MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JOINT ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE AND
DIVERSITY AND EQUITY COMMITTEE MEETING
MARCH 19, 2014

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Present: Chair Margaret Anderson
Kelliher, Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Alfredo Oliveira (on phone), Maria Peluso (on phone) and
Louise Sundin.

Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Absent: Trustees Duane Benson and Dawn
Erlandson.

Diversity and Equity Committee Members Present: Chair Alexander Cirillo (on phone),
Trustees Cheryl Dickson, Alfredo Oliveira (on phone), Maria Peluso (on phone) and Louise
Sundin.

Diversity and Equity Committee Members Absent: Trustees Ann Anaya and Duane Benson

Other Board Members Present: Trustees Clarence Hightower, Michael Vekich, Philip Krinkie,
and Thomas Renier.

Leadership Council Representatives Present: Chancellor Steven Rosenstone, Senior Vice
Chancellor John O'Brien, President Scott Olson and President Sue Collins.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Academic and Student Affairs Committee and
Diversity and Equity Committee held a joint meeting on March 19, 2014 at Wells Fargo Place, 4th
Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7th Street in St. Paul. Academic and Student Affairs Committee
Chair Anderson Kelliher called the session to order at 8:03 am.

1. **Minutes of November 20, 2013**

   *Trustee Oliveira moved that the minutes from the Nov. 20, 2013 meeting be approved as
   written. Trustee Dickson seconded and the motion carried.*

2. **Closing the Achievement Gap, Annual Update on Persistence and Completion**

   Presenters:
   Leon Rodrigues, Chief Diversity Officer
   John O'Brien, Senior Vice Chancellor of Academic and Student Affairs
   Craig Schoenecker, System Director of Research

   This presentation was to review progress and discuss planned initiatives to reduce the
   achievement gap between students of color and white students.

   The achievement gap refers to the disparity between the educational performance of groups
   and students, especially groups defined by gender, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status.
   The achievement gap can be observed on a variety of measures, including standardized test
   scores, grade point average, participation, completion and persistence rates.

The system has ambitious goals pertaining to the achievement gap. In 5 years, by 2018, the system will:
- Eliminate the participation gap
- Reduce the persistence gap by one-half
- Reduce the completion gap by one-quarter

The goal is that in 10 years, by 2023, all gaps will be eliminated.

Metrics to be used to measure the success include the percent of students of color; success of students of color compared to white students on persistence and completion rates; and campus diversity climate, which is defined as the student opinion of the extent to which the college or university promotes contact with an understanding of diverse populations.

Goals for closing the achievement gap have been set for each college and university and progress made on these goals will be part of presidential evaluations.

Chief Diversity Office Rodrigues said there are several factors which affect the achievement gap:
- Academic preparedness of students at the time of admission
- Student financial resources
- Institutional resources to support high impact practices
- Diversity and cultural competency of employees
- Level of collaboration with communities of color to support the strategies.

Gaps start early, Rodrigues said. In the Minneapolis school district, for example, there are big differences in the readiness of white kindergarteners and those of different races. This trend persists through high school.

Minnesota's four-year high school graduation rates rank low nationally, as indicated in 2011 statistics:
- 84 percent of white students graduated , tied for 23rd nationally
- 49 percent of black students graduated, second to last in the nation
- 72 percent of Asian students graduated, last in the nation
- 51 percent of Hispanic students graduated, last in the nation
- 42 percent of American Indian students graduated, last in the nation.

These statistics are shocking and have tremendous implications for the work that must take place at the system's colleges and universities, Chief Diversity Officer Rodrigues said.

Chair Hightower said he's been on the Board for 12 years and during all that time the achievement gap has been an issue. The Board has put an emphasis on eliminating the gap, but success seems to be elusive, he said.

MnSCU serves more of the state's students of color than all other institutions combined. Trustee Renier noted that the increase in diverse students, who tend to need more services and support because of a lack of readiness, coincided with the time period when the system's state funding was cut.

Chancellor Rosenstone emphasized that the two major factors that account for the gaps in persistence and completion is the large number of students who lack college readiness and financial challenges. These factors are working against the system's ability to close these gapes.

New legislation aligns K-12 and higher education in significant ways which should help better prepare students for college, Senior Vice Chancellor O'Brien said.

All Minnesota eleventh graders are taking a nationally-normed college entrance exam. Students in 8th and 10th graders will be taking predictive exams aligned to college entrance exams. If a 10th grade student is not reaching the college readiness benchmark, he or she will take further diagnostic exams to identify what type of support they need to improve and become better prepared for college-level work after high school.

Starting in 9th grade, students will be developing a "plan" around seven key elements. This plan includes academic scheduling, career exploration, 21st century skills, community partnerships, college access, postsecondary training and experiential learning opportunities.

Trustee Sundin noted there is a shortage of counselors in K-12 system and asked who will be helping students develop these plans. Chancellor Rosenstone agreed that knowledgeable staff will be needed to implement this work and that will need to be part of future conversations.

Recent legislation is also helping to ease some financial burdens for students, Chief Diversity Officer Rodrigues said. More than 8,000 part-time students who were not previously eligible for financial aid can now get state grants for their schooling. A two-year tuition freeze is also helping.

Institutional resources can be used to support high-impact practices to ease the achievement gap. Trustees heard of several practices which are having positive results:

- President Earl Potter described MAP-Works, a web-based tool which works to connect faculty and staff to all students. Through the program's interface, student survey results are available to academic advisors, first-year seminar instructors, and residential life staff, so they may identify at-risk students who may need these services. Students gain immediate access to a customized, web-based report that identifies discrepancies between their expectations and the academic and social behaviors necessary to succeed. The program has had success in student retention rates, President Potter said.
- President Adenuga Atewologun described the "Be Your Best Summer Academy" and Cycles for Success Scholarships, which serve underrepresented students at his college. The eight-week summer college prep academy has served 162 students over seven years. The Hormel Foundation of Austin has invested $1.2 million in Riverland Community College scholarships for underrepresented graduates of Austin and Pacelli High Schools since 2010.
- Normandale Community College's supplement instruction initiative had substantially increased student success rates
- Other best practices on college campuses which are bolstering student retention and success include learning communities, first-year experiences and intrusive advising.

Work to change the college environment for students must be coupled with efforts to improve the diversity of our campuses, Chief Diversity Officer Rodrigues said. The presence of diverse faculty and staff not only serve as role models for students, but also help the campus reflect the communities served. Diverse faculty offer perspectives that are essential to creating a culturally competent institution that can better prepare students to meet the needs of those students.

Employees of color comprise an increasingly large percentage of all employees and new hires. In 2012, 9.6 percent of all system employees and 12.9 percent of all new hires were employees of color.

Promoting diversity and closing the achievement gap are relevant to Charting the Future, Chancellor Rosenstone said, adding two of the first implementation teams which will begin work are the Student Success Team and the Diversity Team.

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 am
Respectfully submitted,
Margie Takash, Recorder