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Leadership Letter

From the Vice Chancellor

Campus leadership will provide a number of updates during this week's Campus Assembly meeting. Among the most important will be the enrollment update. The news is encouraging, even as we face an unprecedented challenge with COVID-19.

Before I get to the good news, let me set the context. In the Midwest, we have observed gradual declines in the number of high school graduates since 2012, with the most pronounced declines being in rural communities. We anticipate the declines to level off some for the next four or five years before dropping again in the middle of this decade as the children of the 2008 recession head to college. Only a few colleges and universities saw enrollment growth this past year, and a number saw declines of 3-5 percent. There has been a significant drop in the perceived value of higher education within conservative and rural populations over the past four years. Additionally, we made the difficult decision to discontinue football this year. This will affect both retention and recruitment; football players typically made up more than 15 percent of incoming on-campus enrollment. In short, we were facing a significant challenge well before the COVID-19 pandemic.



The good news is we are meeting the challenge. UMN Crookston was one of only a few regional institutions that met enrollment targets and had an increase in enrollment last fall. We created additional opportunities for students by adding club hockey and trap shooting, which creates avenues for enrollment growth and a strong long-term strategy for retention. Further, we are currently ahead on all metrics compared to this time last year. I have heard the rumor that we achieved these numbers by lowering our

admissions standards, but the evidence is the opposite. As of the beginning of this week, we have denied admission to 38 students, which is up from 24 at this time last year and from just nine only two years ago

Additionally, the number of applicants with an ACTs of 31 or better are up 132%, those with a 28-30 are up 50 percent, and those with a 25-27 are up 39 percent.

While enrollment is everyone's job and everyone deserves credit, it is difficult to overstate the work of the enrollment management team. Nearly every major practice within the office (recruitment strategies, applications, application processing and review, financial aid leveraging, communications, etc.) has changed within the past year. Although many offices might have chosen to spread these changes over two or three years, our enrollment management professionals have fully implemented the new systems in just one. There have been some bumps. In hindsight, we certainly could have done some things better, but we are positioned as well as possible as we face what may prove to be the most significant enrollment challenge of our era.

In addition, much like key positions and players, coaches fulfill a critical and strategic role on the campus enrollment management team. I encourage you to take time to speak with a coach about our degree programs, student activities and clubs, community attractions and the general vibe of the campus. Successful recruitment of top level student athletes depends on it. At this time, student athletes make up nearly 40% of our on campus enrollment, which says a lot about the steady work of athletics coaches and staff.

There is little question that COVID-19 and the accompanying economic recession present an immediate threat to our Fall enrollment. Since we admit approximately twice the proportion of low-income and first-generation college students as the system as a whole, we are vulnerable—they are vulnerable. Most of our students already overcome significant barriers to go to college, and in the face of unprecedented challenges, college may seem like a bridge too far for some. We also know our students are resilient and resourceful, and we will do everything in our power to extend access to them the life-changing benefits of a high-quality university education.

Long-term, we still have work to do. To maintain and grow our enrollment, we need to extend greater access to the growing Hispanic and Somali populations in the region, to Native American communities surrounding our campus, and to new waves of adult learners who will pursue or complete a degree later in life. We need to listen, learn from them, and be open to changes they bring to us. We will also need to continue to engage regional partners including schools, businesses, agricultural industry and healthcare providers. We will need to be responsive, nimble, and innovative as we generate new programs and adapt existing ones to changing needs. Fortunately, like so many of our students, we have proven to be resilient and resourceful over the years, and I am confident that we are ready for the challenge.

Campus Town Hall Meeting

Click [here](#) to find the slides from the town hall meeting held today.

If you want to submit your answers for the "Who Am I?" game, click [here](#).

From Student Activities

Next week the University of Minnesota Crookston will celebrate student award recipients via UMN Crookston main [Facebook page](#) during a "week of recognition." Students receiving an award will see their name, photo, name of award, and a message from the department/individual giving the award (if provided) on Facebook. Each student has been notified of the "week of recognition," however, students were not notified about which specific award they will receive. Departments/individuals are encouraged to reach out to their student recipients if they wish to notify them in advance regarding the specific award they will receive.

Please like and share the UMN Crookston [Facebook page](#) in an effort to recognize the hard work and accomplishments of these students!

If you have any additional questions, please reach out to Megan Beck (msbeck@crk.umn.edu)

From Residential Life:

Housing sign up will begin the Week of April 27, so please be sure to read the attached [Schedule for Room Sign Up](#) Information as each day has specific sign up procedures. If you have questions anytime, please contact Sandy at 218-281-8531 or email sandrad@umn.edu.

From Financial Aid

April is Financial Literacy month! As a way to celebrate, we will post a series of articles throughout the month of April providing valuable information for students. The articles will touch on various beneficial financial aid related topics. Students who participate have a chance to win prizes!

Virtual Admit Day

On Friday, April 3, UMN Crookston hosted the first ever Virtual Admit Day. Of the 86 students that registered, 66 students attended from nine different states and two countries, representing 21 separate majors across the four departments. Forty-nine of these students have confirmed to attend this fall! Watch for more virtual events coming this summer.

Virtual Campus Visits

Admissions has been receiving a steady amount of requests for virtual campus visits. Some students look to join us yet this fall and some look to start fall 2021. We have also had virtual classroom visit requests from high school teachers/counselors, which we are very excited about. We are finalizing a robust virtual recruitment plan that will serve us well throughout the summer as well as into next fall. Stay tuned for more updates and specifics next week!

Help us spread the word - all Fall 2020 on-campus students who confirm their intent to enroll by June 1 will receive a \$250 Golden Eagle Pledge Scholarship!

From Information Technology

Coursera online courses available through July 31

All U of M instructors have access to use content from more than 3,800 open courses and 400 Coursera Specializations at no charge through July 31. This high-quality, electronic curricular material consists of a series of modules with 8- to 12-minute video segments, readings, and assignments that can be used to supplement your content. [Learn how to access Coursera content and discover how to supplement your U of M course content.](#) For assistance or questions, [email Bob Rubinyi.](#)

Securing your Zoom meeting

As a result of the increased use of Zoom meetings globally, they have become a target for meeting hijackers. [Read about how to Secure Your Zoom Meeting](#) before it occurs, while you are meeting, and after it is over. You can also [watch a short demonstration of In-Meeting Tools to Secure your Zoom Meetings.](#)

Laptop Help

Zoom Security - Critical Instructions

Our campus recently experienced a Zoom hack containing very upsetting imagery during a meeting of students and staff. This is a real and significant situation, which we must take seriously. Protect your meetings, your guests, and yourself. To secure your meetings, follow the Zoom Security instructions provided by Mike Williams, Twin Cities OIT.

Security Tips:

Access Security Settings

On April 8, Zoom released a new way to access existing security settings during a meeting. After [updating your Zoom client](#), a shield icon, labeled **Security** will appear in the dock at the bottom of the meeting screen **when you are the host or co-host** (participants will not have access to this feature).

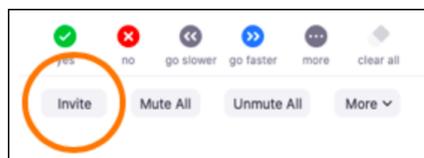


Instructions: Securing Your Zoom Meeting

Choose how you would like to learn about Security settings; read instructions or watch a short video demonstration.

- **Read** instructions on how to [Secure Your Zoom Meeting](#) before it occurs, while you are meeting, and after it is over.
- **Watch** a brief demonstration of [In-Meeting Tools to Secure your Zoom Meetings](#) (3:14).

Note: The **Security** icon is located where the **Invite** icon used to be. Now, to invite participants during a meeting, click **Participants**. The invite button can be found at the bottom of the **Participants** pane.



Address Disruptions

As a result of the increased use of Zoom meetings globally, they have become a target for meeting hijackers. In many cases, these bad actors seek to cause disruption by posting or sharing inappropriate comments, images, or videos. In the event that an unwanted guest joins your Zoom meeting, you can take immediate action:

- **Lock your meeting.** The Zoom host settings allow the host or co-host to lock the meeting after all the expected participants have joined. Click the **Security** icon and select **Lock meeting**. Note: If

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one of your participants leaves the meeting (e.g., their internet connection fails) after you have locked the meeting, they will not be able to rejoin unless you unlock the meeting.

- **Remove a participant or put on hold.** If someone is disrupting your meeting, remove them from the session. Click on the **Participant** icon. From the participant pane, hover over the name of the disruptive participant. When the menu appears, select **Remove**. Another option is to put them **on hold**, during which time the attendee cannot see, hear, or share anything.
- **Restrict screen sharing.** Click the **Security** icon to uncheck screen sharing permissions.
- **Disable chat.** Click the **Security** icon and click the checkmark next to chat to disable participants' ability to use the chat function.

Zoom Backgrounds

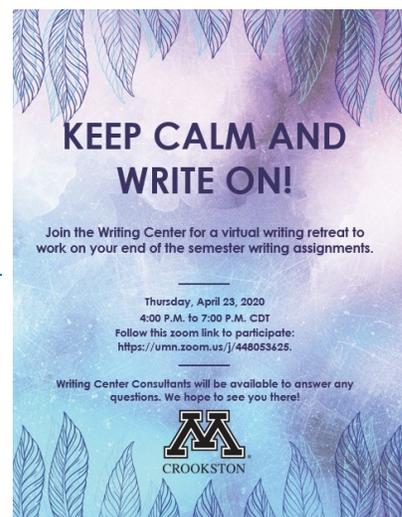
“To have a Zoom background or not...that is the question. And the answer is—“it is ok.”

According to Mike Williams Twin Cities OIT video conferencing service owner, Zoom backdrops do not affect bandwidth. It may cost you some computer processing units (CPUs), so, it will consume resources on your computer (CPU) but it is not a network bandwidth issue.

From the Student Success Center

Keep Calm and Write On

The Writing Center will host this semester's Writing Night on Thursday, April 21! Encourage students to attend so they can finish their end of the semester writing projects. We will have writing consultants available to meet with students and provide feedback on their work. Share this [Zoom Link](#) with your students and share that they can join us at any point between 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. CDT!



First-Year Eagles Peer Mentorship Program

The Student Success Center is looking for six students to help us pilot our new peer mentorship program. The First-Year Eagles Peer Mentorship Program is designed to assist incoming students in making a successful transition in and outside of the classroom. Highly qualified peer mentors will be placed in each FYE (first-year experience) class. Mentors will support first-year students in their academics, assist them in locating resources, and encourage them to become involved on-campus and take pride in being a Golden Eagle. Mentors have not only experienced their first year and all of the challenges that come with

it, such as: feeling home sick, changing or developing study habits, and more. They will also go through peer mentorship training to be better prepared to support their mentees

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Peer mentors will:

- Be a positive role model for their mentees and their peers.
- Lead the way to academic and social success.
- Provide encouragement, support, and advice



The application for the 2020-2021 school year is due by Sunday, April 26 at 11:59 p.m. CDT. If you know of students who would be a great fit, encourage them to apply by visiting this link: [FYE Peer Mentor Application](#). You can find more information on the qualifications and responsibilities on the application.

Questions? Contact [Alma Torres Pierce](#) at almatpie@crk.umn.edu.

Inspired Art Journal

The new [Inspired Art Journal](#) was released earlier this semester!! What is it? It is a publication of creative writing and art from students and staff of the University of Minnesota Crookston.

Would you like to be a published author or artist? Consider submitting your creative writing, poetry, photography, or art piece to the next Inspired Art Journal. Submissions can be made [here](#). All submissions must be original. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at umcwrite@crk.umn.edu.

Highlights

Staff Feature: *Megan Beck*, Assistant Director of Student Activities

Tips for Students: My number one tip for students right now is to continue to keep active! It's really easy right now to not be and I always find that if I can do something to get moving I'm much more productive.

Favorite Activity: I love hiking or any outdoor activities

Favorite Travel Location: My favorite place I've been is Rome Italy where I studied abroad when I was a

student, otherwise Germany and Sweden are on my bucket list of places I'd love to go

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Nifty Narrative: My undergrad degree is in studio art concentrating in metalsmithing. This last year I received a grant through the Northwest Minnesota Arts Council that allowed me to create an entire body of artwork based off the Fournet building (before it went under restoration) in downtown Crookton. I was able to use wallpaper from the various rooms to create some really nice pieces!



Faculty & Staff Updates

Welcome

Dr. Savala DeVoge has accepted our job offer and will begin service as *Dean of Student Engagement and Wellness* beginning approximately July 1. Dr. DeVoge has spent the past 14 years at The College of Idaho where she worked first as the Director of Student Involvement and more recently as the Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Student Involvement. She will be a great addition to our leadership team!

Events

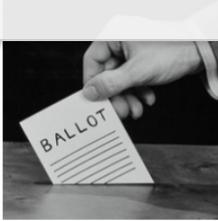


Domestic Violence Support

Recurring event - click to view more dates.

Our University of Minnesota community is going through a difficult time. We are very thankful that our leaders are taking COVID-19 seriously, but we are...

[I'm Interested](#)



Voting for 20-21 Crookston Student Association...

Recurring event - click to view more dates.

Students - Please take a few moments and exercise your civic duty to vote for your representatives on student government for the 2020-2021 Executive Board to...



<https://forms.gle/5Yq3e5hMigsp1oN6>

[I'm Interested](#)

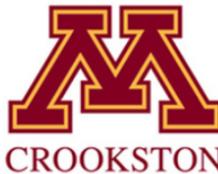


First-Year Eagles Peer Mentor Application is Open

Recurring event - click to view more dates.

The First-Year Eagles Peer Mentorship Program is designed to assist incoming students in making a successful transition in and outside of the classroom....

[I'm Interested](#)



Now Hiring! 2020 Grads -- Virtual Event...

Virtual Career Fair Description: Tuesday, April 21st 2020, 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm CDT join Career Services Administration in learning more about the process of...

🕒 2pm

📍 Virtual,

[https://umn.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/14787/student_preview?](https://umn.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/14787/student_preview?token=zfEzZl8Slr6e6XorZQKa8UwG__4QP59oT5Ns9m4DFXecZjNmOgDgQA)

[token=zfEzZl8Slr6e6XorZQKa8UwG__4QP59oT5Ns9m4DFXecZjNmOgDgQA](https://umn.joinhandshake.com/career_fairs/14787/student_preview?token=zfEzZl8Slr6e6XorZQKa8UwG__4QP59oT5Ns9m4DFXecZjNmOgDgQA)

[Register](#)

[I'm Interested](#)



Virtual Career Preparation Webinar

The purpose of this event is to inform students about different ways to get involved on campus that can prepare you for your career, such as: research...

🕒 1pm

[I'm Interested](#)

All Events

