

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

Agenda Item Summary Sheet

Committee: Academic and Student Affairs **Date of Meeting:** March 17, 2010

Agenda Item: Follow-up to OLA Evaluation of the System Office

Proposed Policy Change Approvals Required by Policy Other Approvals Monitoring

Information

Cite Policy Requirement, or explain why item is on the Board Agenda

The Chair of the Board of Trustees requested that each Committee review Office of the Legislative Auditor (OLA) areas of concern under their purview.

Scheduled Presenters:

Linda L. Baer, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs
Leslie K. Mercer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, Planning, and Effectiveness

Background Information:

- The evaluation was requested by the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees Chair, and it was authorized by the Legislative Audit Commission.
- The OLA evaluation examined the following questions:
 - How has the system office's spending and staffing changed over time, and what accounts for those changes?
 - To what extent does the system office deliver services efficiently and effectively, and to what extent are those services critical to MnSCU's core mission?
 - Are there good working relationships between the system office and trustees, campus officials, and legislators?
- The OLA report was presented to the Board of Trustees Audit committee and a subsequent memo from Board Chair David Olson charged each committee with a review and possible actions in the respective areas of concern, six of which are under the purview of this committee.

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

Follow-up to OLA Evaluation of the System Office

BACKGROUND

The work plan for responding to the OLA evaluation provides a timeline and discussion topics for each of the six “areas of concern” under the purview of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee. The timeline meets the interest of Chair David Olson to have each committee discuss their role and address the OLA report recommendations by June 2010.

The OLA evaluation includes a number of findings and recommendation primarily emanating from a survey of system presidents. The survey feedback provides opportunities for continuous improvement in the services provided to system institutions. It also highlights significant issues related to the value and appropriateness of centralizing some functions and services.

The March meeting of the Academic and Student Affairs Committee will include an overview of the OLA findings and initial suggestions to address each area of concern. Subsequent meetings of the committee in April, May, and June will provide more in-depth discussions of each area.

**Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee Work Plan:
Follow-up to Office of Legislative Auditor Evaluation of the System Office**

The Office of Legislative Auditor report on the System Office provides findings and recommendations requiring a response from the Board of Trustees. Chair David Olson charged each Board Committee to discuss its role in addressing the “areas of concern” outlined in the report. Six areas within the purview of Academic and Student Affairs were identified.

- 1) System-wide academic planning and curriculum development
- 2) Approvals of campus proposals to begin, revise, or close programs
- 3) Faculty professional development
- 4) Impact and cost-effectiveness of online instruction
- 5) Oversight of customized training and continuing education
- 6) Oversight of specialized training in firefighting and emergency medical services

The concerns raised in the report regarding a seventh area, transfer, have been assigned to the Audit Committee and may be addressed during a separate session of the Board of Trustees.

The following is a recommended approach for addressing the six areas during upcoming sessions of the ASA Committee. This will meet Chair Olson’s goal of making progress on as many of the recommendations as possible by June.

March 16-17

- Overview of OLA report focusing on findings in the six areas
- General understanding of the context around each of the six areas

April 20-21

- Review of OLA concerns related to the following areas-
 - Oversight of customized training and continuing education (CE/CT)
 - Oversight of specialized training in firefighting and emergency medical services
 - Impact and cost-effectiveness of online instruction
- Review of current office of the chancellor activities in these areas-
 - Customized training and continuing education (CE/CT)
 - CE/CT financials (Fund 120; financial targets) and other measures
 - CE/CT collaborative projects (grants; online registration and payment)
 - Specialized training in firefighting and emergency medical services (Fire/EMS Center)
 - Background and history
 - Convergence of curricular oversight and campus compliance)

Impact and cost-effectiveness of online instruction

- Overview of current model
 - Online action plan
 - 2007 cost analysis
- Goals identified in March 2009 Board report
- Committee discussion and recommended actions to address the OLA concerns

May 18-19

- Review of OLA concerns related to the following areas-
 - Systemwide academic planning and curriculum development
 - Approval of institutional requests to begin, revise, or close programs
 - Faculty professional development
- Review of current office of the chancellor activities in these areas-
 - Approval of institutional requests to begin, revise, or close programs
 - Background data on amount and types of program transactions
 - Summary of January discussion on program approval and review
 - Systemwide academic planning and curriculum development
 - Examples of systemwide program efforts in Law Enforcement, Practical Nursing, Individualized Studies, AS Broad Field Degrees, etc., labor market analyses.
 - CTL programs and services
 - Evidence of impact
 - Efficiencies/leveraging of resources
 - Future directions (learning outcomes; instructional technology)
- Committee discussion and recommended actions to address the OLA concerns

June 15-16

- Update on actions taken to address the issues identified in the OLA report
- Implications of recommendations for FY11 ASA Committee and Division Work Plans