

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

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Board Study Session

Date of Meeting: April 21, 2010

Agenda Item: Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on System Planning

- Proposed Policy Change Approvals Required by Policy Other Approvals Monitoring
- Information

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

The Ad Hoc Committee on System Planning has proposed revisions of the System Strategic Plan to update the Plan through 2014.

Scheduled Presenter(s):

Trustee Dan McElroy, Chair, Academic and Student Affairs Committee
Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:

- The Board reviewed a revised draft of the System Strategic Plan in March 2010. Board members and presidents were invited to submit comments to assist in further revisions.
- Several written comments were submitted. Staff suggestions to address some of the comments are available for Board consideration.
- Board action on proposed revisions will be requested at a later meeting.

Background Information:

In addition to discussions within the Ad Hoc Committee on System Planning, the proposed revisions are informed by listening sessions held in Brooklyn Park, Moorhead, Alexandria and Mankato.

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

INFORMATION ITEM

Recommendations from the Ad Hoc Committee on System Planning

1 BACKGROUND

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3 In March 2010, the Board of Trustees conducted its first review of proposed changes to the
4 System Strategic Plan to update it for the period 2010–2014. Proposed revisions were developed
5 by the Ad Hoc Committee on System Planning and informed by the Board’s listening sessions
6 held in Brooklyn Park, Moorhead, Alexandria and Mankato during January and February.

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8 The Board invited all members and presidents to review the current draft and provide comments
9 for consideration at a Board study session in April 2010. Advance written comments were
10 received from Chair Olson, Trustee Van Houten, President Ramaley, and the Metro Alliance
11 presidents.

12
13 The current draft of the plan as presented in March appears below. The Preamble is proposed as
14 an entirely new section in the strategic plan. Proposed revisions to the strategic directions and
15 goals in the 2008–2012 plan are shown as annotations.

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17 In an attachment, verbatim comments received on the draft are shown alongside the current draft
18 language. For some comments, staff suggestions to revise the language in the draft are
19 presented.

20
21 Depending on the outcomes of the study session, the Board may schedule a first reading of
22 proposed changes in May and a second reading and Board action in June.

23
24 **SYSTEM STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2014 DESIGNING THE FUTURE**
25 **(CURRENT DRAFT)**

26
27 **Preamble**

28 Minnesota’s competitiveness is advanced by the success of our students in a global market. As
29 the Board of Trustees considered a long-term horizon for the system strategic plan, it became
30 clear that the system in 2020 will be shaped by the ability to address the countervailing
31 challenges of today.

32
33 The refinement of the current system strategic plan acknowledges the system has matured and
34 provides a framework for sustaining a distinctive and collaborative network of colleges and
35 universities. It also recognizes the dynamic needs of a new generation of learners that redefine

1 the programs and services we deliver. The decisions the system makes have long-term
2 consequences for our students and the communities we serve.

3
4 The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will thrive in the next decade and beyond as the
5 most accessible, highest value education in the nation. This requires heightened leadership,
6 support for our students, recognition and pursuit of our collaborative and innovative capacity,
7 and new levels of cooperation with and accountability to our internal and external stakeholders.
8 The continuing and new goals articulated in this document will guide our annual planning,
9 decision-making, and assessment.

10
11 To successfully respond to the academic, economic, demographic and social changes occurring
12 in a global marketplace, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will undertake the
13 following strategic directions and goals:

14
15 **Strategic Direction 1: Increase access, ~~and opportunity,~~ and success**

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17 Goal 1.1 Raise Minnesota’s participation and achievement in post-secondary education by
18 meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals.

19
20 Goal 1.2 Work with other organizations and institutions to prepare all young people to
21 graduate from high school and enroll in college prepared for college-level work.

22
23 Goal 1.3 Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.

24
25 Goal 1.4 Support students to reach their educational goals with a focus on graduation or
26 transfer to complete post-secondary programs.

27
28 **Strategic Direction 2: ~~Promote and measure~~ Ensure high-quality learning programs and
29 services through a commitment to academic excellence and accountability**

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31 Goal 2.1 Improve instruction through assessment of student engagement and learning
32 outcomes. ~~Promote accountability for results through a system of accessible reports to the public~~
33 ~~and other stakeholders.~~

34
35 Goal 2.2 Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable, globally competitive and flexible
36 skills.

37
38 Goal 2.3 Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.

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40 Goal 2.4. Engage outstanding faculty and staff who bring current knowledge, professional
41 skills and diverse life experiences to educate students.

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43 **Strategic Direction 3: Provide programs and services ~~that to~~ enhance the global economic
44 competitiveness of the state, ~~and its regions~~ and its people**

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46 Goal 3.1 Be the state’s leader in ~~identifying~~ workforce education and training ~~opportunities~~

1 ~~and seizing them.~~

2 Goal 3.2 Support regional vitality by contributing artistic, cultural and civic assets that attract
3 employees and other residents seeking a high quality of life.

4
5 Goal 3.3 Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region and
6 meet the needs of employers ~~in its region.~~

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8 **Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs**

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10 Goal 4.1 Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges and remove
11 barriers to innovation and responsiveness.

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13 Goal 4.2 Engage and draw upon the talents and expertise of faculty, staff, students and others
14 to achieve sustainable excellence and efficiency. ~~Reward and support institutions,~~
15 ~~administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency.~~

16

17 Goal 4.3 Hire and develop leaders at all levels who will initiate and support innovation
18 throughout the system.

19

20 Goal 4.4 Critically examine and improve all structures, policies, and processes to support and
21 scale transformative innovation.

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23 **Strategic Direction 5: Ensure the long term viability of public higher education in** 24 **Minnesota**

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26 Goal 5.1 Advance administrative and delivery models that respond to the changing
27 environment.

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29 Goal 5.2 Empower employees while also holding them accountable for quality and efficient
30 operations.

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32 Goal 5.3 Promote fiscal stewardship and facilities sustainability at system and institution
33 levels.

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35 Goal 5.4 Promote continuous improvement and accountability for results through a system of
36 demonstrable outcomes.

Attachment: Written Comments on March 17, 2010 Draft of the System Strategic Plan 2010-2014 and Suggested Revisions for Board Discussion

Current Draft	Written Comments Submitted	Staff Suggestions
<p>Preamble Minnesota’s competitiveness is advanced by the success of our students in a global market. As the Board of Trustees considered a long-term horizon for the system strategic plan, it became clear that the system in 2020 will be shaped by the ability to address the countervailing challenges of today.</p> <p>The refinement of the current system strategic plan acknowledges the system has matured and provides a framework for sustaining a distinctive and collaborative network of colleges and universities. It also recognizes the dynamic needs of a new generation of learners that redefine the programs and services we deliver. The decisions the system makes have long-term consequences for our students and the communities we serve.</p> <p>The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will thrive in the next decade and beyond as the most accessible, highest value education in the nation. This requires heightened leadership, support for our students, recognition and pursuit of our collaborative and innovative capacity, and new levels of cooperation with and accountability to our internal and external stakeholders. The continuing and new goals articulated in this document will guide our annual planning, decision-making, and assessment.</p>	<p>The “success of our students in a global market” is probably true in a long-term macroeconomic sense, but unfortunately totally subjective for MnSCU. Maybe it would be beneficial to come up with an opening line which is more directly and easily tied to our desired outcomes as set forth by the goals below. (Trustee Van Houten)</p> <p>“to address the countervailing challenges of today” What does this mean? (President Ramaley)</p> <p>“a new generation of learners” While we do, indeed, have a new generation of learners coming to our campuses, we also have to serve the needs of their parents and grandparents as well. Each generation has its own needs, ways of approaching education and uses for the education that its members receive. (President Ramaley)</p> <p>“most accessible, highest value education in the nation” I certainly support this laudable goal. However, I am looking at every phrase, assertion and promise in this document with an eye to accountability. I am also asking myself about our own capacity to accomplish the goals in this plan. In what ways are we dependent upon the decisions that others make that will affect our capacity to achieve our mission and direction? This particular aspiration raises issues for me on both fronts—how would we measure this and, given our limited ability to influence the share of the state general fund that will be appropriated to MnSCU, what control have we over affordability? This is the first place where I tried to test whether we can, in fact, use our vision and goals to “guide our annual planning, decision-making, and assessment.” (President Ramaley*)</p>	<p>Minnesota’s competitiveness is advanced by the success of our students in a global market. As the Board of Trustees considered a long-term horizon for the system strategic plan, it became clear that the system in 2020 will be shaped by the ability to address the countervailing <u>today’s</u> challenges of today.</p> <p>The refinement of the current system strategic plan acknowledges the system has matured and provides a framework for sustaining a distinctive and collaborative network of colleges and universities. It also recognizes the dynamic needs of a new generation of learners that redefine the programs and services we deliver. The decisions the system makes have long-term consequences for our students and the communities we serve.</p> <p>The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will thrive in the next decade and beyond as the most accessible, highest value education in the nation. This <u>Our vision</u> requires heightened leadership, support for our students, recognition and pursuit of our collaborative and innovative capacity, and new levels of cooperation with and accountability to our internal and external stakeholders. The continuing and new goals articulated in this document will guide our annual planning, decision-making, and assessment.</p>

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<p>To successfully respond to the academic, economic, demographic and social changes occurring in a global marketplace, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will undertake the following strategic directions and goals:</p>	<p>“A global marketplace” While we do have a special mission to “put Minnesota to work” we also have a strong commitment to serving our communities as places where Minnesotans live and work and study. We want to make Minnesota a better place to live as well as help our citizens, our employers and our communities compete in a global marketplace. Might we use the word “global environment” or some similar term instead since we are not just about jobs? (President Ramaley)</p>	<p>To successfully respond to the academic, economic, demographic and social changes occurring in a global marketplace <u>environment</u>, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will undertake the following strategic directions and goals:</p>
<p>Strategic Direction 1: <u>Increase access, and opportunity, and success</u></p>		
<p>Goal 1.1 Raise Minnesota’s participation and achievement in post-secondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals.</p>	<p>Goal 1.1: “Raise Minnesota’s participation and achievement…” What does this mean in practice? (President Ramaley)</p>	
<p>Goal 1.2 Work with other organizations <u>and institutions</u> to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college prepared for college-level work.</p>	<p>1.2 Good goal. However, the description “work with” can be satisfied by any activity. Perhaps the solution is to use this goal to more precisely ratchet-up the priority for those specific activities that MnSCU institutions are doing (but could do more) to help our K-12 partners. (Trustee Van Houten)</p> <p>Goal 1.2 “Work with other organizations and institutions…” What kinds of organizations do we have in mind and why was the term “institution” added here? (President Ramaley)</p>	<p>Work with <u>schools and</u> other organizations and institutions to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college prepared for college-level work.</p>
<p>Goal 1.3 Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.</p>	<p>Goal 1.3 seems especially important since it is the most political goal in the entire plan. The term “affordable cost” is subjective and undefined. Therefore, it provides little guidance for this important topic -- do we really mean to have each pay according to his or her ability? I suggest we seek a stronger anchor for this critical issue. There seem two possibilities: (1) Change the goal and target cost drivers so as to make it easier to better control or reduce tuition. One approach might be to focus on the board of trustees’ statutory assigned responsibility to “prevent</p>	

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	<p>wasteful and unnecessary public spending” (the committee will recall that we were reminded of this responsibility in our founding statute in the recent OLA audit of MnSCU System). Certainly under present circumstances there is a need for all taxpayer supported entities to revise their standards of what is “necessary.” (2) The second approach might be to define “affordable” by referring to an objective benchmark such as the average tuition (with some tweaking) charged by higher education systems in adjacent states. (Trustee Van Houten)</p> <p>Goal 1.3 “Maintain an affordable...” I think it can be argued that we are not very affordable now although that question is a complex calculus of costs, pricing, availability of financial assistance, etc. (President Ramaley)</p>	
<p>Goal 1.4 _____ <u>Support students to reach their educational goals with a focus on graduation or transfer to complete post-secondary programs.</u></p>	<p>Goal 1.4 The wording of this goal is ambiguous. The word “complete” could be either a verb or an adjective in this sentence. In addition, many educational goals do not lead to degree completion. Many students want updates, professional development or certificates.</p> <p>One possible solution would be to rewrite this sentence to read: “Increase the proportion of students who successfully complete their degrees.” In the further development of this goal, the narrative could articulate several ways to do this, including a focus on successful transfer.</p> <p>Given the spotlight on transfer it might be necessary to identify this in a separate goal under this strategic direction. (President Ramaley)</p>	<p>Support students to reach their educational goals with a focus on graduation or transfer to complete post-secondary programs.</p>
<p>Strategic Direction 2: <u>Promote and measure Ensure high-quality learning programs and services through a commitment to academic excellence and accountability</u></p>	<p>I suggest revising Strategic Direction 2 to read as follows: “Promote, measure and report the effectiveness of learning and training programs.” (Chair Olson)</p>	
<p>Goal 2.1 <u>Improve instruction through assessment of student engagement and learning outcomes.</u> <u>Promote accountability for results through a</u></p>	<p>Goal 2.1: I don't think the change in wording is necessary or an improvement. I would suggest keeping the old wording. (Chair Olson)</p> <p>Goal 2.1 Add: "Continuously" to the beginning of the Goal. So it would</p>	<p><u>Continuously</u> improve instruction through assessment of student engagement and learning outcomes.</p>

Current Draft	Written Comments Submitted	Staff Suggestions
system of accessible reports to the public and other stakeholders.	read: Continuously improve instruction through assessment of student engagement and learning outcomes. (Metro Alliance Presidents)	[Comment: See 5.4]
Goal 2.2 Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable, <u>globally competitive</u> and flexible skills.		
Goal 2.3 Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.	2.3 Can the goal be revised to clarify that in the providing of “multiple delivery options” we wish to prioritize investment in those which are most cost effective? (Trustee Van Houten)	
<u>Goal 2.4.</u> <u>Engage outstanding faculty and staff who bring current knowledge, professional skills and diverse life experiences to educate students.</u>	Goal 2.4: I cannot figure out what this goal means and how I would accomplish it. What does it mean to “engage” outstanding faculty and staff? Does “engage” in this context mean “to hire and support?” It could also mean to inspire and encourage them or to create a supportive environment for them, in which case what about everybody else? Some of our employees are not outstanding. (President Ramaley) Goal 2.4 Rewrite the goal to read: Employ outstanding faculty and staff who are culturally competent, bring current knowledge, and professional skills to educate students. (Metro Alliance Presidents)	Engage <u>Employ</u> outstanding faculty and staff who bring current knowledge, professional skills and diverse life experiences <u>cultural competence</u> to educate students.
Strategic Direction 3: Provide programs and services that to enhance the <u>global economic competitiveness of the state, and its regions and its people</u>		
Goal 3.1 Be the state’s leader in identifying workforce education and training. opportunities and seizing them.	The redraft of goal 3.1 is a definite improvement. (Chair Olson)	
Goal 3.2 Support regional vitality by contributing artistic, cultural and civic assets that attract	3.2 “Supporting regional vitality” provides a great opportunity to rationalize almost anything. Obviously there’s a huge risk of mission creep in this one. Can we narrow this goal so that it only applies to the	

Current Draft	Written Comments Submitted	Staff Suggestions
employees and other residents seeking a high quality of life.	extent that such “artistic, cultural and civic” activities (and spending from our limited educational funds) can be rationalized directly with the institution’s or MnSCU core educational mission? (Trustee Van Houten)	
Goal 3.3 Develop each institution’s capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region and meet the needs of employers in its region.	Goal 3.3. Two separate goals are combined in this goal. The strategies that would be used to add value to a region can be distinctive from the ways we meet the needs of employers. In addition, many of us work together on a statewide basis and therefore can contribute beyond our region. I would cite health care as an example. Given the continuation of the aspiration to create a system made up of distinctive institutions that work well together, we should consider both a regional and a statewide focus. (President Ramaley)	
Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs		
Goal 4.1 Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges and remove barriers to innovation and responsiveness.	4.1 “Capacity for change” seems to have two primary drivers: (1) availability of resources and (2) operational flexibility. In the current climate the first can only be affected by a redirection of current spending (as in goal 1.3). Can we improve our success here by emphasizing the need for more flexibility at all levels and within all activities? I would be surprised if this is not already on the agenda for the next IFO contract negotiations. (Trustee Van Houten)	
Goal 4.2 <u>Engage and draw upon the talents and expertise of faculty, staff, students and others to achieve sustainable excellence and efficiency. Reward and support institutions, administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency.</u>	Fourth, goal 4.2: not sure I understand what this means...clarify or delete? (Chair Olson)	Engage and draw upon the talents and expertise of faculty, staff, students and others to achieve sustainable excellence and efficiency <u>to meet the challenges facing the system</u>

Current Draft	Written Comments Submitted	Staff Suggestions
<p>Goal 4.3 Hire and develop leaders <u>at all levels</u> who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system.</p>		<p>Hire and develop leaders at all levels who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system.</p>
<p>Goal 4.4 _____ <u>Critically examine and improve all structures, policies, and processes to support and scale transformative innovation.</u></p>	<p>4.4 The word “structures” in the first line is unclear. Might there a more precise word? (Trustee Van Houten)</p> <p>Goal 4.4. This is a sweeping statement. Some of our structures, policies and processes already work quite well, both at the campus level and system-wide. We do not need to improve all of them. In addition, it is not clear how this would help us to “support and scale transformative innovation.” Perhaps the term is meant to be “scale up” but, in fact, the options identified in this goal are more appropriate for routine or strategic change rather than transformative change. While both of these approaches are valuable and can allow us to do what we do today more efficiently and at lower cost, the approaches needed to support transformative change are significantly different. For context for this response, you may wish to read the article on <u>Smart Change</u> by Senior Vice Chancellor Baer and others. (President Ramaley)</p>	<p>Critically examine and improve all structures, policies, and processes to Support and scale transformative innovation.</p>
<p><u>Strategic Direction 5:</u> <u>Ensure the long term viability of public higher education in Minnesota</u></p>	<p>This subject seems to touch lots of topics within earlier goals. Some cross-editing might be beneficial. (Trustee Van Houten)</p>	
<p>Goal 5.1 _____ <u>Advance administrative and delivery models that respond to the changing environment.</u></p>	<p>5.1 See comments for goal 4.1. (Trustee Van Houten)</p>	
<p>Goal 5.2 _____ <u>Empower employees while also holding them accountable for quality and efficient operations.</u></p>		

Current Draft	Written Comments Submitted	Staff Suggestions
<u>Goal 5.3</u> <u>Promote fiscal stewardship and facilities sustainability at system and institution levels.</u>	5.3 See comments for goal 1.3. (Trustee Van Houten)	
<u>Goal 5.4</u> <u>Promote continuous improvement and accountability for results through a system of demonstrable outcomes.</u>		

***Introductory comments from President Ramaley:**

Context: As I began to read the Strategic Directions and Goals, I asked myself if the goals themselves could be interpreted in such a way that we could, in fact, use this framework to guide our annual planning, decision-making and assessment. The comments that follow all focus on that simple test. I continue to believe that our four strategic directions are a superlative framework for guiding our development and for “designing the future.” My concern is whether the goals themselves are clearly worded in ways that can be interpreted at both campus and system level and that can guide our approach to the four strategic directions.