

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

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Advancement

Date of Meeting: July 20, 2010

Agenda Item: System Marketing and Communication Plan

Proposed
Policy Change

Approvals
Required by
Policy

Other
Approvals

Monitoring

Information

Cite policy requirement, or explain why item is on the Board agenda: To inform board members about marketing and communication plan and solicit their feedback.

Scheduled Presenter(s): Linda Kohl

Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues: See attached

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

INFORMATION ITEM

System Marketing and Communication Plan

BACKGROUND

Linda Kohl, associate vice chancellor for public affairs, will present the draft 2010-2011 system marketing and communication plan summary, which is attached.

SUMMARY: 2010 – 2011 SYSTEM STRATEGIC MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

MAJOR GOALS

- 1 Advance awareness and understanding of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system.**
- 2 Enhance the ability of the colleges and universities to recruit students, including those in groups underrepresented in higher education.**
- 3 Increase the appreciation of belonging to a system among the system's employees.**

KEY MESSAGES

- We educate Minnesota; we make it work.
- We are an essential contributor to the economic and social vitality of Minnesota in a changing environment. We help build communities and a strong work force.
- Higher education and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system are critical to the state's economic well-being and the key to economic recovery.
- We offer students better value, more choices and unlimited possibilities.

2010 – 2011 THEMES

- Promoting Board initiatives
- Promoting Students First
- The new technical education
- Transfer transparency
- Chancellor transition

The Public Affairs division in the Office of the Chancellor plays the lead role in developing and implementing the system's marketing and communications strategies. These strategies are guided by a cross-functional Communications Team made up of representatives from academic and student affairs, finance, facilities, government relations, human resources, information technology and the system foundation. The team meets periodically to assure a consistent and comprehensive approach to communications.

Institution presidents play a major role in guiding the plan through the Leadership Council Advancement Committee, and key communicators at the colleges and universities also participate through meetings, advisory committees and e-mail communication.

Goal 1: Advance awareness and understanding of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system and its value to the state, and build support for the system among lawmakers, opinion leaders and business leaders.

Target audiences: Legislators, public officials, community leaders, business and opinion leaders

Tactics:

- Use publications, such as the system magazine and business guide, the system's Web site and social networking strategies to **raise awareness and visibility** of the system. (Ongoing, depending on available funding)
- Use advertising and marketing to **raise awareness and appreciation** of the system's contributions to the state's economic and cultural vitality. (Ongoing, depending on available funding)
- **Support the work of the system and the Board of Trustees** with publications and public relations strategies. (Ongoing)
- Develop and implement a plan to **advocate for the system's biennial budget request** at the Minnesota Legislature. (See separate legislative advocacy plan.)
- Create **newsworthy contexts** (events, studies, programs) that raise awareness of the system as a powerhouse of higher education and communicate system messages.

Evaluation:

- Media coverage of the Chancellor, the Board of Trustees, the system and the system's key messages will be monitored and evaluated.
- Demand for and response to publications will be monitored and evaluated.
- Story placements will be quantified and evaluated on whether key messages were communicated. The goal is to offer at least two story proposals per month to major media outlets and to earn placements of at least one per month.
- Quantitative outcomes of the legislative strategy will be measured through state budget appropriations. Measures will include the percentage of budget requests achieved, benchmarked with the University of Minnesota and other higher education entities.
- Regularly assess the effectiveness of advertising media used, as measured by reach, number of impressions and responses to call to action where possible.
- Measure response to social networking strategies as appropriate (Facebook friends, Twitter followers, YouTube viewers, etc.)

Goal 2: Enhance the ability of the colleges and universities to recruit students, including those in groups underrepresented in higher education, by raising awareness of and appreciation for the value of a college education and the accessibility, affordability, wide variety and high quality of the system's programs and services.

Target audience: Prospective students, including traditional-age students, students traditionally underrepresented in higher education (students of color, low income, first generation college-goers and English as a Second Language students), adult students, veterans and dislocated workers; and those who influence college choices, including school counselors, workforce center counselors, parents, guardians, teachers and mentors.

Tactics:

- Update, revise, publish and distribute *Go Places*, the system's main student recruitment resource. (Complete by August for fall distribution.)
- Use advertising and marketing to deliver messages to **underrepresented youth** about the positive benefits of higher education. (Ongoing depending on funding)
- Develop print publications, Web and social media posts to **build awareness of the system's colleges and universities** among prospective students. (Ongoing)
- Use special events, such as the State Fair and the National College Fair, to promote the system's colleges and universities to prospective students. (Annual, depending on funding.)

Evaluation:

- Measure the number of requests for information about the colleges and universities. The goal is to increase the number of inquiries over the previous year.
- Monitor, measure and analyze use of www.mnscu.edu using a variety of Web tools. Conduct periodic usability testing on the site and make improvements as needed.
- Monitor and analyze results from social media outreach, including advertising.
- Collect feedback from State Fair workers and visitors. Measure amount of campus and system literature requested by fair-goers.
- Collect feedback from National College Fair workers and visitors. Measure amount of system literature distributed to visitors.
- Long-term effectiveness will be measured by enrollment trends over time.

Goal 3: Increase the appreciation of belonging to a system among the system's employees; inform them of systemwide news of interest, and enlist employees to become strong advocates for the system.

Target audiences: The system's employees – faculty, staff and administrators – located throughout the state, and employees in the Office of the Chancellor.

Tactics:

- Produce videotaped **back-to-school message** from the chancellor to broadcast to the colleges and universities over MnSAT for use in in-service training events and other meetings of faculty, staff and administrators. Post video on system and college and university websites. (Annual)
- **Recognize achievements** and outstanding contributions by faculty and staff through news releases, magazine stories and media story proposals. (Ongoing.)
- Monitor and enforce use of the "Minnesota State Colleges & Universities" **brand and tagline** in communications. (Ongoing.)
- Depending on resources, continue publication of *The Chronicle*, a monthly electronic newsletter focusing on people and events in the Office of the Chancellor, distributed to all Office of the Chancellor employees through the system Web site. (Monthly except December and August).
- Conduct **informal staff meetings** on specific topics, such as the system's legislative initiatives. (Ongoing)

Evaluation:

- Measure and monitor hits to the electronic newsletter.
- Monitor feedback to back-to-school message