



Minnesota
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& UNIVERSITIES

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 8, 2005

TO: Presidents
Chief Academic Officers

Linda L. Baer

FROM: Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

SUBJECT: System Response to Students Affected by Hurricane Katrina

In follow up to the Leadership Council discussion on the State of Minnesota's response to hurricane Katrina, Laura King, in consultation with the Governor's Office, continues to coordinate and gather added information. We anticipate that dislocated students will be very interested in learning whether and to what extent our colleges and universities have program and student service-related capacity to meet some portion of the great need. Many colleges and universities are responding and we want to ensure that what we do as a system is based on good information from our presidents and their respective education communities. We need to provide greater and better coordination because we are hearing about a growing "logistics disaster" for the many well-intentioned volunteers. We propose to create a system-level website which will be linked back to campus resources as appropriate and linked off MnSCU's main page.

Katrina Response: College and University Planning and Plans In order to better coordinate and communicate college and university responses, we ask that you respond to these questions in relationship to responding to those affected by hurricane Katrina:

- 1) Is your college/university actively involved in planning or committing to education programs? Based on General Counsel guidance, we are not involved in private/personal fundraising by employees, students and staff. We understand that your college/university may be involved in fundraising on behalf of your planned efforts.
- 2) **If yes**, who is your college/university coordinator for your planning through whom we propose to receive and distribute all general information on campus-based initiatives efforts. If you have identified more than one person, please let us know. There is need for greater coordination in the flow of information. We will continue to copy any communications to presidents.
- 3) If you have developed a website, 1-800 numbers, or contact information whether web-based or phone, please provide names, website addresses, names and phone numbers for the project coordinators for staff resources.

In addition, many of you have already made offers of assistance to students who have had their learning disrupted by this disaster. In order to better coordinate our educational opportunities to serve these students, we would like to know your on-ground and on-line programs that you would like to list in a clearinghouse. The phone number that is being listed for this effort (see

attached press release) is that of the Call Center for Minnesota Online, which operates 82 hours/7 days per week. We will aggregate your responses to provide good communication information for the Call Center and for each campus. In addition, a web site is being created that will contain the system's response and contact information. A button on the mnsu.edu and Minnesotaonline.org will link to these new pages.

Programs and Student Services: Your feedback on these aspects of Katrina planning is also needed.

First, is your college or university willing to physically house and register students for enrollment at your campus or community? St. Cloud State University and Minnesota State University, Mankato have indicated they could each take approximately 150 students. The Northeast Higher Ed District can take approximately 5 students per campus. Is your campus willing to take students into classes at your campus and is there room for housing these students?, If yes, how many students? Are there any specific programs or restrictions that students should know about? Who should be the contact person for your institution?

Second, is your college or university willing to partner in a "GuardOnline" type project to offer courses, programs and services online? This will require some flexibility and creativity to assess, advise and register students who are grieving and may have lost all records. Who will be your contact person that can deal with the diverse questions that these students may have?

The Call Center can provide basic information but will want to connect the student with a campus contact for advising, financial aid, and other services. Please note, and this reflects the conversation at Leadership Council, we strongly suggest that **one-stop shop models** (admission/housing/financial aid) may be best in order to reduce barriers to potential students and/or their parents. Since our campuses have already started for fall semester, are you willing to offer a flexible term so students can get some courses completed this fall? Spring semester should be able to be in sync with your regular spring term.

Although there may be lots of inquiries, we are not sure of the volume of need or if students will continue once their home campus re-opens. There may be the possibility that external sponsorships for assistance in paying tuition, fees and housing.

We are looking forward to hearing your ideas, comments and willingness to participate in these efforts. Many have already set up opportunities for these affected students, and we hope that we can count on your support.

Please direct all questions and comments to: Gary Langer at 651-649-5772 or Fax: 651-632-5008 or Email: gary.langer@so.mnsu.edu

Attachment

c: James H. McCormick
Laura King
Chief Student Affairs Officers
Cabinet
Deans
Distance Learning Contacts