

**Biannual Report**  
**Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Work Plan for 2004-2005**  
**Actions for First Six Months of 2004-2005**

**January 20, 2005**

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System is dedicated to serving the people of Minnesota through its academic programs, applied research and specialized workforce training. Both as a system and through the individual colleges and universities, we are committed to enhancing educational programs and services, contributing to Minnesota's economic vitality and strengthening performance.

In addition to these ongoing objectives, the following priorities (approved by the Board of Trustees, 06-16-04) have been identified for academic year 2004-2005: (1) strengthen the system's ability to respond to the changing needs of students and Minnesota communities; (2) align college and university priorities, programs, services and business practices to improve service and manage costs; (3) strengthen teacher preparation and professional development programs; work to assure that high school graduates have the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in college and work; (4) fully develop and launch Minnesota Online; and (5) build recognition of and support for the system among key stakeholders.

**Basic On-going Commitments**

Many of the on-going commitments are longer-term with longer-term goals; typically many are still in progress.<sup>1</sup>

A number of the campuses support large-scale innovation (like incorporating service learning into academic programs) and quality changes (like participation in the Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program), typically expressed in terms of courses, programs and services being redesigned to address need and interest.

Institutions are continuously improving programs and services for students, workers and employers. This is exemplified by Lake Superior College's Disabilities Awareness workshop offered to more than 90 employees and students and a later, "What to Do When a Student Discloses a Disability" workshop attended by a dozen faculty.

Other examples of institutional quality improvements and innovation include Inver Hills Community College's 75 percent participation rate in their professional development of faculty and staff endeavors; South Central Technical College's development, along with Bemidji State University, of an AAS to BS option for students in Graphics Production and Commercial Art which improves program transfer through student access (see also Alexandria Technical College, Hennepin Technical College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, St. Cloud State University and Southwest Minnesota State University, among others, for examples).

The *Marshall Independent* reports, "...because of the innovation and impressive growth at the [Southwest Minnesota State] University over the past 20 years, the community, businesses and the citizens have become united in their goals to improve the area into the future. The University restored the community's sense of vitality and vibrancy. As a result, the community has improved economically, socially, educationally as a result of the University's success."

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<sup>1</sup> Detailed college and university-specific submissions are available upon request; as an aggregate, they exceed 450 landscape pages.

The Northeast Higher Education District formalized a metro-rural partnership with Anoka Technical College for the purpose of promoting community development leading to economic growth. The two institutions have created and funded a shared Regional Development Director position, and funded and implemented three major initiatives to promote regional development.

These and other examples demonstrate how Minnesota's state colleges and universities contribute to Minnesota's economic vitality by providing access to certificate and diploma programs and associate, bachelor's and master's degrees (see reports from Minnesota State Community and Technical College on "Project Access" and Minnesota State University, Mankato on extended learning classes in Fairmont) and by sustaining career and technical education, primarily but not exclusively at the technical colleges (Alexandria Technical College, Anoka Technical College, Anoka-Ramsey Community College, Bemidji State University, Century College, Dakota County Technical College, Hennepin Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, Lake Superior College, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, Minnesota State University, Mankato, Minnesota State University Moorhead, Minnesota West Community and Technical College, Northeast Higher Education District, Pine Technical College, Ridgewater College, Riverland Community College, Rochester Community and Technical College, St. Cloud Technical College, Saint Paul College, South Central Technical College, Southwest Minnesota State University, Winona State University). In addition, state universities conduct valuable applied research as part of their mission, exemplified by Southwest Minnesota State University's student/faculty applied research in agriculture and water.

Many of Minnesota's State Colleges and Universities are reflecting their accountability to students and communities and the reporting of these contributions through participation in the Higher Learning Commission's comprehensive Academic Quality Improvement Program (Alexandria Technical College, Anoka Technical College, Bemidji State University, Century College, Hennepin Technical College, Inver Hills Community College, Lake Superior College, Metropolitan State University, Minneapolis Community and Technical College, Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical, Minnesota State Community and Technical College, some Northeast Higher Education District institutions, Ridgewater College, Riverland Community College, Saint Paul College, and Southwest Minnesota State University). Rochester Community and Technical College has formally pursued Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recognition and has received extensive feedback on their first application. Rochester Community and Technical College and St. Cloud State University have identified short and longer-term approaches for the implementation of a Balanced Scorecard framework. Others have published and widely distributed institutional or component quality assurance reports of institutional outcomes (Southwest Minnesota State University's published report or Winona State University's Assessment Day).

Still others have utilized the specialized accreditation process to underscore continuous improvement and quality improvements. For instance, Minnesota State University, Mankato recently successfully completed National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education re-accreditation. May 2004 graduates of Winona State University's athletic training baccalaureate degree program completed the national licensure exam with a 95.5 percent pass rate (the national pass rate was approximately 86 percent), and its Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Nurse Specialist national certification pass rates remained at 100 percent in each area; this program has recorded 100 percent pass rates since its inception.

Common demonstrations of accountability include the continuous process of reviewing academic programs (for instance Lake Superior College), expanding program reviews to service areas (for example, Bemidji State University) and the greater alignment of college and university programs, services and business processes (for example, the Metropolitan Alliance as an aggregate of institutions).

Our institutions also are addressing the efficient and effective use of their facilities and technology resources, oftentimes accomplishing other goals set out by the Chancellor and the Board of Trustees. Winona State University currently is working with the local high school technology committee to see how Winona State's technology can be utilized to simultaneously advance both partners' goals while also addressing issues of preparation. Additional examples of addressing goals while maximizing the use of educational and technological resources are Minnesota State University Moorhead and Bemidji State University's \$490,000 grant through the Minnesota Department of Education under Title II, Part D, No Child Left Behind entitled "Enhancing Education through Technology: Culturally Sensitive, Technologically Enhanced Literacy Boxes for Student and Family Use." Furthermore, Bemidji State University's Special Education program has been awarded a Minnesota Online grant of \$103,750 to translate existing courses into online courses so that distant (especially in rural areas) and non-traditional learners (professionals who are already teaching) and people from different backgrounds, such as Native Americans on rural reservations, who already have a Special Education teaching license can obtain a second license.

At the system level, facilities program planning continues to mature, particularly in support of state university project planning for new and renewed residence halls and student unions. Significant progress has been made launching a new non-state funded college residence hall and planning a non-state funded residence hall replacement project at a state university. A third non-state funded residence hall replacement project is expected to emerge in early 2005.

The colleges and universities have made great strides in the use of technology to improve services to students. One area where technology has assisted in the improvement of the transfer process is through the use of the Degree Audit Reporting System (DARS) and the Course Applicability System (CAS). Through DARS, students will have access to transfer evaluation reports and degree audits that list courses they need while at their current institution or what they will need when they transfer. With CAS, students will have access to a statewide Web-based planning system. The systems will work together to provide a virtually paperless process that will help transfer students complete their degrees in a timely manner.

At the Office of the Chancellor, the Finance Division successfully introduced e-payments in November, resulting in increased flexibility for students.

To improve their utilization and effectiveness, the campuses have increased the training level for existing DARS users and expanded the base of those using DARS information (for instance, Anoka-Ramsey Community College; Bemidji State University; Dakota County Technical College; Inver Hills Community College; Lake Superior College; Minnesota State Community and Technical College; Minnesota State University, Mankato; North Hennepin Community College; Hibbing Community College and Vermilion Community College of the Northeast Higher Education District; Northland Community and Technical College; Pine Technical College; Ridgewater College; St. Cloud State University; St. Cloud Technical College; South Central Technical College; and Southwest Minnesota State University).

A long-standing goal of the Chancellor and Board of Trustees has been to expand private contributions and/or grants to the institutions. The persistent emphasis is beginning to show results as the colleges and universities have increased their overall fund raising levels. For instance, the Southwest Minnesota State University Foundation has seen a nearly fourfold increase in contributions from 1998 to 2004, and alumni support has increased to 25 percent. The Winona State University Foundation received a \$140,000 estate gift earmarked for Opportunity Scholarships for those students with the greatest financial need. While the state universities have had a longer tradition of seeking external funds, success also is occurring among the two-year institutions. Minnesota State Community and Technical College is on target to grow its foundation base by 5 percent over FY 04. They simultaneously have increased the

procurement of institutional grants (over \$187,000). Only half-way through the year, North Hennepin Community College has expanded annual private fundraising to the point that its annual fund is already at 66 percent of goal. Pine Technical College's scholarship endowment is at 70 percent of goal at the halfway mark, and St. Cloud State University has raised 54 percent of its overall goal (\$1,878,062) for the year and exceeded its goal for endowment funds; Riverland Community College already has exceeded its Foundation scholarship goal. Metropolitan State University achieved 125 percent of its goal for 2004.

The development area within the Office of the Chancellor provided professional training opportunities on fundraising to all presidents and their chief development officer, and 24 institutions were represented at a special seminar conducted by James P. Daniel of Bentz Whaley Flessner. Development also initiated collaborative fundraising opportunities with 7 campuses and met with leaders of 6 corporate and foundation funding sources to discuss current and future funding opportunities within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.

While system fall semester thirtieth-day headcount enrollment for 2004 (170,425) decreased by 0.6 percent compared to fall semester 2003, system enrollment of students of color increased by 1,255, or 7.4 percent in fall 2004 compared to fall 2003. Students of color now comprise 12.7 percent of total system students and increased by 5.7 percent at the colleges and 15.0 percent at the universities. Enrollment of American Indian students increased by 4.2 percent, of Asian and Pacific Islander students 7.8 percent, of Black or African-American students by 8.8 percent, of Hispanic students by 3.6 percent and of White students 2.4 percent. Enrollment of foreign national students decreased by 10.7 percent in fall 2004 compared to fall 2003.

Winona State University increased the number of enrolled students of color by 20 percent from fall semester of 2003 to fall of 2004. St. Cloud State University essentially matched (19.2 per cent) this outcome. Minnesota West Community and Technical College increased their student population of color by 5 percent for the same period. At Inver Hills Community College, students of color have grown from 11 percent of enrollment in 2000 to 20 percent in fall 2004.

These increases reflect programmatic changes that have made campuses more welcoming and helpful. Recall the earlier reference to Minnesota State University Moorhead and Bemidji State University's culturally sensitive technology-assisted education grant, which addresses these efforts. Bemidji State University also has two tribal college collaborations in progress. The Northeast Higher Education District's Itasca Community College received a \$500,000 grant from the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community to initiate a Minnesota Indigenous Language Preservation Model. Fond du Lac Tribal and Community College has added 45 additional American Indian students at Red Lake. With funds provided by grants, the Nursing Program at Inver Hills Community College assigned two faculty as Diversity Mentors to offer support for first generation and diverse students.

Gains also have occurred among employees. While the number of faculty and staff in the system increased by 1.8 percent from 2002 to 2004, the number of faculty and staff of color increased by 7.7 percent over that same time span. In the two year colleges, the number of faculty and staff of color increased by 13.5 percent compared to an overall increase of 1.6 percent in faculty and staff. For the state universities, faculty and staff of color increased by 3.1 percent while overall faculty and staff increased by 2.2 per cent.

Virtually every college and university is involved in pursuing partnerships and collaborating with both business/industry and other educational institutions (whether local schools or sister colleges and universities). For instance, Saint Paul College has continued its partnerships with the Health Careers Institute; South Central Technical College has begun discussions with the area business incubator in relation to partnering with its Small Business Management Program; Hibbing Community College has

been named as an authorized Maytag training center for the five-state region; and, as mentioned earlier, Bemidji State University has two tribal college collaborations in progress.

### **Priorities for Academic Year 2004-2005**

One of this year's goals has been to strengthen the system's ability to respond to the changing needs of students and Minnesota communities. One approach, reflected by a significant number of institutions in the college and university submissions, is improved professional development for faculty and staff. As an example, Inver Hills Community College attained a 75 percent participation rate from faculty and staff during its fall 2004 efforts. At Lake Superior College, 95 percent of their Institutional Effectiveness Committee participated in training to develop the Systems Portfolio in the Higher Learning Commission's Academic Quality Improvement Program.

Other approaches also were employed: Inver Hills Community College elected to hire a Director and Assistant Director of Enrollment Services to address changing needs, and Minneapolis Community and Technical College completed an Academic Quality Improvement Program-related direct mail project.

At the Office of the Chancellor, Information Technology Services has expanded its assessment of how resources are deployed to serve student needs and needs indirectly benefiting students. This will include detailed assessment of Desire2Learn. On the latter, a preliminary survey of 109 students from Minnesota West has found that over 85 percent of the students said they were comfortable using Desire2Learn after the first two weeks, and 84 percent of the students said they would take another online class using Desire2Learn from Minnesota West.

The Office of the Chancellor is charged with the responsibility to develop a strategy to meet Minnesota's educational needs over the next five years, especially in at-risk populations and in communities with fast-growing and declining populations. The Chancellor's Diversity Task Force has made steady progress, as the Board of Trustees will recognize from the various presentations to them. The office Polytechnic Task Force completed a final draft of recommendations to be shared with business and industry leaders and System leadership for feedback. The staff in Academic and Student Affairs, to assess the higher education needs of the metropolitan area, has consulted with the Metro Council, the Department of Administration, and others on data and strategies for addressing metro growth and has developed preliminary data which will contribute to a profile of indicators of current and future demand for higher education.

In conjunction with the Land Management Information Center, staff in Academic and Student Affairs are assessing the geographic participation rates and migration patterns of students enrolled at all System institutions and will identify the types of students served by the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. They will help the colleges and universities develop plans to reach these groups.

Among the responsibilities outlined in the annual work plan, colleges and universities are to provide and improve smooth credit and student transfer. In addition to the examples related to the use of technology-enhanced tools (prior references to the Degree Audit Reporting System and the Course Applicability System), institutions are now better aligned with system expectations and policies for credit and transfer (see, for example, the materials submitted by South Central Technical College and Southwest Minnesota State University), and new articulation agreements have been forged (for example, at Minnesota State University, Mankato).

On its part, the Office of the Chancellor has completed the documentation and upgrades of the Degree Audit Reporting System and the Course Applicability System and provided training on encoding and transfer articulation. All Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the University of Minnesota

were scheduled to be on the Course Applicability System by December 31, 2004. In addition, through the multi-constituent Transfer Oversight Committee, the Office has managed state level transfer processes by working on a plan and timeline for institutional self-evaluation; hosted an annual Transfer Specialist Conference (attended by representatives from 24 Minnesota state colleges, six Minnesota state universities, eight private colleges and universities, the University of Minnesota and four out-of-state colleges/universities) where current and emerging transfer topics were covered; and identified and incorporated curricular changes into the [www.mntransfer.org](http://www.mntransfer.org) Web site.

The Office of the Chancellor's Information Technology Services has completed development of an automated transcript transfer process (SPEEDE) that will allow transcripts to move efficiently and quickly throughout the system, between the system and the University of Minnesota, and, eventually, between K-12 schools and the system.

Information Technology Services also is involved in developing system-wide frameworks for college and university business practices. They have completed development of a system-wide admission process that allows institutions to set automated rules for admission decisions. Applicants for admission who meet the automated rules established by the institutions will be admitted automatically, allowing admissions staff to focus on applications where more attention is needed. Information Technology Services has completed development of a system-wide, Web-based employee time reporting system. In addition to unifying business practices, the deployment of the Web-based solution will be considerably more convenient for many employees. Information Technology Services directly supports the Business Practice Alignment Committee (BPAC), a committee of Presidents and Vice Chancellors that is reviewing campus business practice variations that are or may be an impediment to students desiring to transfer within the system. The committee has completed analysis of 79 business practices, many of which could hinder smooth student transfer. Separate task groups have been established to formulate detailed action plans in response to unnecessary business practice variation, and specific policy and procedure changes have been drafted. Some task groups (for instance, the one on finance) have already distributed the proposed revisions to policies and procedures for review by the student associations, colleges and universities.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities continue to deliver programs to prepare new teachers and upgrade the skills of current teachers as exemplified by Bemidji State University's Special Education program which was awarded a Minnesota Online grant to translate existing courses into online courses so that distant (especially in rural areas) and non-traditional learners (professionals who are already teaching) and people from different backgrounds such as Native Americans on rural reservations, could obtain a second license. Inver Hills Community College's involvement in the Urban Teacher Program also exemplifies these efforts.

Minnesota Satellite and Technology (MnSAT) is working in the teacher preparation area with the Minnesota Department of Education's Special Education offices to bring teacher training experiences to faculty across the state in an efficient approach using the broadcast and/or production capability of MnSAT. In addition, Minnesota Satellite and Technology is working with K-12 institutions in the state to develop a digital broadcast network across the K-12 districts to bring them training and learning experiences in a highly efficient manner.

Another of our annual goals is to work with local schools and school districts to encourage middle and high school students to prepare for college. As noted earlier, Winona State University is working with the local high school technology committee to see how Winona State's technology can be used to improve preparation. Other institutions, like Central Lakes College, have implemented the second year of the Upward Bound grant program or made more healthcare career exploration courses available to local high schools.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities continue to strengthen statewide partnerships to prepare students for college success. The “Project Lead the Way Minnesota” work plan has been established in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Education. Director responsibilities have been defined and the position description has been submitted to Office of the Chancellor Human Relations for classification.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities has moved to create a system-wide Teacher Center to deliver innovative, responsive and high-quality courses and programs for Minnesota teachers. To date, campus coordinators have been named at each state university, the first year’s priorities have been identified, a survey to seek teacher and superintendent input on areas of greatest professional development need has been drafted, a staff person has been hired to work with campus coordinators on establishing the Center, and there has been initial development of a Web site and expert database.

The preliminary plan on the relationship of 2-year to baccalaureate teacher education programs has been completed and reviewed with key internal constituents (the Council on Professional Education, appropriate chief academic officers and the faculty and leadership of our Colleges of Education).

The Board of Trustees and the Leadership Council saw the full development and launching of Minnesota Online as essential to future system success. Typically, the colleges and universities have adopted and are compliant with Minnesota Online collaborative standards. In addition to support for the Minnesota Online initiative, the colleges and universities continue to develop online courses, programs and student services. For instance, Alexandria Technical College hired an online coordinator this fall to improve course and program delivery. Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical increased its online credits by 25 percent while Central Lakes headcount increased by 247 percent and the number of courses increased by 177 per cent. As a system, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities have increased online course offerings by over 286 percent and enrollments by 590 percent between fall 2000 and fall 2004. The number of programs—ranging from certificates to Master’s degrees—available online has increased from 11 to 80 since fall 2001. A significant portion of this increase has occurred in the last year: 34 percent of the courses and 28 percent of the enrollment.

The Office of the Chancellor has supported Minnesota Online Collaborative standards by promoting existing communities of system collaborators in online learning, curriculum, and services and recognizing their exemplary efforts. The Office also has facilitated forums such as those of the chief academic officers, Minnesota Online Council workgroups on quality standards, and establishing and regularly updating an E-Resources information site. The Office of the Chancellor also has provided support and tools to develop online courses, programs and student services. The Academic Services Work Group has explored common assessment tools for surveying online student satisfaction and determining quality of online courses. Nine new (Round 4) e-Curriculum Grants were awarded in November, and the Minnesota Online Call Center implemented. A revamped Minnesota Online site, using Oracle portal technology, was launched on December 1, 2004.

Thirty-five schools completed an audit/assessment of campus Web-based student services. The results were presented at the joint chief academic officers, chief student affairs officers and deans meeting. The audit work recently received national recognition—the WOW Award.

The Office of the Chancellor supports and promotes tools to assist in the interactions among students, faculty and staff. There currently are 38 operational WebBoards with over 1,300 registered users. As of December 2004, there were almost 25,000 registered portfolio users. Research by Darren Cambridge of George Mason University indicates that eFolio is successfully reaching its intended goals.

The Guard Online Web site has been maintained for soldiers deployed abroad with trained personnel at the Minnesota Online Call Center available to answer questions.

The Minnesota Online initiative has trained 30 Peer Review Team members for the accreditation process for online degrees. Four campus visits in preparation for the Peer Review Visit (Inver Hills Community College, Anoka Ramsey Community College, St. Cloud State University and Alexandria Technical College) were completed. Staff conducted an evaluation and assessment process for the completed Peer Review Visits.

After a difficult initial period, during which scalability problems with the Desire2Learn application became evident, the Desire2Learn platform has been stable for the past eight weeks. Information Technology Services has continued to provide training and resources for Desire2Learn, including the Desire2Learn help desk at Mankato, which employs technologies to give users 24 x 7 access to a knowledge database. Across the system, 31 of 32 institutions used Desire2Learn during the fall semester, with 27 totally migrated to Desire2Learn.

The colleges and universities continue to build relationships with business, legislative, educational and community leaders. Initial communication with all area legislators has occurred. Both the Chancellor and the presidents have made personal contact with legislators on key committees for higher education. Several institutions have an annual Legislative Day for area legislators and community business leaders.

South Central Technical College and Inver Hills Community College exemplify the different types of local and regional interrelationships engaged in by the colleges. South Central Technical College has begun discussions with the area business incubator on partnering with their Small Business Management Program. Inver Hills Community College has obtained Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grants to work with BF Goodrich and Xcel energy. Normandale Community College is working with the Taylor Corporation in Mankato to make advanced training opportunities for personal development available through a Minnesota Job Skills Partnership grant.

The Office of the Chancellor also continues to build relationships with key business, legislative, educational and community leaders in collaboration with college and university presidents. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity unit has strengthened the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities relationship with the Minnesota Minority Education Partnership and assisted them in implementing their new Minnesota College Access Network division. The Office of the Chancellor maintained a relationship with 3M through the MECA program, which we have totally restructured. Several members of the Chancellor's staff met with University of Minnesota and the African American Male Project leaders to discuss recruiting and retaining African American males into our colleges.

The Minnesota P-16 Education Partnership continues to meet and is reviewing expanded membership—proposing to add two early childhood representatives to the Partnership—and has identified strategies to involve business/industry in the work of the Partnership.

### **Conclusion**

The first six months of the year have seen additional progress with our ongoing objectives and an initial focus on this year's goals. A careful reading of the college and university submissions illustrates our steady movement toward efficiency as an effectively integrated system. We are confident that the progress presented in this summary demonstrates that the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities as a system is already serving its students and the citizens of Minnesota better.