

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
MAY 17, 2011**

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Present: Chair Christine Rice; Trustees Duane Benson, Christopher Frederick, David Paskach, Thomas Renier, Louise Sundin and James Van Houten.

Other Board Members Present: Trustees Scott Thiss, Cheryl Dickson, Phil Krinkie and Alfredo Oliveira.

Leadership Council Committee Co-Chairs Present: Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson and President Sue Hammersmith.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Academic and Student Affairs Committee held a meeting on May 17, 2011 at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7th Street in St. Paul. Chair Rice called the meeting to order at 2:47 pm.

1. Minutes of the April 13, 2011 Study Session

The minutes from the April 13, 2011 Academic and Student Affairs Committee Study Session were approved as written.

2. Minutes of the April 20, 2011 Joint Academic and Student Affairs and Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Meeting

The minutes from the April 20, 2011 Joint Academic and Student Affairs and Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee meeting were approved as written.

3. Minutes of April 20, 2011 Meeting

The minutes from the April 20, 2011 Academic and Student Affairs Committee meeting were approved as written.

4. Academic and Student Affairs Update – Interim Vice Chancellor Scott Olson

- In May, the system will be co-hosting an event called “Work Green! Finding the Green in Minnesota’s Economy,” with the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and iSeek Solutions.

Featured speaker Jeremy Kalin, a state and national leader in clean energy, will connect local and state data to national and global perspectives and then will describe directions for the state’s energy future.

- There is a conference being presented at Minneapolis Community and Technical College featuring Dr. William Symonds, project director of the Pathways to Prosperity Project at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Dr. Symonds will be discussing the policies and practices recommended in the “*Pathways to Prosperity*” report on how to enable people of all ages to make more successful transitions to working life.

Chancellor McCormick said Dr. Symonds’ message promotes the pivotal role technical education will play in developing the workforce of the future. Higher education will need to forge partnerships with businesses and industry in order to better connect graduating students with work opportunities.

- Bemidji State University faculty member Dr. Anton Treuer was one of five people given a Saint Paul Foundation Facing Race Ambassador Award. Dr. Treuer, a professor of Ojibwe at BSU, was recognized as being a leader in promoting anti-racism and cultural tolerance.
- System Director for Transfer Louise Hoxworth was invited to speak about system’s Transfer practices during a meeting of the Intercollege Relations Commission (ICRC) of Washington state in April. She was invited to speak about successful transfer and articulation initiatives in Minnesota.
- Twenty-four system colleges were part of a statewide \$2.8 million grant proposal to the U.S. Department of Labor for its Trade Adjustment Act Community College and Career Training Initiative. The grant would focus on the MN FastTRAC initiative, the Lumina Foundation degree-completion initiative and regional workforce and industry needs. The collaborative grant is under the leadership of Riverland Community College President Terry Leas.

In addition to this grant, there were seven grant proposals by colleges on more focused topics:

- Northland Community and Technical College submitted a grant on imagery analyst training;
- Minnesota West Community and Technical College submitted one pertaining to renewable energy and agricultural initiatives;
- Northeast Higher Education District submitted one on 21st Century job skills;
- Central Lakes College submitted an advanced manufacturing collaboration grant proposal;
- St. Cloud Technical and Community College submitted a seamless career pathways proposal;
- MSC - SE Technical submitted a proposal focused on a national entrepreneurship workforce consortium;

- Dakota County Technical College submitted a proposal on rail, truck and maritime initiatives.

The system is also part of five multi-state consortiums, Interim Vice Chancellor Olson said. Notification on award recipients should be made soon.

- Interim Vice Chancellor Olson offered an update on new regulations proposed by the Department of Education which would affect the system's delivery of online education. An institution offering an online course to a student in another state would have to meet the state's educational requirements in order to be able to offer that course online.

General Counsel Gail Olson said they have been first contacting neighboring states about their educational regulations, since most non-resident online students come from the Upper Midwest.

The legal staff will be presenting information during a statewide conference for Chief Academic Officers and Chief Student Affairs Officers in late May. They will offer information on this regulation, as well as others which may impact colleges and universities.

Trustee Dickson asked if reciprocal agreements could be reached with states in the Upper Midwest pertaining to online education.

General Counsel Olson said that could be possible, but it could take years to develop such agreements.

- Trustee Van Houten said language in the higher education conference committee report may have implications for the Board of Trustees. The language would require the Board to place the highest priority on meeting the needs of employers for a skilled workforce when making reductions, approving programs of study, establishing requirements for completion of programs, approving course offerings and requirements for credentials. The Board would also be required to focus on the efficient delivery of higher education and reduce duplication.

The Board of Trustees should be ahead of the curve and be ready to address these issues, Trustee Van Houten said. For example, the Board would need to develop a clear definition of duplication.

Trustees Rice and Thiss said it would be best to wait until the legislation is signed before determining a plan of action.

5. Board Committee Goals:

- Three Year Baccalaureate**
- 12 month Academic Calendar**

Presenters:

Manuel Lopez, Associate Vice Chancellor for Learning, Technology and Programmatic Innovations;

Leslie Mercer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, Planning and Effectiveness;

Dr. Wanda Overland, Vice President for Student Life and Development, St. Cloud State University.

The Academic and Student Affairs Committee has been studying the pros and cons of implementing a 12-month calendar and a three-year baccalaureate program.

Interim Vice Chancellor Olson said a report on these options would be presented today and if the Trustees are satisfied with the report, discussion about possible implementation of these two initiatives could take place at the June committee meeting.

The 12-month calendar and three-year baccalaureate degree modes were included in discussions with the presidents, chief academic officers and faculty representatives. In addition, the Office of the Chancellor convened a committee of student representatives, academic and student affairs leaders and faculty organizations representatives to help provide information for the report.

Dr. Overland presented an overview of the report.

Three-year baccalaureate degree

Three-year bachelor's degree programs in the United States are designed to enable students to complete the same requirements as students in conventional baccalaureate degree programs, but to do so within 36 months rather than 45 months. With rare exceptions, programs require the same number of credits and most programs require the same courses be completed. Some three-year baccalaureate degree programs rely on students earning credits over one or more summers.

Several strategies are often used, along or in combination, to accelerate student learning. They include:

- PSEO/Concurrent Enrollment: Students earning college credits in high school through Postsecondary Enrollment Options, concurrent enrollment, Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses.
- Assessment of prior learning: Faculty assessments of work and learning experiences can result in credits that are applied to shorten the time to earn a baccalaureate degree.

- Accelerated course loads: Three-year degree plans usually require students to take a heavier than normal course load during the academic year.

There could be other ways to achieve a three-year baccalaureate. For example, Dr. Robert Zemsky is suggesting a reduced degree credit requirement which would allow students to complete their degrees in 90 credits. This would require extensive curriculum resign.

A three-year polytechnic degree would not be a bachelor's degree, but a new 90 credit degree built on an additional 30 hours earned beyond a two year AS or AAS degrees. These degrees could provide advanced credentialing in technical education fields.

The system does not now offer a defined path to a bachelor's degree in three years. However, there have been a small group of students who have graduated in three or less years, often by earning college credit while in high school.

Potential benefits of a three-year baccalaureate degree:

- Motivated students can qualify for jobs or graduate school a year or more early. They can save on college living costs and can start earning a career salary a year earlier.
- Students may not pay as much in tuition and fees if he or she can come in with credits. By taking advanced placement credits, these students also are more likely to be prepared for college or university coursework.
- Three-year degree programs can improve the university's on-time graduation rates;

Potential disadvantages of a three-year baccalaureate degree:

- Many students, including older students, cannot handle an accelerated schedule because of family and other obligations. By reducing the amount of time a student can work, three-year degree programs can result in additional student borrowing.
- Most three- year baccalaureate require students to identify their major at an early stage and eliminate exploration of different fields of study.
- Students who graduate in three years will have less time for personal development, travel or other activities which contribute to their personal growth.
- Attending school in summer term requires students to forego opportunities for summer internships and work that can contribute to their employability after graduation.
- Resources to support students could be reduced. For example, priority registration for a three-year degree student could limit access to courses for other students not in the program.
- Reallocating resources to benefit the few students who will take advantage of them may be difficult to justify when institutions need to invest in

timely completing, eliminating achievement gaps and other goals that affect the majority of students.

- A three year degree may be seen by public and employers as less rigorous than a traditional degree.

Two universities, Bemidji State University and Minnesota State University, Mankato, are discussing initiatives to offer an accelerated path to a bachelor's degree in a few selected majors.

Trustee Van Houten noted that a person who takes a three year degree would have an extra year of earning at the end of his or her work life, probably at the highest pay level.

Interim Vice Chancellor Olson said a key factor when considering a three-year option is student choice. Different students need different pathways. Some students would do well on an accelerated pathway, but many would not. The Board should not consider making the three-year baccalaureate a mandate, but rather an option that would best meet the needs of selected students.

Trustee Benson noted that higher education will need to be in a position where it reacts to the needs and desires of the marketplace. Adopting a three-year baccalaureate degree will be demand-driven, not supply driven, he said.

12-month calendar

The Board asked for an analysis of the opportunities and impacts of implementing a year-round calendar that could accelerate student program and improve efficiency in using facilities. Right now, programs are designed to fit into an academic year of two 14-17 week semesters and a summer term of no more than 39 days at the colleges with limited course offerings.

Potential Benefits of a 12-month calendar:

- All students would have added flexibility to enroll and complete their programs by enrolling in terms that are convenient for them.
- Highly motivated students could accelerate their programs, graduate and qualify for jobs earlier than attending only during the academic year.
- The same course designs could be taught each term because the terms would be of equal lengths.
- There would be a greater ability for students to begin their studies in the spring or summer.
- A longer summer term would permit greater depth of learning.

Disadvantages of a 12-month calendar:

- Learning in many disciplines require time to absorb and reflect. Students enrolling year round have less time for personal development, travel and other activities which contribute to their personal growth.
- Many students cannot attend year round because of family and other obligations.

- Many traditional students count on summer jobs to finance their education. They might have to increase their reliance on student loans.
- Financial aid policies can suppress the potential for year-round attendance. Until a law change in 2010, students could not receive Federal Pell Grants for summer-term enrollment if they were enrolled during the fall and spring. Because of federal budget reductions, the restriction may return.
- Faculty association contracts are designed around a traditional two semester academic year with options to teach during summer session. Faculty often use their summers to update their skills. Going to a 12-month calendar might require the system to use more adjunct instructors.
- College and universities now schedule heavy maintenance and capital projects during summer when few students are around.
- Many enrichment programs and community partnership programs also are scheduled during the summer months and a full academic schedule could hinder them.

North Hennepin Community College (NHCC) is considering piloting an alternate 12-month calendar for three years. The college would implement a three-semester model, with each semester lasting 15 weeks and equal breaks between the terms.

Trustee Sundin said she would be supportive of the NHCC pilot of the 12-month calendar. The system, in addition to the college, should evaluate the arrangement if this pilot is launched, she said.

Trustee Benson said as with the three-year baccalaureate, the decision to move ahead with a 12-month calendar will be driven by the marketplace.

Trustee Frederick said he would like to hear more from the faculty unions pertaining to the advantages and disadvantages of the 12-month calendar.

Trustee Benson made a motion, seconded by Trustee Frederick, that the Academic and Student Affairs Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees accept the report on the pros, cons and recommendations for implementing 12-month calendars and three-year baccalaureate degree programs in Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. Motion carried.

General Counsel Olson said the vote on the recommendation was not necessary. Typically, the Board does not have to vote to accept a report since the report is received by virtue of it being presented. However, accepting the report does not mean that the Board has to accept every point made in the report, she said.

Chair Rice said the topic of a 12-month calendar and three-year baccalaureate will be on the June agenda for further discussion and action.

**6. Board Committee Goal:
- Developmental Education**

One of the goals the Academic and Student Affairs Committee adopted was to study the pros and cons of moving responsibility for remedial education from state universities to state colleges.

During a study session in December, the Committee reviewed a considerable amount of research in developmental education and concluded that there were sound reasons for maintaining a limited amount of remedial education offerings at the state universities.

Trustee Sundin said the Committee should focus on how to encourage or incent promising practices for developmental education that are working in the system. These practices were presented during a study session in April and are highlighted in the report presented to the Committee.

7. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 3.22 Course Syllabi (Second Reading)

Second reading of this policy amendment which is intended to facilitate transfer by drawing a clear distinction between course syllabi and course outlines and establishing that the course outline is the document to be used in determining course equivalencies.

During the May meeting, representatives from the university and college student associations, as well as from the university faculty association, spoke in favor of the amendment.

*A motion was made by Trustee Paskach and seconded by Trustee Benson that the Board of Trustees approves the amendment to Policy 3.22 Course Syllabi.
Motion carried.*

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 pm
Respectfully submitted,
Margie Takash, Recorder