

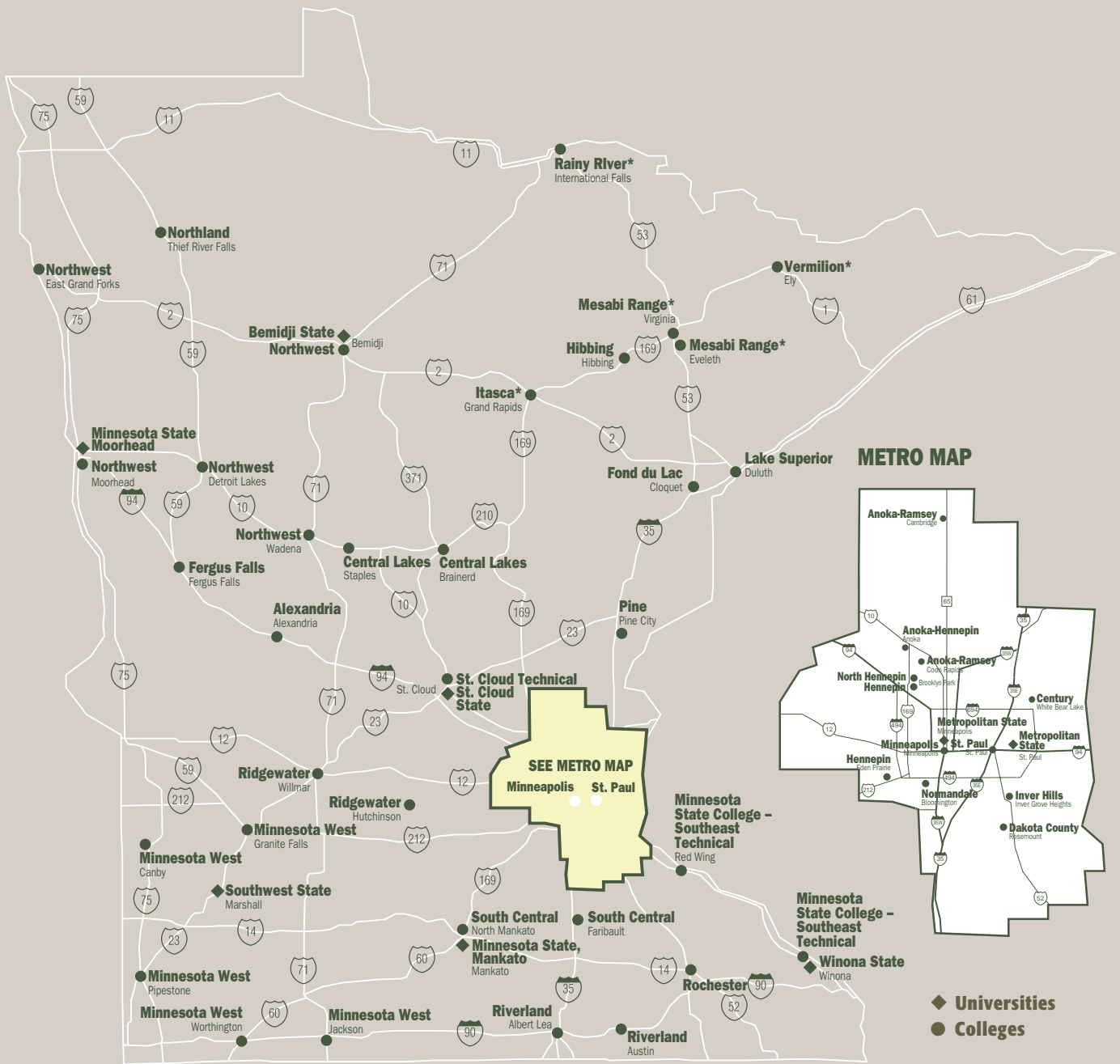


**MINNESOTA STATE  
COLLEGES AND  
UNIVERSITIES  
DESIGNING THE FUTURE  
STRATEGIC PLAN**



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### Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Alexandria Technical College  
 Anoka-Hennepin Technical College  
 Anoka-Ramsey Community College  
 Bemidji State University  
 Central Lakes College  
 Century College  
 Dakota County Technical College  
 Fergus Falls Community College  
 Fond du Lac Tribal & Community College  
 Hennepin Technical College  
 Hibbing Community College  
 Inver Hills Community College  
 Itasca Community College\*  
 Lake Superior College

Mesabi Range Community & Technical College\*  
 Metropolitan State University  
 Minneapolis Community & Technical College  
 Minnesota State College-Southeast Technical  
 Minnesota State University, Mankato  
 Minnesota State University Moorhead  
 Minnesota West Community & Technical College  
 Normandale Community College  
 North Hennepin Community College  
 Northland Community & Technical College  
 Northwest Technical College  
 Pine Technical College  
 Rainy River Community College\*

Ridgewater College  
 Riverland Community College  
 Rochester Community and Technical College  
 St. Cloud State University  
 St. Cloud Technical College  
 St. Paul Technical College  
 South Central Technical College  
 Southwest State University  
 Vermilion Community College\*  
 Winona State University

\*Itasca, Mesabi Range, Rainy River, and Vermilion make up the Northeast Higher Education District, a consortium of four state colleges.

# Designing the Future

## Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Strategic Plan 2002-2005

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, as the largest provider of public higher education in the state, has a duty to serve the widely varying needs of students, employers and communities throughout Minnesota. The system has developed and adopted this strategic plan so that the institutions, programs and services are focused fully on serving the current and future learning needs of the state. This strategic plan is built on assumptions that institutions must work together in an integrated manner as they reach out to current and prospective students, elementary and secondary educators, community groups, business leaders and others to make higher education available and beneficial to the largest number of Minnesotans possible. At the same time, the system needs to meet the challenge of maintaining the right balance between access and cost, quality and affordability, tradition and innovation, and program breadth and depth.

While this plan addresses the next three years, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities also will look 10 and 20 years into the future to anticipate the programs and services needed to serve students, communities and the state. Knowledge is continually changing and expanding. The system needs to have the innovative processes and structures in place to make this knowledge available and useful to all its students and faculty. The system must encourage and support ongoing innovation among its students, faculty, staff and administrators to keep the system up to date with the social, cultural and economic needs of Minnesota.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system cannot achieve the goals in this strategic plan alone. To be effective, the system needs to work in partnerships that draw on the knowledge and skills of capable people and organizations to meet the evolving needs of Minnesotans and their communities.

Higher education is more important today than ever for Minnesota. Guided by this strategic plan, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities can continue to invigorate communities, enhance the skills of Minnesota's workforce and educate the citizens and leaders of the future.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities holds three principles above all others in everything that the system strives to accomplish:

#### Student focus

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will focus on helping students achieve their personal, learning and career goals.

#### Community success

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will educate people committed to building and maintaining the vital civic and economic institutions that contribute to thriving communities.

#### Stewardship

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will continuously earn the public's trust by efficiently and effectively managing the system's human, fiscal and facilities resources.

## Mission and vision

The Board of Trustees adopted the vision and mission for the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities in May 2000.

### VISION

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will be the preferred pathway to higher educational opportunities and a valued partner in statewide economic development and community building.

The uniqueness and diversity of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and the power of a unified system will enable the system to excel as the most accessible, highest-quality and innovative education provider in the region.

### MISSION

The system's mission is to provide the diverse citizens of Minnesota the benefits of high-quality, accessible, future-oriented higher education; relevant research; and community service.

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system of diverse institutions offers unequalled breadth, variety and quality of educational opportunities across the state. Collectively, and in partnership, the system offers learning opportunities for a technologically sophisticated world that result in:

- **Contributing and empowered citizens**
- **Active participants in a democratic society**
- **Educated, skilled and adaptable workers**
- **Innovative lifelong learners**
- **Practical research and development**
- **Successful communities**

## Foundational processes

The Minnesota State Colleges have identified the following processes as foundational to implementing each goal in the plan and managing the system in an efficient and effective manner. These processes will be reflected in all strategies that the system uses to serve students and communities throughout the state.

- **Communicate effectively** – The system will foster effective communication to improve its programs, services and operations.
- **Pursue partnership and collaboration** – The system will collaborate with state and local community and business groups, elementary and secondary educators, and other higher education systems to meet the needs of students and communities.
- **Respect diversity** – The system will serve the diverse needs of students from all walks of life and address the unique characteristics of communities throughout Minnesota.
- **Continuously improve** – The system will continuously seek to improve the delivery of programs and services by evaluating the processes and outcomes that contribute to the learning experience.
- **Demonstrate accountability** – System and institutional activities will be measured to evaluate whether they are achieving the intended objectives and supporting student and community success.
- **Support innovation** – The system will be innovative in developing and implementing its programs and services to meet the current and emerging learning, citizenship and workforce development needs of students and communities.

## Strategic directions and goals

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will pursue four strategic directions to fulfill its vision, mission and guiding principles.

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## Strategic directions and goals

The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will pursue four strategic directions over the next three years. The 21 goals are the specific accomplishments the system aims to achieve.

### STRATEGIC DIRECTION: Increase access and opportunity

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will provide more people from different backgrounds with the opportunity to experience the benefits of higher education.*

**Rationale** – Minnesota has a long history of investing in higher education and providing accessible education for all people who want to improve themselves and their communities. As Minnesota’s diversity increases through immigration and growing communities of color, the system has an obligation to provide the benefits of education to people from all ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds, as well as those with disabilities.

Minnesotans expect a chance to reach their hopes and dreams through the learning and growth offered by a college education. They deserve nothing less than a high-quality, accessible and affordable system of public higher education.

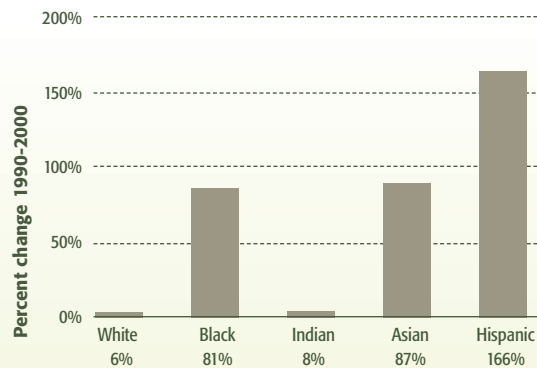
Access to Success,  
Report of the Citizens  
Advisory Commission  
to the Minnesota State  
Colleges and  
Universities, 2002

### GOAL 1: Expand post-secondary participation

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will reach out to encourage full participation of each student group.*

**Rationale** – Most people can benefit from some type of post-secondary education, but their learning goals vary widely. To make sure that the system serves as many types of students as possible, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities consulted with PricewaterhouseCoopers to categorize students according to their higher education needs. Identifying the different groups is especially important since more than 65 percent of students in the state colleges and universities are not in the traditional 18-to-24 age group.

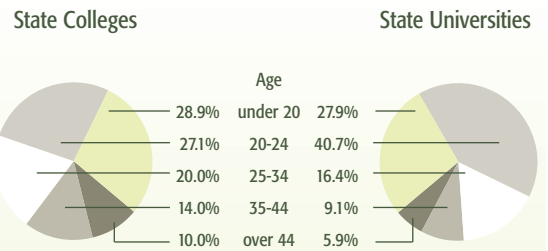
#### Diversity of Minnesota’s population grows



Growth 1990 to 2000 in selected Minnesota race and ethnic groups

Source: Minnesota Planning, 2000 Census

#### The state colleges and universities serve students from all age groups



#### Age of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities students

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Research and Planning  
Includes the 90.4 percent of students within the system for which the age is known in the 2000-2001 academic year.

To better serve Minnesota, the system will encourage the participation of students in each group and be responsive to their needs.

- **College experience learners** are preparing for life and for careers. The system defines them as undergraduate degree-seeking students age 24 and younger.
- **Employed learners** are seeking education to maintain skills or advance their careers, often with the support of their employers. The system defines them as customized training credit and non-credit students.
- **Degree completion adult learners** are seeking to complete an undergraduate or graduate degree, diploma or certificate, often while balancing work and family needs with their educational goals. The system defines them as graduate and undergraduate students age 25 and older who are seeking degrees, diplomas or certificates.
- **Occupational or professional enhancement learners** are seeking to advance in or change careers. The system defines them as non-degree-seeking

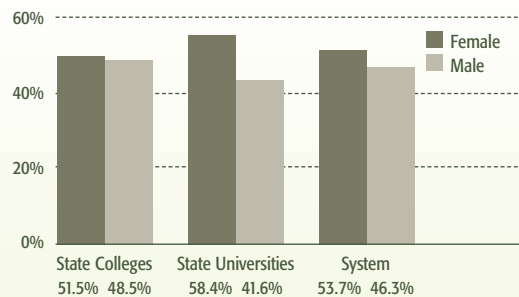
undergraduate students in occupational or professional credit courses, non-degree-seeking graduate students in credit courses and students in occupational or professional non-credit courses.

- **Pre-college (K-12) learners** are interested in taking college-level work before completing secondary school to get a jump-start on college. The system defines them as Post-Secondary Enrollment Options and high school students.
- **Developmental learners** are interested in learning as a prerequisite for enrollment in another program. The system defines them as students enrolled in one or more developmental or remedial courses.
- **Life fulfillment learners** are interested in education for its own sake and view the learning and the academic environment as a source of personal development or enrichment. The system defines them as non-degree-seeking students in non-occupational or professional courses.

Educating all of Minnesota's students is not a choice, but a necessity. Minnesota's economic future will rely on our K-12 schools, colleges and universities to produce students who can meet the rapidly changing needs of our workforce. Because future increases in student enrollments will be driven by students of color, it will be critical for our educational institutions to educate and for our economy to employ people of color.

The State of Students of Color in Minnesota, Minority Education Partnership, Inc., 2001

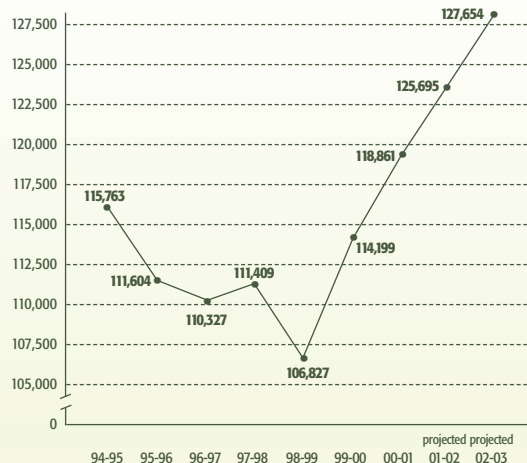
### The system enrolls more women than men



### Gender of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities students

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Research and Planning  
Includes the 96.4 percent of students within the system for which the gender is known in the 2000-2001 academic year.

### Enrollments are growing at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities



### Actual and projected full-year-equivalent enrollment

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Finance Division

**GOAL 2: Increase the participation of under-served students**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will increase the recruitment, enrollment, retention and success of students from groups that have been under-served by higher education.*

**Rationale** – All Minnesotans must be given the chance to share in the benefits of higher education. This is particularly important in an economy that places an increasing premium on knowledge and skills. Prospective students from groups that traditionally have been under-served – students of color, first-generation college students, students for whom English is a second language and low-income students – may need encouragement and more information about the benefits of higher education, financial aid, work-study opportunities and student services that lead to success. Perceived and real barriers to higher education need to be identified and eliminated to support the full participation of students from all backgrounds.

**GOAL 3: Make learning environments inviting and safe**

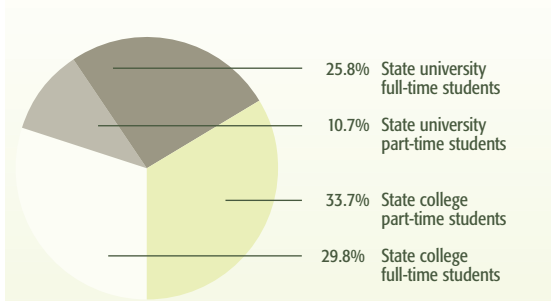
*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will make sure that its programs, services, facilities and employees provide an inviting and safe learning environment for students from all walks of life.*

**Rationale** – Encouraging people to enroll in higher education is only one step in helping them achieve success in college. The task of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is to teach how diversity is a valued resource that can help people think more wisely and act more justly. Programs, services and facilities must be inviting to all people, including those for whom English is not their first language. Students of all cultures, ethnicities and abilities need to feel that the colleges or universities they attend are welcoming and provide a nurturing environment that encourages them to grow and achieve their goals. Students also need to trust that their campuses are safe and secure.

Affordability and accessibility are crucial for Minnesota State Colleges and Universities. The system must help those who cannot afford a college education.

*Participant comment at Public Forum  
Bloomington,  
Minnesota,  
October 2001*

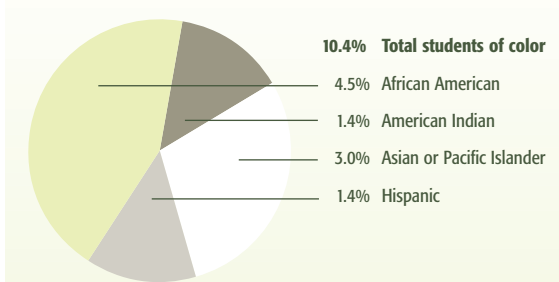
**More than 40 percent attend part-time**



Enrollment status of fall 2001 students at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Research and Planning

**Students of color make up 10.4 percent of enrollment**



African American students make up the largest group of students of color, followed by Asian or Pacific Islanders.

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Research and Planning. Includes the 77.8 percent of students for which race and ethnicity is known in the 2000-2001 academic year. Numbers have been rounded.

**GOAL 4: Increase support for higher education**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will increase public support for higher education so that more Minnesotans have access to affordable higher education to improve their quality of life.*

**Rationale** – Previous generations valued higher education and devoted public resources to develop one of the finest and most extensive systems of higher education in the United States. Higher education is more important now than ever as Minnesota becomes an increasingly active member in a global society and an economy that places a premium on knowledge and skills. Without adequate financial support, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will be unable to continue providing affordable education to meet the state's growing higher education needs.

**GOAL 5: Maintain affordability**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will maintain its standing as the most affordable higher education provider in Minnesota.*

**Rationale** – One of the cornerstones of the system's mission is to provide accessible higher education. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities must continue to be the most affordable higher education provider in the state in order to maintain the system's accessibility to students from all walks of life. If students can rely on the costs staying reasonable, they will be more likely to attend college.

**GOAL 6: Establish partnerships with elementary and secondary educators to prepare students and teachers**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will establish more partnerships with elementary and secondary educators to help students graduate from high school prepared to achieve success in post-secondary programs and to prepare teachers for today's diverse schools.*

**Rationale** – Students who leave high school with the ability to do college-level work are more likely to pursue higher education and succeed. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities faculty and administrators must work with elementary and secondary teachers and administrators to coordinate curriculum, programs and support services to ease the transition from high school to college. By working together they also can help teachers develop the knowledge and skills needed to provide high-quality education to students from diverse backgrounds.

At the dawn of the 21st century, the workforce model has clearly changed. The old descriptor was stability; today, it is constant transition. We tell today's college graduates that they will go through seven careers and countless jobs over the course of their working lifetimes.

Minnesota  
Economic Trends,  
Department of  
Economic Security,  
June/July 2001

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION:  
Expand high-quality learning programs  
and services**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will provide students with a full range of high-quality learning programs and services that respond to student needs and document student achievement.*

**Rationale** – A key legislative objective for higher education is to “provide a level of excellence that is competitive on a national and international level, through high-quality teaching, scholarship and learning in a broad range of arts and sciences, technical education and professional fields.” (Minnesota State Statute Section 135A.053, Subdivision 1) The rapid pace of change in society and the workplace requires the system to continuously evaluate and revise programs and services to offer students innovative and high-quality learning experiences to meet this legislative objective.

Becoming an educated citizen means learning a lot of facts and mastering techniques of reasoning. But it means something more. It means learning how to be a human being capable of love and imagination. We may continue to produce narrow citizens who have difficulty understanding people different from themselves, whose imaginations rarely venture beyond their local setting. ... We have the opportunity to do better. ... That is not ‘political correctness,’ that is the cultivation of humanity.

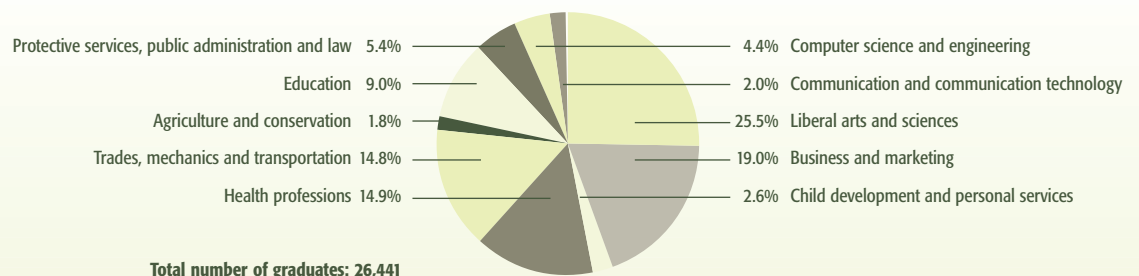
*Martha Nussbaum, Cultivating Humanity: A Classical Defense of Reform in Liberal Education – 1997*

**GOAL 7: Develop lifelong learners and engaged citizens**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enhance opportunities for students to become lifelong learners, critical thinkers and engaged citizens.*

**Rationale** – Higher education, especially in the liberal arts, enables people to broaden their views of themselves and the world, improve their careers and gain self-confidence. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will help students develop lifelong learning, critical thinking and citizenship skills by offering high-quality liberal arts and occupational and professional programs. These programs help students prepare for a constantly changing world by learning investigation, analysis and problem-solving skills along with an understanding of people, cultures and traditions throughout the state, nation and world.

*Minnesota State Colleges and Universities offer a wide range of programs*



Program areas by percentage of total graduates in the 1999-2000 academic year

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Research and Planning

**GOAL 8: Provide up-to-date education and training for work and careers**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will provide up-to-date and innovative curriculum and equipment that prepare students for entry into the workforce and advancement in their careers.*

**Rationale** – To carry out their responsibility for preparing students to succeed in the workforce, the state colleges and universities need to provide current equipment, relevant program content and opportunities for students to develop the knowledge and skills they need for their work. Minnesotans will need to continue updating their knowledge and skills as state, national and global economies evolve. Providing education and training for work and careers is particularly important because Minnesota's workforce is projected to grow more slowly in coming decades and the ratio of retirees to workers will increase.

**GOAL 9: Expand graduate education**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will provide and expand graduate education and practical research and development, particularly in applied fields of study.*

**Rationale** – Graduate education at the state universities contributes to community vitality throughout Minnesota by providing personal, workforce and economic development in applied fields. Graduate study helps students gain high-level knowledge and skills that enable them to advance personally and professionally. Graduate education also provides faculty and students with opportunities to use their expertise to provide innovative research and service to strengthen their academic fields and serve their communities.

**GOAL 10: Offer electronic learning options**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will enhance the use of electronic-learning tools and processes to support classroom learning and to provide students with a full range of high-quality programs and student services.*

**Rationale** – More people are using information technology tools to enhance their personal and professional lives. This means more students will expect online learning programs and student services. Some students will want to take an entire course online. Other students will want to support their classroom learning with online resources such as tutorials, classroom notes and supplemental reading. These online programs and student services have the potential to provide innovative learning experiences while increasing efficiency and saving significant resources at the institutions.

**GOAL 11: Meet the full range of student learning needs**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will provide a full range of educational options that respond to the wide variety of student learning styles.*

**Rationale** – The system serves students who come to college with many different experiences, expectations and learning styles. To effectively serve these students, the state colleges and universities will develop and expand innovative models for delivering higher education. These educational options will range from traditional classroom learning to experiential learning that puts students in real-world learning situations.

Meeting the complex range of skills likely to be required of our workforce in the future presents a significant challenge to our educational system. But it is a challenge we cannot afford to ignore. We must provide young people with the opportunities and incentives to learn.

Alan Greenspan,  
Summit on the  
21st Century  
Workforce,  
June 20, 2001

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION:  
Strengthen community development  
and economic vitality**

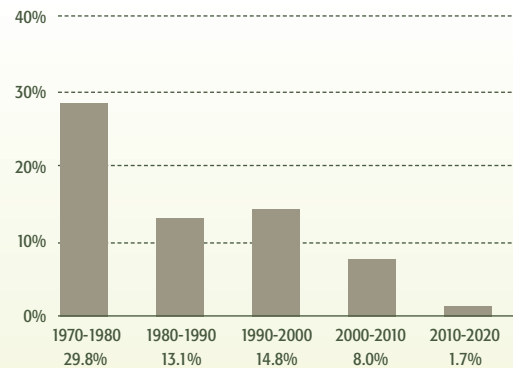
*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will work in new and collaborative ways to maintain and build vital communities and economies at the local, regional and state levels.*

**Rationale** – Minnesota’s higher education systems should “assist the state in being competitive in the world market and to prepare a highly skilled and adaptable workforce that meets Minnesota’s opportunities and needs.” (Minnesota State Statute Section 135A.053, Subdivision 1) The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system is in a unique and important position to help Minnesotans develop the knowledge and skills they need to create strong communities and economies.

We have an urgent need to continue support for the existing workforce. Funding needs to continue to grow for customized training efforts. This can play a huge role in the vitality of small and big businesses.

Participant comment at  
Community Forum,  
Alexandria  
Technical College,  
October 2001

**Growth in Minnesota workforce slows**



**Past and projected Minnesota labor force growth**

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics and Minnesota Planning

**GOAL 12: Contribute to vital communities**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will work with local communities to help them develop, maintain and enhance their vitality.*

**Rationale** – With 53 campuses located in 46 communities throughout the state, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is ideally situated to help communities develop the citizens, leaders and workforce they need to maintain and improve their vitality. Healthy communities, in turn, will help maintain and strengthen the vitality of the state colleges and universities and the state as a whole.

**GOAL 13: Support state and local economic development initiatives**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will seek new ways to serve as a key partner to coordinate local, regional and statewide economic development initiatives.*

**Rationale** – Economic development is a legislative objective for public higher education in Minnesota. The system plays a central role in economic development by educating a skilled and flexible workforce, providing organizations with business and management training, and conducting applied research that contributes to the innovation and productivity of the state’s businesses and communities. The state’s economy is changing constantly as it becomes increasingly knowledge-based and part of the global marketplace. As the system responds to the needs of emerging industries, it also must strengthen its key role in preparing teachers and health care workers and supporting important traditional Minnesota industries such as agriculture, food production and manufacturing.

**GOAL 14: Establish state and regional collaborations**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will develop frameworks for state and regional planning and collaboration that help more of its institutions to work in partnership with community and business groups.*

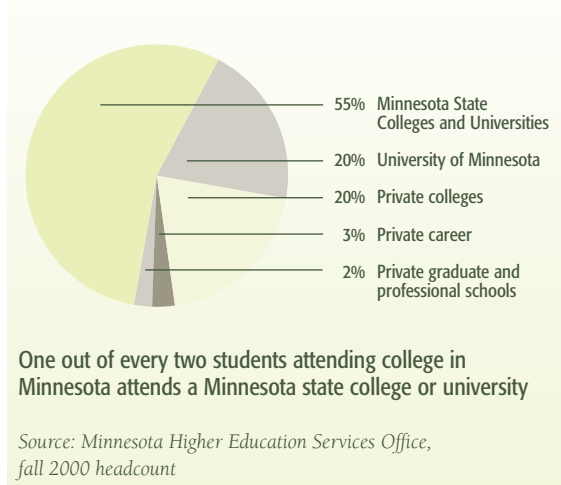
**Rationale** – Statewide and regional planning provides a foundation for state colleges and universities to collaborate on programs and services and marshal their resources more efficiently and effectively. Working as partners, the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities can reach out to community and business leaders to identify and meet important social and economic needs. The system has strong models of statewide and regional planning in place, such as the Farm Business Management and Small Business Management programs, which are based on a statewide structure composed of regions; the Metro Alliance collaborative, consisting of the 10 state colleges and one state university in the Twin Cities; and the Northeast Higher Education District, a consortium of four state colleges in northeast Minnesota.

**GOAL 15: Work collaboratively with other higher education providers**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will collaborate with other public and private providers of higher education to evaluate and meet the state's higher education needs.*

**Rationale** – Minnesota has a rich tradition of public and private higher education that provides high-quality learning opportunities to students from all walks of life. The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will cooperate with fellow members of the Higher Education Advisory Council, as well as with other public and private providers of higher education, to enhance educational opportunity and make full use of limited resources.

**The state's largest provider of higher education**



Five years after the merger, (the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system) is still a “work in progress,” moving in the right direction on many fronts but not as far along as it could have been. ... To make further progress... (the system's) leaders need to provide the organization with a clearer sense of direction and systematically measure progress toward strategic goals.

*Office of the Legislative Auditor, August 2000*

Advocates of the (Minnesota State Colleges and Universities) merger hoped that having one board direct most of the state's public two- and four-year higher education institutions would encourage staff to work together to meet Minnesota's unmet higher education needs. ... However, to realize these benefits, system leaders must work together to set the system's vision, mission and goals and measure progress toward them.

Office of the Legislative Auditor, August 2000

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION:**  
**Fully integrate the system**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will become a more fully coordinated and integrated system of distinct higher education institutions that provide high-quality education.*

**Rationale** – A primary reason for creating the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system was to coordinate programs and services, providing students with easy and seamless access to higher education. The system has a public responsibility to fully integrate its programs and services to provide students with access to the collective programs, services and strengths of its distinct institutions.

**GOAL 16: Recruit and invest in excellent faculty, staff and administrators**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will recruit, develop and retain diverse and qualified faculty, staff and administrators whose primary objective is to provide the highest-quality education and service to students.*

**Rationale** – One of the primary ways that an organization achieves excellence is by hiring and educating a diverse workforce reflective of the people it serves. The learning experiences

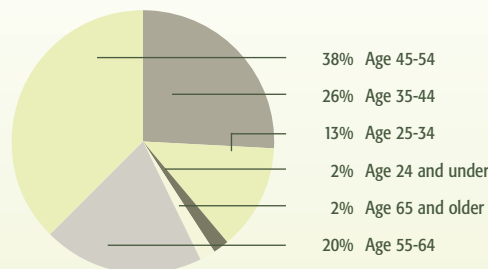
of students are directly related to the teaching skills, background, scholarship and service of the faculty. The service experience for students is directly related to the knowledge and skill of staff. The overall operation of the institutions depends on highly skilled administrators. By supporting professional development, excellence and collegiality among faculty, staff and administrators, the Minnesota State College and Universities will provide students with a high-quality learning experience. As more faculty, staff and administrators reach retirement age, it will become more critical to establish strong processes to find and retain the best people to teach and serve the students.

**GOAL 17: Develop integrated plans**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will develop and evaluate integrated strategic, academic, financial, technology and facilities plans at each institution and at the system level.*

**Rationale** – The system's strengths come from the uniqueness of the individual institutions and the way they work together to provide a full range of learning options. The system can do this by coordinating and integrating its academic, financial, human resource, technology and facilities plans at the institution and system levels so these plans support each other.

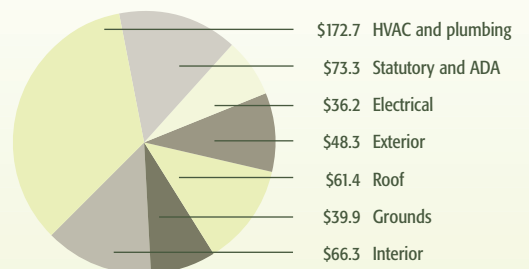
**Most faculty, staff older than 45**



Age groups for all faculty and staff in FY2002

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Human Resources Division

**System buildings need maintenance, repair**  
(Figures in millions, total = \$498.1)



Deferred maintenance and repair needs in 1999

Source: Office of the Chancellor, Finance Division

**GOAL 18: Serve as good stewards of capital assets**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will serve as good stewards of its capital assets by maximizing the use of and appropriately maintaining, repairing and renewing the buildings and infrastructure of the system and its individual campuses.*

**Rationale** – The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities manage a large number and wide variety of capital assets throughout Minnesota, including a broad array of buildings and infrastructure. The system and its institutions have a public responsibility to make sure these assets are used to their fullest advantage and maintained in a manner that protects the public investment.

**GOAL 19: Improve transfer processes**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will continue to improve the transfer process.*

**Rationale** – Thousands of students transfer between institutions to accomplish their educational goals. In the overwhelming majority of cases, transfer works smoothly for students and institutions. While smooth transfer is important, the system must protect the viability of its programs and degrees. This requires that students understand the types of courses that will transfer and the types that will not. Faculty from the various institutions will coordinate their curricula to make transfer clear and easy while maintaining program integrity.

**GOAL 20: Align the system's technology infrastructure**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will fully align its technology infrastructure, including networks and systems, to support a fully integrated statewide higher education system while preserving the ability of campuses to serve unique local needs.*

**Rationale** – Integrated technology networks, administrative systems and academic systems are key resources to help the individual institutions operate as a system. Moving the campuses more quickly into an effective and efficient technology infrastructure will help the institutions better serve students while helping the system to operate as a fully coordinated and integrated system of higher education.

**GOAL 21: Strengthen financial systems and processes**

*The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities will target its financial resources on the state's most important higher education needs and improve the financial viability of its institutions by using data-driven financial systems, tools, programs and processes.*

**Rationale** – Taxpayers expect public resources to be used to meet the state's highest priorities. The effective and efficient use of the system's resources will help the state colleges and universities meet these priorities while keeping costs as low as possible for students. The effective allocation of resources and the continuing financial health of the institutions are critical to implementing this strategic plan.

States cannot assume that the market and institutional initiatives will take care of all of the state's needs. Technology investments that enhance system's competitive advantage in particular areas or are linked to important economic development priorities of the state will be needed.

Technology Planning:  
State and  
System Issues,  
Education Commission  
of the States,  
September 1998

## Measuring the progress of the plan

A strategic plan becomes most useful when the success of its implementation is measured and reported back to stakeholders. Establishing an accountability system will help Minnesota State Colleges and Universities and its institutions focus on how well they are achieving the vision, mission and goals of the plan.

The system will work over the coming year to develop a balanced set of indicators to monitor progress toward achieving the system's strategic directions and goals. An effective indicator system should:

- **Be based on the strategic plan**, not on what is easy to measure or is measured by other organizations.
- **Be cost-effective.** The cost of using particular measures must be justified by the benefits expected.
- **Include shorter-term measures**, which often are measures of input or process, while working toward measures of results or outcomes. Short-term measures are important indicators of progress toward long-term goals.
- **Set measurable targets for monitoring progress.** Most targets should be attainable goals, but some should be "stretch" targets that push the organization to excel.
- **Use the results for decision-making and evaluating performance.** If the results indicate that progress is not being achieved, then strategies may have to be revised.
- **Remain flexible.** Indicators deteriorate over time and must be reviewed to ensure the reliability of underlying data and the indicators.

This strategic plan provides the foundation for making accountability decisions. However, it will take the participation of system stakeholders, the Board of Trustees, and institutional and system leaders to develop and implement a full accountability system. Minnesota State Colleges and Universities is committed to measurement and accountability because it is committed to the success of this strategic plan.

## Next steps for system and institutional planning

This plan will be used to guide the work of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities for the next three years by serving as the foundation for:

- The annual work plans for the Office of the Chancellor, including the 2002-2003 work plan that will be presented to the Board of Trustees in September 2002;
- The annual work plans of each state college and university;
- The indicators development project; and
- The development of the 2004-2005 biennial budget request for the system.

The work plans, biennial budget and indicators developed collaboratively by the Office of the Chancellor and the system's institutions will bring the strategic direction and goals to life. However, without adequate funding, the system will struggle to implement this plan in a way that maintains the quality, affordability and competitiveness of the state colleges and universities. The system hopes that the governor, Legislature, foundations and the non-profit and business communities will help provide the resources to make this plan a reality for the thousands of current and future students who make Minnesota work.

## Planning resources

### INFORMATION SOURCES

Information used in the strategic planning was derived from many sources, including:

- Chancellor James McCormick's visits with faculty, staff, administrators and community representatives at every state college and university and his visits with more than 150 legislators;
- *Access to Success*, the April 2002 report of the Citizens Advisory Commission of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities;
- Discussions with students, faculty, staff and administrators throughout the system;
- State and national reports; and
- Information that the Office of the Chancellor compiled about the system and its institutions.

### KEY MESSAGES

These key messages and themes emerged from the information sources that helped in identifying and developing the strategic directions and goals.

- Minnesota's demographic trends indicate that students increasingly will come from varied cultures and backgrounds with a wider range of goals requiring a broader array of learning opportunities and options.
- Increased competition for limited state resources will require Minnesota State Colleges and Universities to demonstrate the value received from a greater investment of state funds and to seek additional funding from federal and private sources.
- Public higher education is key to the success of Minnesota's people and communities.
- Traditional industries will continue to evolve and provide a solid foundation for Minnesota's economy, while new industries provide opportunities for growth.
- The Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system needs to fully develop as a system to meet the learning, community service and economic development needs of Minnesota.

## Minnesota State Colleges and Universities By the numbers

Number of Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.....	34
Number of campuses.....	53
Number of communities in which campuses are located.....	46
Number of students served per semester, measured by fall 2001 headcount enrollment .....	161,966
Number of students served per year, based on projected full-year-equivalent enrollment, 2001-2002.....	125,695
Number of students served per year in credit-based courses, measured by annual headcount enrollment, 2001-2002.....	224,679
Number of students per year in non-credit courses, measured by annual headcount enrollment, 2001-2002.....	95,419
Total students served per year, measured by unduplicated headcount enrollment, 2001-2002.....	320,098
Number of full-time and part-time faculty and staff .....	17,190
Average age of students .....	26.6
Percent of students who are undergraduates.....	97%
Number of graduates produced each year.....	25,200
Percent of graduates who stay in Minnesota to work or continue their education .....	81.7%
Number of degree programs offered by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.....	3,600
Percent of Minnesota higher education market served by Minnesota State Colleges and Universities.....	55%

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