

2009 SENATE EDUCATION

SB 2407

2009 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Bill/Resolution No. 2407

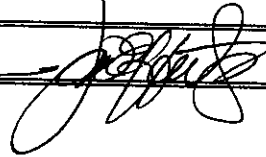
Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Hearing Date: February 3, 2009

Recorder Job Number: 8442, 8445

Committee Clerk Signature



Minutes:

Chairman Freborg opened the hearing on SB 2407. All members were present.

Senator Grindberg introduced the bill. This is a straightforward bill. He will describe the bill then provide some comments on the motivation to spark some debate and future planning regarding the growth of our university system. The bill creates a Virtual University and says that all students that are not traditional, the nontraditional course offering whether it be through the internet, IVN, high school dual credit courses be recorded as a student count in the Virtual University category annually. Section three is \$100, 000 one time for any costs. He will be the first to admit that is a number he plugged in to provoke discussion. There is a sense on the Appropriations Committee, there are continually questions about head count and the numbers that are reported through the appropriations process. It was very apparent in 2 or 3 of the budget presentations this session. It caused us to have some discussion about these numbers vs. numbers of traditional students who take a seat on campus. We are in robust times in North Dakota and the recommendation by the Governor for Higher Education is significant. This is an attempt to have some discussion on the future growth of online programs and their cost. Devils Lake is offering courses to soldiers in Iraq. What are the real numbers. It is not his intent to offer degrees through the Virtual University. He also presented

amendment .0101 to clarify this. It's a good discussion for us to have – how do we record these students?

Senator Taylor asked when we hear enrollment figures from UND, are they reporting full time students?

Senator Grindberg said they report fulltime, head count and then mixed in that is the number of online students in the head count vs. full time.

Senator Taylor said what the bill would do is pare off the full time virtual students that are taking no classes on campus.

Senator Grindberg said yes.

Senator Taylor asked what if a student is taking a seat but also takes a couple of virtual courses?

Senator Grindberg said it is up the wisdom of the committee.

Senator Flakoll asked if the intent is to get a better handle on the actual capital improvement requests and technology requests from an appropriations standpoint.

Senator Grindberg said yes. It is to try to match their funding requests and trying to figure out how the costs differ. Mayville State had a refreshing request for funding for a new building but also for demolition of a building, 50,000 or 60,000 square feet that they no longer need. It is a fresh look at dealing with the future and if there is a shift to more online courses.

Senator Flakoll asked if the intent isn't to encourage or discourage distance learning but rather to get a handle on how much is being used.

Senator Grindberg said yes, a better understanding of the enrollment increases and the projection with virtual courses.

Senator Taylor asked if we could just ask the universities to add another reporting requirement.

Senator Grindberg said perhaps. A number of members of the appropriations committee thought we should have a discussion on this. We need to understand this better.

Senator Flakoll asked if this Virtual University concept would eliminate the "other" category since all students need to be accounted for somewhere.

Senator Grindberg said yes.

Senator Holmberg testified in favor of the bill. This is an interesting idea. As we wrestle with the numbers in Higher Education, it becomes a moving target. His interest in the number of students doing virtual work is the economic impact that students traditionally have had on the region when the state is considering closing an institution. This bill doesn't suggest that at all. If campus X keeps its numbers up it continues to go down the road and become a University of Phoenix, where they are all over the world but they have no one in that community buying pizzas or going to the movies. One of the mainstays of Higher Education in the state is the economic activity that revolves around the 11 campuses we have. If this committee were to approve the bill, Appropriations would look at it in the context of entire Higher Education budget and might find a better use for the \$100,000. It is an intriguing idea and one that should be discussed in the legislature. It will rise or fall on its own merits at the end of the day. Chancellor William Goetz, North Dakota University System, testified against the bill. See written testimony. We need to separate the policy issues. Mayville State finally addressed infrastructure in a responsible way. The North Dakota University System is undertaking work in the next year regarding finance concepts and implication for the entire system. The work is ongoing and is the result of the interim higher education committee. Distance learning will be very much a part of the work. They will report to the interim committee if it is in existence.

There is a tremendous amount of work that needs to be done relative to the changing dynamics of delivery.

Senator Taylor said most of the information requested in the bill seems to already be in the report, in a slightly different format. Does appropriations get a look at this report?

Chancellor Goetz said yes, it is provided to appropriations. It doesn't get the attention it should because of time constraints.

Senator Flakoll said then it wouldn't take near the \$100,000 to accomplish the report.

Chancellor Goetz said that is hard to judge, the computer time and the personnel time are hard to compute.

Senator Flakoll asked if face to face head count is a growth area for the North Dakota University System.

Chancellor Goetz said those numbers are declining.

Senator Flakoll said in looking at one of the campuses on the report, face to face count, there would be 592 square feet per student. If you added the unduplicated distance education students, they would have 82 square feet per student. Does that create any problems in determining capital needs?

Chancellor Goetz said it should not.

Senator Flakoll said with respect to the IPEDs, is that a problem for the University of Phoenix?

Chancellor Goetz said he would have to defer to staff.

Larry Skogen, President, Bismarck State College, testified against the bill. See written testimony.

Senator Flakoll asked what is the per credit cost to deliver a class.

Larry Skogen asked if he means what students pay for a class.

Senator Flakoll said no, the cost to deliver a class.

Larry Skogen said he would have to defer to his staff.

Lane Huber, Director of Distance Education at Bismarck State College said it is very difficult to compute such a number because there are so many variables including the number of students, the level of education of the instructor, the software, the technology fee, every course would be completely different.

Senator Flakoll asked for the average cost.

Lane Huber said he does not have the information.

Senator Flakoll asked if he has the cost per credit for a student who is physically in the classroom vs. those that are online.

Lane Huber said he doesn't know how they would ever figure that out.

Senator Taylor asked if there is a big profit line at the end of the year or is the cost just what you charge on average.

Lane Huber said we make money. We end up with excessive revenues that we put into the reserves. We do not lose money in our online programs if that is the question.

Senator Taylor asked what is the amount that goes back to the bottom line.

Lane Huber said he doesn't have his financial guy there but they could get the answers.

Senator Taylor asked if they are currently tracking how many students are resident vs. nonresident or from a state with reciprocity.

Lane Huber said on the online campus, it is a flat fee, no out of state tuition, it's a flat fee regardless of where you live. They service student from 42 – 48 states every semester.

Senator Flakoll asked if those who only take distant learning classes and live out of state, do they pay student activity fee?

Lane Huber said no, there is a flat fee, part goes to technology. There is no parking or student activity fee. He will get the financials.

Chairman Freborg closed the hearing on SB 2407.

Senator Flakoll moved a Do Pass on SB 2407. The motion died for lack of a second.

Senator Bakke moved a Do Not Pass on SB 2407, seconded by Senator Taylor.

Senator Bakke said the North Dakota University System was quite clear they thought this would be cumbersome and difficult to manage. When we are looking at \$100,000, we don't need to make things more difficult. She doesn't know why we need this.

Senator Taylor said he is satisfied with the data that is provided. The institutions listed are all constitutionally dictated. This is unnecessary. It doesn't accomplish a whole lot.

Senator Flakoll asked if Senator Bakke would be more comfortable if we took section 3 out?

Senator Bakke said it still has no purpose.

Senator Flakoll said he was somewhat taken aback when the president did not know how much it cost to deliver a class per credit. How do they prepare a budget?

Senator Bakke said he should have had some idea of the cost but what does that have to do with the Virtual University?

Senator Flakoll said from an appropriations standpoint, it costs X dollars for face to face and Y dollars for virtual. He is not saying it's cheap to provide classed delivered electronically, it's just different.

Senator Bakke said they have many students who take classes both ways, would they be counted both ways?

Senator Flakoll said it is in the bill. Only those exclusively online would count for the Virtual University. He knows where the bill is going, he wants to make his point.

Senator Lee said when 2 seasoned appropriations committee members come in with a problem, there must be an issue. They need to figure out how many students there actually are. Maybe the answer is to say no to capital requests, then the needed numbers would be provided.

Senator Taylor said this is more a question for the Round Table.

The motion passed 4 – 1. Senator Bakke will carry the bill.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL NO. 2407

Page 2, line 14, after the underscored period, insert "Only an institution may admit students, award certificates and diplomas, or grant degrees."

Page 2, line 20, replace ", a virtual" with ":

- a. "Institution" means an educational institution listed in subsections 1 through 11 of section 15-10-01.
- b. "Virtual"

Renumber accordingly

Date: 2/3/09
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2009 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2401

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Pass

Motion Made By Sen. Flakoll Seconded By _____

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Freborg			Senator Taylor		
Senator Gary Lee			Senator Bakke		
Senator Flakoll					

Total (Yes) _____ No _____

Absent _____

Floor Assignment _____

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

*Decid for back
of record*

Date: 2/3/09
Roll Call Vote #: 2

2009 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE ROLL CALL VOTES
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. 2407

Senate Education Committee

Check here for Conference Committee

Legislative Council Amendment Number _____

Action Taken Do Not Pass

Motion Made By Sen Bakke Seconded By Sen Taylor

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Senator Freborg	✓		Senator Taylor	✓	
Senator Gary Lee	✓	✓	Senator Bakke	✓	
Senator Flakoll					

Total (Yes) 4 No 1

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Senator Bakke

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE (410)
February 3, 2009 1:02 p.m.

Module No: SR-21-1477
Carrier: Bakke
Insert LC: . Title: .

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE

SB 2407: Education Committee (Sen. Freborg, Chairman) recommends DO NOT PASS
(4 YEAS, 1 NAY, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2407 was placed on the
Eleventh order on the calendar.

2009 TESTIMONY

SB 2407

North Dakota University System

SB 2407 - Senate Education

February 3, 2009

William Goetz, Chancellor

Good morning Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Education Committee. For the record, my name is William Goetz, Chancellor of the North Dakota University System.

I am here this morning to urge you to vote "Do Not Pass" on SB 2407. Although the bill may have been introduced based on good intentions, as I will attempt to explain, the bill is not only not necessary, it may actually be difficult and expensive to implement and harmful to students. The NDUS already reports enrollments based on course delivery using the standard delivery method categories established by United States Department of Education. The Department does not recognize "virtual", "electronically" or "dual credit" as valid categories. As you can see in Tables 9 and 9A attached to my testimony, the NDUS already reports enrollment in the distance education delivery method categories identified by the Department of Education. The "virtual course" definition proposed in the bill appears to cross several of these categories, but does not align well with any of them. Using the proposed categories would mean we could no longer track historical enrollment trends in distance education. In addition, the proposed definitions are not well suited to align to new course delivery methods as they evolve. The historical enrollment trend is part of NDUS accountability reporting. Measure AS1 from the Accountability Report is also attached for your reference.

The idea presented in this bill may appear to be a way to logically group distance education courses, but this concept would be difficult to implement. As indicated in the attached tables, thousands of students are simultaneously enrolled in Internet, other distance delivered courses and face to face on campus courses. In order to report "the number of full-time equivalent students enrolled in at least one virtual course" as required on page 2, lines 17 to 19 of the bill, it would require duplicated enrollment reporting between NDUS institutions and the virtual university.

The recent trend is to integrate multiple technologies in individual courses. Almost every course syllabus in the system is available over the Internet, giving all courses an "electronic" component. Does this make the entire NDUS the "virtual university" as defined in the bill? The "COMBO" column in Table 9A of the attachment documents are over 3,000 students enrolled in multi-format courses where no single delivery method makes up 50% of the instruction. The definitions provided in SB 2407 do not provide guidance on how these multi-format courses should be classified for reporting purposes.

The Roundtable on Higher Education recommended that the NDUS make education seamless for students. This has been done through the North Dakota University System – Online and the development of the “Collaborative Student” model. The NDUS-O, as it is called, in 2001 became the first consortium in the country recognized by a regional accrediting association for the joint delivery of multiple academic programs. System institutions can use the NDUS-O to jointly offer degree programs using a model where a student selects a degree-granting home campus, but takes courses from several campuses to earn that degree. The “Collaborative Student” model was developed by the system to provide students who simultaneously register at multiple system institutions a single registration process, a single bill, consolidated financial aid, and, a consolidated transcript. The NDUS-O does not need to be the 12th institution in the NDUS to provide this functionality. The system already has the functionality of a “virtual university” in place from the most important perspective – that of a student.

In SB 2407 virtual University enrollments would include “dual credit”; however, in a technical sense, the NDUS does not offer dual credit courses. NDUS institutions permit qualified, advanced high school students to enroll in college courses. These enrollments are counted and reported along with all other degree-credit enrollments. State law empowers school superintendents to accept those college courses as meeting high school requirements. While the system has begun to categorize high school students as an “admit type” and it will be possible to report students with this admit type, we would not be able to determine exactly how all superintendents use these courses to meet high school course requirements (that is, as dual credit).

System institutions provide enrollment information to the United States Department of Education based on Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS) reporting requirements. The reporting requirements in SB 2407 are inconsistent with these federal reporting requirements. The bill would force the NDUS to implement a new reporting system where the enrollment numbers would not reconcile with the IPEDS reports. This situation would create confusion and distrust over NDUS reported enrollments. NDUS enrollment reports are based on actual course enrollments. SB 2407 would require us to alter our course enrollment records, something we must oppose on ethical grounds.

Mr. Chairman and members of the Senate Education committee, I urge the committee to forward a “Do Not Pass” recommendation on SB 2407.

North Dakota University System Online

www.nduso.org



Mission and Goals

To provide access to degree and certificate programs from the colleges and universities of the North Dakota University System for all residents of North Dakota and others through eLearning.

1. To provide single point of contact for distance education opportunities;
2. To create collaborations to maximize resources and to reduce duplication;
3. To deliver programs and courses using eLearning;
4. To insure quality and address accountability issues for eLearning; and
5. To facilitate needs assessment and development of courses and programs needed *'to enhance the economic vitality of North Dakota and the quality of life of its citizens.'* (Goal of the North Dakota Legislative Council Interim Committee on Higher Education)

Structure

1. Coordinating and connecting entity for the campuses of the North Dakota University System
2. Curricular and administrative responsibilities remaining with the individual campuses
3. Infrastructure to utilize the strength of each campus and to more efficiently utilize limited resources
4. Collaborative Student Model:
 - To register for courses from multiple campuses from a single campus,
 - To receive one financial aid package for courses taken from multiple campuses during the same term,
 - To receive a single bill for those courses, and
 - To generate a single transcript from the degree-granting campus.

Overview

The initial delivery of online courses started with Minot State University and Bismarck State College. In 1997, MiSU had 12 courses available with 120 enrollments. In 1998, BSC had six courses and 80 enrollments. In the last decade, all of the institutions of the North Dakota University System have significant roles in delivering online courses and programs. At the present time, there are 167 online programs available from the institutions of the NDUS...55 undergraduate and graduate certificate programs, 54 two-year programs, 33 four-year programs, and 25 graduate programs. During the Fall 2008 Semester, there were more than 14,000 course registrations and 10,000 unduplicated enrollments in over 1,000 online courses.

Through the Collaborative Student Model (briefly described above), a student can select a home campus and take courses from that campus plus online courses during the same semester from any of the other ten NDUS institutions. The process insures that a program can be completed in a timely manner with access to courses from other NDUS institutions if not available at the home campus.

**Table 9
DEGREE CREDIT HEADCOUNT BY ALL DELIVERY METHODS
Fall 2008**

INSTITUTION	DISTANCE EDUCATION										CAMPUS TOTAL ⁵
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	
	FACE TO FACE OFF CAMPUS	CORRESPONDENCE	E-LEARNING ¹	DUPLICATED DE TOTAL ²	UNDUPLICATED DE TOTAL ³	FACE TO FACE ON CAMPUS	DE & ON-CAMPUS DUPLICATED TOTALS	UNDUPLICATED DE & ON CAMPUS TOTAL ⁴	NON-DEGREE CREDIT ENROLLMENTS ⁵	=HH	
BSC	121	0	3,452	3,573	3,088	2,471	5,559	3,788	0	3,788	
DSU	221	68	777	1,066	817	2,111	2,928	2,730	0	2,730	
LRSC	886	0	891	1,777	1,596	379	1,975	1,657	0	1,657	
MASU	42	0	349	391	336	482	828	789	0	789	
MISU	404	48	1,210	1,662	1,533	2,482	4,025	3,432	0	3,432	
MISU-B	144	0	278	422	398	325	723	652	3	655	
NDSCS	525	0	691	1,216	1,171	1,645	2,816	2,543	2	2,545	
NDSU	11	125	2,867	3,003	2,858	12,847	15,705	13,229	0	13,229	
UND	563	105	2,311	2,979	2,805	11,208	14,013	12,748	0	12,748	
VCSU	82	0	883	965	832	721	1,553	1,019	0	1,019	
WSC	197	0	431	628	549	402	951	847	3	850	
NDUS Total	3,196	346	14,140	17,682	15,983	35,093	51,076	43,434	8	43,442	

¹ E-learning categories are listed in more detail on Table 9A.

² Reflects enrollment in each distance education delivery method. If for example a student is taking both a correspondence course and an e-learning course, this same student would be reported twice in the duplicated enrollment total.

³ Reflects unduplicated headcount enrollment for total distance education. If for example a student is taking both a correspondence and e-learning course, this student would be counted only once in the unduplicated distance education total.

⁴ This is a conservative count of students known to be counted only once by a campus or the system for the system total. The actual unduplicated counts are probably higher for campuses with students with insufficient identification information. If for example, a student that is taking a correspondence course and a face to face on campus course, they would be counted only once when sufficient identification information is provided.

⁵ Students that are only taking non-degree credit courses.

⁶ Enrollments are unduplicated at campus level but are duplicated at system level. Thus, a student who is taking courses simultaneously at two different campuses would be included in the NDUS total twice but only once in the NDUS unduplicated total.

Table 9A
DEGREE CREDIT HEADCOUNT BY E-LEARNING DELIVERY METHOD
Fall 2008

INSTITUTION	VIDEO		TV BROADCAST		PRERECORDED		AUDIO		INTERNET		CD ROM	COMBO < 50%	E-LEARNING DUPLICATED TOTAL	E-LEARNING UNDUPLICATED CAMPUS TOTAL
	1-WAY	2-WAY	LIVE	PRE-RECORDED	VIDEO	AUDIO	1-WAY	2-WAY	SYNCH	A-SYNCH				
BSC	0	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,615	0	1,742	3,452	3,010
DSU	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	777	0
LRSC	0	69	0	0	0	0	0	0	362	0	0	460	891	792
MASU	0	162	0	0	0	0	0	0	187	0	0	0	349	314
MISU	0	37	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,173	0	0	0	1,210	1,200
MISU-B	0	100	0	0	0	0	0	0	178	0	0	0	278	265
NDSCS	0	95	0	0	0	0	0	0	596	0	0	0	691	680
NDSU	35	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,175	0	520	0	2,867	2,753
UND	0	96	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,872	0	13	0	2,311	2,223
VCSU	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	462	0	379	0	883	762
WSC	0	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	332	0	0	0	431	410
NDUS Total	35	852	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,952	0	3,114	0	14,140	12,409

* Reflects unduplicated headcount enrollment for e-learning delivery methods. For example, if a student taking a video course and an internet course the student is counted once in the unduplicated e-learning total.

Non-Traditional Delivery Methods

Measure AS1

(Legis. 3.a.)

Number and proportion of enrollments in courses offered by non-traditional methods

Do NDUS students take courses through non-traditional delivery methods?

In Fall 2008, the NDUS served 15,983 students who enrolled in courses for credit through non-traditional delivery methods. These students comprised 37 percent of the system's total headcount enrollment. Enrollment by students who take courses in a variety of non-traditional delivery methods has increased 88 percent since Fall 2004.

About This Measure

The NDUS is proactively pursuing alternative educational delivery methods to provide "anytime, anyplace" access for students.

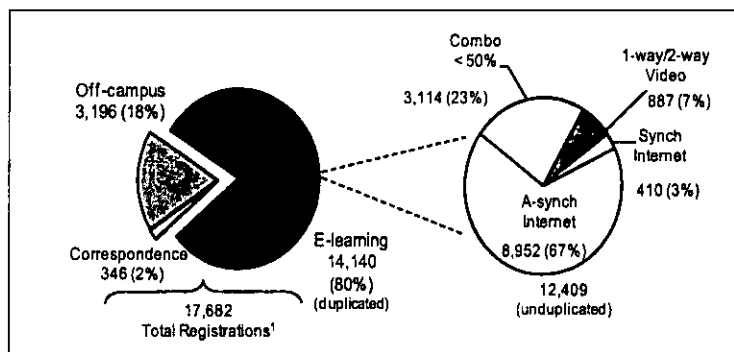
Classes are offered via correspondence study, face-to-face meetings at off-campus sites and through e-learning.

E-learning includes online Internet courses, which can be offered in a synchronous (at the same time) mode or an asynchronous (independent of time) mode. E-learning also includes prerecorded video, two-way video (IVN) or a combination of these methods.

This information is included in the *2008 Fall Enrollment Report*, which is the basis for enrollment accountability reporting. The number of students who enroll in courses via non-traditional delivery methods has increased 88 percent since 2004, including 7.2 percent increase in 2008.

Distance Education Degree Credit Student Headcount Enrollment

Fall 2008



The NDUS also offers courses via live and prerecorded TV broadcasts, prerecorded video, two-way and one-way audio, and CD-ROM; however, students did not choose these delivery methods during Fall 2008.

A course involving a combination of delivery methods is considered a "combo" course only when any single delivery method provides less than 50 percent of the instruction.

¹ The total of 17,682 course registrations included 1,699 students who registered in multiple distance learning courses, resulting in an unduplicated distance education total of 15,983 students. Source: *Fall 2008 Enrollment Report*, Tables 9-9a.


	Face-to-face Off-campus	Correspondence	E-learning	Unduplicated Distance Education Total
Fall 2004	2,557	571	5,800	8,505
Fall 2005	2,366	544	7,849	10,124
Fall 2006	2,924	555	11,060	13,200
Fall 2007	2,639	467	13,587	14,902
Fall 2008	3,196	346	14,140	15,983

Source: Fall Enrollment Reports 2004 through 2008.


Bismarck State College
SB 2407 - Senate Education
February 3, 2009
Larry C. Skogen, Ph. D., President

I am Larry Skogen, President of Bismarck State College. I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 2407 that requires reporting only “traditional” students in an institution’s enrollment figures and dumping all other students, including online and dual credit, into a newly created virtual university. I must oppose this bill because the obvious implication of it is that other than traditional students are not “real students.” Nothing could be further from the truth. Furthermore, this legislation would negatively impact, certainly on our campus, the creative and innovative approaches we’ve taken to overcome the demographic challenges facing our state and our university system. And, finally, this legislation would create a tremendous burden on our recordkeeping function.

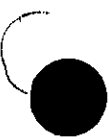
First, online students are most certainly and clearly “real” students. They require IT support, academic advising, financial aid advising and assistance, recordkeeping and transcript services, bookstore support, faculty, of course, and everything else a campus offers. What they don’t require is a desk to sit in or food services. Nearly everything else on campus matters. So what is the really value in just counting



those students sitting at a desk when all the other students served by a campus are using the rest of the campus's services in obtaining their education?



And, there are numerous examples that demonstrate that in higher education online and distance students are real students. Let me use the United States military as an example. For the past two years, we at BSC have been cultivating relationships with the military for the delivery of our nationally recognized programs to service members wherever they might be in the world. Just in the last six weeks we have finalized agreements with the Navy, Army, and Air Force, all of whom are partnering with us precisely because we deliver great quality programs online. The military services spend hundreds of millions of dollars every year paying for the higher education of their members. And much of that is for online learning because it is flexible and provides a quality education while servicemembers move from station to station all around the globe. The military commanders would certainly not be paying for education if they didn't believe it was real education.



And it's not just the military embracing online education. Nationwide, in Fall 2007 there were nearly 18 million [17,975,830] total students in higher education, representing an annual growth rate of 1.2% over the previous year. Of these

students nearly 4 million [3,938,111] were taking at least one online course, for a growth rate of 12.9% over the previous year. So online education is growing much faster than “traditional” higher education. And in 2007, 21.9% of all students in higher education were taking at least one online course. If the philosophy of this proposed legislation were expanded nationwide, then, nearly one quarter of higher education students would not be counted in their respective institutions’ enrollment counts. I assure you, when the University of Maryland counts its enrollments, it includes the over 60,000 online students enrolled in its programs.

Bismarck State College has, as well, experienced tremendous growth in online education. Of 3,800 students enrolled at BSC in the fall 2008, around 1,600 were taking online courses. But of those, roughly 650 were taking both online and on-campus courses. Furthermore, we have another approximately 30 students in our Dakota Nursing Consortium Program (there are over 100 students statewide in this consortium). They are studying to be nurses, a critical need in North Dakota. Yet they are taking their courses over IVN through our five-college consortium. Because IVN is “electronically” delivered, this legislation would prohibit us from counting any of these aforementioned students in our enrollment figures.

To conclude this point, online and distance learning students are real students. To argue otherwise is to deny the tremendous impact technology has had on higher education and the reality of 21st century education.

Secondly, as campuses we are expected to be entrepreneurial in developing programs. To demonstrate any level of success, the number of students we have enrolled in our campus is part of the accountability measure (although there are others, as well). I fear that the motivation to engage with potential students, to develop programs requested by them and industry, and to deliver those programs on a global scale, will be stifled if campuses receive no credit for enrolling those students, but instead the numbers are dumped into some sort of Virtual University.

Finally, there is the issue of accounting that the Chancellor mentioned. This legislation would create a tremendous burden on our recordkeeping function.

Through that function we are already tasked with reporting a variety of accountability measures to the system office, a plethora of federal reports tied to financial aid, to accrediting agencies for our campus overall and for individual programs, to the Veterans Administration for veteran students, and so forth. This legislation, if passed, would require another set of reports requiring us to try to shred out “traditional students”—an ill-defined and outmoded term at best—from

students receiving their education through other means than face-to-face in a classroom setting, even those students who are taking a program wherein they take both on-campus and online courses. Despite the expense of such a requirement, this sort of accounting of students would not add one iota of quality to our educational programs.

In conclusion, higher education today is no longer anything close to what one might think of as “traditional.” This legislation seeks to prevent campuses from counting non-traditional students and/or delivery methods in enrollment figures. It appears to me that this will be a very expensive, time-consuming, unfunded mandate foisted on campuses for no good purpose other than to find out how many students are actually sitting at desks on campuses—a completely outmoded barometer of the delivery of higher education in the 21st century.

Therefore, I encourage you to recommend a “Do Not Pass” on SB 2407. Thank you for this opportunity to address you.