Introduction and Background

From the conversations and forums, it is clear that issues related to faculty and staff quality of life are important to strengthening connections and enhancing a sense of community at UND. Moreover, as retirements among the baby-boom generation increase, quality of life issues will be vital in attracting and retaining the best and brightest.

Additionally, a recent study by the Collaboration on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) indicates that faculty – particularly women – are placing a heavy emphasis on quality of life issues. These factors have also been elevated since the Chronicle of Higher Education’s rankings of the best colleges to work for: (http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5).

The quality-of-life topics that came up most were employment opportunities for spouses and partners, childcare, mid-career faculty development, and staff development.

Impact on Desired Outcomes

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Relationship with other Initiatives

These initiatives emerged as a means for creating a more satisfying place to work and have fulfilling careers. However, the following initiatives also contribute to these ends: Encourage Gathering; Facilitate Collaboration; and Expand UND’s Presence.

Also, while this initiative addresses matters related to faculty and staff quality of life, they also affect the student experience since students also benefit from them, e.g., childcare.

1. Employment Opportunities for Spouses and Partners

Increasingly colleges and universities are finding faculty candidates turning down job offers due to the lack of job opportunities for their spouse or significant other. This factor is so important that a relatively new organization, the Higher Education Dual Career Network, has been formed to assist universities to communicate with other institutions, gain access to resources to help them improve their program, and receive emails about job openings. (http://sites.google.com/site/dualcareer/index)

Spouse/partner assistance programs can also help retain faculty and staff since employees are less likely to want to stay at an institution if their partners do not have a satisfying professional life.
E. ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR FACULTY AND STAFF

Implementation Timeline

Implementation should be a short-term program, with implementation expected in 0-2 years.

The process would involve:
- Appointing a working group with representatives of the various potential users of the service to study the practices of the model programs for Dual Career services listed below.
- Determine potential local partners with organizations within commuting distance of UND, e.g., Altru Health System; Grand Forks Air Force Base; Grand Forks Public Schools; other colleges and universities; etc.
- Working with Deans, directors and department chairs to introduce them to the program and gather their input on the elements that should be part of UND’s Dual Career assistance program.
- Reviewing the skills and resources within current HR staff to determine if addition of the Dual Career assistance program can be managed with existing staff or if hiring additional staff will be necessary.

Short-Term Possibilities

The timeline is sufficiently short so this initiative can be implemented without an interim, short-term solution.

Cost Range

The cost would be relatively low – the salary of an additional staff member, if needed, and operating funds.

Potential Models

- University of Northern Iowa: [http://www.vpaf.uni.edu/dualcareer/](http://www.vpaf.uni.edu/dualcareer/)
- Indiana University: [http://www.indiana.edu/~careers2/](http://www.indiana.edu/~careers2/)
- Virginia Tech: [http://www.hr.vt.edu/employment/dualcareers/](http://www.hr.vt.edu/employment/dualcareers/)

3. Enhance Childcare

UND’s University Child Center is considered an important part of the quality of life of faculty and staff, as it is across American higher education. In surveys by COACHE and the Chronicle, childcare is among the most important, so much so that some universities, such as Stanford, Michigan, and Northwestern, now offer a child care subsidy for faculty.

While there is general satisfaction with childcare at UND, the importance of this service in the growing competitive landscape – and indications that there is room for improvement at UND – suggests that UND would be wise to enhance childcare.

The most effective programs link operational policies completely around the needs of faculty, staff and students, e.g.:
- The days and hours of service align with calendar of the local K-12 systems as well as the University’s
- Hourly services are available for faculty and staff who have on-campus meetings they must attend
- They have after-school care
- They provide care when there are closures due to weather
- There are sufficient openings to accommodate demand

An interesting idea that arose in discussions with faculty is having a seminar room in the childcare center so that faculty with pre-school children could come to campus, drop their children off, and hold meetings on-site.

University childcare programs have traditionally been run in-house, but many universities are choosing to contract out the service. The decision depends on institutional needs, including the role the childcare center plays in the early childhood education program.
E. Enhance the Quality of Life for Faculty and Staff

Implementation Timeline

The timeline depends on how extensive the enhancements are, particularly if there are space needs. The first step would be to appoint a Child Care Center Task Force with representatives of the various users of the service to conduct a survey of needs of students, faculty and staff to determine:

- Days and hours of operation; operating policies; desired services; price elasticity; etc,
- Whether UND wants to explore potential partners for the Center to share services and costs, e.g., local hospitals and health care organizations, the city, K-12 system.
- Determine if the University wishes to explore contracting out

Based on the survey results, the University would identify enhancements to the existing program. Some may be done in the short term (e.g., modifying days and hours of operation); some may require 3-5 years or longer, such as a renovation, significantly expanding or moving the current program.

Cost Range

Like the timeline, the cost will depend on several factors, which would be addressed by the Task Force:

- How extensive the enhancements are
- Space needs
- The funding and operational approach, i.e., if UND chooses to fund and operate the center internally or contract with a third party
- The potential for outside funding -- foundations, state and federal government; NGOs – that might be interested in financing early childhood education and childcare centers that meet certain criteria
- Potential local partners, as mentioned above

Short-Term Possibilities

The potential for short-term solutions depends on the outcome of the work of the task force mentioned above.

Potential Models: Contracted-Out Child Care

- Gettysburg College: [http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/president/hr/daycare/onsite_daycarecenter.dot](http://www.gettysburg.edu/about/offices/president/hr/daycare/onsite_daycarecenter.dot)
- Johns Hopkins: [http://www.jhbrighthorizons.org/about/](http://www.jhbrighthorizons.org/about/)
- Northwestern: [http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/childcare/solutions/kindercare.html](http://www.northwestern.edu/hr/benefits/childcare/solutions/kindercare.html)

4. Mid-Career Faculty Development Program

Perhaps because of the prominence of the Alice T. Clark program, there is considerable interest at UND in issues related to professional fulfillment, quality of life and career development for mid-career and senior faculty. Surprisingly – and an opportunity for UND – there are relatively few programs across American higher education that are targeted to mid-career and senior faculty.

An article in the March/April 2009 issue of Change Magazine is useful as an introductory piece. The research focused on 44 women and minority faculty in STEM disciplines in their early, mid and late careers. While targeted to a select sector of faculty, the study notes that non-science faculty share the same concerns.
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The research findings, corroborated by other similar research, revealed needs of faculty in different stages of their careers:

- “Early-career faculty emphasized making the transition from graduate school to faculty life, which entailed managing stress and learning how to play new multi-dimensional roles. They want to build specific skills such as how to advise students and work in research groups. Contrary to the stereotype, preparing for tenure was not the focus of these early-career faculty. Instead, many tried to keep a long view in mind.”

- “Faculty nearing tenure and those recently past tenure expressed a shared need for advanced skills; after five to 12 years of experience, they had mastered early-career survival skills and now wanted to develop the executive and organizational ones required to run effective meetings, lead committees, and foster collaborations.”

- “Experienced faculty wanted to explore options for career growth…. Associate professors sought advice on long-term career planning, changes in career direction, and promotion to full professor… Senior faculty wanted to test their aptitude for leadership roles….Investing in senior faculty development allows an institution to help experienced faculty develop in new directions and to foster home-grown leadership.”

Missing from these descriptions was something expressed strongly in a conversation with the UND Chester Fritz Distinguished Professors: the need and desire by mid-level and senior faculty to learn more about current pedagogical approaches, particularly those related to instructional technology.

Implementation Timeline

The creation of a mid-career faculty development on the order of the Alice T. Clark program would likely take 3-5 years, perhaps accelerated to 0-2 by the infusion of external funding, whether by the alumni association, as is the Alice T. Clark program; or an endowment, as are the Chester Fritz Distinguished Professorships. Steps would include:

- Identifying a working group with faculty and academic administrators to review the literature and outline a program for UND. How are “mid-career faculty” defined? What elements might be included in the program?
- Hold conversations with a broader number of faculty to develop a focus for the program that make it most relevant and useful in the UND environment
- Review the Alice T. Clark operating model to determine if it is appropriate for a mid-career program
- Based on the selected business approach, identify the costs for staff and operations
- Secure funding
- Develop an implementation plan, perhaps starting small and phasing in additional elements over time, based on experience and the availability of funding.

Cost Range

The cost will depend on several factors, which would be addressed by the working group. However, if the Alice T. Clark operating model, or some version of it, is used, the annual costs would be approximately $50,000.

Short-Term Possibilities

A significant program like this cannot be phased in “on the cheap.” It would have to be done fully from the start to have credibility, internally and externally.
Potential Models

Relatively few models exist for a mid- or senior-level faculty development program on the order of Alice T. Clark. Following are resources that contain helpful information that can assist UND in formulating a program:

- University of Washington:
  http://www.engr.washington.edu/advance/resources/retention/mid_career.html

- Faculty Development for Institutional Change: Lessons From an ADVANCE Project:
  http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/March-April%202009/full-advance-project.html

- Mid-Career Faculty: Staying Challenged and Enthused:

- Mapping the Terrain of Mid-Career Faculty at a Research University: Implications for Faculty and Academic Leaders:
  http://www.changemag.org/Archives/Back%20Issues/September-October%202008/abstract-mapping-the-terrain.html

- Report of the Faculty Development Committee; UMASS Boston:

5. Enhance Staff Development

Members of the staff are important partners in the academic process, and to the university. While UND has a fairly extensive set of staff development offerings through its U2 Program, the conversations suggest that there is a desire for additional opportunities for staff to enhance skills and promote professional advancement.

The essential elements of this initiative are learning experiences and assistance to enable staff to learn, climb their desired career ladders, and better serve students and the entire campus community.

Implementation Timeline

This short-term initiative would take 0 - 2 years to implement. The steps would be:

- Identify an individual in the HR Office to coordinate the various aspects of this initiative
- Review potential models to determine if there are any elements that might be added at UND
- Survey staff members and supervisors for staff training and development needs, particularly activities that relate to assisting UND achieve specific strategic priorities, such as improving learning and the student experience
- Identify desired elements, based on the findings of the survey and models, e.g., enhanced orientation program; seminars and classes to address specific skills; formal certification programs for job advancement
- Identifying the delivery model: In-person? Online? A hybrid approach?
- Determine the costs of each phase and secure funding, including additional staff, if needed
- Create a phase-in plan of various elements

Cost Range

The cost will depend on several factors, primarily how extensive the enhancements are. However, since UND already has a base to work from with its U2 program, it is quite possible that the costs would be relatively low.
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Short-Term Possibilities

Starting the program will require an inventory of existing efforts; gradually phasing in new elements; and communicating with the campus, including a hyperlink on the HR web page stating where staff can access services.

Potential Models

- Rochester Institute of Technology: http://finweb.rit.edu/cpd/
- University of the Pacific: http://web.pacific.edu/x3743.xml