

Town Hall Meeting Notes

May 1, 2020

9:00 a.m.

Important Notes:

- Directives/Guidance coming from various federal and state entities, including Minnesota State. Directives change frequently with little notice. Most decisions are made for the entire Minnesota State system.
- No employee COVID-19 cases.

Spring Semester

- Grading – deans have communicated to faculty regarding end-of-semester grading.
- There will be a virtual commencement ceremony.
- Work-study students will not be back on campus for the remainder of spring semester.
- The stay-at-home order was extended until May 18. Minnesota State is waiting for decision by the governor if institutions can bring specific programs back on campus for face to face labs on Monday, May 4th. Administration will decide by 3:00 p.m. today and then notify students. Students in these programs requiring additional lab experience, will receive an Incomplete (or no grade) and will be allowed to complete after May 18th.
- Federal stimulus funding (\$675,000) – Several students will be receiving a check of the federal stimulus funding if they qualify. Exceptions include online students, students taking less than 3 credits, international students, students using tuition waivers, and students funded by third parties.
- Northland will be receiving \$675,000 for COVID related expenses and lost revenue.

Summer Semester

- Summer enrollment is up!
- Course delivery will be all online.
- Some programs will have students returning to complete spring semester hands-on labs.
- No decision has been made regarding summer semester work-study students returning to campus, except for grounds positions.

Fall Semester

- Enrollment is down 34% down
- Northland will plan to run fall semester as usual – no plans to do solely online at this time.
- Asking faculty to have a contingency plan in place in the event the stay at home order or social distancing orders either continue or are put back into place during fall. Suggested to look at frontloading hands-on portion of courses
- Fall athletics status – NJCAA will give their decision in early June
- Safety Protocol has not decided for fall. Measures could include sanitizing, social distancing, masks, health screening, etc.

Budget

There are several unknowns when developing the budget. Currently preparing for enrollment (tuition) to be reduced significantly, and possibly, state allocation could be reduced. Northland has a healthy reserve and can use that safety net in this emergency situation. There is still a chance that bonding projects could be funded as a stimulus effort to provide jobs.

Communication

Administration will continue to communicate over the summer via Email, text messaging, and by hosting additional town hall meetings.

Questions and Answers:

Q. There were multiple questions on spring grading.

A. Brian Huschle has communicated to all faculty via email with an End of Term Guidance document.

Q. If faculty prepare for in-person and online delivery for fall, will they be compensated for their extra work.

A. Guidance is coming from the system office.

Q. Give an example of frontloading the semester with hands-on training? Use welding as the example.

A. Teach the theory portion about the techniques after the practical piece has been taught.

Q. Will there be summer hours like previous summers?

A. This has not been discussed at the President's Council. More information will be coming. Teleworking is expected to continue into summer or as direction is received from MMB and the System Office. It is uncertain when exactly we will phase employees back to in-person.

Q. If there are significant budget reductions and course cancelations, when will faculty and students be notified.

A. Administration will follow current policy and procedures.

Q. Why are we not advertising that we are planning a on-campus delivery mode for fall?

A. The system office has directed all institutions to wait on this message.

Q. Is there any intention to hold on the EGF water tower project and direct those funds to marketing in a different location?

A. No. That project is in motion currently.

Q. Are there plans to increase budgets for additional marketing?

A. That is a possibility; however, data indicates that the Northland website has seen record traffic recently, and visitors spend record lengths of time on the site. This is our most valuable tool vs. a static billboard, etc.

Q. Multiple questions regarding cleaning/sanitizing were asked.

A. The facilities department will be cleaning and sanitizing the building several times throughout the day, especially in common/shared spaces. There are not enough facilities staff to sanitize labs between classes. Sanitizing kits have been placed in lab spaces for faculty and/or students to clean their work space between classes.

Q. What is the protocol for masks?

A. The CDC is urging the use of masks when in public spaces. Northland fully supports this recommendation; however, Northland cannot require students or employees to wear a mask. Students and employees will be responsible for care of their own masks.

Q. Why were online students excluded from the stimulus funds? Was that a local decision or part of the CARES Act?

A. This was a federal decision.

Q. Does Northland have the authority to choose to begin fall with an online delivery mode? Or is that a Minnesota State decision.

A. This is a Minnesota State decision.