

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS COMMITTEE  
JUNE 17, 2014**

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**Academic and Student Affairs Committee Members Present:** Chair Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Trustees Duane Benson, Cheryl Dickson, Dawn Erlandson, Alfredo Oliveira, Maria Peluso and Louise Sundin.

**Other Board Members Present:** Trustees Alexander Cirillo, Clarence Hightower, Philip Krinkie, Thomas Renier and Elise Ristau.

**Leadership Council Representatives Present:** Chancellor Steven Rosenstone, Senior Vice Chancellor John O'Brien.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Academic and Student Affairs Committee held a meeting on June 17, 2014 at Wells Fargo Place, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7<sup>th</sup> Street in St. Paul. Academic and Student Affairs Committee Chair Anderson Kelliher called the session to order at 1:00 pm.

**1. Minutes of the May 21, 2014 Academic and Student Affairs Committee**

*Trustee Benson moved and Trustee Dickson seconded that the minutes from the May 21, 2014 meeting of Academic and Student Committees be approved as written. Motion carried.*

**2. Student Success Measures and Strategies**

**Presenters:**

John O'Brien, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs  
Sue Hammersmith, President, Metropolitan State University  
Ginny Arthur, Provost, Metropolitan State University  
Cecilia Cervantes, President, Hennepin Technical College  
Marilyn Krasowski, Interim Vice President of Academic and Student Affairs, Hennepin Technical College

Senior Vice Chancellor John O'Brien presented on the system's progress related to student success measures. Increasing student success across the system is a top priority in the Strategic Framework and the focus of a Charting the Future implementation team. Student success in the system is measured by:

- Persistence and completion rates: This is the percentage of students who have been retained, graduated or transferred by the second fall term following original fall enrollment.
- Completion rates: Completion rates are the percentage of students who have graduated or transferred within three years at the colleges or have graduated within six years at universities.

- Related employment of graduates: The percentage of graduates in a fiscal year who reported they were employed during the year after graduation in a job that was related to their program or major.
- Certificates and degrees: The number of certificates and degrees awarded by the system in a fiscal year.

Data shows college and university persistence and completion rates decrease by the first spring after enrollment, but then remained stable. For colleges in 2007, the rate dipped to 84.9 percent by the first spring, but then leveled off at about 67 percent for the next five years. At universities, the persistence and completion rates dropped to 94.3 percent the first spring, and then leveled out at about 85 percent.

Persistence and completion rates proved to be higher for full-time university students and college students. Part-time students complete at a rate about 10 percent lower than full-time students.

For both colleges and universities, data shows the most highly-prepared students and those with the lowest financial need are the ones most likely to rate high in terms of persistence and completion.

Senior System Director for Research Craig Schoenecker said for university students, the system uses the ACT composite score to define preparedness. Students entering a state university with an ACT composite score of 23 or above are considered prepared. Colleges use the Accuplacer reading score as the measure of preparedness.

Chancellor Rosenstone said lack of preparedness and high financial need are the two most critical variables in student success. That's why the system has focused intently on addressing the financial need of students, as well as on ways to help make incoming students more prepared.

The employment rate for graduating students decreased during the recession, but has been recovering in recent years. In fiscal year 2012, 84.8 percent of college graduates and 81.7 percent of university graduates reported being employed in a job related to their major, Senior Vice Chancellor O'Brien said.

The number of degrees and certificates conferred by the system increased 24 percent between 2005 and 2013, going from 33,758 to 41,957.

While student success is a top priority for the system, Chancellor Rosenstone said the Board must be cautious when comparing its rates with those at other colleges and universities in the state because of differences in student population. If the board's primary goal is to increase student success at any price, that can be achieved by restricting enrollment to only those students who have a 29 composite ACT score or by not serving the students with the greatest financial need.

That, however, is not the system's strategy or role, he said. While the system continues in its mission to offer open access and serve traditionally underserved students, it must also strive to ensure these students succeed, Chancellor Rosenstone said.

Campus representatives from Metropolitan State University and Hennepin Technical College offered presentations on their student success strategies.

## **Hennepin Technical College**

Hennepin Technical College has had steady increases in the number of students of color served. From 2007 to 2013, the percentage of diverse student population at Hennepin Technical College increased by almost 10 percent, going from 26.8 percent to 36.5 percent. During the same period, the college's employees of color increased by 7 percent, going from 6 to 11 percent.

The college employs several different strategies in its quest to enhance student success, President Cervantes said.

- 1) "Stacked credentials" allow students to succeed by taking incremental steps in higher education. For example, students can enter college and earn a certificate in a program, enter the workforce with that credential and then come back and apply that original degree toward a higher degree in the field, such as a diploma or associate degree.

"Career ladder" opportunities also are used to promote student success at Hennepin Technical College, President Cervantes said. After completing a degree, some students elect to remain in school and enhance their employability and earning potential by getting a second degree in a complementary field.

- 2) The college strives to promote positive interactions with students of color, President Cervantes said. Diverse students are recruited to work as ambassadors with incoming students so they can share their personal studies of success.

An increase in the number of diverse faculty and advisors, who act as role models, also helps increase student success, President Cervantes said. She said efforts are made to recruit diverse students to return to the college to teach after they graduate and gain work experience.

Finally, campus faculty and staff pride themselves on providing quality service in a friendly, professional manner, President Cervantes said.

- 3) The college has aggressively developed and implemented pilot and federally-funded grant initiatives to promote and evaluate student access and success strategies, Interim Vice President Krasowski said. These include :
  - TRIO Gear Up grants, which work to increase the number of students in several local high schools become prepared to enter and succeed in post-secondary education.
  - The TRIO Educational Talent Search, which is a free college preparatory program which encourages students in grades 7-12 in participating schools to graduate and gain admission to college.
  - TRIO Upward Bound grants, which provide post-secondary preparatory support to low-income and first-generation students.
  - Hennepin Gateway to College grants, which assist students who have dropped out of high school or are about to drop out. They can get dual credit for finishing their high school diploma, while earning college credit at the same time.

A high percentage of students who benefit from the TRIO program are students of color, first-generation students or students who have a greater financial need, Interim Vice President Krasowski said.

- 4) Hennepin Technical College also uses best practices to evaluate and redesign curriculum and programming to support diverse learners. For example, student success courses are now required for all students coming back from suspension. There are more student clubs and events that cater to diverse students.

Chancellor Rosenstone said Hennepin Technical College is exemplary in addressing student success for students of color. Among all system colleges, it has the lowest achievement gap in student achievement and student success.

### **Metropolitan State University**

Metropolitan State University enrolls one-third of all the university students of color in the system and graduates 44 percent of the university graduates of color. In the past six years, this university has:

- Increased enrollment by 25 percent to over 11,000 students per year
- Increased degree conferral by 38 percent to over 2,000 graduates per year
- Increased enrollment of students of color by 35 percent.

This past year alone, the university's number of students of color grew by 7 percent. This included an 18 percent increase in American Indian students; a 10 percent increase in Asian students; and a 6 percent increase for African and African American students.

Veterans and military student enrollment also grew by 38 percent. Metropolitan State University serves more veterans than any other institution, President Hammersmith said, adding many of these students are persons of color.

She described a few of the university's student success strategies, including:

### **Institutional Commitment**

Antiracism, diversity and inclusion are central features in the university's mission, vision and core values. Cultural competency is something expected of all employees and they all attend diversity workshops and training.

All search committees must have diverse representation and diversity questions are included at each round of the interview process for new administrators, faculty and professional staff personnel.

President Hammersmith said 25 percent of all full-time employees at Metropolitan State University are persons of color. The workforce mirrors the student body and students can see faculty and staff who look like them and appreciate their culture. Students tell her that this makes a difference in their educational experience, she said.

### **Intrusive Advising, Cultural Outreach and Early Intervention**

Metropolitan State University was a national pioneer with intrusive advising. With this model, full-time professional academic advisors are responsible for keeping their assigned students enrolled, in touch with the services they need, encouraged and on track. The school has made

a heavy investment in building a substantial staff of academic advisors who know their students and have time to interact with them on an ongoing basis.

In addition to academic advisors, the university also has special professional staff devoted to each of the major diverse populations serviced. They do outreach and have personal relationships with students as well. These staff members help trouble-shoot, make referrals, plan special events and work with the group's respective student organization.

Also playing an important part in this effort are "early intervention" protocols which work to prevent attrition before it happens.

### **The educational experience**

The university employs many high-impact practices to foster success, including:

- Small classes – usually in the low 20s and never over 35.
- Classes which are highly interactive, with ample class collaborative and small group work.
- Class and academic programs which include field experiences so students can see how learning is applied.
- Individualized instruction rather than cookie-cutter "lesson plans."
- Flexible schedules, locations and methods of instructional delivery which are helpful to students who work full-time or part-time.
- Faculty who have real-life examples and applicable experience that they bring into the classroom.
- Faculty who have high expectations of students.

### **Social Work Program success**

President Hammersmith described the Social Work Program which has an extraordinarily high graduation rate of 91 percent to 100 percent.

There are several attributes of the program that help make it successful, President Hammersmith said:

- This program is a cohort model which allows the students to move through the program together. They learn to learn and to support each other.
- Students get personal coaching by the faculty. They meet weekly or biweekly outside the classroom.
- There is a heavy emphasis on field placement and applied learning.
- Students are not admitted to the program until their junior year. By that time they've had time to explore careers and have a better grasp on what they want to do in their professional life.

In other business, Chair Anderson-Kelliher said a Sabbatical Report was included in the Board packet. If Trustees have any questions after reviewing the report, they should direct them to Senior Vice Chancellor O'Brien or to her.

The meeting adjourned at 2:25 pm  
Respectfully submitted,  
Margie Takash, Recorder