

APPENDIX D

Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program (MnCAP)

Description and History

- **Legislative request for institutional cooperation**

The first exploratory meeting that proposed the idea of a cooperative admissions program between MnSCU community colleges and the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities was held in the fall of 1999. The initial draft of a plan, (“Pilot Metro Plan for Deferred CLA Admission Contract”) came as a response to legislative urgings for greater cooperation and coordination in Minnesota higher education in providing options for enrolling students in degree programs at public institutions. What follows is a brief description of the program and the history of its initial implementation.

- **Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program (MnCAP)**

The Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program (MnCAP) was conceived as a vehicle for students to use in their quest to earn a bachelor’s degree from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities (UMTC). Students who had applied as freshmen to UMTC but were not admissible due to lack of space or for scholastic reasons would be offered a contract to enroll at a participating community college. There they would spend 3-4 semesters completing a stipulated set of lower division degree requirements with a GPA above a recommended minimum; upon completion of the contract terms, students would be automatically admitted to one of the approved colleges and majors at UMTC.

While the initial plan was drafted and discussed in the UMTC Office of Admissions in consultation with administrators from Inver Hills Community College, the program was determined to have as its pilot members four colleges: Inver Hills Community College, Normandale Community College, North Hennepin Community College and the University of Minnesota College of Liberal Arts. Meetings between the participating institutions occurred during the planning phase of January – May 2000, with the intent of providing the program as an option to select fall 2000 freshman applicants.

- **Target cohort**

This program's intent was to reach students who, for scholastic or space reasons, were inadmissible as freshmen to UMTC. Many of these students were in deferred status for some time, as the admission decisions for individual colleges were sorted through and the space issues settled. Other students had been rejected outright. In written communication with these students in the past, the Office of Admissions has always respectfully suggested that students pursue other options to higher education, offering no specific recommendations. Other communication (by phone, e-mail or in-person) between these students and Admissions recruiters, advisors and staff also involved suggestions that these students make alternative plans to pursuing a degree at UMTC.

While we could always make general reference to possible alternatives and options, the Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program allows for students who are not admitted directly into the University of Minnesota to see a direct path from their community college choice to eventual enrollment and degree completion at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. Communication with students (in writing, conversation, or e-mail) when such a program is in place allows us to reference to a tangible, concrete set of higher education options, whose completion will allow a seamless transition to a bachelor's degree program at the University.

Although this is the target student cohort for the MnCAP program, we also came to the conclusion that there was no reason that we would exclude students who had never applied to the U of M as freshmen. If a student came to one of the participating community colleges as a freshman with the intention of completing a bachelor's degree at the University, they would be advised of the program and allowed to participate.

- **Benefits to participating students**

This program will probably be most attractive to those students who are place-bound, to those who need or want lower tuition rates for the lower division portion of their academic career, or to those who do not have feasible alternative plans outside the twin cities after they are denied admission to the U of M. The MnCAP option shows a direct path from freshman year through transfer to a four-year degree program.

Most of the students attending two-year colleges do so intending to eventually continue on in a four-year degree program. Allowing students the benefits of the long-term planning – that is, seeing from early on in their academic career where they will finally finish – we hope will give them a number of advantages. Participating students will form a connection to the University from early on, having signed a contract agreement with the U before beginning at the community college. The contract and accompanying curriculum planning sheets (in development at the Office of Admissions) provide a concrete set of course requirements that students must successfully complete: the first year of a second language (if necessary for UMTC college admission or graduation), the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum or Associate of Arts degree, as well as approved prerequisites for their intended major. The contract also stipulates the minimum GPA for admission to the program, so that students understand from the beginning the quantitative terms of admission

Our communication cycle includes meeting with MnCAP participants at least once during their first year on the community college campus, and once during an Admissions Office sponsored Open House. We would like to see the students visit campus and feel from early on that they will indeed be degree students at the University of Minnesota. U of M Admissions staff will be in frequent contact with counselors at participating community colleges in discussing appropriate options for individuals.

- **Benefits to participating institutions**

We intend for this to be a mutually beneficial agreement between community colleges and the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities. U of M Admissions staff is confident in recommending the curriculum offered at the community colleges as an excellent beginning to a successful academic career. Community college counselors know from early on where these students intend to transfer, and can advise them more accurately and efficiently. The University community is able to extend a welcoming hand to potentially successful students by assisting them in early preparation for transfer.

Participating Institutions and Students: **response and enrollment data**

2000-2001

- **2000-2001 participating institutions:**

Partner institutions were three MnSCU community college – Inver Hills, Normandale, and North Hennepin – and the College of Liberal Arts at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities.

- **2000-2001 student respondents and enrollees:**

The MnCAP communication cycle begins with a UMTC mailing from the Office of Admissions to the selected group of students. The mailing includes: MnCAP flier, Business Reply Card (addressed with postage to UMTC), and letter to individual student. When the student returns the reply card, the response is recorded in the student's file in the UMTC Office of Admissions, and then the information is forwarded on to the community college the student has indicated on the card. The community college responds to the student by mailing an application for the college for the term indicated, as well as a MnCAP student contract. The student then comes to the community college to register for courses and submit the MnCAP contract for a counselor signature. The community college keeps one copy of the contract, student retains a copy, and a third copy is forwarded to the UMTC Office of Admissions. This UMTC copy is placed in the student's application file, and a MnCAP Student Group is added to their PeopleSoft application or prospect record for tracking purposes.

The first MnCAP mailing was sent out on June 9, 2000 to a total of 538 students.

These were freshman applicants for fall 2000 who:

- a. had not been admitted to CLA or GC;
- b. had not been admitted to any UMTC college other than CLA or GC;
- c. lived in the twin cities metro area.

Student response rate – total, and for individual institutions:

Total:

Total number respondents: 35
% response rate: 6.5%
Confirmed number enrolled: 19
(fall 2000)
% enrollment from mailing: 3.5%
% enrollment from respondents: 54%

Measured:	Inver Hills	Normandale	North Hennepin
Total number respondents	8	17	10
% of total respondents	23%	48%	29%
Confirmed number enrolled	5	10	4
% enrollment from individual college respondents	63%	58%	40%

2001-2002

• **2001-2002 participating institutions:**

In December, 2000, Minneapolis Community & Technical College agreed to join MnCAP for the 2001-2002 application cycle

• **2001-2002 student respondents and enrollees:**

We targeted the same cohort in this admissions cycle as in the previous year. We invited students to join this program shortly after they were denied admission to the U of M for either General College or the College of Liberal Arts, or had been put on a waitlist for these colleges. The first materials went out on January 18, 2001, followed by mailings on February 15, March 15 and May 1, 2001. A total of 838 students received notification of the MnCAP program option. We are still accumulating the data regarding enrollees at the 4 participating community colleges.

Student response rate – total, and for individual institutions:

Total:

Total number respondents: 66
 % response rate: 7.9%
 Confirmed number enrolled: unknown
 (fall 2001)
 % enrollment from mailing: _____
 % enrollment from respondents: _____

Measured:	Inver Hills	Normandale	North Hennepin	Minneapolis
Total number respondents*	17	22	13	11
% of total respondents	26%	33%	20%	17%
Confirmed number enrolled	5			
% enrollment from individual college respondents	30%			

- 3 responses indicated no community college preference

2002-2003

• **2002-2003 participating institutions and target student cohort:**

Each of the 6 metro area community college have agreed to join the MnCAP program for the 2002-2003 application cycle: Anoka-Ramsey, Century, Inver Hills, Minneapolis, Normandale, and North Hennepin. In addition, 6 of the 8 freshman-admitting colleges at the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities will be participating in the program: College of Liberal Arts (CLA), College of Agricultural, Food, & Environmental Sciences (COAFES), College of Biological Sciences (CBS), College of Human Ecology (CHE) - *non-design majors*, College of Natural Resources (CNR), and Institute of Technology (IT).

The target cohort will remain the same, with an invitation to students to join this program sent out 1-4 weeks after they have been denied admission to the U of M for any freshman-admitting college, or have been put on a waitlist for these participating colleges.