

February 11, 2011

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome to Scholars in Action: the 2011 Symposium on Research, Scholarship and Creative Activity at the University of Northern Iowa. Today is an occasion to celebrate our scholarship at UNI, discover opportunities to collaborate, and engage in dialogue about what it means to be a scholar at UNI in the 21st century.

We are particularly pleased to have Dr. Eugene Rice, Senior Scholar for the Association of American Colleges and Universities, at UNI as our keynote speaker. Dr. Rice has, with several of his colleagues, including the late Ernest Boyer, transformed how higher education serves the public good through the education of our students and the scholarship of our faculty and staff. He is one of the preeminent scholars in the field of faculty work.

We encourage you to attend our two poster sessions where faculty and staff from every college will be highlighting their research and creative activity. These two sessions will be the best opportunity to become more familiar with the variety of scholarship in all of our colleges and explore potential future collaborations. We encourage you to move slowly, engage in conversation, and seek to learn about the fascinating scholarship in which we are engaged at UNI. You will know you have done so when it takes you both sessions to increase your familiarity.

Our breakout sessions are designed to build upon the points made by our keynote speaker. In some instances, what you may hear will be a substantial shift from how we have traditionally viewed the role of a scholar. I encourage you to share your thoughts openly, while being respectful of the views of others.

Please take time during our luncheon to network with the individuals at your table. We have created topical tables that might interest you to join. If not, you can certainly join a general table. We challenge each of you to meet at least two new people and learn more about their scholarship, research interests, or their creative activity.

Our day will close with a reflective panel that Dr. Rice will facilitate. Each panel member will reflect upon what they heard that day in the keynote presentation, break-out sessions, and other conference activities and reflect upon its connection to the history, mission, goals, and culture of UNI, as well as the needs and expectations of the scholars that comprise our academic community.

Whether you are a member of the UNI faculty, staff, or administration, we recognize you all serve a vital role in the scholarly community of UNI, and we thank you for all you do. We look forward to continuing to serve you.

Sincerely,

Christy Twait
Assistant Provost for Sponsored Programs