Letter from President Edna

April 3, 2009

Dear MSUM Faculty, Staff, and Students;

Monday, we will return to our normal operations after sharing the extraordinary experiences of the last two weeks. I would like to thank all of you for your efforts that saved our community from the Red River and to thank you for the privilege of being a part of this kind and caring university community. The purpose of my letter is to discuss our preparations for a potential second crest as well as our plans to resume normal operations.

By now, many of you have heard that a potential second crest of the river is forecast for later this month. Please know that we are carefully watching those developments and will act accordingly to protect people and facilities. At least one member of our campus Emergency Management Team meets regularly with the City Emergency Operations Center to coordinate planning. The university is safe to the 44 ft. level, which exceeds the high end of today’s predictions. However, we may need to cancel classes and close the residence halls again for a brief period depending on the prediction and possible stress on the city water and sewer infrastructure. Regular town meetings are scheduled for 6:30AM, 10:30AM, and 3PM on Tuesday, April 7 at the CMU. The topics for this meeting will now include flood preparations in addition to budget and the university mission statement. All are welcome to attend.

On Monday, April 6, we will resume classes and normal operations. The Faculty Association met earlier in the week and then met with representatives of the Student Senate to discuss the revised academic calendar. We have already missed over two weeks of classes. Faculty members are concerned that students will be disadvantaged in their major sequence courses if we do not cover the required content. Nonetheless, the faculty leadership has asked members to be flexible where possible. Please consult the http://web.mnstate.edu/news/flood/semesterchanges.cfm for calendar changes.

The coming weeks are likely to remain a difficult time for many members of our community. Some of our faculty, staff, and students have had considerable damage to their homes or apartments. Some students who have missed work hours have financial challenges. Further, stress and the recovery from these difficult times remains very much an issue for many people.

I ask that we all continue the spirit of flexibility and compassion that characterizes this community. Although we are coming back to normal operations, this will not be a normal time for many members of our community. Please see the following paragraphs for possible sources of assistance.

- Faculty and staff who may need assistance are asked to call our Human Resources Office for information or to consult the state employee assistance website at http://www.mmb.state.mn.us/eap.

- For students
  - Students needing assistance with the stress of the situation should consult with the Counseling Center.
  - Limited space is available in the residence halls for students needing a place to stay to complete the semester. Please consult the Housing Office during regular business hours.
  - On Monday and Tuesday, we will have tables at the CMU with staff from academic affairs to answer questions you may have.
A special window at the Business Office will be available for students with issues about work hours or financial crises.

Finally, as we return to normal, we are planning some small ways to thank our campus community for their heroic efforts to save Moorhead from the Red River. For starters, there will be an ice cream event on Monday, April 6 from 3-5PM at the CMU. Mayor Voxland will speak at 3:30. In addition, we are in the process of planning a community thanksgiving supper on April 30. We will keep you posted of other events as they unfold.

Again, I thank you all for your assistance as well as your patience and flexibility as we work to return to normal. Please let me know if you have questions, comments, or suggestions. Thank you again!

Best wishes,
Edna