all campuses of the University of Minnesota and all liberal arts colleges in Minnesota in the percentage of students of color enrolled on campus.
- 94 percent are full-time students

From Fall 2000 UMM enrollment statistics. Student of color enrollment for other colleges from US News and World Report "America's Best Colleges, 2001."

Compared to the national average for students entering four-year public colleges, UMM's freshmen are more likely to:

- be "A or A-" average high school students (71 percent vs. 31 percent)
- perform volunteer work and community service
- play a musical instrument
- discuss politics or religion
- visit an art gallery or museum
- read the editorial page
- spend time participating in student groups

From 1999 CIRP Freshman Survey, UCLA Higher Education Research Institute.

UMM student life includes:

- Residential life – over 90 percent of first-year students live on campus
- First Year Seminars – all first-year students participate in first-year seminars
- Student involvement – named one of the "top 10 activist campuses" by *Mother Jones* magazine; UMM students make a difference on campus and beyond
- Civic engagement – 85 percent of UMM students voted in the 2000 presidential election
- A global perspective – one of three UMM graduates studied abroad

From 2000-01 University of Minnesota, Morris program statistics and Mother Jones magazine 1997.

Measures of Success and Student Satisfaction

In 1997 and again in 1999 the UM Twin Cities Office of Institutional Research and Reporting conducted University-wide surveys of the student experience. While results of satisfaction ratings covering academic programs, advising, services, facilities, and quality of student life were positive on all campuses, for UMM the results were especially gratifying. For undergraduates:

- UMM had the highest proportion of students who said they would "definitely enroll again" on the same campus if they started over.
- UMM was first in overall student satisfaction with their University experience.
- UMM was first in rating overall quality of the academic program, quality of instruction, quality of courses in the major, and the amount of active learning.
- UMM was first in rating instructor feedback, availability, and sensitivity to diversity.
- UMM was first in rating overall quality of advising as well as five of the six components of the advising system.

- UMM was first in time students spend studying.
- UMM was first in student attendance at artistic performances, concerts, or exhibits on campus. (UMM's 90 percent participation rate is 20-30 percent higher than other UM campuses.)
- UMM was first in student attendance at special talks, lectures, or panel discussions held on campus. (UMM's 77 percent participation rate compares to 71 percent at Crookston, 61 percent at Duluth, and 51 percent on the Twin Cities campus.)
- UMM was first in students hearing faculty talk about their research and first in students working with a faculty member on a research project.
- UMM was first in students participating in a club, organization or committee on campus. (UMM's 82.2 percent response rate is 20-30 percent higher than other UM campuses.)
- UMM was first in rating international aspects of classes and other campus activities.
- UMM was first in rating service provided by libraries, satisfaction with multicultural and diversity units, and satisfaction with career advising and job placement.
- Compared to students of color on other campuses, UMM students of color gave the highest ratings to overall satisfaction with the University, cultural diversity among the student body, and experiencing a sense of community.
- UMM students are most likely to have had a close friend on campus with a racial background different from their own. (UMM's 66 percent response rate is 10-30 percent higher than other UM campuses.)
- Students on the UMM and UMTC campuses are most likely to have worked together on a class assignment with a student whose racial/ethnic background was different from their own. (74 percent of students on each campus)
- UMM was highest in experiencing a sense of community.

From "University of Minnesota 1999 Student Experiences Survey," Darwin D. Hendel, Institutional Research and Reporting, University of Minnesota with additional analysis by Steve Granger.

UMM Graduate Reactions and Outcomes

- In a composite study of graduates from 1964 to 1998, 89 percent of UMM graduates indicated satisfaction with their university experience.
- Graduates rate the ability to think independently, skill in relating to people, and developing close friendships as the most highly rated benefits of their college years.
- 47 percent of UMM graduates go on to graduate/professional school. Top areas of graduate and professional study for UMM alumni include law, chemistry, psychology, education, and medicine. The University of Minnesota, Twin Cities is the most frequent graduate/professional school of choice.
- The majority of UMM graduates work in Minnesota, 46 percent in greater Minnesota and 27 percent in the Twin Cities metro area.
- UMM graduates find employment at levels consistent with their educational qualifications. Over 85 percent are in professional, technical, and managerial positions.
- UMM graduates are active leaders in their communities and their professions – nine of ten graduates vote in elections, over half are involved in their communities, and nearly two-thirds are involved in professional associations and career activities.

From "A Follow-up Study of the Occupational Histories and Post-baccalaureate Education of University of Minnesota, Morris Graduates from 1964-1998," Gary L. Donovan, Career Center, University of Minnesota, Morris.