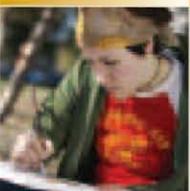




MINNESOTA STATE
 COLLEGES
 & UNIVERSITIES
 DESIGNING THE FUTURE
 STRATEGIC PLAN



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Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

2005-2006

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To the People of Minnesota

In 1995, Minnesota created a new system of public higher education by merging formerly separate systems of community colleges, technical colleges and state universities. Over the past decade, these institutions educated 1.2 million students. In addition, the system devoted major efforts to bring our organizational climate, policies and administrative systems in line with the merger. That work continues, but we now are poised to take full advantage of our collective strength to meet the challenges of the new century.

We are pleased to present the system strategic plan for 2006 - 2010. This plan grows out of the previous three-year plan, retaining strategic directions in access and opportunity, quality and economic development of our state.

A new fourth strategic direction focuses on innovation. We face challenges in global competition, increasing demands on state resources and the growing recognition that virtually all young people will need higher education for career and life success. Innovation throughout the system – by the Board of Trustees, by system leadership and by all faculty and staff – will be essential to achieving the quality, efficiency and capacity that Minnesota deserves.

Robert H. Hoffman
Chair, Board of Trustees

James H. McCormick
Chancellor

Designing the Future: Minnesota State Colleges & Universities Strategic Plan 2006 - 2010

Vision

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enable the people of Minnesota to succeed by providing the most accessible, highest value education in the nation.

Mission

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system of distinct and collaborative institutions offers higher education that meets the personal and career goals of a wide range of individual learners, enhances the quality of life for all Minnesotans and sustains vibrant economies throughout the state.

— Adopted January 19, 2006 by the Board of Trustees

Strategic Directions and Goals Summary

Strategic Direction 1: 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.
- Goal 1.2 Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.
- Goal 1.3 Work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college ready for success.

Strategic Direction 2: Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services

- Goal 2.1 Demonstrate high quality in all educational programs.
- Goal 2.2 Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills.
- Goal 2.3 Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.

Strategic Direction 3: Provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs

- Goal 3.1 As a major partner in educating Minnesota's workforce, participate in identifying and meeting regional and statewide economic development priorities.
- 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.
- Goal 3.3 Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region.

Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently

- Goal 4.1 Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges.
- Goal 4.2 Reward and support institutions, administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency.
- Goal 4.3 Identify and remove barriers to innovation and responsiveness.
- Goal 4.4 Hire and develop leaders who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system.
- Goal 4.5 Promote accountability for results through a system of accessible reports to the public and other stakeholders.

Strategic Direction 1: Increase access and opportunity

Access and opportunity are fundamental to Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. That commitment continues as new generations of Minnesotans look to higher education to advance their careers and contribute to their communities.

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.

Minnesota must increase the number of people with education beyond high school. In a 2005 report, the Citizens League called for an expectation that every Minnesotan should attain at least two years of post-secondary education. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, which enrolls 62 percent of the state's undergraduates, will play a key role in raising educational attainment by implementing effective ways to enroll and graduate more students, including those from populations historically underserved by higher education.

Goal 1.2

Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have long provided an affordable way for students to attend college, and our tuition and fees remain lower than those of other institutions. However, the increasing cost of education is a significant barrier to enabling more Minnesotans to attend college. When our students graduate, many face high debt burdens. Our commitment to this goal requires us to examine the impact of cost on students' ability to afford our colleges and universities and to develop solutions that maintain affordability, especially for students from low-income families.

Goal 1.3

Work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college ready for success.

Too many students give up on higher education before ever setting foot on campus. Of those who do enroll, a significant number of new high school graduates are not ready to succeed in college-level courses. All students need to take high school courses, especially in mathematics, that prepare them for college. As a state, we also need to increase the number of students of color who finish high school. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system is a founding participant in the P-16 Partnership, which works to accomplish these goals. Our institutions must work with the schools in their regions to show students what will be expected in college and to offer opportunities for early college enrollment for students who are ready. We bear a special responsibility to educate the child care workers, teachers, social workers, public health professionals and others who can successfully prepare and support today's children for post-secondary education.

Strategic Direction 2: Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services

Minnesota students have many choices in higher education. We must be able to prove to potential students, to employers and to the taxpayers that our academic programs and student services meet objective standards for quality.

Goal 2.1

Demonstrate high quality in all educational programs.

To assure that all our programs are up-to-date and externally validated, we participate in accreditation, standards-based program development and formal quality-improvement processes. Program quality must be reflected in the success of our graduates, including their success in finding jobs that meet their aspirations. We survey students and graduates about their satisfaction with the quality of education at our colleges and universities.

Goal 2.2**Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills.**

Our graduates and their employers face new demands in the 21st century that will call upon solid skills in reading, writing, mathematics and speaking; the ability to learn and think critically; and globally competitive technical and professional expertise. In addition, our students need opportunities to understand and participate in the global community. Assessment of student learning should be embedded throughout our academic and career programs. We will explore new ways to assess our students and ensure that they meet high expectations, starting with core skills needed by all graduates. Surveys of employers who hired our recent graduates should be part of this assessment.

Goal 2.3**Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services.**

While the importance of the relationship between teacher and student does not change, higher education today must be provided in multiple ways to suit each student's learning style, schedule and preferences and to contribute to the quality of his or her educational experience. Options also are critical to achieving our aspirations for increasing access and opportunity. Online education offers an attractive option for students seeking convenience in learning and services. We are committed to enabling faculty to enrich their online teaching skills and to establishing the system as a leader in online education. In addition to courses, our students expect online access and other flexible means of obtaining student services and conducting business transactions.

**Strategic Direction 3:
Provide programs and services integral
to state and regional economic needs**

As public higher education institutions, our colleges and universities have special relationships with their communities and regions. Our graduates are the backbone of the workforce in many industries, and our institutions contribute to the economic development and social vitality of their regions through service and access to leisure-time and cultural activities.

Goal 3.1**As a major partner in educating Minnesota's workforce, participate in identifying and meeting regional and statewide economic development priorities.**

Our administrators, faculty and staff should be involved, when appropriate, with economic development initiatives that can help inform academic planning and become productive collaborations. Examples are participation in the local Chamber of Commerce or workforce council. All communities benefit when we educate the pool of entrepreneurs and other talented people who will create new engines of economic growth. For most institutions, customized training is a significant service that supports economic development by maintaining a productive workforce. All career programs should be aligned with workforce needs. Professional programs such as nursing and teaching, while fostering personal and intellectual growth, also contribute to economic development.

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.**

Libraries, theaters, sports and lectures and exhibitions at our institutions provide learning opportunities and recreation not only for students, but also for community members who are not enrolled. Particularly in Greater Minnesota, our institutions are vital to the fabric of life. As Minnesota's communities become more diverse, our colleges and universities have new opportunities to enrich cultural life and enable area residents of many cultures to benefit from institutional resources and services.

Goal 3.3**Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region.**

In addition to formal economic development initiatives, the colleges and universities can support their regions by stimulating community involvement by faculty and staff in most departments, including liberal arts and sciences. While faculty members at all institutions use their knowledge to solve local problems, state university faculty, in particular, engage in applied research that can assist their regions. Students at all campuses should have opportunities to link classroom learning with

civic engagement through service learning and community-based research. Student services support for volunteer programs, civic awareness and community-based work study add to institutional capacity for partnerships that sustain healthy regions.

Strategic Direction 4: Innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently

A culture of innovation will strengthen the ability of our colleges and universities to work together to meet the expectations of students. Innovation will be critical to reaching our system's potential for solving the state's need for efficient ways to enable all Minnesotans to complete some form of higher education.

Goal 4.1 Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges.

To serve our students in the new century, we must be comfortable with taking risks and moving fast when opportunities arise. We need to identify future trends and issues and incorporate global perspectives into a culture of innovation. Our organizational structures need to be efficient and adaptable to sudden changes in the student and business markets. Technology is essential for keeping up with new learning and teaching models, improving student convenience and gaining efficiency.

Goal 4.2 Reward and support institutions, administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency.

Innovation leads to national and international leadership, adoption of best practices and greater efficiency. We will use the funding allocation model to reward institutions that take risks and innovate. We will work with our faculty and staff to identify and implement ways to reward innovators with recognition, compensation and other benefits.

Goal 4.3 Identify and remove barriers to innovation and responsiveness.

Our faculty and staff are hard-working and dedicated to helping students. But change can be difficult in a large organization. We need to ask people in the system to identify barriers to innovation, such as state and federal legislation, system policies, formal procedures and informal practices that are unnecessary and could be removed.

Goal 4.4 Hire and develop leaders who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system.

The system needs people with vision, personal integrity and high standards who can motivate colleagues and challenge the status quo. Our presidents and senior administrators must be chosen for their leadership abilities and supported with professional growth opportunities. Leaders are needed in our academic departments, in our business offices and on our student services staff as well. Our practices for selection, development and retention of leaders must address this essential foundation for progress in facing the future.

Goal 4.5 Promote accountability for results through a system of accessible reports to the public and other stakeholders.

The system-level accountability framework enhances the ability of the Board of Trustees and others to measure progress toward achieving the goals of the strategic plan. Continuing implementation should focus first on measures for the highest-priority goals. Performance results must be easily available to the public. System results should be complemented by providing accessible reports from our colleges and universities to prospective students and their communities.

