

1 MINNESOTA STATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
2 BOARD OF TRUSTEES STUDY SESSION
3 April 21, 2010
4

5 Members Present: Chair David Olson; Trustees Dan McElroy, Christine Rice, Duane Benson,
6 Cheryl Dickson, James Van Houten, Jacob Elend, Louis Sundin, Scott Thiss, Ruth Grendahl,
7 David Paskach, Thomas Renier.

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9 Committee Member Absent: Trustee Terri Thomas

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11 Leadership Council Committee Co-Chairs Present: Senior Vice Chancellor Linda Baer
12 and President Richard Davenport
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14 The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees held a Study Session on the
15 System Strategic Plan on April 21, 2010 at Wells Fargo Place, 4th Floor, Board Room, 30 East 7
16 Street in St. Paul. Board of Trustees Chair Olson called the meeting to order at 10:05 am.
17

18 Acknowledgements and Overview
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20 Chair McElroy acknowledged the trustees, presidents and vice chancellors that served on the Ad
21 Hoc Committee. He noted that the committee held four listening sessions in Brooklyn Park,
22 Moorhead, Alexandria, and Mankato. Trustees commented on the process as a valuable
23 effort and that the system should consider conducting listening sessions going forward as
24 opportunities to hear from the public.
25

26 Trustee McElroy articulated that this is a bridge plan to 2014. He acknowledged the comments
27 on the strategic plan as shared by board members and presidents. After today's discussion, a
28 draft will be presented for a first reading in May and a second reading and approval in June.
29

30 Preamble:

31 Trustee McElroy reviewed the preamble and suggested a change in the reference to
32 "countervailing" to "today's challenges".
33

34 Strategic Direction One:

35 Chair McElroy commented on the notable addition of "success" to strategic direction one.
36 Trustee Van Houten asked whether there was a specific goal behind Goal 1.2 that would
37 inform alternative language for "Work with" which does not seem particularly strong. Trustee
38 McElroy asked whether "Collaborate" was more appropriate. Senior Vice Chancellor Baer clarified
39 that we cannot tell the K-12 schools what to do but there should be an effort to make this an
40 active goal. Trustee McElroy suggested "base the preparation and enrollment of K-12
41 students in higher education by ..."
42

43 Chair McElroy noted Goal 1.3 and the submitted comments on affordability. Trustee Van
44 Houten suggested this may be the most important goal to external stakeholders. He added that
45 one approach to maintaining an affordable cost would be to address the expense side of the
46 operation. The other approach would be to let the affordable cost be implied as holding tuition equal
47 to other states. Trustee Benson said that the multiple pricing model suggests there should be
48 more clarity on the cost of going to college and for whom. Trustee Olson noted that 80 percent of
49 our graduates stay in the state and suggested that we may need to go beyond Minnesota for our

1 future workforce. Trustee McElroy suggested ~~that~~ we may want to say “affordable net cost for all
2 students.” Senior Vice Chancellor Baer noted that we compare the system’s tuition to similar
3 systems in other states using net costs ~~and~~ to the average income. Trustee Englund
4 suggested that we need to highlight the ~~financial~~ access piece. President Davenport said that
5 institutional affordability is often addressed ~~in~~ a competitive context for the marketplace
6 such that institutions price themselves at the ~~best~~ possible level to support what institutions

1 Chair McElroy noted President Ramaley's concern regarding the regional suggestion in Goal 3.3
2 noting that in many cases there is a statewide reach for institutions.

3
4 Strategic Direction Four:

5 Chair McElroy moved the committee to strategic direction four and the suggestion from staff on
6 Goal 4.2 "to address the challenges facing the system." Senior Vice Chancellor Baer said that the
7 revision better focuses the intent of this goal. Trustee Benson said that some clarity may be
8 needed in "engage and draw upon" as it may be not known what that means. Trustee Paskasch
9 noted that comments were made at listening sessions that we go to faculty for ideas and input.
10 Trustee Olson suggested going back to the previous language. Chair McElroy suggested the term
11 "Use." Trustee Sundin stated her concern that the term "Use" is not the appropriate context when
12 in fact we want faculty and staff to be supported in advancing innovation. Trustee Hightower
13 stated that the original goal for 4.2 was to reward that activity and asked if the new language
14 signaled that was no longer the case. Chair McElroy stated that is not the intent.

15
16 Chair McElroy referenced the comments from staff and Trustee Van Houten regarding Goal 4.4,
17 specifically the reference to "Support and sustain transformative innovation." Trustee Van Houten
18 stated that he sees this as continuous improvement much like Goal 4.1 and that we may want to
19 eliminate it. Chair McElroy stated the importance of Goal 4.4 for building disruptive innovation
20 and if we were to remove it all we would want to add it to Goal 4.1. Senior Vice Chancellor
21 stated that we can be innovative in small steps that transformative change may require bolder
22 steps especially in the current financial context. Trustee Dickson suggested "Critically examine
23 and improve structures, policies, and processes, to support transformative innovation."

24
25 Strategic Direction Five:

26 Trustee Benson stated that in the current economic environment we need changes that are
27 sustainable. He noted that institutions are engaging their workforce in analyses that argue for the
28 sustainability of what we do and would suggest adding this.

29
30 Trustee Hightower noted that we include "Ensure" in the strategic direction which has a
31 particular connotation as was addressed in Strategic Direction Two. Trustee Dickson stated that
32 there is nothing here that indicates we are going to work on obtaining other financial resources.
33 Trustee Van Houten suggested removing strategic direction five stating that if we innovate and
34 change we will ensure the long-term viability of the system.

35
36 Trustee Sundin stated that "Ensure" seems appropriate and that this makes another statement
37 about sustaining higher education for the next generations. Chair McElroy suggested that the
38 Board may want to amend Strategic Direction Four to incorporate elements of Strategic
39 Direction Five. Trustee Rice suggested adding elements in the preamble to address the financial
40 sustainability issues. Trustee Paskasch stated that there is some redundancy but with strategic
41 direction five we are focusing primarily on change to address sustainability.

42
43 Chancellor McCormick thanked the Ad Hoc Committee for their work and noted the importance
44 of the Board of Trustees embracing this plan. He added that the Board needs to address the
45 expectations for the presidents and institutions to implement this plan.

46
47 Chair McElroy stated that perhaps we need to continue listening sessions beyond the context of
48 the system strategic plan and engage faculty and students in such conversations. Trustee
49 Grendahl acknowledged the suggestion of Trustee Rice in continuing listening sessions.

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2 Chair McElroy adjourned the session at 11:15 a.m.
3 Respectfully submitted,
4 Todd Harmening, Recorder