MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Academic and Student Affairs        Date of Meeting: May 19, 2009

Agenda Item: Minnesota State University Moorhead Mission Approval

☐ Proposed Policy Change   ☑ Approvals Required by Policy   ☐ Other Approvals   ☐ Monitoring

☐ Information

Cite policy requirement, or explain why item is on the Board agenda:

Board Policy 3.24, System and Institutional Missions, Part 2, Review and Approval of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Institutional Missions, requires the Board of Trustees to approve each institution's mission, vision, and purposes. The mission of an institution accredited by the Higher Learning Commission must be approved by its governing board.

Scheduled Presenter(s):

Edna Mora Szymanski, President, Minnesota State University Moorhead
Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:

Minnesota State University Moorhead proposes new mission, vision and purpose statements. The proposed revisions meet Board Policy 3.24, System and Institutional Missions, Part 2, Review and Approval of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Institutional Missions.

Background Information:

The proposed vision, mission and purpose statements replace language adopted in 1994.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The proposed vision, mission and purposes of Minnesota State University Moorhead meet the criteria identified in Board Policy 3.24 System and Institutional Missions, Part2, Review and Approval of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Institutional Missions.

Minnesota State University Moorhead’s Proposed Vision, Mission, Purposes and Array of Awards are:

Vision

Minnesota State University Moorhead will be a welcoming educational community that offers rigorous courses of study and places high expectations upon its students. Our strong commitment to faculty-mentored undergraduate research and intellectual growth will provide students with continual opportunities for personal and professional achievement. MSUM will continue to foster an environment that encourages students to become versatile, thoughtful, innovative, and engaged leaders who contribute to their professions and their communities.

MSUM values diversity and mutual respect and will strive to instill these ideals throughout the institution. MSUM honors its heritage as a respected, student-focused, public university and will continue to enhance our students’ lives at the same time that it contributes to the community and the region. MSUM will offer graduate and professional programs that contribute to the state and region through increased collaboration with local and state business, industry, and human services to assure optimal preparation of graduates.

Minnesota State University Moorhead will build upon a solid foundation of high quality teaching and learning as it commits to a future as the premiere liberal arts and sciences-based university in the region.

Mission

Minnesota State University Moorhead is a caring community promising all students the opportunity to discover their passions, the rigor to develop intellectually and the versatility to shape a changing world.
Purposes

Purpose 1
Support comprehensive, evolving, and innovative curricular designs that prepare students for emerging technologies, increasing global connections, and complex ethical, social, civic, and environmental responsibilities.

Purpose 2
Emphasize undergraduate research and creative activity in a faculty-mentored environment.

Purpose 3
Focus on holistic student development through programs that integrate diversity, student organizations, intramural activities, engaged responsible living, and service learning.

Purpose 4
Concentrate on graduate and professional programs that contribute to the state and region through increased collaboration with business, industry, and human services to assure optimal preparation of graduates to meet state and regional needs.

Purpose 5
Develop transparent fiscal models that promote long term fiscal stability and reflect our institution’s values.

Array of Awards

Minnesota State University Moorhead awards certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, applied doctorate degrees, specialist degrees, and graduate certificates.

BACKGROUND

Minnesota State University Moorhead was chartered as Moorhead Normal School in 1887. Its role in providing teachers for the region expanded, and in 1921 the name was changed to Moorhead State Teachers College. Over the years, the college expanded its offerings to the broader mission of a liberal arts college, and in 1957 MSTC became Moorhead State College. Enrollment growth and expanding programs resulted in a name change to Moorhead State University in 1975, along with similar changes to the names of other system universities founded as Normal schools. In 2000, the name was changed to Minnesota State University Moorhead.

Minnesota State University Moorhead was most recently accredited by the Higher Learning Commission in 2007. The HLC recommended that the next full accreditation visit take place in 2016-2017.
Minnesota State University Moorhead is the system’s university asset in Northwest Minnesota and, because of the proximity of the border, it draws one-third of its students from North Dakota. The university is one of several higher education institutions in Moorhead and Fargo, but it is the only one to offer a high-quality, student-centered, liberal arts and sciences-based education at a public university price.

Minnesota State University Moorhead’s niche is serving students with a wide array of abilities and helping them to achieve higher levels of accomplishment than would otherwise be possible. University faculty have earned more Minnesota Carnegie Professor of the Year awards (eight) than any other higher education institution in Minnesota. The university sponsors an annual campus-wide, faculty-mentored, Student Academic Conference (2009 was the 11th year of the conference and 585 students participated).

The university is a caring campus, and in times of community emergency, it is a crucial resource. During the 2009 flood, the university was Moorhead’s volunteer center and registered 25,000 individuals for emergency work. In addition, one of the interactive classrooms was put into service as Moorhead and Clay County’s Emergency Operations Call Center. Athletic and performance programs bring thousands of people to the campus. The Small Business Development Center has provided consulting to more than 230 Minnesota businesses.

The university’s current mission statement has been in effect since 1994. Dr. Edna Mora Szymanski became the tenth president of Minnesota State University Moorhead on July 1, 2008. The institutional profile developed during the search process for a new president recommended a renewed focus on the university’s mission in light of significant changes in the local and regional circumstances in which the university operates.

ANALYSIS

The proposed vision, mission, and purposes for Minnesota State University Moorhead meet the criteria in Board Policy 3.24, System and Institutional Missions, Part 2, Review and Approval of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Institutional Missions and the related System Procedure 3.24.1.

How the mission and vision respond to definitions in System Procedure 3.24.1

According to System Procedure 3.24.1, a mission statement answers the following questions: Who is to be served? What are our outcomes? Why do we exist?

The proposed new mission statement commits the university to serve all students who are part of its caring community. Students who attend Minnesota State University Moorhead will become versatile life-long learners who use their critical thinking skills “to shape a changing world.” The university exists to provide access and opportunity and the “rigor to develop intellectually.”
Under the System Procedure, a vision statement answers the following questions: What will the ideal future look like for the institution? What will be the primary products or services and which ones are particularly new? What is likely to be different about the institution and its environment five years from now? What is distinctive or unique about the institution? How will the enterprise operate?

The proposed vision statement describes an ideal future as the “premiere liberal arts and sciences-based university in the region” that values “diversity and mutual respect.” MSUM expects to continue its “heritage as a respected, student-focused, public university.” The vision assumes that methods of instruction will utilize more technological interactivity and that state financial support will remain well below historic highs, requiring the institution to be more effective in recruiting students into financially sustainable programs and to be more nimble in dealing with change. To succeed in this environment, there will be “increased collaboration” with related businesses and industries to “assure optimal preparation of graduates.”

The university asserts that one of its distinctive qualities is a “strong commitment to faculty-mentored undergraduate research and intellectual growth.” For more than a decade, the university has scheduled a campus-wide Student Academic Conference that gives students an opportunity to share their knowledge and receive constructive criticism.

The extent to which the institution will meet expectations of law, how it relates to other institutions of higher education, and how its mission, vision and purposes support fulfillment of the system mission and vision

The mission, vision, and purposes of Minnesota State University Moorhead support the mission, vision and strategic plan of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.

In its mission statement, the university proclaims that it values the goals of individual learners, diversity, social responsibility and critical thinking. The university’s mission is to prepare students to be effective in the changing world.

The vision statement expands on how the university will achieve its mission as part of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. In support of both individual success and advancement of the state of Minnesota, MSUM will “foster an environment that encourages students to become versatile, thoughtful, innovative and engaged leaders who contribute to their professions and their communities.”

Minnesota State University Moorhead’s mission and vision will help achieve the system strategic plan:

- **Strategic Direction One: Increase access and opportunity**
  The mission states that the university promises opportunities for all students, including opportunities to “discover their passions.”
• **Strategic Direction Two: Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services**

As stated in the mission, MSUM students will experience “the rigor to develop intellectually and the versatility to shape a changing world.” The vision expresses the university’s commitment to “rigorous courses of study,” “high expectations,” and “faculty-mentored undergraduate research and intellectual growth.”

• **Strategic Direction Three: Provide programs and services that enhance the economic competitiveness of the state and its regions**

As stated in the vision, MSUM will “offer graduate and professional programs that contribute to the community and region through collaboration with local and state business, industry and human services to assure optimal preparation of graduates.”

• **Strategic Direction Four: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs**

As stated in Purpose 1, MSUM will “support comprehensive, evolving, and innovative curricular designs that prepare students for emerging technologies, increasing global connections, and complex ethical, social, civic, and environmental responsibilities.”

The proposed mission and vision are in accordance with state and federal law.

**The institution’s purposes and array of awards**

Minnesota State University Moorhead identifies the following purposes as goals to carry out its mission:

**Purpose 1**
Support comprehensive, evolving, and innovative curricular designs that prepare students for emerging technologies, increasing global connections, and complex ethical, social, civic, and environmental responsibilities.

**Purpose 2**
Emphasize undergraduate research and creative activity in a faculty-mentored environment.

**Purpose 3**
Focus on holistic student development through programs that integrate diversity, student organizations, intramural activities, engaged responsible living, and service learning.

**Purpose 4**
Concentrate on graduate and professional programs that contribute to the state and region through increased collaboration with business, industry, and human services to assure optimal preparation of graduates to meet state and regional needs.
Purpose 5

Develop transparent fiscal models that promote long term fiscal stability and reflect our institution’s values.

Minnesota State University Moorhead awards certificates, associate degrees, bachelor's degrees, master's degrees, applied doctorate degrees, specialist degrees, and graduate certificates. No change in the array of awards is proposed.

How the new mission compares with the former mission

The former mission statement was approved by the State University Board in 1994. It states:

The mission of Minnesota State University Moorhead is to foster excellence in teaching and learning. The University strives to provide an educational environment that supports intellectual development, that welcomes diversity, and that develops the skills and talents of women and men so that they have the capacity to live usefully, act responsibly, and be learners all their lives. The academic programs at the University are founded upon a common liberal studies experience and emphasize developing the unique talents of each person. The University provides baccalaureate-level programs in the liberal arts, natural and social sciences, teacher education, business and technology, the fine arts, and professional areas. It provides selected graduate programs in response to regional needs.

The University encourages scholarly and creative endeavors that promote a commitment by faculty and students to their disciplines, to continuing professional development, and to excellence in learning.

The University enhances the quality of life in the region with the professional, cultural, and recreational services offered by its students, faculty, and staff.

Minnesota State University Moorhead is one of seven comprehensive Minnesota state universities established to provide the citizens of Minnesota access to quality educational programs at moderate cost. Minnesota State University Moorhead’s primary responsibility is to provide baccalaureate programs to residents of northwest and west central Minnesota. Through tuition reciprocity agreements, the University also provides educational services to residents of several regional states and one province.

Because of the length of this statement, the University Planning and Budget Committee approved a condensed version in 2003 which reads:

We develop knowledge, talent, and skills for a lifetime of learning, service, and citizenship.

The proposed statement of mission is much briefer, stronger, more memorable than the previous Board-approved statement. The new mission underscores the value of community, the
significance of a supportive environment for discovery, the importance of critical thinking skills, and the ability to adapt to accelerating change.

**Consultation with faculty, students, employers and other essential stakeholders**

President Szymanski initiated the review of the university’s mission and vision in October, 2008, by naming a Vision Task Force and charging it to draft a vision for the next five and 10 years and to refine the university’s mission statement. In addition to university students, faculty, staff, and administrators, the 30 member task force included representatives of the community, foundation board, and alumni association.

During its work, the task force reviewed Board of Trustees 2020 planning and constructed several scenarios for the university’s market niche.

Over the course of several months, drafts of the new vision and mission statements were broadly shared at campus-wide meetings, with bargaining units, and with students. Subsequent drafts incorporated recommendations from the meetings. Consultation included both on-campus and off-campus constituencies:

- Comments on drafts of the vision and mission statements were solicited on the home page of the university Web site and at three town meetings.
- President Szymanski described the mission review process during her meetings with business leaders to review their relationships with the campus.
- Members of the Mission Subcommittee tested language informally with on and off-campus contacts.
- Draft statements were presented to the President’s Advisory Board comprised of professionals from outside the university.
- At the final town meeting, the revised vision and mission were presented in the context of an upcoming strategic planning process for the university.

**RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE MOTION**

The Academic and Student Affairs committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve the vision, mission, purposes and array of awards of Minnesota State University Moorhead as listed in the Executive Summary.

**RECOMMENDED BOARD MOTION**

The Board of Trustees approves the vision, mission, purposes and array of awards of Minnesota State University Moorhead as listed in the Executive Summary.