

# “The Pros and Cons of Cluster and Interdisciplinary Hires”

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# The Context for Our Hires

## ***North Dakota and NDSU (AY 2011-12):***

- State budget surplus of more than \$1 billion
- New provost and call for academic roadmap to “ignite a new epoch of academic distinction”
- All departments expected to submit proposals
- Deans asked to submit 3-5 college hiring priorities based on departmental proposals
- Appropriated funding increase of \$6.4 million

# The UNITE Proposal

## Our Unconventional Response to the CFP:

- The Vision of **UNITE** (Unifying Hires for Innovation, Transformation, and Engagement)
- The Provost's Response
- The Funding Allocation: \$1.1M but. . .
- Modifications: Spousal/Partner Hires

# The UNITE Hires

- Director, Tribal and Indigenous Studies Program
- Assistant Professor, African Diaspora Studies (now Africana Studies)

# Other Interdisciplinary Hires

## *Spousal/Partner Hires:*

- Assistant Prof of WGS and English
- Assistant Prof of History and English
- Assistant Prof of Visual Arts and History

## *College-based hires:*

- Director of Center for Social Research
- Assistant Professor of Practice,  
Instructional Design (funded by DCE)

# Positive Outcomes of the Hires

- Serve the needs of multiple departments
- Build synergies and research collaborations across departments and colleges (e.g., between Public Health/Health Professions and TIPS program)
- Create programs that can enable us to recruit students from underrepresented groups
- Enhance grant opportunities
- Increase the diversity of college faculty
- Serve as a springboard for other interdisciplinary initiatives in college and university

# Challenges Related to the Hires

- Establishing the tenure home for the appointments
- Recruiting students into the programs
- Dealing with preexisting tensions and problematic dynamics in a host department
- Building broader faculty support for the UNITE programs, especially given staffing issues in some departments