

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURALISM COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
April 19, 2011**

**Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Present:** Trustees Louise Sundin, Chair; Trustee Duane Benson, Vice Chair; Jacob Englund; Alfredo Oliveira; James Van Houten

**Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee Members Absent:** Trustee Christine Rice

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Clarence Hightower, Dan McElroy, Thomas Renier, Scott Thiss

**Leadership Council Members Present:** Whitney Stewart Harris, Executive Director; Phil Davis, President

A meeting of the Diversity and Multiculturalism Committee was held on April 19, 2011, at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor Board Room, 30 7<sup>th</sup> Street East, St. Paul. Chair Sundin called the meeting to order at 1:37 p.m.

**1. Minutes of March 15, 2011**

The minutes of the March 15, 2011, meeting were approved as written.

**2. Diversity and Multiculturalism Division Update**

Trustee Sundin called on Dr. Whitney Harris to give the update.

- Education Training
  - The Office of the Chancellor's Diversity and Multiculturalism division recently hosted a regional professional development session for metro campus chief diversity officers. Ten of the eleven metro campus diversity officers attended this session, which focused on best practices to recruit and retain first-generation college students. The group also discussed how to recognize and address stereotype threat and imposter syndrome, two things which could hinder underrepresented students from success in higher education.
  
- Compliance
  - Decisionmaker Training was provided at St. Cloud Technical College to approximately 38 leaders throughout the Minnesota State Colleges and University system. Trained decisionmakers are necessary to implement the Board of Trustees 1B.1 Nondiscrimination in Employment and Education Opportunity policy.

Trustee Oliveira said he had participated in two of the division webinars. He thanked the division for the webinars and asked that they be continued.

### **3. Demographic Characteristics of College and University Graduates**

Dr. Craig Schoenecker presented this agenda item. The presentation was in response to a request from Trustee Van Houten for an examination of the majors selected by underrepresented students.

The total number of graduates systemwide has increased by seven or eight percent over the past five years, both at the colleges and at the universities. There has also been a large growth in enrollment, but most of that has been more recent and is not yet reflected in graduation rates. In fiscal year 2010, about two-thirds of the graduates' highest awards are sub-baccalaureate awards; this includes associate degrees (38 percent of graduates), diplomas and certificates (30 percent). Approximately 25 percent received bachelor's degrees and five percent received graduate degrees.

Underrepresented groups are more concentrated at the sub-baccalaureate level and are also more concentrated in health-related awards (degrees, certificates and diplomas) and less concentrated in teacher education. The differences between underrepresented and non-underrepresented student awards are not significant in other categories. Students of color are also more heavily concentrated at the certificate level and less at the bachelor's degree level. As with the other underrepresented students, students of color are more concentrated in health-related fields than education. They also are more represented in business awards.

Older graduates (25 and up) are more likely to be at the certificate level and at the graduate level and less likely to be at the baccalaureate level. They are more likely to be in health-related fields, less likely to be in the liberal arts fields. Thus, they are not very different from other students in other categories.

Female graduates are more likely to be at the associate level and more likely to major in health and education. Males are more likely to earn diplomas and more likely to major in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields or in the trades.

### **4. The Center for College Readiness - Minnesota State Community and Technical College**

Dr. Harris introduced Paul Drange, Director of the Center for College Readiness, and Dr. Jill Abbott, Executive Dean of the eCampus and the K-12 collaboration, to speak about the Center for College Readiness. Mr. Drange has significantly increased the number of underrepresented students served above the targeted goals, increased the number of new schools that will be part of the program, and formed new partnerships with other system centers of excellence.

Paul Drange said that according to a 2010 study, 40 percent of students entering college in Minnesota needed at least one remedial reading or math course. The center works with junior high and high school underrepresented students and Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system institutions. Programs include Ready or Not Writing, Step Write Up, Ready or Not Reading, Math Works and Science Works, and summer camps for middle school students. Math Works and Science Works are still being refined but are already producing good results.

Ready or Not Writing relies on a submission and feedback process. Students are mainly sophomores and juniors. Papers are submitted to college faculty members, who then send feedback to students and their teachers. The feedback is in the form of a personalized letter and ratings on their writing skills in five different areas. Test scores for students who have had two years of the center's writing programs are markedly above the state average.

The program center has been collaborating with several Minnesota colleges and universities and is adding more. Dr. Harris reminded the Board that at the time the centers were established, the expectation was that they would share their knowledge with the other campuses. Chancellor McCormick said that one of the hopes was that these centers would produce a body of knowledge and results that would be there if the money stopped. Mr. Drange said that the center is also expanding to collaborate with more high schools across the state to bring this program to additional underrepresented students. In answer to a question, Mr. Drange said that the program also could work well with adult learners, but additional funding would be needed.

The summer camp program serves fifth through eighth graders and provides an opportunity to build relationships and introduce students to educational concepts. The program also allows broader partnerships with system institutions and paves the way for future collaboration.

Mr. Drange said he believes these tools can have a profound impact on the students' college readiness and success, and he appreciates the support the Board and the Office of the Chancellor have provided.

##### **5. Proposed Amendment to Board Policy 1B.4 Access for Individuals with Disabilities (First Reading)**

Whitney called on Renée Hogoboom to present on the proposed revisions to Board Policy 1B.4. The first change was to add a policy statement to make the policy more consistent with other current policies. In answer to a question from Trustee Dickson, people are sometimes treated as having a disability or regarded as having a disability even though they are not actually disabled. Trustee Dickson said that there are people who are regarded as disabled but not discriminated against, and there are people who are disabled who are not viewed as disabled. She thinks that the policy needs further work.

Dr. Harris said that the “regarded as” issue has often showed up in an employment situation where a person would be regarded as having a disability and discriminated against as a result. A disabled person needs to present appropriate documentation. He and Ms. Hogoboom will look at the policy language again and use the committee discussion to inform the next revision. In answer to a question, the language came from Minnesota Statute 363A.03, part of the Human Rights Act. Diversity staff members were instructed to review the policy in light of the discussion and to revise as appropriate.

Trustee Sundin said that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system was one of approximately 20 institutions that supported the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual White Privilege Conference, which was held this year, April 13-16, at the Bloomington Sheraton Hotel. There have been columns in the newspaper attacking and defending the conference. She believes that the conference is valuable. A number of public school teachers attend, and some suburban schools are using it to increase staff understanding of their increasingly diverse student bodies. She asked if Board members had questions about the conference. She had heard there had been concerns.

Trustee Van Houten said that a keynote speaker of a previous conference had attacked capitalism and called the United States a colonial power. He had six people contact him with concerns about the conference. Trustee Thiss said he had received calls and responded to them, and this seemed to resolve the fears. Trustee Dickson said it would be helpful to give the Trustees advance notice of issues and sponsorships that might prove controversial, telling them that they might get inquiries and this is the reason for the action taken. Trustee Sundin said that President Hammersmith attended the conference and said it was very good. She might be able to provide further information, if Board members have questions.

Chair Sundin called on Trustee Van Houten to raise a new issue. He said that one of the goals of the Minnesota State system is to promote democratic values and to enhance Minnesota’s quality of life by developing an understanding and appreciation of a free and diverse society. The state has a large immigrant population, and he thought it would be a good policy to influence system institutions to help this group have a deeper understanding of the country’s history and system of governance, to better prepare them for citizenship. Dr. Harris said that a starting point would be to work with Academic and Student Affairs and to see what they are currently doing and what they might do in the future. He will discuss this issue with them.

The Chancellor suggested that it would also be good to investigate what is needed for citizenship. Trustee Sundin said she had seen recent statistics showing a decrease in the percentage of immigrants that actually chose to become citizens and completed the process. The numbers dropped from about 55 percent to about 35 percent. This would be worth investigating as well.

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Gale Rohde