

MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Work Group on Technology Meeting Notes
March 10, 2008

***Work Group Members Present:** Cheryl Dickson, Chair; Trustees Duane Benson, Scott Thiss, and James Van Houten; Staff – Vice Chancellors Laura King and Ken Niemi*

***Other Board Members Present:** Clarence Hightower, Chair of the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee*

***Leadership Council Representative Present:** Cheryl Frank, President, Inver Hills Community College*

The Work Group on Technology held its first meeting on March 10, 2008, 4th Floor, World Trade Room, 30 East 7th Street in St. Paul. Chair Dickson called the meeting to order at 9:00 am.

1. DISCUSS WORK GROUP CHARGE

Trustee Hightower noted that the work group was formed to be the eyes and ears for the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee. He thanked those present for agreeing to serve on the group. The group is charged with reviewing the periodic progress reports and providing advice concerning the execution of the Enterprise Technology Master Plan. He reiterated that the work group should focus on the critical paths, progress and outcomes of the Technology plan and should not be overly concerned about the “type” of reports or charts. Trustee Hightower looks forward to a discussion at the full committee of areas of concern.

2. UPDATE ON ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Vice Chancellor Niemi reviewed the project approval stream and the project business case plans that are prepared by the project managers. He demonstrated that in some major projects, the paper trail is already extensive. Status monitoring starts with bi-weekly meetings with the project managers and on the following week full project team meetings. Monthly updates are made to the vice chancellors and quarterly reports go to the full Enterprise Investment Committee (consisting of the four vice chancellors and five presidents). The EIC regularly reports to the Leadership Council and Vice Chancellor Niemi frequently provides updates to the Leadership Council Technology Committee and to the Finance, Facilities and Technology Committee of the Board. This level of scrutiny quickly shows if a project is off-target.

3. REVIEW PROGRESS ON ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY MASTER PLAN

Chair Dickson expressed concern about crossing the line between governance and management. She noted that the work group should relate the projects back to the original goals. It is important to have a clear understanding of how the projects relate to the strategic goals and how the projects are managed.

4. COMMUNICATIONS ON ENTERPRISE TECHNOLOGY

Members remarked that it was easy to see progress and completion of a capital project in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Status Report. Vice Chancellor Niemi noted that some of the technology projects are phased, multi-year efforts and should be expected to have some changes as they develop. He also noted that as the project management discipline has only been in place for about a year it would not be unexpected that some alterations to project schedules and scope would occur.

Vice Chancellor King suggested a reporting format similar to the CIP Report. She recommended that the projects be presented in related groups to simplify reporting. Common language, including a glossary of technology terms, would be helpful so everyone can understand the report.

Melinda Voss shared a draft of a brochure being prepared for the System that will clarify what the Technology plan, when completed, will be able to do for students, faculty, and staff. The major goals are summarized succinctly in the phrase, “fast, secure, reliable”. The brochure will be available at the March Board of Trustees meeting.

The work group discussed the agenda for the next meeting to include:

1. Review of the IT Enterprise Strategic Plan
2. Review of current projects sorted by sectors benefiting (students, faculty, etc)
3. Discussion of projects and their criticality
4. Discussion of divisions of responsibility in IT arena between campus and central IT organization.

5. MEETING SCHEDULE

The next meeting for the Work Group is scheduled for 9:30 am on April 24, 2008.