**Collaboration and Engagement Focus Group**

**Thursday, June 16 11:00 am-12:00 pm**

**ND Government and State Officials**

**11 Participants**

1. **UND’s Mission is “to provide transformative learning, discovery and community engagement opportunities for developing tomorrow’s leaders.” It is the “community engagement opportunities” that we are particularly interested in today. That’s connected to UND’s long-time mission to serve North Dakota. What do you think UND does well in terms of providing service to the state? Where could UND be playing a role that it doesn’t seem to be playing now? What could UND do better in terms of serving the state?**
   * I feel like UND does a wonderful job of recruiting, educating, and retaining people in North Dakota for positions in the medical field. Also, a good job with outreach and education for the indigenous student population.
   * I agree that our Medical School and medical professions do a great job, in particular PT and OT. Feel like the College of Education could do better in a variety of ways. There is such a shortage of teachers across the state- the need is great.
   * I like how UND is being so progressive to help move the state forward and position it within the field of UAS. When Aerospace was first started, Odegard was given the opportunity by the President at the time to create. The President allowed Odegard to do something out of the box and look what it has turned into. This is now internationally known. It set the groundwork and foundation for the UAS work that UND is doing now, and North Dakota is an international leader in this field because of it. We have Space and technology, and we are training people to provide the workforce for this, and it all started because someone was given the space and permission to be creative.
   * Last session the legislature did a great job with the Rural Attorney Initiative. I hope there is going to be stronger integration of this into the Law School. A bit disappointed in the numbers we are seeing for this program right now, but that could have been timing since it was passed so late in the session. I would like to see close integration between that program and the Law School.
   * Talking about UND involvement, Dean McGinniss did a fantastic job of integrating UND into the State Bar and being involved in North Dakota. The good will that has generated between the Law School and the practicing Bar has been great. Long term, the benefits to that from the alumni is critical. Without that tie you lose that initiative to provide financial support. Also, Law School to attend to educational aspects for the Bar. We could expand the work happening here in significant ways.
   * UND is light years ahead in terms of its ability to inspire economic development in the region. I am headed over to celebrate the opening of the first UAS operation center in the nation. UND has been instrumental in advancing this industry. North Dakota is at the very bottom in terms of receiving national defense funding- and it is initiatives such as this that will help get us get out of that bottom quartile. We need continuous momentum in this.
   * In terms of aviation and other areas, we have amazing researchers, can we include IP production as part of tenure and promotion? Right now, UND’s best researchers want to do more but it seems like more standard research is encouraged. If we can include IP then I believe the ability to impact the economic development in the rest of the state could be much bigger. We could really take this to the next level in terms of research activity.
   * I serve on the UND medical school advisory committee, and UND has done well under Josh Wynne, especially with the Rural Med program. I am representing a rural community, and we have make real headway in this program. If a student does a residency program in the state, they are more likely to practice in that same state for longer period of time. We are making some strides in attracting people to the area. So many shortages in medical fields.
   * Collaborative effort in medical school and nursing school could help produce more health care workers because there is an acute shortage in this area. In addition, we need to increase the number of behavioral health professionals. One of the issues we have in behavioral health is the state that does not have the workforce that we need. UND can really help support and find solutions to this need.
   * The energy sector at UND has done amazing work- with the EERC, UND has proven to be remarkably innovative in ideas and technology for the energy sector. That is another area we can be proud of and make sure that we are not complacent.
   * I would like to see the College of Nursing in closer alignment with the Medical School. We need to provide a community of health care providers, and yet they are separated into separate units- I think we could do better here.
   * At WSC, we have good collaboration with UND. Regarding the UAS program, it was a UND lead that helped write our curriculum which is helping train our ND workforce on the ‘beyond visual line of sight’ program. They have been tremendous partners for us
   * UND has also been a great collaborator helping WSC in the medical field. Sanford Health is working to convert Williston into regional health hub for this area. We need to ramp up training opportunities to train a workforce to help make this happen. President Armacost first words was ‘how can UND help?” Since then, we have had numerous conversations about ways we can collaborate. We will need a trained workforce and Dr. Armacost has assured us that UND will assist in bringing the training west so when Sanford opens the health hub out here, we can have a trained workforce on day one. So, in terms of collaboration we really want to thank all the people at UND for helping make this happen.
   * Appreciate of what UND does in support of military and veterans. The programs they offer are outstanding and the ROTC program produces great leaders. Many of our leaders are all ROTC UND graduates. Area we are struggling with is adequate mental health, counseling, and psychologists for our active service members in the state. Our service members we have additional barriers to get this help. We need to think about how to support and retain our military members in North Dakota and what supports they need for this to happen. We have active military that live in all corners of the state and Guard Units in 14 communities. Our challenge is not just in Fargo or larger cities, but to get services to the more rural portions of the state. UND could provide military culture training to service providers in these areas. Access to behavioral health, chemical dependency programs, better access to counseling and psychology are all big parts of this. Understanding the military community and focusing efforts on active serving members and their families would go a long way.
   * This is a bit more tactical, but facility planning is number one in my book. Higher education got to a place where there was a real backlog of facility needs. UND has stepped up and done planning for this and used every model possible including P3 and matching foundation funds. They have taken care of many issues and have been good model for other institutions in the system.
   * When we talk about energy, I think that it is impressive that EERC is essentially self-funded and the money that the state provides is for targeted services that the state needs or wants. So, when the state provides funding, it is for a dedicated project vs. a more broad spectrum of general research. UND’s initiative to step up institutionally is really important. That being said, they should not have to just wait and see what the state will provide, we can do better.
   * Will second that the College of Education can really step up and help fill the unmet needs of the state. We need to get more people in this workforce pipeline- this is something that all the institutions will need to do to help the state.
   * Research is an important component to this. Need to ensure that more/better collaboration is happening across North Dakota universities. Taken together, our research enterprise is still not as big as some of the other research institutions that we compete against. If there are opportunities to collaborate on the research work that we are doing and go after bigger grants would be instrumental to moving the state forward.
   * Not big enough supply for clinical experiences in North Dakota. In addition, we need more skilled care facilities, what used to be called nursing homes, along with basic care (lower intensity of care) and other senior facilities in the state. I believe there are some unique opportunities that exist when we look at both these needs in the state. Skilled Care Facilities are an identity which can offer excellent clinical experiences for those medical providers who deserve a broad range of experiences in their clinical time.
2. **Higher education institutions like UND can have an important impact on a state through Research. Take the ag research done by our friends at NDSU, which has benefited North Dakota and its economy in multi-multi fold ways over the years. Or the energy research done through UND’s Energy & Environmental Research Center — which has played a role in energy boom North Dakota continues to experience. UND’s work in unmanned systems which has led to a statewide UAS ecosystem is another example. Health and wellness is another sector where UND researchers are having an impact. As you look at the state, are there other sectors that UND could and should consider creating a research focus?**
   * Mining. I believe we have a program like this within geology, NDSU might as well. However, I feel it is important when you look at the future of lignite and other natural resources in the state. We have lots of resources that are ‘value-add’ for places across the globe. As the world looks at decarbonization we have a lot of roles that we can play in terms of the mineral resources that we have in the Western part of the state. I really believe there is a future in mining, and we can play a greater role in this space. Lots of investment and grants available in this area
   * I read recently about the possibility of removing minerals from wastewater in fracking. These are experimental thoughts right now, but we can look at opportunities here and do it in a more environmentally and human rights friendly way then some of our international competitors. Variety of areas we can explore here.
   * Those in the legislature have responsibility as well, if we can use state dollars to leverage the federal dollars in terms of research, we need to help do this. If we want our state researchers to do more research that impacts the state, then we need to step up and support it. Can they setup satellite areas near Williston State and Dickinson State to look at research opportunities in areas out in this region of the state? I think doing this like this would benefit the entire state.
   * Thinking about the mining programs mentioned, I think we need to look at the offerings happening at higher education institutions across the state and find out how to collaborate, and in some cases specialize more. Certain programs should be specialized and grow in certain places, rather than duplicating our efforts across two or more institutions. What kind of planning goes into these decisions, and how can we avoid these duplications?
3. **In terms of education and service: In what ways can UND advance educational collaborations to address the health, educational, safety, cultural and economic needs of our community, state, and region?**
   * I am very concerned about supplying ND with enough teachers- especially in the sciences and math. Other areas are short also. I think the whole university system needs to talk about this. We need to resupply and restock our teaching ranks. Without good teachers we will not have good researchers. Would be good for the whole university system and our community colleges to talk about this issue.
   * The Career Academy gives us another way we can impact this issue. The pipeline is very slim relative to the needs of the state. Half of our teachers will not make it 5 years; the next marker is 12 years where they burn out. A good example for me would be the UND partnership with Watford City which has brought good things for both Watford’s school system and UND. This is a good example of what can happen. Need system wide solutions or approaches to some of these issues. Education and Health Care both fall into these areas where we could use a more integrated focus to helping secure our future.
   * Thinking UND specifically- I appreciate the system wide work UND does, and I think they do a wonderful job in terms of research for UAS and medicine. I wish there would be something in the strategic plan to double down on helping the average student. To get them in and out in 4 years. Reduce student debt. In the College of Education, I would like to see fewer classes offered just online. I was stunned to see how many courses are not offered in person. When we talk about retention of teachers it is hard to see how taking classes online prepares you for the intense experience of having 30 students in person. Focus on the basics of good advising and preparing students for the workforce.
   * Think that university presidents and administrators are going a good job. I would encourage you all to get out and talk directly to your legislators. Use us as a resource and encourage people to get involved in the community.