

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 17, 2009**

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*Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Present: Dan McElroy, Chair; Trustees Christine Rice, Duane Benson, Cheryl Dickson, Louise Sundin, James Van Houten and Jacob Englund.*

*Other Board Members Present: Trustees David Olson, Thomas Renier, Scott Thiss, Terri Thomas, Clarence Hightower and Ruth Grendahl.*

*Leadership Council Committee Co-Chairs Present: Senior Vice Chancellor Linda Baer and President Patrick Johns.*

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Academic and Student Affairs Committee held a meeting on March 17, 2009, at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street in St. Paul. Chair McElroy called the meeting to order at 10:10 am.

**1. Bush Foundation's Goal to Increase Educational Achievement**

**Presenters:**

Peter Hutchinson, Bush Foundation President

Lee-Hoon Benson, Program Officer

Susan Heegaard, Vice President and Educational Achievement Team Leader

In 2008, the Bush Foundation announced a goal to increase educational achievement in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota. The key strategy in achieving this goal is the creation of 25,000 new and highly effective teachers over the next decade.

Foundation President Peter Hutchinson gave an overview of this effort and how this goal may fit into the work done by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

Research indicates that effective teaching is the most powerful school-related variable that affects student achievement, Mr. Hutchinson said. Data gained from a study done in Dallas, Texas, schools showed children who had effective teachers three, four and five years in a row were able to overcome achievement gaps and perform at consistently higher levels. Good teachers appeared to make the difference, he said.

At the campus level, producing high-caliber teachers will require a willingness to change the way things have always been done, Mr. Hutchinson said. Recruitment efforts will need to focus on attracting the best and brightest students. Once

recruited, those students will need to be exposed to improved teacher preparation, including revamped curriculum, methods and enhanced guidance.

The commitment to create effective teachers will not end at graduation, he added. Efforts will be needed to ensure graduates are placed in receptive classrooms and that they continue to receive support and guidance during their first years of teaching to achieve high levels of classroom performance.

Trustee Sundin said placement is critical to the success of efforts. Schools hiring these students must make a commitment to ensure that new, effective teaching methods will be accepted into the school work environment.

Mr. Hutchinson said the foundation has had talks with representatives from three system campuses and the response has been encouraging. People involved in the talks have indicated they are ready and willing to evaluate recruitment strategies, mission requirements, program curriculum and classroom accountability benchmarks.

Foundation representatives have also met with the Board of Teaching regarding licensure, Mr. Hutchinson said. Offering provisional licensures or developing ways to bring more mid-career people into the classroom are two efforts which could help meet the foundation's goal.

Chair Olson asked Mr. Hutchinson what would be expected of the system if a partnership on achieving this is formed with the Bush Foundation.

In order to achieve the goal of increased educational achievement, Mr. Hutchinson said the system will need to make a commitment to a systemic change. This may require some policy changes, he said.

The system also will be asked to create or recreate financial incentives so that they focus on the creation of effective teachers. At this point, it is unclear what the incentives would be, Mr. Hutchinson said. During the next six to nine months, a design team will be meeting with various groups to develop a plan that defines the content, structure, finances and sustainability of the effort.

He said some schools may be able to launch revamped programs by the fall of 2010, with the first graduates emerging four to six years later. Benchmarks will be built into the review process to assess teacher effectiveness during their first years in the classroom, Mr. Hutchinson said.

In response to a question from Trustee Englund, Mr. Hutchinson said the foundation is concentrating its efforts on new teachers at this point. Strategies aimed at existing teachers may be a strategy in the future, if the efforts with new teachers are proving successful.

Not all teacher education programs in the state will be a part of the foundation's effort, Mr. Hutchison said. In April, the foundation expects to announce the names of the five to seven institution campuses in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota that will be participating.

Chair McElroy said the foundation is offering an exciting proposal. Since committee members expressed a consensus that they support the idea, he suggested that a special meeting may be needed in April or early May to further discuss and define the system's commitment to the effort.

The meeting adjourned at 11:10 am

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Takash, Recorder

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*Leadership Council Committee Co-Chairs Present: Senior Vice Chancellor Linda Baer and President David Danahar.*

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**1. Minutes of January 20, 2009**

*The minutes from the January 20, 2009 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Meeting were approved as written.*

**2. Minutes of February 12, 2009 Joint Academic and Student Affairs and Finance, Facilities and Technology Committees**

*The minutes from the February 12, 2009 Joint Academic and Student Affairs Committee and Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee meeting were approved as written.*

**3. Academic and Student Affairs Update – Senior Vice Chancellor Baer**

- The Board of Trustees will be hosting Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College President Larry Anderson and other representatives from the college during lunch. The lunch is a way of acknowledging and celebrating the signing of a memorandum of understanding with the tribal college pertaining to the delivery of higher education services to the tribal community and community college students in the Cloquet area.
- Pine Technical College and South Central College have received grants from the U.S. Department of Labor to train workers for advanced manufacturing jobs.

Pine Technical College has received a \$1.9 million grant to support teaching advanced manufacturing technology skills to high school students, particularly junior and seniors, and out-of-work or under-

employed adults. During the next three years, the college plans to train more than 4,700 people in a six-county region that encompasses Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec and Pine counties in Minnesota and Polk and Burnett counties in Wisconsin.

South Central College has been awarded a \$1.9 million grant to support a new mechatronics degree program that begins this fall. A new and rapidly growing field, mechatronics combines electronics, mechanics, pneumatics, hydraulics and computer control systems to create new and improved automated manufacturing production systems.

The program is designed for people interested in plant maintenance, set up, installation and assembly. These jobs are found in medical, electronics, agriculture, biotechnology and automotive industries.

- Career One-Stop has been asked by the US Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration to create a re-employment portal. This website is designed to provide assistance to workers during job transition.

Users will be offered information on unemployment insurance, health care coverage, skill assessment, job hunting and networking. There will also be information on short-term training opportunities and ways to pay for schooling.

- The All-State Academic Team was honored March 5 by the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society. Two-year college students named to the team were recognized for their leadership, academic achievement and service to community and college.

#### **4. Workforce of the Future: Leadership Reaches Out to Business - Senior Vice Chancellor Baer**

System leadership reaching out to businesses is one of the system's initiatives in the 2009 Action Plan. To help achieve this initiative, system presidents and other system leaders each conducted high-level visits on behalf of the system to ten or more private-sector companies in Minnesota to learn about their competitive advantage and the system's role in enhancing the prosperity of the state's citizens through education and training.

The report offers the following recommendations:

- College and university representatives should conduct follow-up visits. Approximately half of the business leaders indicated they are interested in continuing or renewing their relationship with a local college or university.

- There should be a focus on internships, apprenticeships and on-the-job training with local businesses and industry. Colleges and universities should see local business and industry as partners in educational delivery.
- Business leaders stressed the importance of flexible delivery, such as online learning.
- It is recommended that faculty look carefully at curricular areas that could be strengthened to reflect emerging skill needs of employers. These skills include technology skills and business critical “soft skills” that reflect emerging business practices, such as the use of “green” products or global competition.

Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said while business leaders provided specific advice for the system, many expressed gratitude and satisfaction with their relationship with local colleges and universities.

President and administrative leaders involved in the visits reported that they appreciated the opportunity to connect with employers and expressed an interest in continuing to reach out to businesses.

Southwest Minnesota State University President Danahar commented on his visits. He said many of the businesses expressed a need for graduates who are articulate, problem solvers and who have the ability to speak and write clearly. He was told graduates need to be able to handle technology in a fundamental way and should be sensitive toward diversity and globalization.

He said the general consensus was that business and industries are willing to train graduates in business practices, as long as they have the basic skills needed to be good employees.

Trustee Dickson pointed out that the system wants incoming students to be proficient in core competencies and college ready. In turn, the system’s institutions also should strive to turn out graduates who are proficient in core competencies and who are career ready.

Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said the visits showed employers are not only worried about the economy, but also about their ability to find workers. That makes the system’s goal of educating the under-served even more critical since employers are going to have to draw from a larger pool of people to find productive workers.

Chancellor McCormick said the value of these business visits was highlighted in a recent legislative audit report, which said it is important for system leaders to develop and to maintain good relationships with businesses and industry.

Trustee Van Houten said presidents should work on targeting businesses and industries that are core to the economic development in their regions. These businesses should be represented on advisory committees, he said.

## 5. Overview of Academic Program Review

### **Presenter:**

Manuel M. López, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Program Quality

Dr. López presented information on the system's processes for new program approval and program review.

### **Program Approval:**

Once a new program application is received, staff in the Academic Programs Unit review it. Factors considered are:

- Is the program consistent with the institution's mission;
- Has it gone through the proper approval processes at the institution, including review by an external advisory board and an institution-wide academic standards committee;
- Has the institutional administration approved the application;
- Have capacity issues been addressed, including fiscal, facilities, human resources implications;
- Has the need for the program, including labor market demand, been documented;
- Are projected enrollment figures and the types of students who will likely be enrolled documented;
- Is the curriculum thorough and relevant;
- Are external academic program requirements, such as what would be needed for national certification, documented;
- Are articulation agreements in place.

A new program application is typically approved in one to six weeks after submittal, depending on the need for additional information or clarification. A new doctoral program typically takes from two to six months to approve because of the need for external reviews and a more extensive review. Simple program changes, such as credit or name changes, are usually done in one to six days after the application is received.

When asked by Trustee Sundin where ideas for new programs come from, Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said they often come from advisory groups or from federal initiatives, such as a current energy consortium which is working on alternative energy programming. Another way for institutions to get ideas for new programs or improved training comes through Minnesota Job Skills Partnership relationships.

**Program Review:**

Program review, which is a continuous improvement process handled by the college or university, typically takes place according to a designated cycle. Board Policy and Procedures specify the factors that need to be addressed in program reviews:

- Enrollment – total number students enrolled/full-time program faculty;
- Articulation agreements in place with universities;
- Transfer rates;
- Program retention;
- Graduation percentages;
- Student satisfaction;
- Business and industry partnerships, which could include student experiences such as internships;
- Placement rates;
- Feedback from key stakeholders, which include current students, alumni, advisory groups, employers and graduate schools.

The Office of the Chancellor reviews the annual summaries of program reviews done at the institutional-level and posts the summaries to a system website. These program reviews are incorporated into the regional higher learning accreditation review process.

Chair McElroy said the recent legislative audit indicated one way system institutions could improve the program approval and review process would be to better connect labor market information and the likelihood of jobs existing in the future.

The audit also indicated that college program review policies at several colleges did not address employer input and the reviews did not consistently measure job demand, Trustee Rice said.

As a follow-up to the legislative audit, Board policies will be revised to put stronger language regarding the use and monitoring of advisory committees, Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said.

Chancellor McCormick said he would like the policy changes to come before the Board of Trustees as soon as possible so that they can be incorporated into presidential evaluations.

Chair McElroy asked about the accreditation process and was told by Dr. López that seeking national program accreditation is an institutional decision. This is an issue the committee may want to consider in the future, Chair McElroy said, since accreditation has implications in terms of program cost and transferability.

Trustee Van Houten asked if programs are ever reviewed to assess their enrollment levels and costs.

The Office of the Chancellor has at times done a statewide analysis of a program area to determine market demand, but institutions do their own monitoring of program enrollments and costs, Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said.

Trustee Van Houten said when the education cost study comes out in April it may be a good idea for the Academic and Student Affairs Committee to review it with staff. The report should identify programs where overhead costs and variable costs appear to be out-of-line.

Chair McElroy asked Dr. López about the process involving program closures.

Dr. López said closures are initiated at the campus level, typically prompted by low enrollment, staff costs, facility issues or placement rates.

The system has taken steps to revise the suspension process. Dr. Lopez added. Institutions used to suspend programs for three years and then allowed them to be closed automatically by the Office of the Chancellor. Now, when requesting a suspension, institutions are asked for a reinstatement plan and that has resulted in more outright program closures.

Chancellor McCormick offered four instances in which he became personally involved in program issues:

- He's told staff that doctorates approved need to be of high quality;
- He said he held firm to a decision limiting law enforcement skills programs to three current sites because of the high costs associated with skills training facilities.
- Before closing a barber program – the last one of its kind in the system – he asked for an analysis on why it had a low graduate rate and low starting wages. Information gained through the analysis resulted in the Office of the Chancellor keeping the program open;
- The office worked with three colleges regarding their machine tool programs. The programs, which are expensive to offer, have suffered decreasing enrollment. A strategic decision was made to keep machine tool programs open at Saint Paul College and South Central College, while closing the one at Dakota County Technical College.

Trustee Van Houten pointed out that there was a discrepancy between program activity numbers cited in a January memo from the governor's office and the program activity numbers listed in Dr. López's presentation.

Senior Vice Chancellor said she would have staff look into the discrepancy and report back to the committee.

At one time all program approval recommendations came to the Board for final approval, but Trustees have since delegated this authority to the Chancellor or his/her representative. Chair McElroy asked trustees if they wanted to take a more active role in program approval again, or if they wanted a more detailed summary of program actions.

Trustee Van Houten said he would appreciate a detailed program activity report which shows approved programs, their program classification area and projected budget implications.

While saying this kind of report may be interesting, Trustee Benson questioned what Trustees would gain by it. He said he feels comfortable holding the Chancellor accountable for program decisions.

Chair McElroy said he doesn't necessarily want to go back to making program approval decisions, but it may be a good idea for Trustees to have more information so they can ask the chancellor why certain decisions are made.

Dr. López said there is already a report on the system website which shows a summary of various program actions by institution. He said he would provide the web address to Trustees.

What do Trustees want to do with the information, Trustee Dickson asked. Do they want to get involved in the micro-management of program activity?

Chair McElroy said it depends on what is done with the information. If the information is used to tell Presidents what to do, that could be a problem. He said he doesn't see a problem if the additional information is used to create better-informed Trustees.

Trustee Van Houten said as Trustees, they have a fiduciary responsibility to the people of the state and he said he sees nothing wrong in asking for additional information about programming.

As a way to share more information about institutional programs, Chancellor McCormick suggested that Trustees and presidents participating in Higher Learning Commission visits could present a brief follow-up report to the committee.

The meeting adjourned at 12:03 pm  
Respectfully submitted,  
Margie Takash, Recorder