

**MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION  
OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND SERVICE FACULTY MEET and CONFER NOTES  
Thursday, May 6, 2021 | 1:15-2:45 p.m.**

**Supplemental Documents Discussed: <https://link.mnsu.edu/may2021mcsd>**

**PRESENT:** Oscar Gonzalez, Mandy Weister, David Jones, Henry Morris, Matt Cecil, Liz Steinborn-Gourley, Richard Davenport, Debra Schulz, Brian Martenson, Steve Barrett, Jennifer Velstos, Mel Iverson, Lindsay Smith, Mark Johnson, Jeff Pool, Rick Straka, Carolyn Nelson, Katie Hodgden

**Special Guests for limited/special presentation:** Dr. Chris Corley/Dr. Rhonda Dass

**Meeting Chair –Mandy Weister, MSUAASF President**

**Review of Notes**—no changes needed declared

### **MSU President's Report**

- My pleasure to congratulate: 1) Matt Cecil, working as provost at Northern Kentucky University (working double duty getting things done and addressing issues there)
- 2) Dr. Brian Martenson will replace Matt as interim Provost which was completed by President-Elect, Edward Inch
- Thank you to everyone who has been working on the alternative commencement, it's not ideal but the students and families really appreciate it. I reinforce my promise, president-elect has promised to follow through, that we have already invited the students from the last year and half for a full graduation commencement ceremony opportunity. Campus is beautiful thanks to ground folks, fountain, etc.
- Announcement over noon hour from Governor Walz,, I haven't gone over in detail so going to hold on that one before addressing with the group what that could mean for us.
- Budget challenge this year and cutting of \$5 million would not have been possible without everyone's help. Base cut is significant, we will balance the budget but as we go into next year we don't really know what's in store for us because of the next legislature
- Disappointed not getting Armstrong Hall done during my tenure but very encouraged we will get that bonding bill approved if not next year, shortly thereafter. It shows that by delaying projects it costs us more; early on it was in the \$70million + and now in order to finish and demolish it's more like \$100 million. We rank pretty high on the list whenever it goes forward, pretty confident it will happen (President-Elect Inch shared it is one of his top priorities).
- Not able to build a new football stadium despite high support, it will have to wait. A lot of friends and donors that might help step up to the plate.
- Some other things on the back burner—new scheduling system, to help students graduate in a shorter period of time.
- Good shape for opening in the fall, heard excellent numbers in terms of interested students. Also understand no response from many on future plans. And a number of international students---travel issues in their own countries and restrictions in U.S.
- Hope you all enjoy this wonderful weather and get rejuvenated for the fall.

### **MSUAASF President's Report**

**M. Weister:**

- Spring has sprung and summer is nearly here! As we close in on the last days of finals week, the miracles of this time of year surround us. Student's make plans for summer work and internships, graduates close one chapter and prepare to start the next as Maverick alums, our once brown and snow-covered campus has turned to a pristine green with meticulous care from our grounds and facilities crews. And this Spring season, watching campus "*come back to life*" holds new meaning as not only nature flourishes but so do our hopes of a healthy campus soon more fully populated by the physical presence of our dear students. Our members in so many areas across campus look forward and prepare for the coming months as they play a vital hand in welcoming hundreds of students this season to campus through Orientation programs and welcome initiatives. As I found myself thinking about the work our ASF members have done this past year and as I walked across campus yesterday seeing graduates smiling for photo opps and the grounds full of beautifully cared for flowers, trees, and greens, I couldn't help but be

reminded of another Spring miracle story that lives among them: the humble caterpillar. And I believe we have something to learn from this critter to help us understand our current reality.

- The caterpillar, after spending its entire existence up to this point; stuffing itself with leaves growing bigger and longer, suddenly one day, stops eating and hangs itself upside down from a twig or leaf and spins a silky cocoon. Within this protective casing, which marks a drastic change from everything in life this caterpillar has known, a radical transformation begins.
- First, it completely digests itself and dissolves all tissues of its current body. If you cut open a cocoon at just the right time, you'd find something resembling caterpillar soup. While this ooze may look like an unorganized mess, all the necessary pieces & proteins are there to grow and mature into a fully realized butterfly. Rapid cell division then occurs to form wings, antennae, legs, eyes, and so on. In some species, sections of the nervous system and muscles are preserved in the adult butterfly and one study suggests that they even remember what they learned from earlier stages as a caterpillar after emerging from the cocoon as a butterfly.
- We are this caterpillar. Having known only our current existence in recent history, we too were suddenly subjected to new confines we had never before experienced. Ours wasn't called a cocoon, but rather "quarantine." Our world and experience as we knew it, quite literally like the caterpillar's, was turned upside down. Our previous plans were completely digested, our operating structures and interactions as we knew them dissolved. And if an outsider had been able to cut into our world and try to make sense of it, at times it too might have resembled a soupy ooze. Now this is not a criticism of how we have handled this cocoon of ours, it's simply part of the process, that at times, felt like trying to make sense of an ooze of caterpillar soup. But like the caterpillar, all the pieces were there to grow and mature into a fully realized butterfly. Into something we've never been before, into something we have never imagined, into something **we didn't know we needed to become**. And like the butterfly, **I believe we will remember what we have learned** from our caterpillar and cocoon days to apply in this new form. I'd like to suggest we are currently in the "*rapid cell division*" phase of this metaphor as we work to form the new functional parts that will create our new way of being in the world. And it is within this most important work, that I recognize and thank our members for helping to form what will become our own transformation as we prepare for emerging from our cocoon of quarantine.
- Over the past year our membership has contributed to this "rapid cell division" by having 58 chairs filled by ASF members on Return to Learn Committees, 35 ASF positions filled on shared governance committees across campus, 14 positions filled for ASF business committee work, 7+ ASF positions filled on additional workgroups that convened this year, 16 new ASF Members joining since June 2020, 32 ASF members serving on search committees, 8 members volunteer their time as Stewards, 9 on M&C team, and 11 on our Executive Board.
- Our members in every unit have navigated the caterpillar ooze for more than an entire academic year as they constantly performed "rapid cell division" to build new and better parts of our being. This metamorphoses of programs and service delivery that arose from what originally was inconvenience and unexpectedness will remain as lasting parts of our work to enhance outreach and empower more students well beyond our "cocoon" days. Because of ASF member innovation and dedication, we will emerge better, stronger, and transformed.
- But the transformation within the cocoon does not occur in isolation. Outside factors such as weather and predators can hinder or help its development. Our transformation is also intermingled with the greater climate of our environment. As service faculty dedicated to student success, recruitment, retention, and graduation, we are deeply impacted by current events across the nation and in our own backyard of MN. Occurrences such as these shake the core of

our community and threaten the ability of our students & staff to excel, feel safe, and move forward. We acknowledge and grieve with our fellow staff, faculty, and students during these emotional and devastating times. We commit to doing what we can to do better and support the messaging and actions the university has taken and continues to do to make social justice progress through these unfortunate tragedies.

- Transformation within ASF leadership is also on the horizon. This month we celebrate our newly-elected President-Elect Marie Slotemaker and Treasurer Lindsay Smith. Lindsay will be joining us at M&C in September permanently and she is with us here today as an alternate. Congratulations Lindsay on being elected to Treasurer and thank you for your service in this 2-year term. Thank you also to Marie for your service as Treasurer during your term, and we look forward to her leadership in years to come as President-Elect next academic year with her President Term beginning June 1, 2022. I also want to acknowledge our other talented Exec Board Members whose term ends this year: Mel Iverson as Past President, Liz Steinborn-Gourley as Membership Chair, Carolyn Nelson as Legislative Liaison, and Jeff Pool as Member at Large. I thank them greatly for lending their time, talents, and leadership to ASF – we could not have accomplished the work we did this past year without you. Thank you!
- Our Negotiator Oscar Gonzalez and Alternate Negotiator Tracy Hernandez-Stokes have also been hard at work through negotiations which formally began on April 28<sup>th</sup>. I thank them on behalf of our entire membership for committing their time, effort, and talents to this task. We appreciate the sacrifices you've made for ASF. Thank you.
- Not only are we undergoing transformation ourselves, but I have witnessed the many ways our members play in aiding our student's transformation. In recent weeks, ASF members in Advancement awarded scholarship funds of \$1.86 Million from 922 Foundation accounts to 818 students for next academic year and ASF members served as Scholarship Champions for their Colleges and provided leadership in their divisions. ASF members in Student Success have been active in re-enrollment registration campaigns and countless advising sessions. The ASF members of our Finance division have played a vital role in the review of 1500 plus student applications for CRSSA funds, while ASF Members in Student Affairs, Diversity & Inclusion, and our Academic divisions provide challenge and support through guiding next steps for our recent graduates and host countless end of year celebrations, activities, recognition events to make sure even a year spent mostly in a "cocoon" is still recognized and honored.
- Speaking of recognition and honoring new stages of life, I would remiss if I did not take a moment to congratulate and thank President Davenport for his tremendous service and leadership over the past 19 years and for his partnership with ASF. Personally I have so enjoyed our conversations this year, learning from you, and being part of this team. The Exec Board and I have created this "digital card" to voice our appreciation, which I will send you via email, but here is a little sneak peak for the group. (Share screen with card).
- This might also be the appropriate time for me to share that I am also preparing personally for a new stage of life at the Weister house; in June we will be transforming from a family of 3 to a family of 4 as we welcome our second child; a daughter. For our work together, this means I will be on maternity leave from approximately June 10 through October 1. During my absence, VP Deb and President-Elect Marie will be your contacts for ASF. I thank them for their incredible leadership, commitment, and dependability that allows me to step away over the summer months knowing ASF is in great hands.
- The third stage of a caterpillar's life is referred to as chrysalis and most notably includes the emergence of the new butterfly. We are not quite there yet. And it will take some time; months, semesters, maybe even years before our new way of being in the world is fully maximized. Our

membership recognizes the importance of this work and aims to contribute always to the health and growth of our institution in and through these growing pains. The.... wings.... of.... transformation... are... born... of.... **patience.... and struggle**. If we can recognize at this moment in time, the value and need for both of these, and be ok living through them, the final effects of transformation will be worth with it. Maya Angelou is known for saying “We delight in the beauty of the butterfly, but rarely admit the changes it has gone through to achieve that beauty.” ASF membership remains eager to continue positively impacting those changes in support of our transformation, yet to be fully imagined, as we emerge as a powerful force and leader of higher education in a post-pandemic world. Thank you for your time today and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

## Vice President Student Affairs & Enrollment Management Report

### *D Jones:*

- Thanks to all your team members’ help throughout all of this year in so many ways, much of your team did the work of outreaches, recruitment, graduation—a lot of extra effort, cooperation and creativity.
- Spring 2021: 14,268 up 2.68%
- Summer 2021: 1.1% down, about 11 students, still time for students to sign up, last couple summers trend
- Fall 2021: # of apps growing, mostly from international; 0.43% down overall, 9.6% down without international. With the May---intent to enroll improvement—about 22%; up 5.5%, graduate numbers are up even higher than last fall
- Continue to stay in contact, continue to reiterate the importance of all the different steps we are taking to make it a more normal experience. With the overtures governor made today could be even more possible.

### *M. Iverson:*

- Do we know where we are at in overall orientation (registered for it) numbers compared to last year?

### *D Jones:*

- About 500 behind where we normally we are

### *L. Akey:*

- It is a bit like an apples and oranges comparison; a little over 1,400 registered for orientation, 322 are in the intake for Registration & Advising, and 286 that have completed.
- Overall re-enrollment of students (no hold and not graduating) up just slightly 67%--- compared to last year which was 66.1%---outside of pandemic that’s down, typically around 70-71.5% of our students registered at this time.

### *H. Morris:*

- Domestic students of color –slower to re-enroll, happening nationwide, the pandemic is effecting financially and emotionally at a greater rate.
- That’s after many years of growing we were up to 18%, our gap has been decreasing last few years we were under 4 (can’t improve graduation until retention and persistence rates are improved) so important to keep them here semester to semester. We continue to look at those numbers and multi-faceted strategies.

## Recommendation on Lincoln Statue Location (Dr. Chris Corley/Dr. Rhonda Dass)

### *Dr. Corley:*

- Thank you, here to provide another update on where we are at with the recommendation on the Lincoln Statue Location
- In Sept of 2020, charged to review landmarks and names; this is a long standing trend nation wise and studying historical ties to slavery and racism—removing items that fail to reflect mission
- Divided between advisory and research in documents
- At previous Meet and Confer only 1 statue we reviewed that had concern and created a work group.
- Merged Recommendations 2 & 3—hope for anyone on campus to share an identification and advocate
- Library continues to look through research (rooms and landmarks, mainly done with buildings)

## Committee Recommendations Presented at February Meet & Confer

1. Propose recommendations for Lincoln Statue to Academic Affairs by April 30, 2021.
2. Draft a campus naming/renaming policy for consideration in the AY 21-22 policy cycle.
3. Advocate for intentional representation of historically underserved and marginalized groups, and their accomplishments, in future naming opportunities.
4. Continue archival research on remaining buildings and landmarks and provide progress updates.

### ***Dr. Dass:***

Thank you, I was part of the Lincoln Statue Committee.

- We attempted to honor both the students we had heard from in the past but also hear other voices moving forward
- Representation from a number of people, looked at many options like total removal or etc.
- Talked about contextualizing it more than anything. So we wanted to put in all the voices and use it as an educational opportunity to discuss all the issues that surround the topic and perspective.

## Lincoln Statue Recommendation Process

- Guided by advisory documents created last semester, a committee subgroup reviewed research on the history of Lincoln and of the statue.
- Subgroup formulated recommendations grounded in MSU's core institutional values.

## Lincoln Statue Recommendation Process

- Committee representatives engaged in three opportunities to receive feedback from campus constituents:
  - Students of Color – April 15, 2021
  - Cabinet – April 21, 2021
  - Open Campus Session – April 29, 2021, 4-5:30 via zoom
- Week of May 3: Committee will send recommendations to the Provost

# Lincoln Statue Findings

1. Abraham Lincoln has a divided public legacy at MSU and more broadly across our country and our history;
2. The statue's location in the CSU and its lack of interpretive material do not sufficiently foster our goals of “inclusiveness, understanding, acceptance, and respect in a multicultural society”;

- Example of divided legacy—when he signed the document for the hanging of Dakota men in Mankato and a few weeks later signed the Emancipation Proclamation so we need to talk about all these things happening.
- The current location not ideal to combine all those voices.

## Committee Recommendations

With careful consideration of nurturing and maintaining a continued dialogue about this difficult and important history, the committee recommends these actions:

1. Expand the narrative through **contextualization** of the statue by developing a museum-quality, peer-reviewed exhibit.
2. **Relocate** the statue to a publicly accessible space in the Memorial Library.

- We have identified moving it to Memorial Library. Memorial Library has been its home in the past. It's a good space with public access with a museum quality, peer reviewed nuance for us to look at it to contextualize it.

## Membership

### Research Team Membership:

- Rhonda Dass, Professor of American Indigenous Studies
- Chad McCutchen, Assistant Professor of History
- Kenneth Reid, Director of African American Affairs
- Gwen Westerman, Professor of English

### Advisory Team:

- Christopher Brown, Acting Dean of Arts and Humanities
- Christopher Corley, Interim Dean of Library and Learning
- [Joniesha Hayes](#), Student Representative, Social Work, '22
- H. Matthew Loayza, Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Michelle Reinhardt, Director of Stewardship and Foundation Relations

- Joneisha Hayes has been instrumental as a student providing a voice during this. We had a number of voices but needed more which is why we had listening sessions and still need more which is why we are putting forward the plan to relocate to ML with the contextualizing of it. Not removing, when you take away the image, you take

away the narrative and the ability to talk about that complex history. It still needs to be there to remind us that we have things to address.

## HR Topics

### *S. Barrett:*

- **Human Resources Vacancies-** Any questions, corrections, e-mail me. We are looking at having these posted on our website eventually in the coming time, it's in the planning stages.
- **Workplace Environment Investigations-** 13 complaints into HR, a few have been in combination with Equal Opportunity. A little less than last year. Avg. time from HR to decision is about 50 days, our goal is average of 30 days. We are completing them better and more efficiently than in the past.
- **MMB Policy Update on Teleworking-** New policy related to teleworking. As we gear up to return, more employees will be needing to return as well and the policy needing to update that is now pretty much a part of our work life to reflect the modern day. Goes into effect late July---using teleworking to attract and retain the best employees. When to agree and the business necessity of such an arrangement. Our current practices already reflect what this policy is after so we will continue but there are more specific items outlining scheduling, vacation time, etc. there will be more communication going out to make sure we implement this policy, and policy-making is created fairly and consistently throughout the University.
- **BESI Update-** This last round of BESIS—5 were accepted, over \$400k savings. Another item on the radar: move forward with a targeted BESI---with a third round, towards certain areas and certain academic department to help set up President Elect Inch on best budget scenario to not just be balanced but to pursue other initiatives and get ahead of the curve of on future layoffs. Still have details to work out.

### *M. Weister:*

- Will there be an e-mail about summer core hours?

### *S. Barrett:*

- Yes, working with Sheri Sargent, rather than a bunch of piece meal communications, will be sending out fairly soon.

## Return to Learn/COVID-19 Update (Matt Cecil & Cabinet)

### *M. Cecil:*

- Regarding return to learn, an email coming out from president that will cover it all.
- Health Screening tool effective May 23<sup>rd</sup> is no longer required to enter campus.
- Out of state travel, we needed system office approval but now we are back to our normal practices.
- International travel remains banned—review frequently. Good news is control over domestic travel

### *L. Akey:*

- Set up the Return to Learn well over a year ago, with advisory and action teams, we are seeing ourselves to a more post pandemic state. Asked each action team to submit final reports and recommendations as we transition to post pandemic—really highlight actions and decision points as we go through that process as well as highlight on lessons learn. What should we continue due to pandemic, things we started but shouldn't keep doing or things we recognize and need to take action on or more action. Also help push forward to other constituents for decision making.

### *D Jones:*

- Those who took advantage of the vaccine clinics, we are not planning on offering others at this time.
- There is an option to partner with MDH—they are still working with us in providing the J&J vaccine for any international student that is coming for the fall. More attractive and more safe.

### *M. Weister:*

- I understand not planning more, to be clear, is the 2<sup>nd</sup> dose already in the works and will still be happening?

### *D Jones:*

- Yes, most definitely, already scheduled for the 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>

### *O. Gonzalez:*

- Is there requirement or request for students to be vaccinated before attending?

### *D Jones:*

- At this time our system and state do not expect it to be a requirement. We are seeing some across the country. It is a frequent conversation but don't seem to be moving towards that expectation.

## Budget

### *Rick Straka:*

- **CARES/CRRSA Update-**
  - a. Just recently we did the fund applied portion for 1,375 students which totaled over \$1,228,000. We had set aside over \$400k side for emergency grant.
  - b. There was clearly more need than that. Through an approval process able to offer more.
  - c. Help to pay off charges at University and then a direct deposit by early next week. Really good news.
  - d. Total aid in the last year to over \$10 million, that is about 10% of our tuition bills. It's significant aid.
  - e. Still expecting over \$12 million in aid to give out next year from American Rescue once more details are flushed out. There are only 347 students that owe more than \$750 that impacts registration. So hopefully we see more register after that
- **Overall budget—**
  - f. Early next week or after will have budget targets to give us a better idea of appropriations.
  - g. This is one of the broadest bookend difference between the 2 legislators, the Senate vs House---4 main variables: tuition rate (next 2-3 weeks where that will stand), final enrollment (as we move throughout summer we will know more—American Recovery Plan has a lost revenue component so if we do have a loss, we could tap those funds and have a year to react), appropriation (next 2-3 weeks unless a special session), and inflation rates.
  - h. Hopefully know more in the next couple of weeks. We projected a \$2million budget deficit originally before the pandemic.

## Equity 2030 Update

### *H. Morris:*

- Continues to be the highest priority of system and university and President Elect Inch.
- We look forward to that continuing as it did under President Davenport as we learn better ways. 3: student success, recruitment, and retention of students, student population should be reflection (20%) of the population as a base, we were at 18%, we will probably see a decrease when we do it again based on pandemic and other realities
- another is retention of employees of color—some slight improvement (13%), employees should be reflective of the student body—recruit and have them stay,
- last one equitable resource acquisition (how do we make sure minority have access to rewards to won)

### *R. Straka:*

- Planning committee and Paul Corcoran are working with MinnState—looking at Armstrong Hall about \$100 million over 6 years, we have been working with the system diligently to ensure we spread that work
- Goal is to recognize women and minority owned businesses that are general contractors or RFBs—expectations that they look to start hiring sub-contractors that are diversified. We want to give business to those businesses that exist but also create a demographic that they can be entrepreneurial to own their own businesses and know there is a source they can go.
- Also looking at software and databases to identify existing female veteran and minority owned—something easily searchable to help find what service/supply/commodities from diverse businesses

### *H. Morris:*

- We saw lots of things with progress in the right direction, saw some blips and hope they remain blips so working on new strategies and continue to meet the goal of no equity gaps in those 3 areas by 2030. Prior to pandemic we could have reached way before 2040 and now we might still can.

### *M. Weister:*

- Can you speak to, looking to the future, what is the best way for the average ASF member to stay informed, active and participate in these goals?

### *H. Morris:*

- Helping by learning how to interact with people that are different from them.
- Front line interactions can cause students to stay or leave—more that we can minimize that will be a big thing to help stabilize enrollment.
- Continue to look at policies and practices to see if any of them are impacting diverse populations and bring it to cabinet. Best way to move forward is to have students not stop out. If you get stuck help connect them to someone who can. Maverick Diversity Institute—helps lead activities in how to help

## Final Policy Draft

**Brian Martensen:**

- We enter into the last phase of the policy consultation and approval process we go through every year.
- Policies are brought forward every 7 years, if needed and new---go through an informal review for feedback from campus through website then another round then formal review where we again take in comments and then make a final version and it will go to VP most aligned to the policy.
- Final Version: on website 1 more time for 1 week to see the cleanest version and let us know (esp. implementation) something we need to be aware of then goes to president for final signature and approval. We always appreciate your updates

**Final Budget Plan**

**Matt Cecil:**

- As always it's important to understand we are never really have a final plan, budgets change. Things remaining constant: 1/3 cuts from searches, how we use graduate differentials and reorganizations. Key points do not change. From 1.2 million to 500k from attrition and targeted BESI (classified staff positions). As part of this, we are reducing administration by 500k—about 5% of the cut. We have reduced 30 faculty positions in the last 18 months—real pain behind these cuts. Just because we didn't retrench doesn't mean we didn't still make things difficult.
- We do continue to plan for the merger. There was 1 ASF position we were looking at to cut, it is highly likely we are going to restore that position—working with VP Stanley and Straka to work on that. Those positions in fundraising are so important in a budget constrained environment. Process for merger of colleges: the committee has been taken time to create—a call next week. 1 FA from each dept. (18), 4 ASF members (ideally 2 from each college)—same for classified and then students. 2 Facets: 1) creation of a college, managing the faculty, staff, etc. 2) the Academic combinations and collaborations. We need the 1<sup>st</sup> part to be settled by July 1, 2022 but really by Nov. 2021 for consultation before the Feb. 1, 2022 with FA. The second part can start in discussions as soon as possible. Hopefully we will have that group meet this summer and pay a couple duty days to orient themselves. The work continues. We set ourselves a tough task to cut \$5 million without disrupting-main area to make decisions is with classified. Thanks to Mandy and Deb—provided strong representation and leadership.

*Well wishes and gratitude shared to Matt Cecil as well as to President Davenport during this meeting for their upcoming departure and retirement, respectively. Details on opportunities to help celebrate President Davenport's retirement will be shared out soon.*

**Upcoming FY22 MSUAASF Meet & Confer**

September 2, 2021  
October 7, 2021  
November 4, 2021  
December 9, 2021  
February 3, 2022  
March 3, 2022  
March 31, 2022  
May 5, 2022