

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
OCTOBER 18, 2011**

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**Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Present:** Chair Christine Rice; Trustees Duane Benson, Jacob Englund, Alfredo Oliveira, Thomas Renier, Louise Sundin and James Van Houten.

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Brett Anderson, Cheryl Dickson, Phil Krinkie, Dan McElroy, Scott Thiss and Michael Vekich.

**Leadership Council Committee Co-Chairs Present:** Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Leslie Mercer and Presidents Anne Temte and Edna Szymanski.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Academic and Student Affairs Committee held a meeting on October 18, 2011 at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street in St. Paul. Chair Rice called the meeting to order at 2:10 pm.

**1. Minutes of July 19, 2011**

*The minutes from July 19, 2011 Academic and Student Affairs Committee were approved as written.*

**2. Academic and Student Affairs Update – Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Leslie Mercer**

- Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Mercer said work on the Academic and Student Affairs annual workplan has begun. The plan will conform to the Chancellor's strategic framework. More details on the plan will be offered at a future meeting.
- The Academic and Student Affairs Division is hosting an annual meeting of chief academic officers, chief student affairs officers and deans Oct. 26-28, 2011. Over 200 people are expected to attend the three-day conference, which offers opportunities for networking and the sharing of best practices. Chancellor Rosenstone will be offering a keynote address and Steven Spanghel, Vice President for Accreditation Relations at the Higher Learning Commission, also will speak.
- Associate Vice Chancellor Mike López said National College Application Week in Minnesota is set for Nov. 14-18, 2011. The focus of the event

will be to provide high school students, particularly under-represented students, assistance in completing and submitting college applications.

There are 17 high schools throughout the state, including ones in both the urban and rural areas, that we will be participating in this pilot effort, Associate Vice Chancellor López said. System colleges and universities are being asked to provide leadership and assistance to students at these high schools who are filling out the applications. System schools are also being asked to waive application fees during this time, if possible.

Trustee Benson asked if there is some way the System can do a better job on making students aware of the net price of attending a college or university.

Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Mercer said a net price calculator tool has been developed and now will be displayed on System college and university websites. President Temte said she expects this tool will help inform students about the cost of their education, as well as options for financial aid.

Trustee Benson asked what the Board can do to get students interested in programs that offer the best chance for employment after graduation.

Chancellor Rosenstone said he has already started a discussion with Department of Education Commissioner Cassellius regarding this topic. The system can recognize workforce needs and offer programs that meet those needs, but these efforts will be in vain if students don't enroll in them. He said there needs to be a greater effort to help students match their passion and skills with careers that align with workforce needs.

### **3. Proposed Amendment to Policy 3.36 – Academic Programs (First Reading)**

Education priorities for the Board of Trustees were established in 2011 Session Law and college and university presidents were informed about this legislative language in a September memo from Chancellor Rosenstone. A proposed amendment of Policy 3.36 Academic Programs was reviewed by Trustees.

The amendment states that to meet Minnesota's educational needs, the System will:

1. Ensure quality and excellence that is competitive on a national and international level in meeting the needs of students for occupational, general, undergraduate and graduate education;
2. Facilitate ease of transfer among schools and programs, integrate course credit and coordinate degree programs;
3. Give highest priority to meeting the needs of Minnesota employers for a highly skilled and adaptable workforce;

4. Enhance Minnesota's quality of life by developing understanding and appreciation of a free and diverse society; and
5. Eliminate unnecessary duplication and achieve efficient and streamlined operations.

Trustee Van Houten said the session law explicitly states that highest priority be given to meeting the needs of employers for a highly skilled and adaptable workforce. Putting this directive in the middle of this list doesn't give it enough prominence, he said.

Trustee Dickson said she doesn't interpret the list of priorities in the proposed amendment as being ranked in order of importance.

The priorities listed compliment each other and are all essential in the production of a highly-skilled workforce, Trustee Benson pointed out.

Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Mercer said the order of the priorities could be changed, but all five directives listed come directly from state statute.

Members of the Committee also discussed a friendly amendment proposed by Trustee Sundin regarding the approval of academic programs. Language in this amendment proposes that an annual report to the Board on the status of the inventory include data and analysis of programs measured against program goals established by the Chancellor. The goals should be based on aligning program offerings to workforce needs statewide, regionally and locally in collaboration with the Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Governor's Workforce Development Council, including data from the state demographer.

Trustee Sundin said she is concerned that annual reports submitted to the Board on program approval in the past have not offered enough information on how decisions are made regarding the closing and opening of programs. She would like to see decisions be based on standards and goals established by the Chancellor. Trustees also need to be assured that decisions are based on statewide data to ensure highest priority is given to meeting the needs of the workforce.

Trustee Van Houten said he supports this idea. He said he believes the Legislature is asking that the Board be more involved in the front-end of approval decisions, not just reviewing an inventory report after decisions on new programs or closures have been made.

Trustee Benson asked what preparing this kind of report would mean to the workload of staff in Academic and Student Affairs.

Senior Associate Vice Chancellor Mercer said much of this information is already gathered and used by campuses and the system office during the program approval process. The process to approve programs and program view includes a

review of workforce needs, as well as other factors such as student interest and financial considerations, she said.

There is already collaboration underway with DEED to develop an easy-to-use tool which will help campuses gather labor market information. There may be an issue with the achievement of annual goals, she said. For example, it may take more than one year to realize workforce goals in some industries, such as health care.

Trustee Dickson said she found the discussion troubling. The stated priorities in the amendment are focused too much on producing “workers,” rather than producing well-rounded, educated citizens – the types of graduates employers repeatedly say they want to hire, she said.

President Szymanski said meeting the needs of the workforce is different today than it was five or ten years ago. For example, an employer may want to hire a person who is trained in business and technology or in health care and technology. Employers more and more are looking for adaptable graduates who are able to work across disciplines, she said.

Trustees Van Houten and Krinkie spoke of the need for well-educated people with liberal arts backgrounds. Trustee Krinkie said the system’s primary goal should be to graduate students who are highly skilled, adaptable and who can be successful, regardless of the vocation they choose.

Chancellor Rosenstone said he doesn’t interpret the term “workforce” in the proposed policy amendment to refer only to graduates of two-year colleges. Rather, he said he interprets the policy broadly and takes it to mean the System will continue to strive to prepare its students to be leaders in every sector of the state’s economy and all walks of life, whether it is in business, health care, the arts or technical trades.

Trustee Dickson said she appreciated the comments made by Trustees Krinkie and Van Houten, as well as from the Chancellor, in support of a liberal arts education. She said she would like to see a statement added to the policy’s purpose and applicability section that addresses the goal of graduating well-rounded, highly-educated, adaptable students who will become productive and engaged members of society.

Trustee Benson suggested that the term career be used instead of workforce.

Chancellor Rosenstone said he will work to revise the wording of the amendment to incorporate Trustee Dickson’s suggestion.

Trustee Rice said there will be a ceremony and reception at the November Board meeting to recognize students who have received awards at national career and technical education competitions, including SkillsUSA, Business Professional of

America (BPA), Delta Epsilon Chi and National Postsecondary Agricultural Student Association.

The meeting adjourned at 3:10 pm

Respectfully submitted,

Margie Takash, Recorder