

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA, MORRIS
Morris, Minnesota

INSTITUTIONAL PROFILE

Search for Chancellor

History

The Board of Regents of the University of Minnesota established the University of Minnesota, Morris (UMM) campus in 1960. Located in west central Minnesota, the campus is situated on the rolling agricultural prairie along the Pomme de Terre River adjacent to the city of Morris, an attractive community with a population of approximately 5,000.

While only 45 years old itself, UMM makes its home on a 118 year-old campus. The first buildings housed an American Indian boarding school operated initially by the Sisters of Mercy of the Catholic Church, and later by the United States Government. The school was closed in 1909, and the campus was transferred to the State of Minnesota with the stipulation that American Indian students “shall at all times be admitted to such school free of charge for tuition,” a policy still proudly honored. The following year the West Central School of Agriculture, a boarding school for rural youth under the auspices of the University of Minnesota’s Institute for Agriculture, was established on the campus. The facilities of the West Central School of Agriculture and Experiment Station have since been entered on the National Register of Historic Places as a Historic District.

From its establishment as a campus of the University of Minnesota in 1960, UMM was conceived as a four-year, liberal arts college. The guiding principles of selective admission, controlled growth and academic excellence in a residential campus atmosphere have not changed for over four decades.

Mission

The mission of the University of Minnesota is carried out on multiple campuses throughout the state. Its mission is threefold: research and discovery; teaching and learning; and outreach and public service. The University strives to sustain an open exchange of ideas in an environment that embodies the values of academic freedom, responsibility, integrity and cooperation; that provides an atmosphere of mutual respect, free from racism, sexism and other forms of prejudice and intolerance; that assists individuals, institutions and communities in responding to a continuously changing world; and that creates and supports partnerships within the University, with other educational systems and institutions, and with communities to achieve common goals.

The mission of UMM as a rigorous undergraduate, residential liberal arts college is distinctive within the University of Minnesota. While it shares the University’s mission of teaching, research and outreach, UMM is specifically and intentionally a small, undergraduate college where students play a major role in shaping their own education.

The campus serves undergraduate students from Minnesota and across the nation, and is a highly valued educational resource and cultural center for residents of West Central Minnesota. UMM attracts and serves a student body, faculty and staff reflective of a multicultural society. The college empowers the campus community to participate fully and thoughtfully in a diverse society, regionally, nationally, and globally. Through its instructional excellence, commitment to research in which students are actively engaged, many extracurricular programs and services, and a strong sense of community, UMM is *recognized* as one of the premier public liberal arts colleges in the nation.

Academic Programs

UMM offers a four-year *curriculum* that leads to the bachelor of arts degree in more than thirty fields, as well as student-designed interdisciplinary programs. Students can also choose from one-year to four-year liberal arts curricula that provide preparation for admission to a variety of professional schools.

The UMM *Honors Program* offers a distinct, academically challenging educational experience for motivated, high-achieving students that utilizes an interdisciplinary curriculum. As seniors, Honors students complete an Honors Project: a substantial scholarly or creative interdisciplinary work designed by the student working cooperatively with a project advisor.

Study abroad is an important aspect of the “Morris experience.” Nearly half of UMM students participate in some type of international study. Opportunities include exchange programs in Japan, Korea, China and France; an English Language Teaching Assistant Program (ELTAP) that lets participants develop an understanding of another culture as they help others to learn; May and summer session study-travel abroad; and an International Student Exchange Program (ISEP) that offers direct matriculation in a wide array of universities in countries throughout the world.

Continuing Education, Regional Programs and Summer Session (*CERP*) shares the liberal arts mission of UMM and serves as the primary outreach unit of the campus. Among its many responsibilities, CERP organizes and administers evening, May and summer session offerings, including a wide range of credit and non-credit courses offered on campus as well as online.

Campus Atmosphere

A genuine sense of community pervades the UMM campus. Students, faculty, staff and administrators uniformly point to this sense of community when asked to identify the institution’s distinguishing characteristics. Active participation in all aspects of campus endeavors is highly valued and respected. At the foundation of this sense of community is a proud history of shared governance and decision-making. Students, faculty, staff and administrators alike invest themselves heavily in policy development, operational planning and charting the College’s future, and all value and protect their rights to and responsibilities for such involvement.

The commitment to liberal arts education is more than words on paper at UMM. Students, faculty, staff and administrators can articulate what that commitment to the liberal arts means in terms of curriculum, teaching/learning and inquiry, institutional and personal values, human interaction and engagement with contemporary issues. In addition, UMM makes a passionate commitment to multiculturalism through both the curriculum and out of classroom experiences. Through its intentional recruitment of a diverse student body, ongoing support of the historic tuition waiver for Native American students and annual programs such as the Multicultural Student Leadership Retreat and World Touch Cultural Heritage Week, UMM seeks to become a leader in addressing the changing needs of our increasingly diverse society.

Campus leaders have advanced sustainable, environmentally friendly initiatives since the original Earth Day. Since 2000, the efforts have grown to levels of national leadership and touch nearly every aspect of campus life—from energy to food, water, transportation and waste stream infrastructure. Members of the campus community speak with pride about being a *green campus*, one visible example of which is the recent addition of a wind turbine, a joint venture with the University of Minnesota's West Central Research and Outreach Center (WCROC), also located in Morris. Given Morris' location in the heart of prime agricultural country, the location of the USDA North Central Soil Conservation Research Laboratory in Morris, and the link to WCROC, UMM's connections to the environment and sustainability are strong.

Statistical Information

Detailed statistical information is available online at www.morris.umn.edu/academic/institres.html. Simply click on *Statistical Data Book (online)*.

UMM has a total expenditure budget of approximately \$24,000,000 and enrolls about 1700 students, of whom 115 are non-degree enrollees. Almost 15% of students are students of color, with 7.8% being American Indian. Eighty-six percent of students are from Minnesota, with 35% coming from the 7-county metro (Twin Cities) area. Almost half the students live on campus. The average combined SAT score for entering freshmen is 1200, and the average composite ACT is 25. The student/faculty ratio is approximately 13:1.

Academic, Civil Service and Bargaining Unit staff total 386. There are 122 full-time teaching faculty. This number does not include full-time administrators with faculty rank or faculty teaching in Continuing Education programs. Forty percent of full-time faculty are female, 17% are minority and 53% are tenured.

Challenges and Opportunities Facing New Chancellor

Enrollment Enrollment of degree-seeking students has declined from 1917 students in fall 1994 to 1585 students in fall 2005. The comparable enrollment in fall 1999 was 1789; thus, the pattern of decline has been more significant in the past six years.

Many factors contributing to the institution's enrollment decline have been identified. Among them are the following:

- The demographics of the rural upper Midwest region, including Minnesota, show a declining population that is aging. While the demographics of the region are beyond the control of the institution, strategic leadership is required to redefine and refocus recruiting and the methods/techniques used to reach prospective students.
- Competition for students within the UMM profile is intensifying, with significant competition coming from the UM Twin Cities campus.
- Tuition rates for undergraduates are higher at UMM than at other UM campuses, and scholarship support is a concern.
- The offices responsible for student recruitment, admission, financial aid, etc. (the enrollment management functions) experienced significant instability in recent times that clearly affected enrollment. Major reorganization and staffing have recently occurred and preliminary data are encouraging, but enrollment will remain a critical area of focus for the new chancellor.

Financial Resources UMM is *recognized regionally and nationally* as an exceptional public liberal arts college. Indeed, it has few peers in the public higher education sector. It compares itself and tends to be compared by others to selective, private liberal arts colleges. Its financial resource base, however, is markedly different from those institutions. State appropriations have been relatively flat or declining, and tuition income has declined along with enrollment. While the University grants UMM some offset for the tuition that is foregone as a result of the standing commitment to American Indian students, the net loss of income remains significant. A concerted effort to achieve full funding from the State or U. S. Government to meet this important obligation that was proudly assumed by the State of Minnesota in 1909 is important to the financial health of the College.

UMM has a very modest endowment even in comparison to its public liberal arts peers. A recent capital campaign was highly successful, exceeding its \$6 million goal by \$3.6 million. It is expected that the new chancellor will participate in a second, more substantial capital campaign to be designed and implemented within the next few years. The University of Minnesota development infrastructure is available to assist with this effort.

At the campus level, new efforts are being mounted to invigorate the 10,000+ UMM alumni as a means to significantly expand annual fund giving, and a comprehensive external relations plan has been developed. In terms of capital and deferred giving, significant numbers of alums are at the point in their careers where they can make major contributions themselves and lend their influence in securing substantial gifts from corporations, foundations and individual philanthropists. Identifying and cultivating these individuals is a high priority as the new chancellor attempts to broaden the sources and increase the level of the College's financial support.

Relationships within the University of Minnesota The multi-campus University of Minnesota is one of the nation's leading land grant research universities. The future of

UMM is inextricably tied to the strategic and financial future of the University. The University has repeatedly expressed its pride in UMM as one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges, and the current leadership of the campus is highly regarded by the University's executive leadership.

The University of Minnesota is currently engaged in an all-campus strategic analysis and planning initiative. UMM is actively engaged in campus-based activities related to the initiative, and some representatives from the campus serve on University-wide committees, study groups, task forces, etc. Clearly the results of this initiative will impact the challenges and opportunities to be addressed by the new chancellor.

Many benefits accrue to UMM as a result of being a campus within a multi-campus, land grant research university. Among the benefits are an impressive technology and information management infrastructure; a large, professionally staffed development function; an array of centralized services; opportunities for cross-unit collaboration; and statewide political access and representation. At the same time, there are challenges associated with this status. While highly valued, UMM remains a small part of the overall University. The substantial majority of the University's programs, personnel and resources are concentrated on the Twin Cities campus, and the President of the University is also the CEO of that campus. It is, therefore, incumbent upon the new chancellor of UMM to be proactive in articulating the programs, goals, achievements and needs of the Morris campus to the University and creative in identifying opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation and collaboration. In short, the new chancellor of UMM must be prepared to provide effective campus leadership in the context of the all-University executive leadership team.

Community Relations and Constituency Building UMM is the largest employer in Morris, and the population of the campus represents a significant percentage of the city's total population. Thus UMM has a significant impact on its host community economically, culturally and operationally. Differences between the culture, values and attitudes of a strong liberal arts college and those of a rural, mid-western community are to be expected. Consequently, college/community relations are a high priority and require continued attention by the new chancellor.

Despite inevitable fluctuations in the quality of college/community relations, UMM has had a number of notable cooperative initiatives with the local community. Prime examples include the Regional Fitness Center, which serves both the campus and the city, and a new football stadium that will serve the local high school and College's NCAA Division III Cougar football program. Such joint projects require thoughtful, patient and persistent leadership on the part of all parties, as well as considerable amounts of time. The new chancellor should continue to seek such partnerships and work to advance positive college/community relations.

The UMM Center for Small Towns is an important and direct link to the towns in the College's immediate region. The involvement of students in the work of the Center enriches their educational experience and gives personal and physical presence to the

College in those communities. Business leaders, professionals, farmers and neighbors in the surrounding communities have the potential to be a strong base for both financial and political support for the College, but they must know that the College values them. That requires the genuine interest and consistent presence of the chancellor in those communities.

Strong Leadership in the Context of the Campus Culture Broad and active participation in campus governance and decision-making is one of the defining characteristics of UMM. It is a characteristic that historically has attracted excellent faculty, outstanding students and committed staff. While it is not always efficient, its effectiveness can be demonstrated.

The new chancellor must be genuinely committed to leading the institution within the context of shared governance and decision-making. At the same time, the new chancellor and the campus community must recognize that governing in such context does not equate to passive leadership. Thoughtful and proactive leadership, both internally and externally, combined with effective management skills, are required to address the challenges and opportunities facing UMM. Such leadership must engage the community early and consistently in the generation and development of ideas, strategies and operational procedures and create an environment where ideas and judgments are exchanged freely and participation is valued. Furthermore, the chancellor is both a leader and an administrator. Effective administration assures by delegation and oversight careful stewardship of an institution's assets--programs, people, facilities and finances.

The Chancellor Search

UMM is currently accepting nominations and applications for the position of Chancellor. Qualifications for the position and details of the application process are available at www.academic-search.org

The search is being assisted by:

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