

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

**BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Work Session**

**September 7, 2006**

A work session of the Board of Regents was held on Thursday, September 7, 2006 at 1:20 p.m. in the East Committee Room, 600 McNamara Alumni Center.

Regents present: Patricia Simmons, presiding; Clyde Allen, Anthony Baraga, Frank Berman, Dallas Bohnsack, John Frobenius, Steven Hunter, Cynthia Leshner, David Metzen, and Lakeesha Ransom.

Staff present: President Robert H. Bruininks; Senior Vice President and Provost Thomas Sullivan; Vice Presidents Kathryn Brown and Carol Carrier; and Executive Director Ann Cieslak.

Regent Simmons informed the Board that the goal of work session was to examine, comment on, and reach consensus on a set of principles that will guide the human resources systems of the University. She added that the Board's principles will then be utilized to develop specific Board policies that will be brought to the Faculty, Staff, and Student Affairs Committee for review.

Simmons introduced Senior Vice President and Provost Sullivan and Vice Presidents Brown and Carrier to present background information on University human resources issues and the structure of Board and administrative policies and procedures. The presenters noted the following during their presentation:

- Recruiting and retaining top talent to the University is becoming increasingly competitive;
- 70 percent of the University's budget is directed toward employee-related costs;
- More than 75 percent of both University faculty and staff express satisfaction with their employment;
- Current Board policies relating to human resources contain excessive operational detail, lack guiding principles, and fail to communicate an integrated vision.

The following human resources guiding principles were presented for Board analysis and discussion:

1. Recruit, engage, and retain talented, diverse faculty who contribute to the mission of a top ranked public research university.
2. Recognize the unique contributions of the faculty in accomplishing our mission and aggressively promote their vitality.
3. Recruit, engage, and retain talented, diverse staff who understand how their work supports the mission.
4. Achieve and maintain competitive compensation, benefits, and people practices consistent with comparable markets for each category of employees.
5. Select and support leaders who model the values of the institution.

6. Regularly evaluate performance, in every role, against appropriate criteria and standards using formal and informal recognition systems to reward excellence.
7. Expect and support responsible conduct and continued professional growth, development, and vitality of all employees.
8. Ensure that each employee experiences and contributes to a workplace that is respectful, inclusive, and responsive to both professional and personal needs.
9. Structure human resource policies, systems, and practices to increase the overall effectiveness and productivity of faculty and staff through best practices, flexibility, transparency, and accountability.

Carrier proposed an integrated set of Board human resources policies that will be developed using the Board's guiding principles.

Regent Leshner observed that the establishment of guiding principles is the appropriate first step in the process. She expressed appreciation for the scope of the proposed restructuring and observed that major transformational change is often more successful than incremental change.

Regents Allen and Bell commented that the guiding principles should focus on all employees and need not differentiate between faculty and staff. Several Regents noted that the leadership principle (#5) did not accurately capture all of the components of leadership, and suggested it be broadened.

Simmons summarized the work session by making the following observations:

- The establishment of guiding principles is an important first step;
- The development of guiding principles is the appropriate role for the Board;
- The use of language is extremely critical in differentiating between Board policies and administrative procedures;
- Professional development of all employees is important;
- The expectation of ethical conduct should be clearly expressed in the principles;
- Evaluation of employee performance should be conducted regularly;
- Exceptional performance should be appropriately rewarded;
- The principles must take into account the recruitment, development, and support of leaders;
- Positive work environment is important to recruitment and retention issues;
- Further discussion needs to occur as to whether faculty and staff should be differentiated or grouped together in the guiding principles;
- Identifying employees who are not successful at the University should be included in the principles;
- A culture of listening should be encouraged.

Simmons requested that a revised set of guiding principles reflecting Regent concerns be finalized so that Board review of individual policies may proceed.

The work session adjourned at 2:28 p.m.

**ANN D. CIESLAK**  
**Executive Director and**  
**Corporate Secretary**