

FY16 Compact

Top Strategic Priorities for the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC)

Strategic Enrollment Management – The top strategic priority is to achieve and maintain a critical mass of students on campus, while continuing to grow strategically online. We intend to advance this priority through the addition of new academic programs that build on our competitive advantages, our existing faculty strengths, and our reputation for excellence in online education as well as through continued and increased retention and recruitment efforts.

Three new academic programs recently have been approved by the Board of Regents: the B.S. in International Business (on-campus and online delivery), the B.S. in English (on-campus), and the B.S. in Agricultural Education (on-campus), which is now preparing for Board of Teaching review. Current on-campus programs under discussion for online delivery are Agricultural Business and Criminal Justice. The UMC Faculty Assembly has approved B.S. programs in Medical Laboratory Science (in conjunction with University of North Dakota) and Exercise Science and Wellness, which are undergoing final campus review. The latter intentionally connects academic programming to the new Wellness Center.

A much needed move of the Admissions Office to a more prominent place on campus (space formerly occupied by the Agricultural Utilization Research Institute (AURI)) has been planned for summer of 2015. The space is more functional, welcoming, and is easier for prospective students to find.

Retention efforts have been redoubled in all departments across the entire campus on multiple fronts. Each academic department has developed strategies to improve student persistence and retention, aided by data provided by the Office of Institutional Effectiveness. Academic departments and Admissions are working more closely to recruit additional students in programs with available capacity, and a broader, yet highly targeted international student recruitment effort has begun.

Wellness Center – The new Wellness Center is key to enhancing campus-wide retention and recruitment efforts. Final planning is underway with construction to begin in spring 2015. Before the new facility opens in spring 2016, the operational budget for the additional new 37,700 sq. ft. must be finalized (including utilities, staffing, and maintenance).

Scholarships and Financial Aid – Scholarships and financial aid are instrumental to recruitment and retention efforts. This is especially important at UMC due to the students we serve, consistent with our land-grant mission. Within the University of Minnesota system, UMC students:

- come from families with the **lowest average household income** for students who applied for and received financial aid: Crookston \$65,172; Morris \$85,476; Rochester \$91,396; Twin Cities \$93,754; Duluth \$94,397
- receive the need-based **Federal Pell Grant at a higher percentage** than students at the other system campuses: Crookston 33%; Morris 31%; Rochester 29%; Duluth 27%; Twin Cities 24%
- are significantly **more likely to be first generation** college students: Crookston 42%; Rochester 39%; Morris 37%; Twin Cities 29%; Duluth 28%

We recently expanded the award cycle of UMC's academic scholarships for new high school students from two years to four years—a move intended to increase four-year graduation rates. Working within current funding sources, this expansion has resulted in smaller annual awards as the same dollars are now spread over four years rather than two. For fiscal year 2015, \$375,000 in academic scholarships was disbursed. An additional \$200,000 would allow UMC to increase these

annual awards, becoming more attractive to prospective students and enabling greater retention and graduation of current students.

Scholarship funding is also needed to comply with Title IX and to assist with the retention and recruitment of female student-athletes. Currently, enrollment on campus is 50.2 percent male and 49.8 percent female. Athletic participation is at 54% male and 46% female, and our student aid is 58% male and 42% female. An additional \$115,000 is needed to meet the goal of increasing student aid and student numbers in women's athletics over the next three years.

Rural Economic Development – UMC is in the process of establishing a Center for Rural Economic Development, with the search for the founding director underway. The Center's draft mission is to:

- Stimulate and grow the entrepreneurial culture and economic vitality of the region and the state
- Leverage regional, state, and federal resources focused on rural economic development
- Enhance the education of UMC students by engaging them in projects and research studies related to economic development and entrepreneurship

The new Center will provide an organizational home for the Center for Rural Entrepreneurial Studies and the state's Economic Development Administration, both of which are already located on campus, as well as for the Northwest Region's Small Business Development Center beginning in FY16.

Strategic Philanthropic Engagement and Regional Support – Our goal is to enhance and leverage both financial and positive public relations support for UMC by engaging internal and external constituencies, including current students and their families, alumni, faculty, staff, business and industry, community members, and donors. Priority action items include expanding outreach to alumni (both on-campus and online) and requesting their advocacy in the recruitment of prospective students; reinforcing and enhancing "town-gown" relationships; and working with regional youth organizations to promote the campus and its programs.

How We Have Directed/Redirected a Portion of Current Resources to Implement Strategic Priorities

Strategic Enrollment Management

- Redirected overload pay to the hiring of additional tenure-track faculty and instructional staff to support leadership of academic programs and increased student retention
- Streamlined the online-only entering student pathway to enhance support to prospective online students and reduce process redundancies
- Redirected some resources and work streams within Student Affairs to expand the existing orientation program to support a more robust, integrated first-year experience program
- Created a full-time professional advisor position in the Liberal Arts and Education Department to advise online students and on-campus students who are undecided about their major
- Redistributed funds in order to refresh and redesign recruitment materials
- Redistributed staff time in the current effort of rebuilding UMC's website within the new Drupal environment, with assistance from U of M's central Office of Information Technology

Wellness Center

- Established a student Wellness Center fee

Scholarships and Financial Aid

- Redistributed existing two-year academic merit scholarships to smaller annual awards as funds are now spread over four years rather than two

Center for Rural Economic Development

- Redirected funds and staff time; used foundation funds to support the hiring of a full-time founding director

Strategic Philanthropic Engagement and Regional Support

- Added strategic projects through reprioritization to existing workload without additional staffing or funds