

**MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**Agenda Item Summary Sheet**

**Committee:** Academic and Student Affairs

**Date of Meeting:** May 18, 2010

**Agenda Item:** Alexandria Technical College Mission Change (First Reading)

Proposed  
Policy Change

Approvals  
Required by  
Policy

Other  
Approvals

Monitoring

Information

**Cite policy requirement, or explain why item is on the Board agenda:**

Board policy 3.24 requires Board approval of institution missions and changes in authority to confer an academic award. This mission change request is a first reading. The motion will be acted upon during a second reading in June.

**Scheduled Presenter(s):**

Kevin Kopischke, President, Alexandria Technical College

**Outline of Key Points/Policy Issues:**

Alexandria Technical College is requesting Board approval to change its mission from a technical college to a comprehensive community and technical college authorized to offer the Associate in Arts degree. Alexandria Technical College has met all the requirements of the mission change policy and procedure. An executive summary of the mission change proposal was shared with the Leadership Council at its May 4, 2010 meeting.

As required by the recently approved changes to Board policy 3.24, mission approvals leading to a change in authority to confer an academic award require a first and second reading of the Board of Trustees. This is a first reading of the mission change by the Board of Trustees. Alexandria Technical College will (1) return to the Board of Trustees Academic and Student Affairs Committee in June for a second reading and the recommended motion, (2) propose a name change to the Board of Trustees Advancement Committee in June and July for first and second readings, and (3) pursue final program approval for its Associate in Arts degree program.

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES**

*First Reading*

**ACTION ITEM**

**Alexandria Technical College Mission Change**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Alexandria Technical College is requesting approval to change its mission from that of a technical college to a comprehensive two-year college offering the Associate in Arts (AA) degree in addition to Associate of Science (AS) and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees. The college does not intend to diminish its role in career and technical education but rather to expand its offerings to meet the needs of students and employers in the region. The following information is provided to the Board of Trustees in consideration of the motion provided at the end of this document for Alexandria Technical College to change its mission.

**Proposed Mission Change**

*New Mission:* Alexandria Technical and Community College creates opportunity for individuals and businesses through education, innovation, and leadership. The college’s high-quality technical and transfer programs and services meet their needs, interests, and abilities and strengthen the economic, social, and cultural life of Minnesota’s communities.

*Current Mission Statement:* Alexandria Technical College provides access to learning – for careers and for life!

The name change proposed in the new mission statement will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees Advancement Committee pending approval of the mission change.

**Primary Reasons for the Mission Change**

The primary reasons for mission change are:

1. To respond to student interest and community requests for additional access to lower division transfer education.
  - a. There are over 600 students currently at the college who are enrolled in the Individualized Professional Studies (INPS) and Associate in Arts (AA) degree through Bemidji State University or are taking liberal arts courses outside a technical program. Most of these students are ineligible to receive financial aid because they are not enrolled in an approved AA degree program.
  - b. A high percentage of students enrolling in college are undecided about their final career objective. They are committed to college but have not had the experience or advising to make a commitment to a long term career. The AA degree meets

1 this need by allowing students to progress in lower division work without loss of  
2 credit for transfer.

- 3 2. To increase awareness of technical degrees and related career opportunities.
  - 4 a. Students who take the AA degree at Alexandria Technical College will be  
5 required to demonstrate career awareness. Courses in basic manufacturing, health  
6 care, computer occupations, or business will increase awareness of technical  
7 career opportunities for those who did not have the option of high school  
8 technical courses.
  - 9 b. AA students will be exposed to fellow students majoring in technical programs  
10 which will increase their awareness of these opportunities. The interaction  
11 between AA and technical program students will enhance the educational  
12 experience of both.
- 13 3. To meet the strategic objectives of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities in the  
14 competitive environment of higher education with today's market realities.

15  
16 Alexandria Technical College currently offers technical career education supported by a strong  
17 core of general education courses taught by credentialed faculty. The college offers 75 approved  
18 transfer courses that allow students to complete the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum at the  
19 college, to complete any one of five separate AS degrees, or to complete other AAS degrees,  
20 diplomas and certificates. General education courses account for 24% of credits at the college.

21  
22 The college has worked towards creation of a comprehensive higher education environment for  
23 over 30 years. While its historic focus has been on technical and career education, it has been  
24 long recognized that employers seek graduates who have a broad education that complements  
25 technical skills. To that end, the college has developed a strong general education curriculum in  
26 the arts, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Consistent with the  
27 position of the American Association of Community Colleges, the college's current practices and  
28 continued intent is to provide students with a foundation in general education courses that enable  
29 the student to understand and appreciate culture; to develop personal values based on accepted  
30 ethics; and to attain competencies in analysis, communication, qualitative and quantitative  
31 methods, synthesis, and teamwork to grow as a productive member of society for both the  
32 individual and public good.

33  
34 Expansion of the college mission to include the AA` degree has been driven by student interest  
35 and community input. Surveys of regional high school students have indicated a high demand for  
36 local access to lower division transfer curriculum. Community interests have indicated an  
37 overwhelming support for creating increased access to the AA degree. The college has  
38 unanimous endorsement for the expanded mission from all technical program advisory  
39 committees, from the college Futures team, from community surveys, and from direct visits with  
40 local businesses. Internal surveys have indicated broad support from current faculty and staff at  
41 the college.

42

1 Alexandria Technical College was accepted as a candidate for North Central Accreditation in  
2 1974 and was fully accredited in 1980 at the associate degree level. At the time of mission  
3 delineation in 1986, Minnesota legislation required technical colleges to move general education  
4 to community colleges, creating merged colleges to provide broad access to technical and liberal  
5 arts education for students. The single exception to this was Alexandria Technical College. The  
6 college was authorized to continue offering its own accredited general education courses due to  
7 its geographical isolation from other two and four-year colleges. The authorization, however,  
8 restricted the authority to offer the AA degree. Continuing to comply with regional accreditation  
9 standards, the college created a stand-alone general education division in 1990. The college was  
10 reaccredited in 1994 at the associate degree level limited to the AAS and AS degrees based on  
11 the limited authority granted to the institution by the State of Minnesota. The college was  
12 admitted to AQIP by the Higher Learning Commission on September 14, 2000. In 2008, ATC  
13 was approved for Reaffirmation of Accreditation and is scheduled for its next Higher Learning  
14 Commission reaffirmation in 2014-2015.

15  
16 A mission change will require approval of the Higher Learning Commission. Following  
17 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board approval, the college will request Higher  
18 Learning Commission staff action to approve a mission change. An action project to track  
19 implementation of the degree will be required. A site visit for college change in status is not  
20 anticipated.

21  
22 No other program accreditation processes are anticipated for the Associate in Arts program.

## 23 **BACKGROUND AND MISSION CHANGE INFORMATION**

24  
25  
26 Listed below is the information required for a college to change its mission leading to a change  
27 in institutional type. Alexandria Technical College has met all mission change requirements.

28  
29 The proposed mission clarifies the responsibility of the college to serve both individual learners  
30 and businesses as learning organizations. The college exists to provide opportunity not only  
31 through teaching of technical and transfer curriculum, but also through using resources to  
32 provide leadership and innovation in economic and community development. The outcome is  
33 stronger communities across Minnesota.

34  
35 Current Vision:

36 *To be the premier institution of career preparation and comprehensive lifelong learning*  
37 *by:*

38 ✓ *Continuing our heritage of caring*

39 ✓ *Engaging learners as full partners in their educational experiences*

40 ✓ *Valuing our highly trained, professional staff, relevant programs and state-of-the-art*  
41 *technology*

42 ✓ *Implementing instructional innovation*

43 ✓ *Inspiring learners through an exemplary learning environment*

- 1 ✓ *Integrating our collaborative learning alliances and partnerships within and beyond*  
2 *Alexandria Technical College*
- 3 ✓ *Modeling a diverse culture of empowerment, creativity, and innovation as partners in*  
4 *a powerful learning organization*

5  
6 Proposed Vision: No change is proposed

7  
8 The proposed mission change does not alter the vision of Alexandria Technical College. The  
9 vision for the college is to be “THE” college of West Central Minnesota, recognized across  
10 Minnesota and the nation. To accomplish that, the proposed mission change will provide  
11 increased ability to respond to the demonstrated expectations of learners and the community.  
12 Focused on engagement with learners, collaboration to leverage public and private resources, and  
13 support for a culture of excellence implemented by faculty and staff, the college will pursue its  
14 vision of being a premier institution.

15  
16 Proposed Alexandria Technical College Purpose Statements:

- 17 1. *To prepare students for career and personal success through demonstrated competency*  
18 *in general and transferable skills, technical or focused discipline knowledge, information*  
19 *literacy, and interactive engagement with community.*
- 20 2. *To actively and openly engage community and students in the responsibility for learning*  
21 *outcomes that lead to personal and community benefit.*
- 22 3. *To enhance awareness and integration of general education learning with the changing*  
23 *requirements of the world of work.*
- 24 4. *To manage college programs and services for long term sustainability that ensures*  
25 *continued value for students’ investment in Alexandria Technical and Community*  
26 *College.*

## 27 28 **Market Analysis and Demand**

### 29 30 **Alexandria Technical College Enrollment Trends:**

31 Continued growth in the Bemidji State University AA degree, INPS, and undeclared majors has  
32 not diminished student demand for technical programs; eight technical programs are filled to  
33 capacity and cannot accept additional students. College enrollment in its technical programs has  
34 been stable with growth in the health, manufacturing, transportation, and law enforcement  
35 divisions. Soft enrollment in construction-related occupations and computer occupations reflect  
36 the current economic situation.

37  
38 The growth in liberal arts and general education demonstrates increasing demand from students  
39 seeking transfer credits or early entry into college courses (see Table 3). Currently, 31.5% (696)  
40 of students attending ATC, approximately 12% of the college FYE, are taking general education  
41 courses (including PSEO students). Access to financial aid, increased course offerings, and the  
42 universal transfer benefits of the AA degree would potentially not only encourage more students

1 to enroll at ATC, but facilitate current students to take more credits per semester. Table 3 shows  
 2 the increasing number of students falling into this category.

POTENTIAL AA CANDIDATES ENROLLED AS ATC STUDENTS					
10th Day Fall	Total Enrollment	Undc/AA/INPS	% of Total	PSEO/OCHS	% of Total
2009	2,205	539	24.4%	157	7.1%
2008	2,209	604	27.3%	97	4.4%
2007	2,132	430	20.2%	98	4.6%
2006	2,001	301	15.0%	119	5.9%
2005	1,954	232	11.9%	46	2.4%
2004	2,002	217	10.8%	53	2.6%

4 **Table 1**

5 **High school occupational survey:**

6 The 2009 occupational interest survey of high school juniors was conducted in the seven high  
 7 schools in the area immediately surrounding the college. A total of 598 students returned the  
 8 survey (a 90% return rate). Students identified 125 potential occupations of primary interest.  
 9 Sixty-eight of these occupations require a baccalaureate or higher degree. Two hundred eighty-  
 10 eight students chose one of these 68 occupations, meaning that approximately 48% of high  
 11 school juniors in the Alexandria service area identified an occupation incompatible with degree  
 12 options currently offered at Alexandria Technical College. This does not account for those who  
 13 are undecided and would choose to enter college to complete general transfer courses while  
 14 determining their occupational choice.

15  
 16 This survey has been done annually since 2007, and it consistently shows that a large percentage  
 17 of high school students are interested in career options requiring a baccalaureate degree or  
 18 higher. The survey also shows a declining interest in specific technical programs at the college.

19  
 20 **Jefferson high school program preference:**

21 The strong interest in a transfer degree is clearly evidenced by a review of the programs selected  
 22 by Jefferson High School (Alexandria School District) students when they come to the college.  
 23 Of the 732 Jefferson students who have been students at the college since 2007, 20% (150  
 24 students) have been undeclared majors rather than electing to become a student in one of the  
 25 college’s technical programs (see attachment 3). If a college AA degree had been available here,  
 26 some of these students plus others who did not come here at all for lack of a transfer degree and  
 27 financial aid would have enrolled. Evidence from students themselves has indicated that the AA  
 28 degree has the potential to attract students to ATC who now are required to move to another  
 29 community or who are restricted from access to college transfer credits due to cost or personal  
 30 circumstances.

31  
 32 **Comparative enrollment data for comparable institutions:**

33 Evidence supports substantial growth potential from AA degree enrollment based on student  
 34 enrollment at comparable institutions. The following table compares MnSCU campus enrollment  
 35 for liberal studies, undeclared or unassigned students, and general studies majors. Alexandria

1 Technical College would expect to gain at least 10% in enrollment based on comparison to  
2 comparable comprehensive institutions in 2009.  
3

COMPARISON OF MNSCU CAMPUS ENROLLMENT		
College	Total FYE Enrollment	% AA, General Studies, or Undeclared
Alexandria Technical College	2,063	12.1%
St. Paul College	3,785	16.2%
Northland College	2,788	24.7%
South Central College	2,714	26.0%
Ridgewater College	3,306	34.8%
Minnesota State	4,584	42.9%

4 Calculated from MnSCU Management website fall 2009

**Table 2**

5 Additionally, the low percentage of female students enrolled at the college has been identified by  
6 external reviewers and the college itself. The MnSCU system average is 55% female and 44%  
7 male in fall 2009 compares to the Alexandria Technical College mix of 45% female students and  
8 55% male. This represents an increase in the percentage of women enrolled from the 40% female  
9 enrollment recorded in 2004. Program mix impacts gender balance. The increasing enrollment in  
10 the undeclared, general studies, and liberal arts programs at ATC is increasing female enrollment  
11 at the college. It is believed that women's enrollment at the college would continue to increase  
12 with the availability of the AA degree at Alexandria.  
13

14 The college has experienced a large and growing demand for non-technical, liberal arts courses  
15 taken by students not enrolled in technical majors. In 2004, 270 students or 13.4% of the  
16 college's total headcount were enrolled in non-technical courses. Enrollments in non-traditional  
17 courses have grown to 696 students or 31.5%, in the current year. Given this history, the college  
18 believes student interest in non-technical education will continue to increase in the coming years,  
19 but even if it does not, the current number of students enrolling in non-technical courses will be  
20 much better served if a defined AA degree option is available to them.  
21

22 As documented in the previous section, current high school students continue to have a strong  
23 interest in pursuing occupational goals requiring baccalaureate or higher degree. National focus  
24 on two year colleges supports increased enrollment in two year colleges as a means to support  
25 both workforce development and preparation for higher level college and university education.  
26

**Job skills analysis:**

28 Current job skill analysis of employer demand matches the growing student interest in  
29 baccalaureate-level education. Economic development is not limited to task oriented  
30 occupational skills. Strategic Advantage software from Economic Modeling Specialists, Inc.  
31 indicates that the highest growth demand in areas of knowledge from the workforce of the seven  
32 county Alexandria region is in liberal arts education (see Figure 1). Skills that are the focus of  
33 the AA degree see the largest projected growth between now and 2014 (see Table 3).  
34  
35  
36  
37

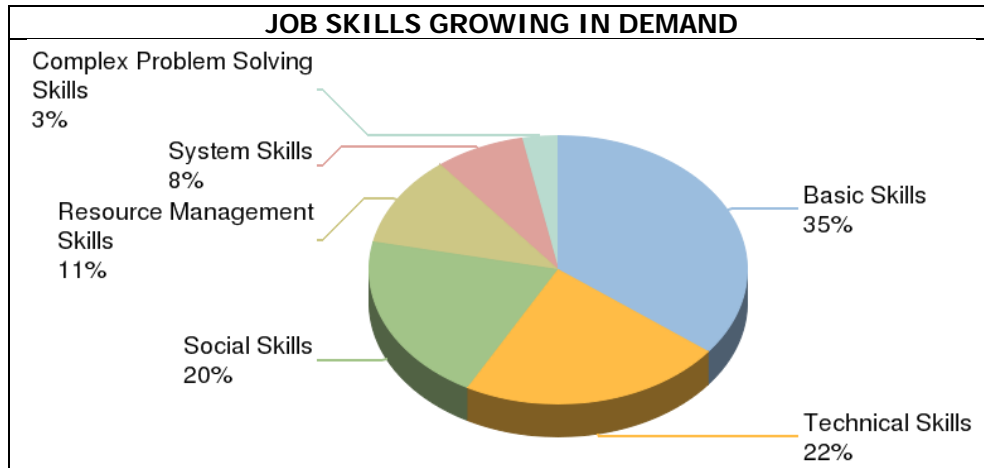


Figure 1

Skills Sector	2007 % of All Skills	2007-2014 % Growth
Technical Skills	22%	5%
Resource Management Skills	11%	6%
System Skills	8%	7%
Social Skills	20%	7%
Basic Skills	35%	7%
Complex Problem Solving Skills	3%	7%

Table 3

### Historical Context

Alexandria AVTI was established in 1961. Despite success as a technical college, the community continued to pursue approval for a community college. Supporting the need for liberal arts education, a 1965 study commissioned by Alexandria District 206 through the University of Minnesota concluded that, “Educational opportunities for the young people of that community (Alexandria) become complete only when a college exists in the locality.” The community’s first effort to establish a community college in Alexandria failed.

In a letter dated March 26, 1986, written to leaders of the Minnesota technical college system, then President Frank Starke argued that the mission delineation agreement would not serve technical colleges in their mission. Alexandria Technical College was ultimately allowed to act as a comprehensive college by creating and accrediting its own general education division. The advantage to the college and the community continues.

From 2000-2009, Alexandria Technical College requested and documented demand and capacity to be considered for expanded mission authority on three separate occasions. For various reasons, the college requests were not considered by the Board of Trustees.



1 **Market Analysis**

2 There are no other competing public or private higher education degree granting institutions in  
3 the City of Alexandria or immediately surrounding communities. The community and area are  
4 left with no local liberal arts degree granting institution. Yet, a strong demand for the Associate  
5 in Arts degree has been documented from the approximately 600 high school seniors graduating  
6 yearly from the immediate surrounding high schools (over 300 from the Alexandria high school  
7 itself) (see attachment 1). The fact that the Alexandria Technical College has over 600 students  
8 (including PSEO) currently attending as undeclared majors or in a program focused on liberal  
9 arts learning outcomes clearly demonstrates that other higher education institutions are not  
10 meeting their higher educational needs. Distance is certainly one factor. A majority of the  
11 students identified as potential AA degree enrollees come from the immediate surrounding area  
12 and have demonstrated by their attendance at the college that they prefer a liberal arts option  
13 close to home. Alexandria Technical College currently serves these students with the AA degree  
14 through Bemidji State University and as undeclared students. Given the history of students  
15 enrolled at Alexandria Technical College as AA students, undeclared, or in other programs  
16 leading to transfer, authorization of an AA degree at Alexandria is not anticipated to have a  
17 significant negative attendance impact on other MnSCU colleges.

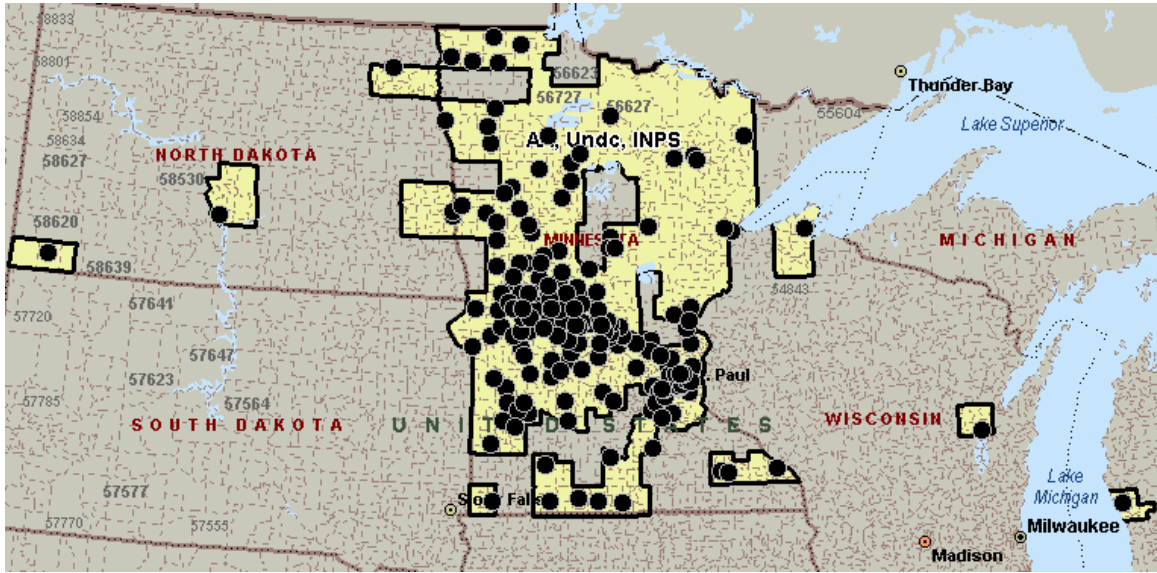
18  
19 Analysis of student and community interests provides evidence that the key customers for the  
20 Associate in Arts degree will cross three primary areas.

- 21 1. Adults, not directly from high school, who are entering or reentering higher education to  
22 complete lower division coursework that will lead to improved career opportunity  
23 through completion of a baccalaureate degree or the required additional coursework to  
24 advance within a company or industry sector. This includes students returning from  
25 military assignment and students who join a friend or significant other while they are  
26 attending Alexandria Technical College. The degree is expected to increase enrollment of  
27 female students reflecting a more typical ratio of male to female college enrollment for  
28 Alexandria Technical College. Currently, 55% of the college's students are male.
- 29 2. High school graduates who are choosing to stay in the region, or are required to be in the  
30 region due to economic or personal restrictions, while completing lower division courses  
31 leading to a baccalaureate or higher degree.
- 32 3. Current high school students seeking options to complete lower division college work  
33 through PSEO or dual credit enrollment at the college, which could include summer  
34 enrollment.

35 In addition, the college has identified a trend with non-technical degree students that parallels the  
36 profile of students attending technical programs. Many students come here from a significant  
37 distance to take general education courses (see Figure 2).

38  
39

## AA, UNDECLARED, & INPS STUDENTS' HOME ZIP CODES



1 **Figure 2 (Each dot represents a unique zip code and may represent more than one student.)**

2 Interviews with some of these students reveal that they are choosing to attend the college  
3 because another person of significance in their lives is enrolled here in one of the technical  
4 majors. While this segment of students has driven past one or more other colleges to take general  
5 education classes here, they are doing so for personal reasons. This category of demand is  
6 expected to continue and providing an AA degree would clearly be to their benefit.

7  
8 Alexandria Technical College anticipates the ability to enroll students in the Associate in Arts  
9 degree in the fall of 2010. The college has demonstrated the ability to provide required  
10 instruction and support for the program at current enrollment levels with the addition of one FTE  
11 of new faculty. Support for existing enrollment for the AA degree and liberal arts courses has  
12 provided the necessary base for offering the program locally.

### 13 14 **Relationship of New Mission, Vision, and Purposes to the System Mission and Strategic Directions**

15  
16 The primary reasons for mission change are:

- 17 1. To respond to student interest and community requests for additional access to lower  
18 division transfer education.
  - 19 a. There are over 600 students currently enrolled at the college who are undeclared  
20 or who are enrolled in the INPS and AA degree through Bemidji State University.  
21 As undeclared students, most of these students are ineligible to receive financial  
22 aid because they are not enrolled in an approved program (AA degree).
  - 23 b. A high percentage of students enrolling in college are undecided about their final  
24 career objective. They are committed to college but have not had the experience

1 or advising to make a long term career commitment. The AA degree allows  
 2 students to progress in lower division work without loss of credit for transfer.

- 3 2. To increase awareness of technical degrees and related career opportunities.
- 4 a. Students who take the AA degree at Alexandria Technical College will need to  
 5 demonstrate career awareness. Courses in basic manufacturing, health care,  
 6 computer occupations, or business will increase awareness of technical career  
 7 opportunities for those who do not have the option of high school technical  
 8 courses.
- 9 b. AA students will be exposed to fellow students majoring in technical programs  
 10 which will increase their awareness of these opportunities. The interaction  
 11 between AA and technical program students will enhance the educational  
 12 experience of both.
- 13 3. To meet the strategic objectives of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities in the  
 14 competitive environment of higher education. Table 4 provides an overview of the  
 15 current strategic goals of the Board of Trustees and associated benefits of providing the  
 16 Associate in Arts degree as an option for students in Alexandria.

<b>MNSCU STRATEGIC GOALS</b>			
<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Numeric Goal</b>	<b>Goal Definition</b>	<b>Supported by AA Degree</b>
Increase access and opportunity	Goal 1.1	Raise Minnesota's participation and achievement in post-secondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals.	Yes
	Goal 1.2	Work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college prepared for college-level work.	Yes
	Goal 1.3	Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.	Yes
Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services	Goal 2.2	Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills.	Yes
	Goal 2.3	Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.	Yes
Provide programs and services that enhance the economic competitiveness of the state and its regions	Goal 3.2	Support regional vitality by contributing artistic, cultural and civic assets that attract employees and other residents seeking a high quality of life.	Yes
	Goal 3.3	Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region and meet the needs of employers in its region.	Yes
Innovate to meet current and future educational needs	Goal 14.1	Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges and remove barriers to innovation and responsiveness.	Yes

1 **Table 4**

2 In addition to the direct correlation between the strategic goals of the system and the associated  
3 outcomes of the AA degree, the following quotations represent both the system’s description of  
4 strategic objectives and industry recommendations for future workers. They directly support the  
5 expanded mission of Alexandria Technical College.

6  
7 “Our graduates and their employers face new demands in the 21st century that will call upon  
8 solid skills in reading, writing, mathematics and speaking; the ability to learn and think  
9 critically; and globally competitive technical and professional expertise. In addition, our  
10 students need opportunities to understand and participate in the global community.” *Source:*  
11 *Designing the Future: Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Strategic Plan 2008 – 2012*

12  
13 “Workers in the future will need even more **interpersonal skills** and a **deeper**  
14 **understanding of budget, finance and technology** and MnSCU should focus on producing  
15 graduates with this type of broader span of knowledge. Campuses should also do a better job  
16 of providing information to business about their offerings and **build strong connections to**  
17 **their local business community.**” *Source: Workforce of the Future: Leadership Reaches*  
18 *Out to Business Section 5*

19  
20 “When asked about the skills employers seek in new employees, three themes emerged.  
21 Business leaders spoke overwhelmingly of the need for:

- 22 • technology skills;
- 23 • business-critical “soft” skills; and
- 24 • skills that reflect changes resulting from emerging business practices, such as using  
25 “green” products and responding to global competition.”

26 *Source: Workforce of the Future: Leadership Reaches Out to Business Section 4*

27  
28 The proposed change will increase access to higher education for students in the Alexandria and  
29 West Central Minnesota region; strengthen the economic base of the region by attracting,  
30 retaining, and developing a more educated workforce; and minimize barriers for students  
31 pursuing the AA degree at Alexandria. While the current college partnership with Bemidji State  
32 University allows students access to an AA degree, barriers include confusing and cumbersome  
33 financial aid processing, higher tuition, restricted course availability, and limited access to  
34 academic advising.

35  
36 Additionally, the college believes that the Associate in Arts degree will strengthen the college by  
37 attracting students who have not identified a specific career path but who have both the financial  
38 and academic ability to pursue college education. These students will increase the ability of the  
39 college to offer curriculum that supports the college’s Associate in Science degrees, the ability to  
40 provide additional beneficial partnerships with the state universities, and in some cases influence  
41 students to make career choices that will include technical programs.

42  
43  
44  
45

1 **Comprehensive Planning Process**

2 **How the new vision will create the ideal future for the institution**

3 The economic and political environment requires Alexandria Technical College to clearly define  
4 its strategic objectives for sustainability. Mission is central to the future of the college and its  
5 ability to meet the needs of West Central Minnesota businesses and learners, legislative and  
6 stakeholder expectations, and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System’s goals.  
7 This request for mission expansion supports the goals of each of these constituent groups.

8  
9 Strategically, Alexandria Technical College must maintain its focus on its “signature” programs  
10 within the technical and occupational education mission. These programs bring students to  
11 Alexandria from a broad regional area and support continued enrollment in programs, which will  
12 not be viable based on local enrollment only (see Figure 3 below). Additionally, the community  
13 has developed industries that specifically align with the college capacity to provide skilled  
14 workers. The economic future of the community is linked not only with the ability of the college  
15 to offer technical programs, but its ability to create programs that will attract and retain the very  
16 highest quality graduates for the Alexandria region. This strategic goal of being the best  
17 “technical college” through signature programs supports increased enrollment across the college,  
18 long term regional economic viability, and the needs of Minnesota’s workforce.

19  
20  
21 **STUDENTS’ HOMETOWNS**  
22 (CURRENT STUDENTS SPRING 2010)  
23 Communication Art & Design, Diesel, Law Enforcement, Machine Tool,  
Mechatronics, Marine & Small Engine, Nursing, and Welding



24  
25 **Figure 3 (Each dot represents a unique zip code and represents one or more students.)**

26 Equally important to the sustainability of the college is its role as “THE” college of West Central  
27 Minnesota. With the emerging skills for the 21<sup>st</sup> century identified above, a population that is  
28 requesting access to liberal arts and transfer credits through an approved program, and a  
29 marketplace that is increasingly competitive, Alexandria Technical College must respond by

1 addressing the comprehensive education needs of learners of all ages in its community. The  
2 college will continue to address its partnership with regional high schools, graduates who choose  
3 to live at home while beginning their college education, returning adults seeking to begin or  
4 continue college, and undecided students.

5 The college general learning outcomes reflect a commitment to both the current and future goals  
6 of the college and the community. The outcomes identified in Figure 4 reflect the need to  
7 balance learning that prepares graduates for work and for life. These outcomes are consistent  
8 with the historical mission of the college and drive implementation strategies for the future  
9 Associate in Arts degree.



11  
12 **Figure 4**

13 Specific objectives for implementation of the AA degree will be supported with educational  
14 strategies that have proven to be successful in completing college objectives across all levels.

- 15 1. Undecided students will be advised to consider enrollment in cohort learning  
16 communities that will initially be organized around a common curriculum that will  
17 include career exploration.
- 18 2. AA students will be required to demonstrate an understanding of opportunities and  
19 implications for personal and social communities of professional and occupational  
20 careers as a graduation requirement.
- 21 3. Personal academic advising will proactively identify student goals and develop an  
22 individualized plan to support student retention and graduation.
- 23 4. Scheduling will be designed to create interaction between technical and liberal arts  
24 students socially and academically.
- 25 5. Academic leadership of the college will be distributed by division to ensure continued  
26 balanced representation of all interests of the college.

1 Operational benefits supporting the sustainable future for Alexandria Technical College include:

- 2 1. Financial Aid: Students who are undecided about a specific career can currently attend  
3 Alexandria Technical College without declaring a major. However, without declaring a  
4 specific major, these students are not eligible for Federal financial aid. Their ineligibility  
5 for financial aid restricts the ability of Alexandria Technical College to meet the needs of  
6 many local students who would like to take lower division courses while living at home  
7 or while working. An AA degree option would allow these students to be eligible for  
8 Federal financial aid.
- 9 2. Specialization: The core competency for Alexandria Technical College continues to be  
10 applied learning for high skills technical occupations. This competency leads to two year  
11 degrees in computer and manufacturing technology, law enforcement, health occupations,  
12 business and marketing, and power systems and transportation. Increasingly, these  
13 degrees are pathways to further education before or after entering into the workforce.  
14 Strategically, the college will invest in expanding capacity in technical occupations while  
15 expanding its commitment to liberal arts and general education that supports its  
16 comprehensive mission.
- 17 3. Efficiencies in Course Delivery: In fall 2009, Alexandria Technical College had a fill rate  
18 of 77% leaving 558 open seats in transfer curriculum courses at the college, equivalent to  
19 approximately 55 FYE that could be offered with no additional cost to the college. The  
20 addition of the AA students will provide potential to create full utilization of existing  
21 schedules while providing additional opportunities for those enrolled in existing  
22 programs at the college.
- 23 4. Regionalization of Education: Alexandria Technical College is the single college campus  
24 that serves West Central Minnesota between Fergus Falls and St. Cloud (a distance of  
25 more than 100 miles). Alexandria is the regional center for continued consolidation of  
26 education delivery that reaches from high school to advanced workforce training.  
27 Collaboration outlined in this proposal will continue to strengthen the value of the  
28 MnSCU system to West Central Minnesota's high schools, businesses, and students.

29  
30 As a summary, outcomes of an expanded Alexandria Technical College mission to offer the  
31 AA degree are:

- 32 ✓ Increased enrollment of students who have not had the opportunity to attend college  
33 because they are unable to relocate due to economic or personal circumstances.
- 34 ✓ Increased enrollment of regional high school graduates who currently leave the  
35 community or who do not enroll in college directly out of high school.
- 36 ✓ Lower cost for students completing lower division courses locally.
- 37 ✓ Increased PSEO enrollment.

- 1 ✓ Access to financial aid for those students who have not identified a specific  
2 occupational program of study.
- 3 ✓ Strengthened partnerships with MnSCU universities building on existing relationships  
4 of shared degree programs.
- 5 ✓ Increased liberal arts course offerings that benefit AS and AAS students.

### 6 **Role of Associate in Arts in Advancing Institution Mission**

7 Alexandria Technical College currently offers technical career education that is supported by a  
8 strong core of general education courses taught by credentialed faculty. The college offers 75  
9 approved transfer courses that allow students to complete the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum at  
10 the college, to complete any one of five separate AS degrees, or to complete other AAS degrees,  
11 diplomas and certificates. General education courses account for 24% of credits at the college.  
12

13 The college has worked towards creation of a comprehensive higher education environment for  
14 over 30 years. While its historic focus has been on technical and career education, it has been  
15 long recognized that employers seek graduates who have a broad education that complements  
16 technical skills. To that end, the college has developed a strong general education curriculum in  
17 the arts, humanities, mathematics, natural sciences, and social sciences. Consistent with the  
18 position of the American Association of Community Colleges, the college's current practices and  
19 continued intent is to provide students with a foundation in general education courses that enable  
20 the student to understand and appreciate culture; to develop personal values based on accepted  
21 ethics; and to attain competencies in analysis, communication, qualitative and quantitative  
22 methods, synthesis, and teamwork to grow as a productive member of society for both the  
23 individual and public good.  
24

25 Alexandria Technical College was accepted as a candidate for North Central Accreditation in  
26 1974 and was fully accredited in 1980 at the associate degree level. At the time of mission  
27 delineation, 1986, Minnesota legislation required technical colleges to move general education to  
28 community colleges creating merged colleges to provide broad access to technical and liberal  
29 arts education for students. The single exception to this was Alexandria Technical College. The  
30 college was authorized to continue offering its own accredited general education courses due to  
31 its geographical isolation from other two and four-year colleges. The authorization, however, did  
32 not include authority to offer the AA degree. Continuing to comply with regional accreditation  
33 standards, the college created a stand-alone general education division in 1990. The college was  
34 reaccredited in 1994 at the associate degree level but was restricted to the AAS and AS degrees  
35 based on the limited authority granted to the institution by the State of Minnesota. The college  
36 was admitted to AQIP by the Higher Learning Commission on September 14, 2000. In 2008,  
37 ATC was approved for Reaffirmation of Accreditation and is scheduled for its next Higher  
38 Learning Commission reaffirmation in 2014-2015.  
39

40 A mission change will require approval of the Higher Learning Commission. Following  
41 Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board approval, the college will request Higher  
42 Learning Commission staff action to approve a mission change. An action project to track  
43 implementation of the degree is required. A site visit for change in status is not anticipated.  
44 No other program accreditation processes are anticipated for the Associate in Arts program.



1 **Partnership Efforts**

2 Alexandria Technical College has developed a strong partnership with Bemidji State University  
3 their approved AA degree program offered on campus. During this time, Alexandria Technical  
4 College continued to build its capacity to support liberal arts curriculum, established  
5 collaborations for online delivery of AA degree courses, and increased its number of undeclared,  
6 Associate in Arts, and Individualized Professional Studies students dramatically (see Table 1).

7  
8 Attempts to collaborate with peer institutions were initiated to meet the needs of both students  
9 and the participating colleges. Results include:

10  
11 2004: Formal discussion with Fergus Fall Community College failed to complete an  
12 agreement for delivery of the AA degree at Alexandria.

13  
14 2005: Alexandria became a formal partner in Distance Minnesota as an online option for  
15 providing and accessing courses that support the AA degree and technical degrees.

16  
17 2005: Bemidji State University and Alexandria Technical College signed a formal  
18 agreement creating a partnership that established Alexandria as a site location for the  
19 Bemidji AA degree using shared curriculum from both colleges.

20  
21 2006: Alexandria Technical College was established as a partner in the Minnesota Center  
22 for Engineering and Manufacturing Excellence with Minnesota State University Mankato  
23 focused on increased transfer credits, including general education.

24  
25 2009: Alexandria Technical College filed intent for approval of the Associate in Arts  
26 degree. No direct opposition to Alexandria's proposal was posted to the list serve. The  
27 subsequent program application includes a proposal to integrate partner courses into the  
28 Alexandria AA degree.

29  
30 The goal and responsibility of the college is to design an AA program that meets the criteria set  
31 forth by the Higher Learning Commission for this degree, recognizing that successful completion  
32 of the degree may take a path much different than the one many have historically experienced  
33 (which was defined by enrolling in courses from one main college and earning a degree in that  
34 manner). In compliance with the Board direction for increasing access to online education,  
35 Alexandria has designed an AA program that:

- 36 1. Provides access to AA coursework delivered through Distance Minnesota partner  
37 colleges and universities.  
38 2. Continues a partnership with Bemidji State University in an effort to provide a clear  
39 pathway to the baccalaureate degree and expanded access to unique expertise across  
40 multiple disciplines.  
41 3. Draws upon liberal arts coursework available through MN Online in an effort to expand  
42 AA course offerings.  
43 4. Recognizes (and transfers) liberal arts coursework from accredited colleges and  
44 universities from across the United States.

Alexandria Technical College believes that this request to implement an Associate in Arts degree that integrates online curriculum to increase student access and better utilize system resources is not only appropriate, but is leading in innovation and collaboration at the system level.

The college is currently operating with an agreement to share revenue and cost for the delivery of online courses. As described above, Alexandria Technical College students may take online courses through Distance Minnesota. This option provides a broad selection of courses that complement courses offered on campus (courses available for the current academic year are at <http://distance.minnesota.edu/marketing/>). The growth of Distance Minnesota as reflected below demonstrates the increasing market for online courses and the benefits of collaboration.

**DISTANCE MINNESOTA HISTORY BY FULL-YEAR EQUIVALENT PARTICIPATION  
FY 1997-98 to FY 2008-09**

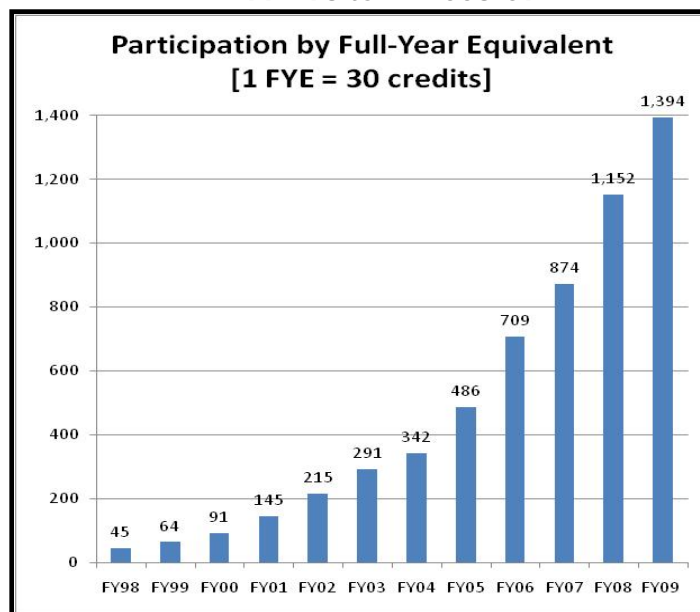


Figure 5

Table 5 demonstrates the capacity of the college for delivery of online curriculum through Distance Minnesota:

ATC TRANSFER COURSES THROUGH DISTANCE MINNESOTA						
Distance MN Courses: (unduplicated courses)	Fall 2009		Spring 2010 (current)		Summer 2010	
	Total Courses	% ATC taught	Total Courses	% ATC taught	Total Courses	% ATC taught
	96	19.79%	118	19.49%	54	22.22%
Online College in the High School:	2009 - 10 Academic Year		2010 - 2011 Academic Year			
	Total Courses	% ATC taught	Total Courses	% ATC Taught		
	23	39.13%	21	42.86%		

Table 5

1 One of the initiatives the college is pursuing through Distance Minnesota is the seamless offering  
2 of a bachelor's degree through Bemidji State University with discussions leading to participation  
3 of additional universities. This plan will allow students who start taking courses online through  
4 Online College in the High School (a current program offered through the college and Distance  
5 Minnesota) or other PSEO options to progress to an AA degree through the college either online,  
6 face to face, or a combination of both and then to complete their baccalaureate education online  
7 through the Distance Minnesota option.

8  
9 The college also continues to partner with other MnSCU institutions through Minnesota Online.  
10 The college currently offers the new Energy Technical Specialist AAS degree in a cooperative  
11 arrangement with eight other MnSCU colleges and the Human Services Practitioner AAS with  
12 South Central College.

### 13 14 **Institutional Readiness – Human Resources**

#### 15 16 **Faculty and staff capacity to staff range of disciplines**

17 The college currently has 17 unlimited faculty members and 6 temporary part time/adjunct  
18 instructors assigned to liberal arts. All of these faculty members have obtained at least a masters  
19 degree and are properly credentialed pursuant to applicable MnSCU policy. They currently teach  
20 73 unduplicated courses in all 10 transfer curriculum content goal areas to students in technical  
21 majors pursuing the AAS degree, students with undeclared majors, students pursuing an AA  
22 degree through a partnership between the college and Bemidji State University, post secondary  
23 enrollment students, AS major students, and students pursuing an individual education plan  
24 major.

25  
26 In addition to the courses offered by the college, students have the option of selecting courses  
27 from the Distance Minnesota inventory of dozens of courses offered online every semester from  
28 the member colleges (Alexandria Technical College, Minnesota State Community and Technical  
29 College, Northland Community and Technical College, and Northwest Technical College).

30  
31 At this time, the college plans to expand its general education faculty by one additional FTE  
32 credentialed to teach art. Additional faculty needs will be based on enrollment.

#### 33 34 **Role of faculty in curriculum oversight, outcomes assessment, governance structure, and 35 professional development**

36 Faculty at Alexandria Technical College play the dominant role in curriculum development and  
37 oversight for all courses offered through the college. Each course at the college is assigned to a  
38 properly credentialed faculty member or group of faculty members for initial development. It is  
39 then reviewed by other faculty members in the liberal arts division and eventually by the  
40 curriculum committee, which is composed of faculty members. Once developed and offered, the  
41 course is evaluated on a regular basis by students through the use of an evaluation instrument  
42 developed and refined by a joint committee composed of faculty members selected by faculty  
43 leadership and the dean or associate dean of academic affairs. Faculty members have also  
44 developed and participate in a peer review process whereby they attend and observe delivery of  
45 courses, discuss effective delivery techniques, and critique the course in general.

46

1 The college has a long tradition of involving faculty from all divisions of the college in decision  
2 making. Faculty play a key role in financial decisions made at the college through service on the  
3 Finance Team. Faculty also serve on ad hoc committees, which are brought together to address  
4 issues as they arise. In addition, faculty members are selected by faculty leadership to serve on  
5 hiring teams for faculty, administrative, and key staff hires. Administrators routinely request  
6 faculty participation in college initiatives in both advisory and functional capacities. Preparation  
7 of the application for the AA degree and this mission change effort are examples of faculty  
8 leadership in planning for this change from the beginning.

9  
10 Faculty from the six academic divisions of the college, of which liberal arts is one, annually  
11 selects a division chairperson who has the day to day responsibility of coordinating the activities  
12 of the division. The division chairs serve on the Academic Affairs and Standards Council, which  
13 is the key organization in the college responsible for the academic integrity of the curriculum.  
14 The division chairs also meet to review issues such as faculty sabbaticals requests, faculty  
15 internship requests, distribution of faculty development funds, and other issues directly related to  
16 the daily operations of the college. This division structure assures representation from all  
17 technical and liberal arts areas of the college.

18  
19 Faculty members are given responsibility individually and at the division level for professional  
20 development. Each faculty member is required to create an individual professional development  
21 plan. This plan is reviewed annually with an administrator; however, the faculty member is  
22 responsible for developing and implementing the plan. Funds for professional development are  
23 distributed according to the requirements of the MSCF contract. The college, however, has  
24 traditionally established a budget for each college division and then placed the responsibility on  
25 the faculty within the division to decide on the appropriate distribution of those funds to  
26 accomplish the goals of the division including funding of additional professional development.

27  
28 Administrators needed to offer the AA degree:

29 The college will need no new administrators to offer the AA degree. The college has an associate  
30 dean of academic affairs currently assigned to the liberal arts division.

31  
32 Academic leadership team:

33 Both the dean of academic affairs and the associate dean of academic affairs were previously  
34 faculty members at the college teaching in the liberal arts division. They both have academic  
35 credentials appropriate to the teaching of liberal arts transfer curriculum courses and are  
36 experienced in the development and delivery of transfer curriculum courses. The dean of  
37 academic affairs has been an administrator for three years and previously a full time faculty  
38 member for 16 years teaching in the area of mathematics and biology. The associate dean of  
39 academic affairs has been an administrator in the liberal arts division for three years and  
40 previously taught communication in the liberal arts division at the college for 10 years.

41  
42 Additional student services:

43 Alexandria Technical College is currently providing student services support for over 600  
44 students who are enrolled in courses leading to transfer or completion of a liberal arts degree.  
45 The staff is experienced in handling all aspects of the transfer curriculum and has assigned a

1 student services employee to manage transfer curriculum issues full time. Future staffing will  
2 reflect college needs based on enrollment.

3  
4 Recruiting and funding of new positions:

5 The college has hired a new director of admissions. The director has more than 30 years of  
6 experience working in student services at universities, which included responsibilities for  
7 enrollment management, financial aid, and multicultural services. Funding for this position is  
8 from reduction in administrative assignment to the student services division. One additional FTE  
9 is anticipated as a result of offering an AA degree. This position will be funded by an anticipated  
10 increase in FYE as a result of offering the new AA degree.

11  
12 **Institutional Readiness—Curriculum Development**

13 Academic plan for delivery of the AA curriculum:

14 The Associates in Arts degree allows students to complete lower division requirements of a  
15 baccalaureate degree program in four semesters of study. The liberal arts focus of the curriculum  
16 requires students to complete the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum by completing general  
17 education courses across all required goal areas and additional courses in at least one technical  
18 studies area and/or work exploration. Besides completion of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum  
19 requirements, three additional general education courses to meet the college’s general learning  
20 outcomes are required. These three areas are information literacy, workplace skills, and physical  
21 education. The degree is awarded in the liberal arts and sciences without a named field of study.  
22 The AA degree is specifically designed to transfer to baccalaureate degree-granting institutions.

23

<b>Minnesota Transfer Curriculum</b>		
1. Communications (written)	6 credits	Writing
Communications (oral)	3 credits	One of these three: Intro to communication Studies or Interpersonal Communication or Public Speaking
2. Critical Thinking	3 credits	One course from the area
3. Natural Sciences	7 credits (1 lab)	Two courses, one of which must have a lab component
4. Math/Logical Thinking	3 credits	One course from area
5. History/Social Behavioral Sciences	9 credits	Three courses from two different disciplines
6. Humanities/Fine Arts	9 credits	Two or more disciplines
7. Diversity	3 credits	One course from this area
8. Global Perspective	3 credits	One course from area
9. Ethics/Civic Responsibility	3 credits	One course from area
10. People and the Environment	3 credits	One course from area

1 Students taking the AA degree must satisfy the following transfer curriculum requirements:

2	Minnesota Transfer Curriculum	40 Cr. ( as listed in the following table)
3	Technical Electives	Up to 16 Credits
4	Information Literacy course	2-3 credits
5	Workplace Skills course	1-2 credits
6	Physical Education course	1-2 credits

7  
8 To bring total to 60 credits  
9

10 Plan for curriculum evaluation and development:

11 Curriculum evaluation is done at the institutional, program, and course level and the results are  
12 fed back to the faculty.

13  
14 The college currently evaluates the efficiency and effectiveness of each program area annually  
15 on multiple criteria. During the program review, an administrator meets with the program faculty  
16 and they discuss data collected during the year bearing on all aspects of the program including  
17 budget planning, student numbers, graduation rates, and other similar measurements. This  
18 evaluation process includes the liberal arts program. In the future, the college plans to further  
19 evaluate each liberal arts content area in a similar way.

20  
21 To assess student learning in general education outcomes, the college administered the College  
22 WorkKeys in 2009 to a sample of graduating students to assess the following areas: Reading for  
23 Information, Locating Information, and Applied Mathematics. Results of these assessments were  
24 summarized and distributed to program advisors. The college will be administering this  
25 assessment to a larger sample of students in 2010. This assessment will provide a benchmark to  
26 determine how the college's graduates are prepared for the workforce. The college also  
27 administers the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) and the Noel  
28 Levitz Survey of Student Satisfaction to a randomly selected number of classes. Results of the  
29 surveys provide a benchmark of student engagement and satisfaction with the learning and  
30 support processes. Results are shared with all personnel and are used as part of the college's  
31 continuous improvement plan. These types of instruments will be administered in the future in  
32 order to measure the continued effectiveness of the college learning environment.

33  
34 Curriculum assessment and program effectiveness at the program level areas completed in a  
35 number of different ways. For those programs that have licensure exams: Nursing, Law  
36 Enforcement, and Medical Laboratory Technician; annual passing rates are examined to  
37 determine if the level of preparation is sufficient for high pass rates greater than 90%. Some  
38 programs have industry produced certification exams. Successful passing of these exams assess  
39 the level of student learning. ATC is also using the Skills USA Work Force Ready System to  
40 assess technical learning in those programs where an assessment has been developed by industry.  
41 For the AA degree, the college plans to use the ACT CAAP to assess general education  
42 outcomes. Data collected from these assessments will be used during the annual program review  
43 process at the college as part of the college's continuous improvement plan. During the annual  
44 program review, an administrator meets with the program faculty to discuss data collected during

1 the year bearing on all aspects of the program including budget planning, student numbers,  
2 graduation rates, and other similar measurements.

3  
4 Assessment of student learning at the course level is completed by faculty. Each course at the  
5 college has course learning outcomes that are assessed by the use of exams, rubrics, portfolios, or  
6 demonstration. Faculty regularly provide feedback to students regarding the level of  
7 understanding of the course learning outcomes. All transfer curriculum courses have been  
8 developed to ensure that they meet the competencies of the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum.

9  
10 Preparation of students for baccalaureate major:

11 The college has received formal letters of support from Bemidji State University and Minnesota  
12 State University, Moorhead, which were included with the AA application submitted to the  
13 Office of the Chancellor in December 2009 (see attachment 2). These universities have stated  
14 that they will accept the transfer curriculum from ATC. The college has also communicated with  
15 St. Cloud State University and Minnesota State University, Mankato about its intent to offer the  
16 AA degree and has received favorable responses. The University of Minnesota at Morris and  
17 Crookston have also responded favorably to the college's intent to offer the AA degree.

18  
19 Relationship of general education curriculum to the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum:

20 The entire Minnesota Transfer Curriculum is currently available at the college. The proposed AA  
21 degree is designed to provide students with a broad background preparing them for transfer into  
22 a bachelor's degree. The program includes a minimum of 40 credits from the Minnesota  
23 Transfer Curriculum distributed among the 10 content goal areas as required by the current  
24 transfer curriculum. All transfer curriculum courses at the college have been reviewed and  
25 approved by the curriculum committee to ensure that each course meets the Minnesota Transfer  
26 Curriculum goals and competencies. The AA degree will require completion of three additional  
27 general education courses to meet college's general learning outcomes. These three areas are  
28 information literacy, workplace skills, and physical education.

29  
30 Institutional Capacity – Financial

31 Enrollment and revenue to support the AA program will come from two groups of students:  
32 those currently enrolled and taking primarily liberal arts courses and new students expected to  
33 enroll in the AA program. Increased expenditures will result from additional faculty. Overall, the  
34 addition of the AA degree will generate a net increase in revenue to the college.

35  
36 Currently, the college has approximately 600 students taking liberal arts courses who are not  
37 enrolled in a technical program. Of those 600 students, approximately 310 are likely AA students  
38 (30 Bemidji AA program, 80 Individualized Professional Studies program, and approximately  
39 200 undeclared majors). The college assumes for purposes of the AA enrollment projections that  
40 80% of the Bemidji AA students, 40% of the INPS students, and 50% of the undeclared students  
41 will move to the AA program. The college, therefore, estimates 156 current students representing  
42 84.4 FYE will become students in the AA program. The Bemidji AA students and the INPS  
43 students average 24 credits per year and the undeclared students each average 12 credits per year.  
44 These students currently generate 168 FYE.

45

1 The college expects increased enrollment based upon the experience of other colleges who have  
 2 added an AA program. The college assumes new enrollment of 30 students in the first year of the  
 3 AA program and 30 additional entering students each year thereafter, each taking an average of  
 4 24 credits per year. These enrollments are expected to generate an additional 24 FYE in the first  
 5 year and 48 FYE in the second year. Adding these new students to the number of existing  
 6 students generates a total of 108 FYE in the first year of the program and 133 thereafter. Summer  
 7 enrollments have not been included in these projections. The college offers a wide selection of  
 8 transfer curriculum courses during summer sessions and can reasonably expect additional FYE  
 9 as a result.

10  
 11 Below is a table of projected enrollment in the AA program. The projections are based upon the  
 12 above analysis and expected retention and graduation rates.

<b>ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS</b>				
	<b>First Year</b>	<b>Second Year</b>	<b>Third Year</b>	<b>Fourth Year</b>
Student headcount	186	206	206	206
Full-Year-Equivalent	108	133	133	133
Number of graduates	25	74	82	82

13  
 14 Even without the AA degree, the college has consistently experienced significant increased  
 15 enrollment in liberal arts courses. From 2004 to 2008, this enrollment has gone from 381.76 FYE  
 16 to 465.58 FYE, a 22% increase. The current academic year is on track to experience a similar  
 17 increase (includes students who are enrolled in liberal arts and technical majors).

18  
 19 Two factors drive expenditures resulting from the addition of the AA degree: increasing number  
 20 of class sections and decreasing maximum faculty teaching loads from 32 to 30 credits (based on  
 21 changed college mission and negotiated labor agreements). During fall semester 2009, the fill  
 22 rate for liberal arts classes was 77% overall resulting in a total of 558 unfilled seats available in  
 23 courses in all of the ten transfer curriculum goal areas. This fill rate is typical for transfer  
 24 curriculum courses during all semesters. Current unused capacity means that the college can  
 25 absorb 55 FYE's of potential enrollment without adding additional instructional cost.

26  
 27 Based upon the new student enrollment discussed above, the college should fill 44% (30 students  
 28 x 24 credits/30 = 24 new FYE/ 55 current FYE = 44%) of the available unfilled seats in transfer  
 29 curriculum courses the first year of the program and 88% of the unfilled seats thereafter. As a  
 30 result of increased enrollment due to the expanded mission, the revenue increase would more  
 31 than offset the increase in instructional cost. This increase in enrollment would also lower the  
 32 overall average instructional cost for the liberal arts classes.

33  
 34 The college has 17 full-time faculty identified whose workloads would change as a result of a  
 35 mission change. Decreasing maximum teaching loads from 32 to 30 credits results in a potential  
 36 increase of 34 additional teaching load credits. This obligation represents a potential cost  
 37 increase of \$85,000 at an average cost of \$2,500/credit; however, not all of the identified faculty  
 38 members are fully loaded, resulting in a lower actual cost to the college. The reduction in  
 39 teaching loads and some instructional redesign results in the need to add one FTE as a result of  
 40 the AA degree.



1 The following table summarizes the expected revenue and expense projects of the AA degree.  
 2

<b>REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES</b>				
<i>Revenues</i>				
	<b>First Year</b>	<b>Second Year</b>	<b>Third Year</b>	<b>Fourth Year</b>
Student Tuition*	\$466,560	\$630,420	\$662,340	\$662,340
Program Fees	\$53,654	\$66,500	\$66,500	\$66,500
External (Grants, gifts, other)	0	0	0	0
State Allocation	\$226,800	\$279,300	\$279,300	\$279,300
Internal Reallocation**	\$362,880	\$402,900	\$423,300	\$423,300
TOTAL NEW TUITION REVENUE***	\$103,680	\$227,520	\$239,040	\$239,040
TOTAL NEW STATE ALLOCATION REVENUE	\$50,400	\$100,800	\$100,800	\$100,800
TOTAL NEW FEES REVENUE	\$12,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000
TOTAL NEW PROGRAM REVENUE	\$166,080	\$352,320	\$363,840	\$363,840
*current rate per credit x student FYE x 30 semester credits per year for undergraduate, 20 semester credits for graduate				
***The figures in this and the next three rows represent new revenue generated by expected enrollment in the AA program over and above current students expected to transfer to the AA program from the Bemidji AA and INPS programs.				
<i>Expenditures</i>				
	<b>First Year</b>	<b>Second Year</b>	<b>Third Year</b>	<b>Fourth Year</b>
NEW Salary and Fringe*	\$68,000	\$69,700	\$71,000	\$71,000
Supplies	\$1,000	\$1,100	\$1,200	\$1,200
Equipment	0	0	0	0
Library holdings	0	0	0	0
Travel, Purchased Services and Other Expenses	\$500	\$520	\$530	\$530
Space related costs	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$69,500</b>	<b>\$71,320</b>	<b>\$72,730</b>	<b>\$72,730</b>
*Fringe benefits: 28%				

3 The net increase in college revenue from the addition of the AA degree is estimated at \$96,500  
 4 during the first year of the program and \$281,000 during the second year. From a business  
 5 perspective, the decision to offer the AA degree is very beneficial to the college.  
 6

7 **Institutional Capacity-Facilities**

8 The mission expansion requested by Alexandria Technical College will not result in a request for  
 9 expanded facilities or significant increase in faculty or staff. As indicated, ATC has been  
 10 delivering liberal arts coursework for many years and has established both the physical  
 11 infrastructure and staff to support the proposed mission change. Examples of space at ATC that  
 12 will support the delivery of an Associate in Arts degree include, but are not limited to:  
 13

- 14 1. Newly completed state-of-the-art Biology and Chemistry labs within the last two years.
- 15 2. Two physical education gymnasiums / large exercise spaces.

- 1 3. Two community theatres that have partnered with ATC for many years and continue to  
2 support ATC programming.
- 3 4. A fully-supported and staffed library and student life space that will be expanded during  
4 the next capital bonding cycle (this ATC project is #8 on the system's prioritization list).
- 5 5. State-of-the-art lecture halls, classrooms, and learning spaces throughout the campus to  
6 support large and small class sizes.

### 7 8 **Stakeholder Participation Documentation**

9 In addition to the consultation and market research noted in previous sections, the following  
10 activities took place related to stakeholder input.

11  
12 Since the college has had an ongoing relationship with Bemidji State University in delivering  
13 their AA degree at Alexandria, the college requested their input on the AA proposal. They have  
14 given their full support to this application for an AA degree (see attachment 2) and agree that  
15 while the Bemidji AA degree at Alexandria has been of benefit to students, its delivery has  
16 proved cumbersome for both institutions and students. Administration of financial aid has been  
17 particularly difficult.

18  
19 Alexandria Technical College has 28 program advisory committees. In the fall of 2009 and the  
20 spring of 2010, information was provided to all advisory committees prior to requesting the  
21 discussion of a resolution regarding the application and approval for offering an Associate in  
22 Arts degree at Alexandria Technical College. All programs also had an individual vote on a  
23 preferred name change for the college that would be required with the approval of an expanded  
24 mission. All advisory committees provided a resolution supporting the application to expand the  
25 mission of the college and to offer the Associate in Arts degree through Alexandria Technical  
26 College.

27  
28 In the spring of 2009, the college contracted a third party to conduct a campus climate  
29 evaluation. Support for pursuit of the Associate in Arts degree at Alexandria was addressed as a  
30 unique item in the survey. More than 70% responded that they supported the pursuit of the AA  
31 degree. Twenty-three percent supported the pursuit of the degree with some concerns  
32 (specifically the need to support technical programs and to preserve the culture of the college).  
33 Some concern was identified reflecting the tension that can be created with the differences  
34 between the community college and technical college contract provisions for MnSCU  
35 comprehensive colleges.

36  
37 In October of 2009, more than 150 community members who are enrolled in Senior College at  
38 Alexandria Technical College were surveyed on their level of support for offering the AA degree  
39 in Alexandria, at the college, and how the college name should be changed. Unanimously, every  
40 person responding supported the addition of the degree and a name change for the college.

41  
42 During the summer of 2009, President Kevin Kopischke and Dean Chad Coquette participated in  
43 strategic initiative planning for Alexandria and the surrounding communities (stewardship  
44 project). Expanding the mission of Alexandria Technical College to better serve the community  
45 needs and the needs of surrounding high schools was identified as a key initiative for the region.

1 The college met with the Runestone Area Education District superintendents in spring of 2009  
2 and again in September of 2009 to discuss the implications of Alexandria Technical College  
3 pursuing its expanded mission to offer the AA degree. Potential for increased student enrollment  
4 was confirmed. Of greatest concern is the impact of additional PSEO enrollment at the college  
5 on high school enrollments. The college continues to work on options with the RAED schools  
6 that will provide benefit to both students and the institutions.

7  
8 **RECOMMENDED COMMITTEE MOTION**

9  
10 The Academic and Student Affairs Committee recommends that the Board of Trustees approve  
11 the Alexandria Technical College request to change its mission to become a comprehensive two-  
12 year college. The new mission is, “Alexandria Technical and Community College creates  
13 opportunity for individuals and businesses through education, innovation, and leadership. The  
14 college’s high-quality technical and transfer programs and services meet their needs, interests,  
15 and abilities and strengthen the economic, social, and cultural life of Minnesota’s communities.”  
16

17 **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

18  
19 The Board of Trustees approves the request by Alexandria Technical College to change its  
20 mission to become a comprehensive two-year college. The new mission is, “Alexandria  
21 Technical and Community College creates opportunity for individuals and businesses through  
22 education, innovation, and leadership. The college’s high-quality technical and transfer programs  
23 and services meet their needs, interests, and abilities and strengthen the economic, social, and  
24 cultural life of Minnesota’s communities.”  
25

26 **Note:** The name change proposed in the new mission statement will be reviewed by the Board of  
27 Trustees Advancement Committee pending approval of the mission change.

28  
29 **Respectively submitted by: President Kevin Kopischke, Alexandria Technical College**

30  
31 **See attached Letters of Support**



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

February 10, 2010

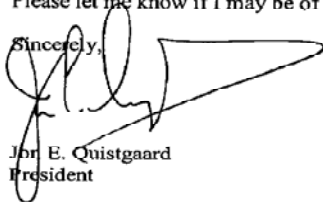
Dr. Linda Baer  
Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs  
Office of the Chancellor  
Wells Fargo Place, 30 7<sup>th</sup> Street E, Suite 350  
St. Paul, MN 55101-7804

Dear Senior Vice Chancellor Baer:

I have recently been advised that Alexandria Technical College has submitted an application for new program approval to the Chancellor's office requesting permission to offer an Associate of Arts degree on campus. As you may be aware, Bemidji State University and Alexandria Technical College have, for the past two years, been working together to collaboratively offer students enrolled at Alexandria Technical College the option of pursuing an Associate of Arts degree through Bemidji State University. An articulation agreement was developed between our two institutions whereby Alexandria Technical College students may transfer up to 40 credits directly from the college into Bemidji State's Associate of Arts degree program. Currently, there are approximately 90 students admitted into the collaborative program, which produced its first graduates last spring. Should Alexandria Technical College receive permission to offer the Associate of Arts degree, Bemidji State University agrees to discontinue its current collaborative program.

Please let me know if I may be of any further assistance. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Jon E. Quistgaard  
President

JEQ:smr

218-755-2011 / 218-755-2749 fax / [www.bemidjistate.edu](http://www.bemidjistate.edu)  
Deputy Hall, 1500 Birchmont Drive NE, #3, Bemidji, MN 56601-2699

A member of The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System, Bemidji State University is an equal opportunity educator and employer.



Jan Doebbert  
Executive Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs  
Alexandria Technical College  
1601 Jefferson Street  
Alexandria, MN 56308

January 27, 2010

Dear Jan:

This letter confirms our conversation last month that Minnesota State University Moorhead is very pleased that you asked for our support as part of the approval process that will result in an associate of arts degree being offered on the Alexandria Technical College campus.

Alexandria Technical College is a strong school with fine programs and faculty. I hope that in future years, MSUM will see transfer applications from many, many associate in arts degree graduates from your campus.

Yours Very Truly,

Bette G. Midgarden  
Vice President for Academic Affairs

Cc: Academic Affairs File