

March 24, 2022



Dear Members of the Senate Higher Education Finance and Policy Committee,

We write to you on behalf of the UMD Student Association and the University Education Association of Duluth, which together represent the nearly 10,000 students and roughly 550 faculty at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

We urge you to support the University of Minnesota’s full \$65 million supplemental budget request in SF 3799. The \$43 million appropriation in SF 3510 is simply not enough to fully fund the three programs proposed by the University, each of which is critical for UMD, its students, and their families.

1. \$30 million to support system-wide Promise Program scholarships.

The Promise Program scholarships will benefit students from low-income families and from historically underrepresented groups. This proposal is critical for UMD, which is the most expensive campus in the system for students from low-income families once cost-of-living expenses and student aid are factored in.

Average Annual Cost by Family Income				
	\$0- \$30,000	\$30,001- \$48,000	\$48,001- \$75,000	\$75,001- \$110,000
Crookston	\$4,968	\$5,857	\$10,735	\$15,174
Morris	\$4,040	\$4,725	\$7,163	\$14,818
Duluth	\$7,712	\$9,390	\$12,978	\$19,632
Rochester	\$7,069	\$8,712	\$13,764	\$20,793
Twin Cities	\$7,688	\$8,898	\$12,965	\$19,558

Source: Collegescorecard.ed.gov (2020-2021)

Because it is more expensive for poorer students than other system campuses, the funding to expand the Promise Program scholarships will have the greatest impact for UMD, and will allow it to better fulfill its mission as a regional comprehensive university: to be accessible and affordable.

2. \$30 million to create a new Greater Minnesota Scholarship program.

The Greater Minnesota Scholarship program is intended to attract and retain students at the Greater MN system campuses. This program is essential for UMD, because its sticker price is far higher than its regional peer institutions.

Regional 4-Year Public Universities	Tuition & Fees
University of Wisconsin-Superior	\$8,155

University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire	\$8,874
Saint Cloud State University	\$9,170
Metropolitan State University	\$9,395
University of South Dakota	\$9,432
North Dakota State University	\$10,601
University of North Dakota	\$10,596
Northern Michigan University	\$12,918
University of Minnesota-Duluth	\$13,850

In-state tuition for 2021-2022. Source: nces.ed.gov

The Greater Minnesota Scholarship Program would reduce tuition costs for students from Minnesota by up to \$4,000 in their first year and an additional \$4,000 to \$5,000 spread over years 2 – 4. These scholarships would make UMD competitive with its regional peers. In turn, it would better position UMD to balance its budget, since more effective student recruitment and retention would minimize or even eliminate recurring tuition shortfalls.

3. \$5 million to improve existing services to allow students to graduate in four years.

Once again, the support services that this money strengthens will benefit UMD students, who face serious barriers to timely graduation due to systemic underfunding in critical areas. In 2020, UEA-D identified some of these barriers in a letter addressed to President Gabel. At that time, we noted:

- UMD is supported by 1/8th of 1 of the 13 Twin Cities-based specialists at the Center for Educational Innovation.
- There are 205 end users per IT staff at UMD; the system average is 66 end users per IT staff.
- UMD has one disability access consultant per 3,723 students, the highest ratio in the system.
- UMD is the only system campus that fails to meet the minimum [IACS](#) counselor-to-student standard.
- UMD Health Services cannot provide psychiatric services on campus or via telepsychiatry through Boynton.

Thank you for your support and for your service on the Committee of Higher Education Finance and Policy. If you have any questions or concerns about this bill or about any other legislation related to higher education, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

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