

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Joint Academic and Student Affairs and Finance, Facilities and Technology

Date of Meeting: February 12, 2009

Agenda Item: Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching

Proposed Policy Change Approvals Required by Policy Other Approvals Monitoring

Information

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

The Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching is an honor bestowed upon Minnesota State Colleges and Universities faculty to acknowledge and reward superior teaching and exceptional professional accomplishment by an individual and to encourage ongoing excellence in teaching. The board will have a discussion about the Board of Trustees Award for Excellence in Teaching.

Scheduled Presenter(s):

Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
*INFORMATION ITEM***

BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

BACKGROUND

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Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
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BOARD OF TRUSTEES AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

PURPOSE

The award is an honor bestowed upon Minnesota State Colleges and Universities faculty to acknowledge and reward superior teaching and exceptional professional accomplishment by an individual and to encourage ongoing excellence in teaching. This award is intended to proclaim the Board of Trustees' pride in the dedication and accomplishment of our faculty in providing instruction that prepares Minnesota's state college and university students for their professional, scholarly and civic lives. Further, the award strengthens the primary mission of the system's 32 college and university faculties, which is to teach.



BACKGROUND

The idea for a new award arose simultaneously among faculty and board members in late 2003. The board had adopted a new strategic plan for 2002-2005 that called explicitly for maintaining excellence among faculty and staff across the system. Board members were interested in establishing a teaching award as a highly visible and symbolic commendation of faculty teaching excellence at the system's 32 public institutions. Faculty recommended a system-level award—in addition to existing college or university awards—as a strong statement of commitment by the board and chancellor to them and to outstanding teaching, supported by excellent scholarship and research.

DEVELOPING THE AWARD PROGRAM

A statewide task force of faculty representing the system's collective bargaining associations, students and administrators reviewed the few available models of system-level teaching award programs and designed an annual event that respects the diverse teaching missions at the system's universities and two-year technical and community colleges. At the same time, the design committee ensured that the program would have an inclusive nomination and selection process not tiered or differentiated by institutional or program type.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

After an annual campus-based nomination process, each college or university president may designate from one to seven "outstanding educators" to the senior vice chancellor for academic and student affairs. The number of "outstanding educators" is allocated by student full-year equivalency per institution. A broadly representative committee reviews portfolios submitted by Outstanding Educators. The review process is consensus-based, rigorous and criterion-referenced. Each portfolio is evaluated in the following areas:

- teaching strategies;
- content expertise and professional growth;
- service to students, profession, institution, system and
- assessment of student learning and performance.

The committee makes recommendations to confer up to six Board of Trustees "Educator of the Year" awards and then in consultation with the senior vice chancellor, the board acts to approve or decline.

PROGRAM SUCCESS

In 2007, the Board of Trustees recognized 29 Outstanding Educators and three award recipients. In 2008, 24 Outstanding Educators were recognized along with four award recipients. Each Educator of the Year award recipient received \$5,000 at a formal, systemwide evening reception attended by presidents, academic administrators, faculty and their families. Video presentations of each of the awardees' teaching accomplishments were presented. The event has rapidly become a not-to-be-missed celebration of academic excellence.

The board is particularly proud that one of its award recipients has also been honored as United States Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. This marks the first time a Minnesota faculty member has received this prestigious national award.

Additional details, including photos, videos, and program guidelines are publicly available at <http://botawards.mnscu.edu>.

ABOUT MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system (www.mnscu.edu) comprises 32 state universities and community and technical colleges on 53 campuses serving the higher education needs of Minnesota. The system is separate from the University of Minnesota. The system serves about 242,000 students per year in credit-based courses and an additional 140,000 students in non-credit courses.

For more information, please contact Ray Anschel, faculty awards coordinator, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, at 651-649-5746 or ray.anschel@so.mnscu.edu.