University of Minnesota

Academic Task Force Report and Recommendations:
Academic Positioning

Report to the President

March 30, 2005

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Executive Summary

The mandate for bold leadership and change now has been issued. On March 11, 2005 the University of Minnesota’s Board of Regents unanimously endorsed the Strategic Positioning Report. That report set a goal for the University to reach new heights of excellence and academic distinction by aspiring to be, within the next decade, one of the top three public research universities in the world.

As part of this process, an Academic Task Force was asked to prepare a series of recommendations for consideration by President Bruininks. The aim of these recommendations was to identify, based on the Strategic Positioning Report, new pathways for the University, anticipating the future and realigning resources to show promise for the new, frequently interdisciplinary pursuits of the 21st century. The recommendations contained in the report are specific to the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus, but all recommendations should be reviewed by the coordinate campuses as they complete their own strategic positioning processes currently underway.

The 31 recommendations for consideration in this report are not meant to be the final steps but should be springboards for new ideas at all levels of our organizational structure. Some recommended changes will require investment of new or additional resources; others will result in cost savings. All cost savings realized as a result of implementation of any of these recommendations will be reinvested in the academic enterprise as permanent reallocations. All faculty and staff affected by any final action by the Board of Regents will continue to enjoy all rights they currently have under University policy. As implementation plans are developing, faculty and staff will be consulted.

This Academic Task Force report identifies three major areas of change. There are recommendations that suggest new ways to improve the undergraduate and graduate experience, faculty culture, and the reshaping and design of the University. The report recommends that a series of Task Forces report to the President and Provost with detailed implementation plans by December 10, 2005. The process of reviewing programs, services, structures, and evaluating priorities, is meant to be a multi-year, ongoing one.

To improve the undergraduate experience at the University, there are recommendations for a new model for academic support services, a newly reconstituted Consortium for Post-Secondary Academic Success, enhanced outreach and recruitment efforts, improved retention and graduation strategies, a renewal of the University’s commitment to diversity, a new Baccalaureate Writing Institute, and a new a Regents Honors College.

Any great university relies on its faculty. The University must do all it can to strengthen its current approach and implement a broad range of new strategies to attract, retain, recognize, reward, and develop its faculty.

A reshaped University is recommended for consideration. There are a number of recommendations for improving the scope of the Academic Health Center as it prepares
for the 21st century. A new College of Design integrating several design disciplines into a new College is recommended for consideration. A reconfiguration of the College of Biological Sciences, Institute of Technology, College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences, and College of Natural Resources is recommended for consideration as is the creation of a new Institute of the Environment. A Task Force is proposed to review the College of Liberal Arts to examine ways it can be even stronger as the “centerpiece” of the University’s liberal arts curriculum, recognizing the unique and compatible role of the University of Minnesota, Morris. A redesign of Education and Human Development is recommended for consideration to integrate all departments that address education, human development and developmental education within the College of Education and Human Development (this includes the creation of a new General Developmental Education department within the new College).

In addition, the Academic Task Force recommends for consideration that the Department of Food Science and Nutrition department be relocated with several possibilities suggested. To enhance and further promote the University’s strengths in graduate education, graduate programs should be evaluated to ensure their proper alignment with academic demand and needs. For smaller academic units opportunities for shared administrative functions should be assessed. Coordinate campuses will continue their own strategic positioning processes in parallel with the initiatives on the Twin Cities campus.
I. Introduction

A. A Mandate for Excellence

The mandate for bold leadership and change has now been issued: On March 11, 2005 the University of Minnesota’s Board of Regents unanimously endorsed the Strategic Positioning Report. There is broad recognition that we have entered a new era for higher education, and with it the need to improve and transform fundamentally the University to greater academic distinction. To fulfill our foundational state statutory mandate to be Minnesota’s primary research and graduate education center, the University must embark upon new pathways to ensure our continued success and leadership. The prospect is both daunting and inspiring. It will require energy, imagination, dedication, and leadership—over time. This process, and evaluation will be ongoing. Additional recommendations may well be added in the future. One purpose of this document is to provide coherent direction to a series of new Task Forces, which will then produce detailed ideas and action plans to reshape and redesign our University. While this document is extensive and wide-ranging we expect that it will promote, and we strongly encourage, further discussion for additional bold and inspiring ideas to improve our University. The quest to improve the excellence of our University requires the full resolve and creativity of our University community.

This strategic positioning process represents a continuity of vision for the future of the University. In his Inaugural Address, President Bruininks emphasized three areas that form the core of the University’s strategic vision. He stated that the University must: invest in our distinctive strengths, capturing new areas of potential while recognizing that we will have to make strategic choices; deepen the interdisciplinary work that allows us to leverage the breadth and particular strengths of the University, creating new academic synergies; and deliver the best possible education to our students at the undergraduate, graduate, and professional levels. He made this commitment: “I want to assure you that the leadership of this great University is fully committed to achieving excellence in every aspect of our mission, in fulfilling the promises we have made to the University community and to the state of Minnesota.”

Most of the recommendations in this report are specific to the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities campus, but all of the recommendations should be reviewed by coordinate campuses for potential applicability, as each of these campuses completes their strategic positioning processes currently underway. All chancellors should consider developing their own parallel Task Forces to develop specific plans for writing, honors, and diversity, as well as additional areas the chancellors may want to review.

The University of Minnesota recently celebrated its 154th anniversary. This is a cause for celebration—and for reflection—as we move into the 21st century. These are exciting

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1 Robert H. Bruininks, Inaugural Address, “Advancing Knowledge: A Partner for the Public Good” (February 28, 2003). Available at: http://www1.umn.edu/pres/02_speeches_030228.html
times for higher education and for the University of Minnesota. We are presented with unprecedented challenges and unprecedented opportunities. We believe the entire University community is prepared to face our challenges and develop the promise of our opportunities.

Access to excellence in higher education is one of our state’s most important priorities. Indeed, access to excellence informs the very structure of this report by suggesting new ways to improve the undergraduate and graduate experience, to enhance faculty culture and productivity, and to advance ideas to create exciting academic synergies. Maintaining and enhancing excellence at the University of Minnesota is necessary to ensure the state’s long-term economic and cultural success. The goal of excellence is fully compatible with access. The University must continue to serve approximately the same number of students but we simply must enhance their educational experience and ensure better results. Our pursuit of excellence demands attention to equity and to the encouragement of diversity in all its forms. Attention to excellence also requires that we anticipate the future and align our academic resources to enhance the new, often interdisciplinary, sciences, arts, and professions of the 21st century. In the coming decade, the University also has the opportunity to identify, attract, mentor, inspire, reward, and retain faculty and staff of the highest quality.

The University today comprises a flagship research campus; coordinate campuses, each with its own unique mission and strong signature and reputation; and a network of statewide research centers and University of Minnesota Extension Service offices. Through these resources, the University provides a unique contribution and a comparative national and international advantage to Minnesota's system of higher education. Our state-mandated responsibilities and our distinctive mission are clear—the University offers a range of undergraduate, graduate, and professional education, and is “the primary state-supported academic agency for research and extension services.” In responding to our mission, we generate more than 98 percent of sponsored research in Minnesota’s higher education institutions; we graduated over 12,000 students in 2003-04; we operate six Research and Outreach Centers and 18 regional extension offices; we are the only Research I-category Ph.D awarding public institution in the state; we graduate a very high proportion of our state’s professionals. The interdisciplinary potential and impact of our research and teaching is unmatched and critical to Minnesota’s future.

Our threefold mission, as most recently articulated by the Board of Regents in 1994, is carried out throughout the state and across multiple campuses and encompasses research and discovery, teaching and learning, and outreach and public service. Equally clear, yet perhaps less well-understood, are statewide objectives established by statute in 1996 for higher education in Minnesota to “provide a level of excellence that is competitive on a national and international level, through high quality teaching, scholarship, and learning.” To continue to pursue our unique contribution to higher education with excellence and purpose will require moving beyond the status quo. Indeed, the Citizens

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2 Minnesota Statutes, Section 135A.052
4 Minnesota Statutes, Section 135A.053
League, an independent group of experienced, committed, and civic-minded Minnesotans, produced a report in 2004, commissioned by Governor Tim Pawlenty, on higher education that urged leaders to action: “The time for bold leadership, for hard choices, for reform, for innovation, and for long-term investments is now.”[^5] Indeed, the time is now to renew and to transform this great university through boldness, creativity, and determination.

**B. Our Challenges and Opportunities**

We have entered a transformative era for higher education. The University and others in higher education face unprecedented challenges. An important part of understanding our commitment to the public good is to recognize how demographic changes – some unique to our region – affect our future. Minnesota’s population, like the nation’s, is becoming more diverse and older, and the implications for higher education are immense. About 40 percent of our current faculty is of an age likely to retire within the next decade. Demographic trends in Minnesota, in a number of ways, are different from the national picture in that the increase in diversity and the decrease in projected numbers of high school age students are more pronounced. There will be many more students of color, with 30 percent of Minnesota’s high school graduates projected to be students of color by 2018, compared to 13 percent in 2004.[^6] There will be a greater need for the University to work in partnership with Minnesota schools on PreK-12 educational preparation to ensure that those seeking admission to higher education institutions are fully prepared to accept the rigors of a research university education. It is extremely important for the University to do all it can to maintain its enrollment and its commitment to attracting bright, diverse, well-prepared, and motivated students. We cannot be a great university without recognizing that promoting access based on talent and potential – and not income or other social advantages – is a crucial aspect of our mission.

More than ever, we must look beyond our past and beyond our borders to thrive in an increasingly competitive and global higher education scene. The national and international competition for highly qualified faculty and talented undergraduate, graduate, and professional students is becoming ever more intense. Many countries around the world are devoting considerable resources to reforming and improving their research universities, including much more aggressive recruitment of international students and faculty. We face world-wide competition and will be held to world-class standards. Without transformative change, the University and Minnesota face the prospect of losing our competitive position and the prospect of eroding quality in this increasingly competitive environment. Merely maintaining the status quo will undermine how well the University can serve the needs of Minnesota, and will affect the quality of life for all Minnesotans.


We are asked to pursue our unique research and education mission in the face of serious new financial constraints. Minnesota has dropped from 6th among states in 1978 to 26th in 2004 in the percentage of state budget support for higher education, as measured by tax effort or state support per $1,000 of personal income. Yet, the costs associated with high-quality research, teaching, and public outreach require growth and additional investments in public research university funding. Competition with other state-funded entities, such as PreK-12 education, health care, and corrections, will continue to increase. The competition for private gifts, particularly large, multi-million dollar gifts, will become increasingly keen. After years of steady increases in the budgets of major research funding agencies like the NIH and the NSF, most federal research funding sources anticipate funding cuts or increases at levels below inflation due to the federal deficit. This will require the University of Minnesota to make the needed decisions to insure our competitive position in research, education and public engagement. This commitment is essential to the future of Minnesota’s economy and quality of life. Notably, this occurs at a time when the resource gap between public and private higher education continues to widen and while competition among universities in the global market continues to escalate.

C. The Process of Change

Given this series of challenges—and opportunities—we should not assume that our University will succeed in the 21st century without a thoughtful, fresh approach consistent with our heritage and our core values. Minnesota needs our unique research system and the University, in turn, needs Minnesota.7 As President Robert Bruininks remarked in response to a question at his most recent State of the University address: “This [strategic positioning process] is all about rethinking the future of higher education. Rethinking about how it's organized, how it operates, what it addresses, how it connects itself to the needs of our communities and our world.”8 Responsive and responsible change is important for everyone given that maintaining the status quo at the University would impair seriously our ability to continue to serve the state of Minnesota, our nation, and the world with distinction in research, teaching and public outreach.

This past summer, we began the first comprehensive strategic positioning process the University has undergone in more than a decade. As part of our process we have encouraged, and continue to encourage, comments and suggestions from the entire University community.9 To date, this consultative process has included presentations at five Regents meetings, over three dozen question-and-answer sessions, five town hall meetings, the creation of a Web site, and monthly e-mails from the Provost. There have been discussions both in meetings of the Deans’ Council and through the compact planning and budget process with the University’s academic and service units, including

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7 See the February 28, 2003 Inaugural Address of President Bruininks “Advancing Knowledge: A Partner for the Public Good,” available at: http://www1.umn.edu/pres/02_speeches_030228.html
9 To provide comments and suggestions please visit the Strategic Positioning Process Web site: http://www1.umn.edu/systemwide/strategic_positioning/
the coordinate campuses. A draft report was submitted to the Board of Regents on February 10 defining our goal to be one of the top three public research universities in the world and providing framing concepts, decision-making criteria, and action strategies to reach that goal within the next decade. The plan also emphasized the critical importance of a comparable aspiration for our coordinate campuses and their respective peer groups. The plan was reviewed and unanimously approved by the Board action at the March 2005 meeting. This is a mandate for bold leadership and change. Further discussions, refinements, and consultation will continue through the spring semester.

D. Looking Forward

As part of the strategic positioning process, President Bruininks appointed two working groups to review academic service and business operations of the University of Minnesota system. Based on the Strategic Positioning Report, these two task forces have reviewed academic and administrative programs in order to develop recommendations for consideration by President Bruininks. After broad consultation in the Spring with relevant colleges, faculty, and groups representing employees and students, the President will formulate and submit his recommendations for consideration to the Board in May and June. In May, the Board will hold a special public hearing on the President’s recommendations. The Board will vote on the recommendations at its June meeting. Assuming Board action in June, extensive consultation will follow for a period of six months in order to seek advice and address implementation options and strategies.

There are five general guiding planning principles that were developed by the academic task force. The planning principles are intended to be consistent with the criteria outlined in the strategic positioning document and relate directly to, and serve to advance, the five action strategies described in the Strategic Positioning Report:

- Recruit, educate, challenge, and graduate outstanding students
- Recruit, mentor, reward, and retain outstanding faculty and staff
- Promote an effective organizational culture that is committed to excellence and responsive to change
- Enhance and effectively utilize our resources and infrastructure
- Communicate clearly and credibly with all our constituencies and practice public engagement responsive to the public good

The Academic Task Force principles and planning assumptions (and the recommendations for consideration that follow) were developed with the understanding that committee members should not assume that the arrangements of the past are sufficient in themselves to meet the challenges of the University in the 21st century.

The five guiding planning principles for the Academic Task Force are:

1. Optimally align resources and budgets with the mission and the goal of the University and develop priorities based on centrality to mission, quality, productivity and impact.
2. Increase investment in those areas that best advance excellence and leverage existing resources with special attention to uniqueness, comparative advantage, and economies of scale.

3. Improve synergy and critical mass in academic programs through enhanced coordination, collaboration and use of academic resources.

4. Focus on continuous improvement by reducing operating costs and increasing service and productivity through better use of human and fiscal resources.

5. Rationalize academic programs, curricula, and organization in ways that create an opportunity to move to world-class recognition by the best use of our faculty talent and energy.
II. Undergraduate Admissions, Enrichment, and Support

A. Introduction

The quality of undergraduate education at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities is a central factor contributing to the University’s ability to achieve its vision of becoming one of the world’s top three research universities. There is a symbiotic relationship between excellence in research and excellence in teaching and learning. Faculty, staff, and students are all agents of academic excellence in the 21st century paradigm of higher education. To sustain and advance academic quality at the University, we must institute systemic improvements in undergraduate education that promote high expectations for learning outcomes and a rich and supportive environment for student engagement in excellence.

There are recommendations for consideration below for systemic advancements in four areas that would improve significantly the effectiveness of undergraduate education and enhance the student experience at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities:

- Campus-Wide Academic Support and Advising Services
- Enhancing Access and Diversity
- Baccalaureate Writing Initiative
- Regents Honors College

These efforts are intended to promote several inter-related academic and fiscal advantages that will position the University to benefit from as yet unforeseen but imminent future opportunities to achieve excellence in the education and support of our students. In general, the University will benefit from increased success in recruitment of high ability and well-prepared students, strengthened commitment to educational attainment, improved institutional accountability and demonstrated learning outcomes, improved student services, increased student satisfaction, and improved 4-, 5- and 6-year graduation rates. Several of these academic advantages translate to fiscal advantages through streamlined efforts, minimization of redundancy, and overall increased efficiencies. These efforts possess the added advantage of increasing student access to the University of Minnesota by expanding the number of students we can serve.
B. Campus-Wide Academic Support and Advising Services

Introduction

Strengthening academic support and advising services campus-wide will better position the University to fulfill its historical commitment to access as a renewed commitment to educational attainment, a mission better fitting the needs of the increasingly diverse student body of the 21st century.

To accomplish this, we recommend for consideration alignment of organizational structures and institutional practices to improve student support and advising services for all students, which will reinforce and invigorate the University’s deep institutional commitment to opportunity and access to excellence for all.

Statement of Recommendations

(1) We recommend for consideration that the University articulate high expectations and standards for academic achievement of all enrolled students.

All students, regardless of discipline, program, or level of study, must embrace and actively engage in the rigor, challenge and opportunity inherent in a world-class research university. High expectations must be adopted campus-wide and all colleges and schools should contribute to the University’s obligation to provide proper services to support all students.

(2) We recommend for consideration the creation of a more centralized model for coordinating and delivering academic support services, expanding and extending various areas of expertise developed in General College as foundational elements.

(3) We recommend for consideration that the President and Provost appoint a Task Force to design and plan the implementation of expanded student support services; a Task Force report would be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005.

Rationale

The rapidly evolving context of higher education and increasing diversity of the student body have created an entirely new set of challenges for students of the 21st century. Nowhere in the academy are the needs and the response as complex as at a comprehensive public research institution. The functions of advising and mentoring of students are more critical than ever, yet few universities consistently deliver excellence in these areas.

Good academic advising has been characterized as a great challenge, but, when done well, even the best students report particular appreciation of advising and mentoring
contacts. While the University continues to satisfy a number of traditional needs through its network of advising and student support services, one of the primary goals of the advising relationship should be to inspire and cultivate a thought process that requires students to relate their academic work to their personal lives as one of the learning outcomes of a University education.

The University has made great strides in the past decade in improving academic advising and other student support services. Yet, advising remains a pressing area of continuing need. In 1991, the University’s Task Force on Liberal Education\(^\text{10}\) recommended “that the University develop a comprehensive, campus-wide strategy for improving academic advising, especially in relation to liberal education outcomes.” Among the essential attitudes and qualities of mind that the Task Force identified as outcomes for a liberally educated person at a major research university was a “capacity for gaining perspective on one’s own life.” To effect improvement in achieving this elusive outcome, the University must explicitly articulate and expand a shared understanding of advising as the educational process best suited to develop a student’s “capacity for gaining perspective on one’s own life.”

Research is in a symbiotic relationship with teaching and learning. The University, therefore, must set high the bar for its students, as well as for itself. What is it that differentiates graduates of the University of Minnesota from other institutions in the state? What, exactly, do we expect our students to learn? How well have they achieved those learning outcomes? And how do we know? The University must develop a culture of assessment that actively engages students in directing their own learning experiences and achieving learning outcomes that press them toward their fullest potential.

Many students, despite strong preparation for post-secondary education, require strong academic and related support services. General College has been an academic unit with a primarily service-oriented mission. Over the years, General College has developed and refined various components of student support services. General College’s service units can serve as the model and base for campus-wide centers addressing various aspects of student support services, e.g., Parent Help Center, support for English as a second language learners, etc.

The Provost’s Council for Enhancing Student learning has worked over the past two years to establish a campus dialogue and to articulate exploratory directions for intentional institutional development toward academic excellence. The Council has convened several focus group discussions with faculty and students campus-wide to consider proposed learning outcomes for all undergraduate students; additionally, the

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\(^{10}\) “A Liberal Education Agenda for the 1990s and Beyond on the Twin Cities Campus of the University of Minnesota,” The Final Report of the Twin Cities Campus Task Force on Liberal Education (May 6, 1991). Available at: http://www1.umn.edu/usentae/cle/cletaskforce.html
Council drafted a position statement on academic and research advising. These recommendations draw heavily from the Council’s work on both fronts.

While coursework and classroom processes, the structure of degree requirements, and co-curricular experiences all test our students’ sense of self and prompt their capacities for gaining perspective on their own lives, academic advising should provide explicit assistance to help students personally synthesize, articulate, and direct their curricular, co-curricular, and even extra-curricular learning to goals that are genuinely their own.

Strong advising and mentoring relationships—peer, professional, and faculty—help students to develop the capacity to engage in periodic and reflective self-assessment, to explore University values, to understand the role of research in their educational experience, and to appreciate the meaning of liberal education. Ultimately, effective advising and mentoring relationships help students to apply their education to life choices, and to better understand the connection between their academic experience and their goals for personal and career development, lifelong learning, and citizenship.

Thus, it is appropriate now to revisit our institutional practices and to articulate a paradigm of shared expectations about the role of advising and academic support services in the overall educational experience at the University of Minnesota. When students, faculty, staff, and administration share a common understanding about their respective roles and responsibilities in this vital educational process, it will have a positive and powerful impact on improving demonstrated learning outcomes and student satisfaction with their overall educational experience.

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C. Enhancing Access and Diversity

Introduction

The University must build on past success and continue to explore better ways to recruit, retain, and serve a diverse student body. This commitment benefits the entire academic enterprise by enriching the environment for all students and encouraging dialogue among diverse perspectives and experiences to the core mission of teaching and learning, and research and inquiry.

On the Twin Cities campus in Fall 2004, students of color accounted for 16.4 percent of undergraduates. The most recent data (2003-2004 academic year) show that students of color comprised 12.7 percent of all public high school graduates in Minnesota. Students of color who graduated in the top half of their public high school class and who have taken the ACT as an indication of their interest and preparation for a four-year college experience, totaled 4.5 percent of Minnesota public high school graduates.

Over the past decade, the University has enrolled 77 percent more students of color by responding proactively and successfully to changing demographics. The University of Minnesota enrolls 23 percent of all undergraduate students in the state, but is home to 40 percent of undergraduates of color who are attending all four-year institutions. It is expected that the percentage of Minnesota high school graduates who are students of color will more than double within the next decade, and the number of first-generation students and students whose native language is not English is projected to increase.

To extend its record of success in serving a diverse student body, the University will need to think and act in new and creative ways to produce optimal outcomes in PreK-12 student achievement, recruitment, retention, and graduation. The Provost is leading an ongoing Task Force charged with strengthening the University’s success at recruiting, retaining, and graduating a diverse student body. To fulfill this commitment, the University must pursue and implement the following strategies:

Statement of Recommendations

(4) We recommend for consideration that the University play a leadership role in raising aspirations and preparation levels of students to seek and qualify for admission to post-secondary education and attendance at the University of Minnesota.

The University must enhance coordination of preK-12 partnerships and develop and implement new strategies, relying on the latest research and expertise of University faculty, to address pressing issues in preK-12 education—especially preparation for higher education. Through a newly constituted Consortium for Post-Secondary Academic Success, the University will promote new synergies between existing University programs, leverage resources, and increase the
impact of the University’s partnership with public education in the state. Through partnerships with preK-12 systems, the Consortium will help drive system change in key areas, such as: 1) improving preK-12 curriculum standards, 2) improving academic preparation for higher education, 3) student enrichment programs, and 4) partnerships for school improvement.

The Consortium must work to strengthen and support the University’s outreach strategies. Students and parents who are aware, well in advance, of the academic and financial requirements of education beyond high school have better capacity to prepare for success in higher education. There is a need to ensure that all elementary and junior high school students receive appropriate material from – or specific to – the University as a whole. Yet, as students transition into seventh grade, critical decisions are made affecting math preparation and future high school course selections (for example, students interested in a career in the health professions need to know that they must receive strong education in science and math during high school). There is a need for more student and parent information (in various languages) from the University including core academic expectations, tuition and fee realities, and University-specific financial aid opportunities.

(5) We recommend for consideration that the University of Minnesota continue to be committed to scholarship support for our most needy students and to making information about that support widely available.

The President has made scholarships the University’s number one fundraising priority and has put significant resources, some $12 million annually, into a Partnership Grant Program designed to protect the University’s most needy students from tuition hikes. The recently announced Founders Opportunity Scholarship is the University’s pledge to fill the gap in funding that some low-income students face between their grant assistance and their required tuition and fees. The Founders Opportunity Scholarship is a commitment to keep the doors to this University and the unique education it offers open to talented students from all walks of life.

The University is a primary contributor to the pipeline that sustains Minnesota’s highly skilled diverse workforce. Extending the pipeline through graduate education requires proactive interventions beginning in middle school and continuing throughout the undergraduate experience. Career guidance, mentoring, internships, and research and other developmental opportunities can help students form specific aspirations for professional and academic careers, and can inform appropriate postgraduate educational aspirations. Specific recommendations include: greater awareness for the need for career counseling from middle school through undergraduate education; expanded undergraduate research and internship experiences, as well as programs to support the preparation of the next generation of the professoriate, including the Preparing Future Faculty program, Bush teaching programs, grant writing workshops,
mentoring opportunities, etc.; and strengthened mentoring programs for advanced graduate students.

(6) We recommend for consideration that the University strengthen undergraduate retention and graduation rates in accordance with goals set by the University’s Board of Regents.

While the University has made substantial improvements in its undergraduate experience in the past decade, research on student success indicates several areas in which an institution can act to improve educational attainment, including: residential life and student engagement on campus; academic planning and student progress; developmental education, advising and academic support; faculty dedicated to the scholarship of teaching and learning, and explicit goals for retention, student success, and graduation.

All students bring differing experiences, expectations, and needs; the academic environment must be flexible enough to meet student needs by providing both challenges and support to shape their intellectual growth and human development. All student support and advising units must be prepared fully to meet the needs of our diverse student body. Some suggested strategies include: pre-enrollment evaluation to identify students potentially at risk based on predictors such as test scores, high school rank, strength of preparation curriculum, placement test results, etc.; and expanded analyses of student outcomes so that decisions and directions are data-driven.

(7) We recommend for consideration that the University must be an institution that respects, embraces, and supports diversity by actively working to cultivate a shared value for diversity as a learning outcome for all students and as a mechanism to maintain a campus climate suitable for all students. The developmental nature of the educational enterprise requires consistent attention to campus climate and continual renewal of a shared commitment to diversity.

A supportive campus climate in which students feel understood, respected, and valued contributes to the recruitment, retention, and graduation of a diverse student body. The campus climate should not isolate students; it should seek to engage them in the fabric of the educational experience both in the classroom and in co-curricular activities.

If the University is to prepare adequately students to live, work, and serve in the 21st century world, then all University students must be prepared to engage effectively in a multicultural society. A hallmark of a University of Minnesota education should be an increased understanding of and sensitivity to the broad spectrum of diversity.
D. Baccalaureate Writing Initiative

Introduction

In recent years, the University has worked to elevate the importance of writing by strengthening its expectations of and support for the teaching and learning of writing. Freshman seeking admission to the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities are required to complete the ACT 30-minute Writing Test and to meet academic preparation requirements including four years of high school English, with emphasis on writing and literary understanding and appreciation. Once admitted, all undergraduates complete the University’s first-year writing requirement and four writing-intensive courses (at least one of which is taken within the student’s major or program area). Our graduation requirements for undergraduate writing currently are more aggressive than those at most other Big 10 institutions; overall, institutional policies and practices are trending toward strengthening learning outcomes for writing and communication competencies, via more comprehensive and integrated curricular and instructional strategies. We recognize the considerable accomplishments of the College of Liberal Arts in supporting skills in writing.

Statement of Recommendation

(8) We recommend for consideration the design and implementation of a Baccalaureate Writing Initiative to provide comprehensive writing instruction and developmental support throughout the undergraduate experience, to ensure that every undergraduate is able to demonstrate an effective command of written English upon graduation. A Task Force should be empanelled by the President and Provost and consist of faculty with expertise in writing, writing instruction, and the assessment of writing. The Task Force report and recommendation for implementation would be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005.

Rationale

The Baccalaureate Writing Initiative should establish a campus-wide educational goal for all undergraduate students that clearly articulates the University’s expectation for proficiency in writing upon graduation. This comprehensive approach to writing instruction is proposed in response to needs, across all colleges, for enhanced writing education and mentoring, and especially to fulfill a research university’s responsibility to prepare students for graduate or professional education and for work and life beyond campus.

The Baccalaureate Writing Initiative will commit the University to supporting a systemic educational strategy designed to assure that every undergraduate, irrespective of college of enrollment or major, will demonstrate an appropriate command of written English upon graduation. Such a campus-wide educational goal also commits the faculty to develop pedagogical proficiency in writing instruction and to integrate the teaching and
learning of writing with disciplinary content in all academic programs of study. The Baccalaureate Writing Initiative will infuse writing into every program of study to align the delivery of writing instruction with the disciplinary context of all curricula.

The Baccalaureate Writing Initiative represents a commitment to writing throughout the undergraduate curriculum. It will consist of a number of components, including formal elements such as composition courses expressly designed for various undergraduate majors, as well as plentiful opportunities to receive developmentally appropriate mentoring and advising that actively and frequently engage students in pursuing their mastery of written English. No longer will students be allowed to randomly pursue incoherent writing support motivated by desperation of failing a senior paper or capstone project.

Successful implementation of a Baccalaureate Writing Initiative requires dedicated teaching and support staff, though there is much to be leveraged from existing programs and pockets of expertise. Implementation of this vision requires its own strategic planning effort, and must take advantage of the prime nucleus of effective exemplars already in operation at the University, including: the Center for Writing in the College of Liberal Arts, various developmental writing initiatives in the present General College, the Department of Rhetoric in the College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences, and faculty development offerings from the Center for Teaching and Learning Services.

**Academic Advantages**

A comprehensive academic strategy for “writing across the curriculum” promotes an institutional value for literacy that is systemically attentive to the developmental requirements of mastering written communication.

“Hard-wiring” writing to major program curricula anchors the instruction of writing in a disciplinary context, and promotes the integration of writing into most courses. In doing so, it also extends a universal expectation that all students will engage in coursework to hone and perfect their writing skills, not just those whose level of skill is flagged in the process of admission. Learning to write well, then, becomes an individualized academic goal (relative to where one begins on the continuum) that should engage and challenge even the highest ability students.

This recommendation directly addresses one of the global Undergraduate Learning Outcomes\(^\text{12}\), proposed by the Provost’s Council for Enhancing Student Learning. This list of outcomes details seven “foundational and lifelong learning and citizenship goals” all students will demonstrate at the time of receiving a bachelor’s degree from the University. Item 5 is “the ability to communicate effectively” and is intended to encompass written, oral, and visual communication.

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\(^{12}\) See: [http://www.academic.umn.edu/provost/teaching/cesl_loutcomes.html](http://www.academic.umn.edu/provost/teaching/cesl_loutcomes.html)
Graduates with stronger communication abilities, including written language skills, are more flexible, more successful, and more compatible with contemporary workforce needs.

**Financial Advantages**

A positive investment in the Baccalaureate Writing Initiative will require a sizeable infusion of new funds and a considerable reallocation of effort, the result of which will be significant advances in faculty development, academic support services, and course and curriculum redesign.

A centralized approach to writing will maximize organizational and administrative efficiencies that will improve the teaching and learning of writing, including:

A centralized office or center, charged under the auspices of the Provost, will knit together several discrete and unconnected units with various needs, including, for example, the Center for Teaching and Learning Services, the CLA’s Center for Writing, and the Department of Rhetoric in COAFES.

An institutional approach to delivering writing instruction will maximize whatever economies of scale may exist in relieving individual academic units of the responsibility to determine appropriate developmental needs and to deliver duplicative support services.

A centralized administrative unit will provide consistent leadership and equitable distribution of resources for academic and developmental support to students as well as faculty development for best practices in writing instruction.
E. Regents Honors College

Introduction

A university is judged in large part by the quality of the students that it attracts and educates. If the University is to achieve the goal mandated by the Regents to become one of the top three public research universities, and if it is to continue to serve as a talent magnet for the state, it is essential that the University attract top undergraduate students. A Regents Honors College provides a new and exciting means for achieving this goal.

The University of Minnesota has a diverse and highly talented faculty that offers undergraduate education in majors that span the arts, sciences, humanities, languages, social sciences, engineering professions, mathematics, architecture, business, agriculture, and many other disciplines. Given the strengths of our faculty and their programs, the University is suited ideally to provide the most talented students of the state and nation with a highly challenging education that prepares them for any goal they seek to achieve; Regents Honors College is designed to expand the pool of the most highly talented applicants who give the University serious consideration. Regents Honors College would cooperate with and serve as a ‘feeder’ program for all undergraduate colleges in the University.

Statement of Recommendations

(9) We recommend for consideration the formation of a Task Force empanelled by the President and Provost and consisting of faculty representing the full breadth of undergraduate education at the University to design and plan the implementation of “Regents Honors College” (potential alternative name: University Honors College). The Task Force report and recommendations for implementation would be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005. The Task Force would be charged with, among other things, strengthening honors opportunities across the campus—increasing the number and variety of honors offerings, more coherence for the experience of honors students in all colleges, stronger extracurricular programming for all honors students and the creation of the Grand Challenges Curriculum.

Regents Honors College would provide an academically challenging education, centered on a “Grand Challenges” curriculum, to the University’s most highly qualified first and second year undergraduate students of diverse backgrounds, intellectual interests and goals. Students would explore, in small honors seminars and larger honors lecture classes, the biggest issues and unanswered questions that face society, science, the arts and the humanities. This “Grand Challenges” curriculum should be designed to take advantage of the Baccalaureate Writing Initiative.

Regents Honors College would not offer any majors, but rather would serve as a gateway to all undergraduate majors in all colleges of the University. Students in Regents Honors College would be admitted automatically, at any time they
requested during their first two years, to any undergraduate college of their choice. A student would apply directly to Regents Honors College for admission. Regents Honors College would not replace any existing honors programs, but rather becomes a new honors program tailored to students interested in its Grand Challenges Curriculum.

Regents Honors College would allow students access to and give them an opportunity to explore the breadth of the entire University. The Grand Challenges Curriculum would be designed to meet the liberal education requirements of all other colleges, allowing students to choose any major and be on a path to graduate in four years. The Grand Challenges Curriculum would include time for first and second-year students to take elective classes, including electives that are prerequisites for various majors.

**Rationale**

The creation of Regents Honors College would communicate three important messages to potential applicants: first, that the University values excellence in scholarship and learning and is committed to providing an atmosphere within which Regents Honors College students would be mentored and challenged by top faculty and by other top students; second, that each student would explore the great ideas, mysteries and challenges of the arts, humanities and sciences in collaboration with the faculty who dedicate their lives to the pursuit of these issues; and third, that their experiences in Regents Honors College would allow each student to find and pursue the educational specialty and career of their choosing. These three factors, in combination with other enriching activities offered by Regents Honors College, should allow the University to expand the segment of applicants who are likely especially to benefit from the many strengths of the University.

**Components of a Regents Honors College**

The Task Force appointed by the President and Provost should be charged with developing by December 10, 2005, a recommended implementation plan. Components that should be considered include the following:

Regents Honors College might enroll approximately 300 students per year. Between the ends of their first and second years, these students would have chosen a degree-granting college as their academic home, but would be encouraged to maintain ties with Regents Honors College throughout their four years at the University.

Regents Honors College would have no academic departments. Rather, all of its faculty would hold their academic appointments in other colleges, which would receive full credit for their teaching, and serve as faculty in Regents Honors College via fixed-term agreements negotiated with their home departments and colleges.
Because each Grand Challenges class is a gateway that could attract students to an area of scholarship, each college should offer at least one Grand Challenges class that highlights that college. Similarly, Regents Honors College could offer about 25 Freshman Seminars that, in aggregate, spanned the breadth of the University.

In designing and implementing Regents Honors College, it will be important to consider how to integrate the Regents Honors experience, which is focused on a series of Grand Challenges courses taken during an undergraduate’s first two years at the University, with existing majors and honors programs in degree-granting colleges. It also is important to consider how students would pursue their own research, scholarly, or artistic interests during their third and fourth years as they prepare the honors thesis or project that completes their Regents Honors College experience. One possibility is that, in addition to current options for honors projects in majors, students in Regents Honors College be encouraged to consider a mentored project that involves the exploration and synthesis of other issues beyond those of their major, such as issues raised in the Grand Challenge Curriculum.

It also will be important to provide each Regents Honors College student with the experience of being part of a particular community. One possibility might begin with a Summer Orientation when students meet their peers, discuss their goals and dreams with each other and their academic advisor, and choose their classes. Another mechanism would be to offer all students a Freshman Honors Seminar on a topic of interest to them. These seminars, with perhaps a maximum enrollment of 15 students, could allow students to get to know each other and a faculty member who might also serve as their faculty advisor until they choose a major.

A sense of community also might come from providing students with the option of living in Regents Honors Housing, which would allow them to interact both socially and intellectually with their peers. Other enriching activities, such as a weekly informal Regents Honors Lunch Forum, where faculty or visiting scholars speak on specific announced topics, also should be considered.

Regents Honors College would best serve students who have demonstrated outstanding academic potential and outstanding leadership, community service and civic engagement. Because the College would be dedicated to preparing, challenging and nurturing the future leaders of the state, the nation and world, it should have no strict test score “numbers” needed for admission. Rather, it should evaluate the complete record of each applicant. In general, though, the median students admitted to the College should fall in the upper 10% of their high school class and have ACT or SAT scores above the 90th percentile. The admissions process also should consider evidence of excellence in the areas of leadership, service and civic engagement.

Given the quality of the students to be admitted to Regents Honors College, it is worthwhile to evaluate the feasibility of a Regents Honors College “Professional Fasttrack Program.” Such a program, if established, could facilitate admission to a participating University of Minnesota professional school for all Regents Honors
Program students who satisfactorily complete the requisite courses and related activities and criteria. Fasttrack Programs should be considered by professional schools such as the Medical School (for an M.D.), the Law School (J. D.), Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), and Physical Therapy (D.P.T.), for instance. The Fasttrack Program would be a powerful incentive for retaining top students in the state and for attracting top students to Minnesota from across the nation.

**Academic Advantages**

A Regents Honors College would help promote a consistent culture of academic excellence throughout undergraduate education.

The Regents Honors College would enroll approximately 300 students per year with the stated goal of attracting to the University new applicants with high intellectual ability.

The Regents Honors College would increase opportunities for faculty to teach students in new and exciting ways.

The Regents Honors College would give greater access to the selected students to the academic diversity of the whole University.

**Financial Advantages**

The Regents Honors College would require no new academic departments. However, the program would require the investment of new funds for administration, staff, and operations. Its Director and Advisory Board would be appointed from the existing faculty of the University by the Provost. Its staff would oversee the operation of the program, including student recruiting and admissions, organizing academic and social events, coordinating the curriculum, advising students and so on.

All Honors faculty would hold their academic appointments in other colleges, and serve as faculty in Regents Honors College via fixed-term appointments negotiated with their home departments and colleges. An equitable tuition attribution structure would need to be devised to reward colleges for faculty service as instructors for Freshman Seminars and Grand Challenges courses, mentors and advisors.

Regents Honors College also would need a physical campus home.
III. Faculty Culture

Introduction

To be great, a university must attract and sustain a great faculty—scholars, researchers and artists of the highest quality and potential who also are dedicated and inspired teachers. Excellence demands genuine diversity of background as well as a broad range of ideas across disciplines. All faculty should pursue bold, path-breaking research, scholarship, or creative endeavors and, where possible, seek interdisciplinary and international collaboration. This level of excellence requires vigilance about quality and equity, and therefore requires stringent University-wide standards in tenure and promotion decisions.

The University must inspire and challenge, mentor, develop and reward this winning faculty. There is a continued need to invest in faculty development. We currently offer a variety of programs to assist faculty members in developing their academic careers including: grant writing seminars; leaves and sabbaticals; awards and recognitions; teaching enrichment; and leadership development. We should, however, make additional efforts to improve mentoring, training, and other faculty development issues. Both individual faculty members and the University community as a whole must increase efforts to achieve national and international recognition for University faculty members.

Statement of Recommendation

(10) We recommend for consideration that the University strengthen its current approach and implement a broad range of new strategies to attract, retain, recognize, reward, and develop its faculty.

The quality of a University comes first and foremost from the achievements of its faculty. To reach our goal to be one of the world’s top three public research universities requires that we choose promising entry level faculty and distinguished senior faculty wisely, successfully attract them to Minnesota, provide an environment that continually challenges, mentors and inspires them, provides consistent development opportunities, and then retains and rewards them successfully in the face of offers from our competitors. Our University continually should excite and inspire faculty to do their best cutting-edge work in research and teaching.

Rationale

About 40 percent of the faculty of the University of Minnesota is of an age likely to retire within the next decade. This represents one of the University’s greatest challenges and one of its greatest opportunities. To be attractive to the highest quality faculty and staff will require that we offer salaries, benefits, programmatic support and support for graduate students comparable to other top universities. Such selective investments are central to retaining the University’s current strengths and to building additional strengths.
Investing in our human capital is a top priority. For example, the recent increase in the number of Regents’ Professors and the enhancement of their compensation are evidence of this commitment to faculty excellence.

Both the actual and the perceived quality of the faculty are key parameters for the University to achieve its academic goals. Perceptions of faculty quality are important because they are part of attracting both the human and the financial capital required for the University to achieve its academic goals. Both individual faculty members and the University community as a whole need to increase efforts to achieve national and international recognition for University faculty members through public scholarship, awards by professional societies, memberships in the National Academies, respected public exhibitions of creative works, and other similar public affirmations.

Equally as important as recruiting a high quality faculty is retaining that faculty. The responsibility for ensuring excellence requires action of the administration and faculty—not the administration alone. The responsiveness of the University’s support functions must be increased, particularly those offices charged with facilitating research and creative endeavor. Faculty productivity also will be enhanced by more attention to the distribution of support staff within academic departments to best allow faculty to focus on research, creativity, teaching, and public service. The University of Minnesota must continue to enhance its efforts to encourage a climate of racial, ethnic, gender, and intellectual diversity: Excellence and diversity are mutually dependent.

Appropriate standards for recruitment, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review already are in place. To sustain and build excellence it is crucial that we consistently and rigorously enforce these standards. We should be certain that our standards are clear throughout the process of hiring, tenure, promotion, and post-tenure review. There is need for a University-wide commitment to a consistent application of existing standards. Vigilance to the University’s tenure, promotion and post-tenure standards will be required to attract and nurture a world-class faculty.

**Academic Advantages**

Emphasis on high quality engaged faculty is fundamental to the mission of the University and essential to reaching our goal to become one of the top three public research universities in the world. An outstanding faculty is a necessary component of a world-class university.

Research, teaching, and public outreach are inextricably entwined. An improved faculty culture enhances each of these activities and improves the academic experience for students at many levels.

Greater efforts at mentoring and advising faculty lead, as the literature suggests, to a greater likelihood that faculty of color and women will be fully included in academic life and will make greater contributions to the intellectual life of the University.
Enhanced support staff across all departments, including academic advising staff as well as office staff, will better focus faculty on their missions of research and creativity, teaching and service.

Financial Advantages

Investing in human capital is one of the most important priorities of the University. It will require additional financial commitments to maintain and to enhance quality and to reach our goal. Over the long term such investments will reap significant benefits to the University and to the state.

A broad effort at reforming faculty culture should lead to higher retention and better success at recruiting the high-quality and diverse faculty needed to reach our goal.

Engaged, focused faculty produce higher quality research, can be more creative, and better integrate their discovery and artistic efforts into their teaching.
IV. Design of the University

A. Academic Health Center

Introduction

The University’s Academic Health Center (AHC) completed a strategic repositioning effort in 2000 in response to significant external challenges to its schools and colleges. Beginning in 1999 and working alongside a Regents’ Task Force, the Academic Health Center engaged faculty, staff, state, and community leaders in answering the question – how can the schools and colleges of the AHC reorganize to best meet their core missions on behalf of Minnesota?

The external challenges that spurred that change included significant shifts in the health care marketplace with new financing models; the sale of University Hospital and Clinics; the reorganization of 27 practice plans into a single UMPhysicians; the increasing pressure on the costs of health professional education; the breakthroughs in science, including mapping of the human genome; and the profound change in workplace expectations for physicians, dentists, pharmacists, public health professionals, and advance practice nurses that required a change in the education paradigm.

In response, the Regents approved the AHC’s strategic vision and plan in July, 2000 and that plan has guided its program and budget decisions since that time.

The plan articulates a number of required changes including:

- A changing demand for the number of health professionals educated, resulting in expanded enrollments in Pharmacy, Nursing, Veterinary Medicine, Public Health, and Dentistry.
- Need to revamp curricula to reflect the new skills and knowledge required of the next generation of health professionals,
- Development of community partnerships to help educate our students, with more than 400 sites offering our students their clinical training in interprofessional community settings. More students are being trained in primary care rather than acute care settings to better reflect what they actually will be doing. This model of interprofessional practice and education allows communities and health care providers to share real life experiences, as well as the cost, and encourages students to stay in Minnesota to practice.
- Need to focus on, and invest in facilitating interprofessional research. Seed grants and targeted investments were developed across the University in areas such as bioinformatics, molecular genomics, proteomics, food safety, and bioterrorism, as well as supporting the research infrastructure. This focused investment is designed to make the faculty more competitive for sponsored research, attracting both new faculty and jobs to Minnesota, as well as providing breakthrough advances in health care. This activity contributes to the early success of the
University’s partnership with Mayo. As a result, sponsored funding has increased 42 percent over the past five years.

- Strengthening of the clinical operations so that the faculty can offer top health care, provide key practice sites for our faculty at their core teaching site in partnership with Fairview Health Services, for training our students, and for conducting clinical research. The clinical enterprise enables the AHC to compete in the market place, provides educational opportunities, and represents nearly 24 percent of the entire budget for the Academic Health Center’s operations.

Statement of Recommendations

(11) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should continue to monitor and assess the health professional workforce needs of Minnesota, and adjust enrollments to meet this need in medicine, nursing, dentistry, public health, pharmacy and veterinary medicine. They should take a leadership role in working with state agencies, MnSCU, private colleges, health systems and other providers in meeting other health workforce needs through community partnership models.

(12) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should work across school boundaries to develop new, interprofessional models of acute and chronic care delivery, and in promoting wellness and improvement in health status. This will require developing shared resources for classrooms, skills training, simulation experiences, and using information systems in promoting life-long learning.

(13) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should further develop community partnerships for education for health professional students in interprofessional, experiential programs that are also beneficial to the communities and that are financially sustainable.

(14) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should enhance their interprofessional research activities within the Academic Health Center and within the University to promote applications of research for animal and human health and to promote the development of stronger ties with engineering and the biological sciences.

(15) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should work across school boundaries to promote interdisciplinary research with close links to biology and to rebuild the clinical research capacity and productivity that enhances the development of translational research and the breakthrough therapies that prevent or treat disease.

(16) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should work across school boundaries and with the health
systems to enhance their clinical services, sites for interprofessional practice, student education and clinical research. The primary partner in this development is Fairview Health System, with substantive relationships with the other health systems in the state. This will entail investing in upgrading of facilities, equipment and technology, and in new faculty and staff. The Academic Health Center should think strategically about long-term space needs.

(17) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should develop new funding models for graduate health professional education and training in anticipation of major reductions in federal support for these programs.

(18) We recommend for consideration that the health professional schools of the Academic Health Center should develop a program that assures sufficient faculty numbers and quality to maintain their academic programs.
B. College of Design

Introduction

Architecture and Landscape Architecture have important elements in common—both are professional design programs, with their graduates licensed through the same state legislation and same state board as Architecture. While it has a strong environmental design pedagogy, and a body of research well informed by science, Landscape Architecture also has many cross-disciplinary connections with the arts, humanities, engineering, and social sciences, like Architecture and the other design professions.

In addition, the Design Institute, a unique entity in the United States, is gaining expertise in interdisciplinary efforts to improve design in the public realm. The December 2004 Review of the 1998 Academic Interdisciplinary Initiatives\(^\text{13}\) reported that: “The Design Institute is well practiced in cross-disciplinary collaborations because by its very nature it sits at the intersection of science, industry, and art. This gives design research the unique potential to exemplify hybrid programming and reinforces the Design Institute’s important role as an intellectual catalyst at the University and beyond.”

Design, Housing, and Apparel (DHA) intellectually complements and substantially expands the study of design with architecture, landscape architecture, and the Design Institute. DHA is a unique multidisciplinary department that addresses complex issues related to humans and their designed environments.

Statement of Recommendation

(19) We recommend for consideration the formation of a Task force empaneled by the President and Provost to consider implementation issues surrounding the creation of a new College of Design. The new College would integrate Design, Housing, and Apparel, presently in the College of Human Ecology, with the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture. There also should be a review of other parts of the campus with emphasis on planning and design to see how well these areas might be integrated into, or better relate with, the new College. The Task Force report and recommendations for implementation would be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005.

Rationale

There would be exciting new opportunities for students to engage in interdisciplinary studies in the new College; faculty may be more likely to conduct research and teaching that encompass a broader range of designed environments.

\(^{13}\)See:http://www.academic.umn.edu/img/assets/12262/1998%20Acad%20Interdisc.%20Init%20final%20report.pdf
Currently, five undergraduate programs are offered through the department of Design, Housing, and Apparel, and two undergraduate minors: clothing design, graphic design, housing studies, interior design, and retail merchandising. At the graduate level, DHA offers graduate degrees — M.A, M.S., M.F.A. and Ph.D. — with emphases in apparel, design communication, multimedia design, housing studies or interior design and a post-baccalaureate certificate in housing studies. DHA’s intellectual and creative links to architecture and landscape architecture are robust and significant.

There also might be entirely new collaborations possible in, for example, product design once these strong and intellectually robust disciplines are integrated. A product design program does not exist presently at the University but could draw from many of the existing design programs once this integration was achieved. This expanded emphasis represents a great opportunity for the University and a comparative advantage for current and growing industries in Minnesota. As the 2004 review cited above stated: “It is clear that the University of Minnesota will be increasingly seen as a center of design expertise and innovation.”

**Academic Advantages**

The new College would integrate and leverage the University’s strengths across a range of design disciplines resulting in increased academic synergies, integrated functions and possibilities for cross-disciplinary efforts. The increased design breadth of the College would create new perspectives, expertise and presents opportunities to bridge theoretical and applied approaches. The integration could strengthen and deepen the mission and aspirations of each. The new College would bring well-regarded related disciplines together that would build a stronger academic unit, creating a greater whole and position of strength on the national and international level. The potential for great distinction and expansion of programs is substantial.

The University’s architecture program is highly regarded nationally, and interior design is also nationally well-respected. Through the more effective and dynamic use of resources these and other programs could improve their academic quality and impact even further.

High-quality undergraduates would be attracted to the range of design offerings with the new coherence and reach of the College. The new College could allow students both to focus their studies in one particular discipline while learning new perspectives from related fields. The proposed new College with its larger synergistic entities has great promise for expanded student opportunities, greater faculty distinction, and enhanced interdisciplinarity and systems analysis. It can create a new paradigm at the University for the research, study, and teaching of the designed environment.
C. College of Biological Sciences, Institute of Technology, College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences and College of Natural Resources

Introduction

The University of Minnesota is one of only five universities in the nation that combines on a single campus strengths in the basic sciences and mathematics with Schools of Medicine, Engineering, Agriculture, Veterinary Medicine, Natural Resources and Public Health. The University, however, requires a more cohesive organizational structure in these areas to enhance its current strength into clear, world-class leadership. Present structures reinforce intra-campus geographic barriers and unduly constrain both faculty and students from developing research and discoveries in critical areas of biology, mathematics, physical sciences, engineering, environmental science, natural resources and food systems.

Statement of Recommendation

(20) We recommend for consideration that a Task Force be charged with developing and implementing a reconfiguration of the sciences and engineering that best integrates and promotes academic synergies, teaching and research among four current colleges: Biological Sciences (CBS); Institute of Technology (IT); Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences (COAFES); and Natural Resources (CNR). The Task Force report and recommendations for implementation will be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005

Five important strategies must be achieved through this reconfiguration and integration:

- Strengthening the core of biology and its connections to the physical sciences, mathematics and engineering in IT;
- Enhancing the University’s currently dispersed strengths in environmental science and related fields;
- Realigning and integrating CNR into a broader framework that strengthens environmental science and increases administrative efficiency;
- More sharply focusing COAFES on the major challenges facing agriculture and food science in the 21st century; and
- Deepening biology’s relationships to COAFES and the Academic Health Center (AHC).

Biology is emerging as the science that underpins and connects the AHC, COAFES, CNR and IT. Biology at the University of Minnesota must be linked more closely to medicine, physics and chemistry, engineering, mathematics, environmental sciences and agriculture and food systems. At the same time, the biological sciences must have the autonomy to develop their own core strengths.
The University’s current strengths in the basic sciences and engineering must be enhanced significantly by aligning and optimizing undergraduate and graduate education, collaboration, multidisciplinary research and other synergies among the physical, biological, and environmental sciences and engineering. This alignment would create a single, high-profile port of entry for attracting to the University more top-notch undergraduate students interested in the basic sciences and engineering and entrance into professional and graduate education and would offer significant efficiencies of scale.

A new Institute of the Environment, with its own core faculty, should be an important element of this reconfiguration. It will draw upon a series of academic disciplines in CNR, CBS COAFES, and other fields, and become the central focus for environmental research and teaching at the University.

**Rationale**

A reconfiguration will align resources optimally, improve academic synergies through enhanced collaboration, rationalize academic programs and curricula, and attract high quality students interested in more interdisciplinary opportunities and the ability to work with a broad range of faculty on cutting-edge projects and problems.

Biological Sciences must strengthen its links to medicine, for example, through joint appointments and increased curricular coordination with microbiology, physiology and neuroscience. Biological Sciences also must implement strong links to the physical sciences, mathematics and engineering in IT, such as would occur with the creation of a College of Science and Engineering that combined CBS and IT.

There are exciting and promising new developments in the interrelationships of biology with medicine, engineering, and mathematics. A major study by the National Academies of Science, *Bio 2010*, recommended that biology education should integrate more purposefully physical sciences, mathematics, computer science, and engineering. Several research universities already have begun these efforts and the University of Minnesota has an opportunity to take a leadership role. But we must act now.

Major academic strengths in the environment have been slow to develop because they currently are spread across various colleges with less than optimal interaction and collaboration. A new Institute of the Environment, with its own core faculty, must have strong links to COAFES and Biological Sciences. The Institute of the Environment should serve as the central focus of the University’s educational and research activities on the environment and form liaisons with related programs in other colleges through joint appointments and shared graduate programs.

Food production, safety and research related to health must more closely reflect 21st century challenges and developments. With an expansion and acceleration of efforts already underway in COAFES, agricultural research must focus sharply on maximizing the total return to society from production of both market goods (e.g., agricultural
commodities and renewable energy) and non-market ecosystems services (e.g., sequestration of carbon dioxide and production of potable water). New relationships of COAFES with engineering will strengthen agriculture given that the future growth of agriculture in the state may come from the development of biomass-based energy products such as ethanol and hydrogen, or from the development of technology used in precision agriculture, or from engineering solutions to the environmental problems of agriculture.

The realignment of CBS, IT, COAFES and CNR will expand and significantly improve the University’s land-grant outreach mission. Extension and Continuing Education are prepared and positioned to support the teaching and research mission of the University by serving as a conduit for communicating the implications and applications of the full range of University’s strengths in pure and applied science and engineering. By better linking together a range of scientific activity (with enormous promise and potential for the future of the state), we can continue to refine and deepen our communications efforts aimed at Minnesota’s various communities and constituencies, better transferring the outcomes of our research to them while demonstrating the many benefits they derive from the University’s work.

We believe these recommendations also will strengthen and be strengthened by the important President’s interdisciplinary initiatives already announced, including the relationships among: Biocatalysis; Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives; Environment and Renewable Energy; Brain Function Across the Lifespan; and Translational Research in Human Health.

Given the University’s rare breadth in basic sciences, mathematics, engineering, medicine, agriculture, veterinary medicine, natural resources and public health, a truly remarkable opportunity exists for imaginative renewal and leadership. The University has within its grasp an opportunity to develop into a national and international leader through the integration of these disciplines in ways few other universities in the world could hope to accomplish. The potential is enormous for path-breaking research and new applications of this research to benefit the state and the nation. This is a propitious moment. We must do all we can to ensure that we boldly, and expeditiously, move forward. This defining opportunity may not come again.
D. College of Liberal Arts

Introduction

The success of the College of Liberal Arts (CLA) is critical to the University’s success in achieving the Regents’ mandate of becoming one of the top three public research universities. A great university requires exceptional strengths across the sciences, applied sciences, arts, humanities, social sciences, and professions. Over the past decade, CLA has raised the standards of its incoming freshmen and recently has begun innovative cross-disciplinary initiatives such as the Collaborative Arts program and the proposed Institute for Advanced Studies. These dynamic efforts and others, touching on enhancing CLA’s strengths in undergraduate and graduate education as well as research and discovery, invite and even demand further innovation and commitment.

Statement of Recommendation

(21) We recommend for consideration a Task Force on CLA, empanelled by the President and Provost and composed of visionary leaders from both within and outside CLA who share a strong commitment to enhancing undergraduate and graduate education at the University. The Task Force report and recommendations for implementation will be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005.

The College of Liberal Arts deserves an ambitious review of its design that considers the logic of its assembled units and develops a forward-looking plan that takes into account its diversity, history and many adjunct programs, institutes and centers, and that redefines national standards for excellence in liberal arts education, scholarship and research. The Task Force should be charged with implementing bold goals in concert with the Regents’ recent mandate and identified as essential to positioning the College of Liberal Arts as a premier college so that CLA will:

• Become one of the University’s well-branded, best-regarded and most attractive undergraduate and graduate colleges.
• Become a model for retention and graduation rates at the University, ensuring a nationally selective and diverse student population.
• Attain recognition as the centerpiece for a modern liberal arts education—public and private—in the state and region, recognizing the unique and compatible role of the University of Minnesota, Morris.
• Promote and lead interdisciplinary endeavors across departments and colleges, becoming a model of academic cooperation and synergy.
• Consider its identity and academic/intellectual focus by reviewing its design, including departments, as well as centers, programs and institutes.
• Identify areas of national and international academic distinction and opportunity that must be preserved and strengthened.
Rationale

CLA is the tenure home and research base for about 550 faculty in remarkably diverse fields. As the largest of the University’s 20 colleges, with 30 departments offering 70 majors, and serving a total of about 14,000 undergraduate students and 2,200 graduate students, CLA is the heart of both undergraduate and graduate education and research and scholarship that spans and extends through and beyond the humanities, social sciences, arts and artistic expression, languages and literature. The research, scholarship and creative efforts of faculty in CLA address fundamental issues about culture, government and social structures, economics, ethics, identity, language and human expression that help us better understand, guide and advance ourselves and society. Indeed, the disciplines of CLA represent the essence of the academy—introducing students to some of the greatest achievements of our civilization and providing the faculty and students in the sciences and professional schools with cultural and humanistic contexts for their efforts.

CLA’s sheer size and disciplinary diversity (ranging from the Art Department to the Statistics Department) give the college a rich texture, rather like a great city thronging with unlike populations and cultures that, at its best, helps everyone to benefit from proximity to each other. At the same time, the definition of collegiate mission requires that the academic and intellectual integrity of the college be clear, unburdened by merely received patterns (do art and statistics, for example, belong in the same college? Is psychology today more clearly aligned with biology than it was when it originally was positioned within the liberal arts?). We ask these kinds of questions as we search for ways to best position CLA and best serve students whom we recruit to demand the best of themselves and of a keenly focused faculty.

For many Minnesotans, CLA is the centerpiece of the University, champion of a treasured core of liberal education, especially in the freshman and sophomore years. CLA students earn nearly one-third of all degrees the University grants each year. More importantly, CLA serves the students of every other college as they progress toward their academic majors and specializations. It is impossible for the University to achieve its ambitious goal of attaining primacy as a public research institution without committing itself to a premier College of Liberal Arts. At present, however, CLA is not immediately recognized by many of the most gifted students of the state and region as the premier place for a liberal arts undergraduate education in the region, a reputation that CLA must earn if the University is to achieve the Regents’ mandate for excellence. CLA must redefine what a liberal arts education means for today’s students.

The Task Force should allow CLA to leverage its diversity and redefine its mission for the future. It also should allow CLA to lead the way, as the largest undergraduate college, in addressing the University-wide concern over graduation rates and excellence. At least as important, any such plan must consider the role CLA plays in fostering intellectual life across the University.
**Academic Advantages**

The Task Force, composed of those both inside the College of Liberal Arts and those in other colleges with strong concerns and commitments to undergraduate education, should draw together diverse disciplines and faculty, modeling interdisciplinarity and enhancing collegiate cooperation.

Key issues related to undergraduate education, including the commitment to attracting high-ranking high school students, improving graduation rates, and enhancing advising and mentoring, should be given highest priority.

CLA and its programs will be crafted to become “brand name” educational opportunities that make the College more competitive and enhance recruitment of the best undergraduate students.

**Financial Advantages**

Thorough collegiate review that may involve relocation of units or leveraging of existing capabilities may result in efficiencies and economies for the College and the University, but the goals of the CLA Task Force represent opportunities for serious investment. These investments—in faculty and students—are made with the wise faith that such commitments, in turn, will achieve the primacy we have committed ourselves to as we strive to become one of the great universities in the world.
E. College of Education and Human Development

Introduction

The University of Minnesota has considerable strength in education and human development across the lifespan, but this strength is currently dispersed between three colleges: the College of Education and Human Development, the College of Human Ecology, and General College. These academic units are highly recognized national and international centers of research, education, and public engagement. The University has the opportunity to leverage these advantages by strengthening existing academic synergisms and creating new academic connections in areas critical to the development of human capital, families, and communities.

The College of Education and Human Development continues to be a highly ranked professional school, as do many of its departments. The mission of General College is to develop and promote research on learning theories and their application to teaching, advising, and outreach. The University is recognized nationally as a leader in developmental education research and application. The Department of Family Social Science, now in the College of Human Ecology, provides education concerning all aspects of family life in the United States and elsewhere, with the full range of factors affecting families, family therapy, and family education. The School of Social Work, now in the College of Human Ecology, has contributed to the development of the field of social work and is ranked as one of the best schools of social work in the country. The school is a leader in creative learning ventures through distance education, interactive television, satellite, and independent study. Integrating these colleges that address education, human development, and community and family social structures would contribute to and advance institutional academic priorities and commitments. Current commitments and priorities include the President’s initiatives to advance brain development and vitality across the lifespan, and to deepen and broaden the University’s capacity to address the pressing issues related to children, youth, families, and communities.

Statement of Recommendations

The President and Provost should empanel a Task Force to consider structural, procedural, fiscal, and academic issues based on the recommendations below. The Task Force report and recommendations for implementation will be due to the President and Provost no later than December 10, 2005.

(22) We recommend for consideration the integration of all departments that address education, developmental education, and the development of human capital, families, and communities within a single college, within a new College of Education and Human Development.
This new assembly includes the following departments from the College of Education and Human Development, the College of Human Ecology, and General College:

- Child Development, Institute of
- Curriculum & Instruction
- General Developmental Education
- Educational Policy & Administration
- Educational Psychology
- Family Social Science
- School of Kinesiology
- School of Social Work
- Work, Community & Family Education

A realigned new College of Education and Human Development will increase substantially academic and intellectual synergies among and across related disciplines, and will be better organized to achieve a unified coherent mission focused on education and human development across the life span. The alliance of stakeholders in this new integrated collegiate unit would then assess organizational alternatives to realign and/or redesign departments, curricula, and programs of study as necessary and essential.

(23) We recommend for consideration the establishment of a new Department of General Developmental Education to provide an academic home for the research enterprise in developmental education. Beginning Fall, 2006, the new Department would unite General College with the full complement of educational and developmental disciplines in the College of Education and Human Development.

This new department will cultivate and expand what has been General College’s mission to develop and promote research on learning theories and their application to a general education curriculum. Faculty in the Department of General Developmental Education will allow greater scope for the developmental curriculum that has been offered only to General College students, establish programs of study that address broad student needs (such as academic development for writing, mathematics, and English as a second language learners), and strengthen research agendas. The Department of General Developmental Education will build upon General College’s essential mission. The new department, for example, might extend research from the Center for Research on Developmental Education and Urban Literacy and strengthen program offerings such as the Certificate in Postsecondary Developmental Education.

This integration will not change the research focus or the emphasis on transferring this new knowledge to practical applications in teaching, advising and outreach. Neither will this integration unduly affect the enrollment of students of color. The University remains committed to delivering developmentally appropriate student
support services to students from diverse backgrounds with the intellectual potential to succeed at the University. In fact, this transition will allow the University to develop comprehensive services, delivered systemically, to improve support services for all students who may need academic development.

(24) We recommend for consideration that the newly aligned College of Education and Human Development become a freshman admitting college.

Both General College and the College of Human Ecology currently admit undergraduate students. In General College, students are admitted for their first two years and then seek admission to a degree granting college within the University. The College of Education and Human Development does not currently admit freshmen.

(25) We recommend for consideration that during a transitional year (2006), a dual admission model be adopted, with new admitting procedures fully in place by 2007 for students needing developmental services and support.

During the transitional year, new students in need of developmental education will receive dual admission to the Department of General Developmental Education and to the undergraduate college that offers the academic course of study in which they intend to major. In subsequent years, such students will be admitted directly to undergraduate admitting and degree-granting colleges, but their curriculum during their first one or two years will include developmental education courses appropriate to their needs.

(26) We recommend for consideration the alignment of General College’s successful student support practices, rooted in the ongoing research on developmental education, with other similar, strong institutional efforts for campus-wide delivery via University-wide service centers affiliated with the new department, including:

- Academic Resource Center
- Center for Experiential Learning
- Commanding English
- Curriculum Transformation and Disability

(27) We recommend for consideration the integration of Family Social Science and the School of Social Work into this new expanded College.

These academic units are highly recognized national and international centers of research, education, and public engagement. They represent essential academic fields of study with close academic synergisms with the current core departments of the College of Education and Human Development. We do not anticipate that the department structure of these units will change, but there are many academic connections that must be strengthened in critical areas of human development.
This new college would position the University of Minnesota’s leadership in areas critical to the development of human capital, families, and communities.

Rationale

The integration of academic departments that support research, teaching and public engagement in disciplines related to education and human development across the life span will increase the intellectual synergy and cooperative inquiry that is required to address the complexity of confounding educational and social issues facing Minnesota. The larger, stronger new collegiate unit will unite the interrelated missions of several units currently scattered across the University, and increased economies of scale would better leverage fiscal resources.

The University’s long-standing commitment to access has sustained over time the University’s commitment to the structure of General College. Changing demographics and the changing needs of an increasingly diverse student population have pushed this structure beyond its capacity and require the transformation of organizational structures that will assure not only access, but educational success, to all. Many other peer campuses also admit under prepared students, but they do not separate them from their peers by admitting them to a separate college. Instead, they matriculate students directly to a degree-granting college, so that they are immediately and actively engaged in the structure and culture of an academic discipline, as well as a participant in the commonplace experiences of student life. Necessary academic support is then delivered in the disciplinary and social context of the college community. This is the most effective way to educate these students. It is the model we now should implement.

The mission of General College has been to provide access and academic developmental support to underprepared students to prepare them to transfer to and succeed in a rigorous course of study in a degree granting college at our research university. Despite the efforts of a talented and dedicated faculty and staff, the College has not been able fully to achieve this goal. Notwithstanding recent efforts to be more selective in admissions, fewer than 10 percent of students who enter General College graduate in four years, and six-year graduation rates are only 31 percent. These measures have not improved significantly in recent years.

If there is no improvement in closing the achievement gap between white students and students of color, we cannot assume that this increase in the number of high school graduates who are students of color will produce an equivalent increase in the number of students prepared to succeed at a research university. Today the enrollment of students of color in General College stands at 48 percent. The impending demographic changes easily could overwhelm General College’s capacity to serve as a major point of access and support for students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.
The University must embrace the opportunity to position itself to engage more fully the diverse student body of the 21st century. Sustaining the status quo by maintaining the current structure of General College is not the best option because it does not harness or maximize the available institutional resources to better serve the needs of all students in the long run. For example, the University’s prominence as a national leader in developmental education research is rooted in the General College experience and the work of General College faculty. This faculty expertise is an institutional resource that can and should be leveraged to lead institution-wide improvements for students in academic support services across the campus. Integrating a Department of General Developmental Education in the College of Education and Human Development will improve and expand student access to developmental support while extending the University’s focus on educational success for all students.

**Academic Advantages**

The University is recognized nationally as a leader in developmental education research. This repositioning of a research focus from General College will increase opportunities for academic synergy by positioning General College faculty in closer proximity to other faculty pursuing research in an assembly of connected educational and developmental disciplines, with access to a broader array of resources. Faculty researchers from General College established developmental education as a bona fide disciplinary focus and a new area of research. They will benefit from a stronger alliance with inquiry in related fields of education and human development, including early childhood, educational psychology, educational leadership, curriculum and instruction, program evaluation, and organizational and social constructs of educational systems.

Commitment to access is meaningless without a corresponding commitment to academic success. The new structure will allow all students to matriculate directly into a degree-granting college. This integration will better serve high-potential students from diverse and/or disadvantaged backgrounds, and also will support the implementation of new practices designed to strengthen the PreK-12 educational pipeline for high ability students from diverse racial, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds, while improving the educational experience and graduation rates of all students. Additionally, explicit learning outcomes that articulate high expectations for all students motivate deeper learning, better instruction, and engender stronger commitment to lifelong learning.

**Financial Advantages**

A larger collegiate base affords superior opportunities for reallocation of fiscal and human resources to better serve the academic and research missions of these related areas. Additionally, the expected improvement in the academic success of students across the University resulting from the changes recommended above should result in important economic benefits for the state.
F. Food Science and Nutrition

Introduction

We understand that Food Science and Nutrition, which is a joint department between the present College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences and the College of Human Ecology, is largely centered in the study of biology as the unifying discipline. Chemistry, engineering and anthropology are related backgrounds. The mission of the department is to engage in research and teaching related to the science of safe and healthy foods. Importantly, the work of the department is in direct harmony and concert with President Bruininks’s initiative on Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives. How food affects health is a fundamental question that runs through all the department’s research and teaching. The current research efforts include basic and applied laboratory sciences, clinical trials/science, and community nutrition.

Statement of Recommendation

(28) We recommend for consideration that a Task Force of the leaders in this intellectual community report to the President and Provost, no later than December 10, 2005, regarding the appropriate new location and integration of this dynamic department.

Clearly, the College of Biological Sciences, the School of Public Health, and perhaps the School of Medicine, or the proposed new integration of colleges outlined elsewhere in this report at IV C (with linkage to the present College of Agricultural, Food and Environmental Sciences) would seem appropriate colleges for discussion. Once an academic home (or homes) is decided for Food Science and Nutrition, other formal relationships, including joint appointments can be selected as well. Given the department’s present strengths and unique advantages, great care must be given to its proper placement and integration. Its teaching and research mission affects many environments across the life span.
G. Graduate Programs

Introduction

Graduate education at the University is one of its key strengths and forms a vital part of the University’s important research and teaching efforts. A series of recent investments are but one step to improving the University’s commitment to graduate education. For example, the base salary for graduate assistants will increase by 10 percent beginning in the summer of 2005. And in 2004, President Bruininks reallocated University resources to provide colleges with $2.4 million annually to help mitigate rising costs for funding graduate assistants. This targeting of funds allowed colleges to continue to hire and support graduate assistants. Of critical importance is the financing of graduate education and to that end in January 2005 a Task force released a series of recommendations, which are being prioritized now for funding through the biennial budget request.14 Once successful, our graduate programs will be even more competitive in recruiting the top graduate and professional students.

Graduate programs are a vital and dynamic component of any great research university. To encourage cutting-edge research, scholarship, and creative work, the Graduate School should act nimbly and with vigilance to ensure that graduate programs are appropriately tailored to best meet academic demand and need. The nature of an intellectual enterprise is to grow and develop. New discoveries and the creation of new knowledge, the growth of interdisciplinary inquiry, and the changing needs of society have an impact on academic programs, which must be responsive if they are to remain strong and achieve excellence.

Regular attention should be paid to ongoing review of graduate programs regarding program interest, enrollment and graduation rates. New graduate programs should be added where there is promise and potential or where new academic synergies might be created, or to meet a new academic need or demand. The seven decision-making criteria as outlined in the Strategic Positioning Report should be used to guide program review and priorities: Centrality to Mission; Quality, Productivity, and Impact; Uniqueness and Comparative Advantage; Enhancement of Academic Synergies; Demand and Resources; Efficiency and Effectiveness; and Development and Leveraging of Resources.

Statement of Recommendation

(29) We recommend for consideration the reduction and/or consolidation of low enrollment graduate or professional programs to improve the cost, quality, and support for our students. A summary report of such actions should be completed and submitted annually to the Provost by the Dean of the Graduate School.

Rationale

The Graduate School is the University’s second largest college with 10,558 students in Fall 2004 and 140 different majors and 28 minors offered. Such a large entity must be especially alert to the need to offer graduate programs that best meet student interests and academic priorities of the University.

Great graduate programs evolve over time, creating the need for new programs and requiring the reshaping or elimination of programs for which there is less demand or declining relevance. The decision-making criteria as indicated in the Strategic Positioning Report points first to advancing academic quality and also recognizes the need for programs to be essential to the University’s core mission. Programs should be of high quality, competitive, and offer comparative advantage. Where promise and potential are high, new programs or concentrations may be added or expanded. Recent new programs and concentrations include: Master of Public Health Degree – Global Health Interdisciplinary Concentration; Master of Arts in Strategic Communications; and Master of Science Degree in Integrated Biosciences (this interdisciplinary program will be based on the Duluth campus and will involve faculty from its College of Science and Engineering, College of Pharmacy, and Natural Resources Research Institute as well as Twin Cities campus faculty).

If a program demonstrates a consistently low enrollment and/or graduation rates or if a program fails to meet the other decision-making criteria, the program should be considered for elimination or integration with another program. Consultation with students, faculty, and staff, through the policy and review councils, is part of this process. (When programs are discontinued or integrated, all currently-enrolled students making satisfactory academic progress should be able to complete their degree.)

Recently, several programs were discontinued for which there was no demand or need (no students were enrolled) and these included: Biomedical Science, East Asian Studies, Manufacturing Systems Engineering, and Russian Area Studies. In addition, and as part of the annual review, several other programs were integrated: South Asian Languages, Chinese and Japanese were integrated into a new Asian Literatures, Cultures and Media program; Music Education was integrated with Music; Hispanic Linguistics was integrated into Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Linguistics; Hispanic Literature was integrated into Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Linguistics; Recreation, Park and Leisure Studies was integrated into Education, Recreation, Park & Leisure Studies; Work, Community and Family Education was integrated into Education, Work, Community and Family Education; Aerospace Engineering was integrated into Mechanics; and History of Medicine and Biological Science was integrated into History of Science and Technology.

The Board of Regents regularly reviews academic programs through its Educational Planning & Policy Committee. It is expected that additional graduate programs will come under consideration, consistent with the strategic plan, as part of the Board’s ongoing review.
H. Smaller Academic Units and Increased Efficiencies

Introduction

Smaller academic units should consider ways of sharing administrative functions with units in close geographic proximity in order to create efficiencies and conserve resources that can be redirected to academic endeavors.

The University should help identify potential targets of opportunity through ongoing monitoring of the levels of administrative costs in smaller units. Note that all cost savings realized as a result of implementation of any of these recommendations will be reinvested in the academic enterprise.

Statement of Recommendation

(30) We recommend for consideration that the President and Provost appoint a Task Force to consider under what circumstances the Humphrey Institute and the Law School can share administrative functions in a way that will create cost savings that can be reinvested in the academic enterprise. The Task Force should present its recommendations by December 10, 2005. Other similarly-situated units, such as the School of Nursing and the College of Pharmacy, the Carlson School of Management, and nearby Schools, as well as some of the coordinate campuses, also should be encouraged to explore whether efficiencies can be created by sharing selected administrative functions.

Rationale

There has been a tendency for all academic units, regardless of size, to maintain internally the ability to perform all administrative functions necessary to support the unit, with the primary exception of facilities management support. A Working Group on Small Academic Units noted in a report to the Provost in June 2005 that the following administrative functions are performed by most if not all academic units:

- Payroll
- Finance, accounting, and grants management
- Human resources
- Student services, including admissions, recruiting, advising, and career services
- Information technology support
- External relations, including development and communications
- Secretarial/clerical support

Smaller academic units in particular should consider whether opportunities may exist for streamlining and creating new efficiencies by partnering with other units in close geographic proximity to share some of these administrative tasks. While some support services will in certain circumstances need to be performed “in house” due to unique features of a particular academic unit or unique needs of a particular population within
the unit, there generally will be other administrative functions that will be more fungible or interchangeable or that, with some level of creativity, could be shared across units to achieve greater efficiencies.

As an example, the Humphrey Institute and the Law School are among the smaller units on the Twin Cities campus when measured by total expenditures, degrees awarded, tenured and tenure-track faculty, and total number of staff. The Humphrey Institute and the Law School are housed in buildings that are nearly adjacent to each other and previously have shared some administrative services. While some administrative functions, such as career services support for students, may be so particularized that each unit must retain its own staff, there are other functions that may logically be shared, such as payroll, human resources, and information technology support.
V. Coordinate Campuses

Introduction

Each campus of the University of Minnesota has its own unique mission and well-differentiated strengths that provide distinctive contributions within the shared mission and values of the University of Minnesota. The convergence of demographic, financial, and political challenges, requires that each coordinate campus be more strategic about its future. Each must begin to evaluate how it can best continue to serve its region, the state, and beyond.

As the University plans for the future, it is critical that each campus, in addition to pursuing excellence while investing in well-differentiated strengths and strategic priorities, fulfills system-wide expectations for fiscal and academic accountability.

We recognize that different levels of interaction may be appropriate to the needs and context of each of the distinct campuses.

Statement of Recommendation

(31) We recommend for consideration that Central Administration work with each coordinate campus to initiate a process to establish a financial and academic accountability framework under which it will operate and its annual progress will be evaluated—within its own context and consistent with its history and mission.

The fiscal and academic accountability model for each campus will be based on the following operating principles:

1. **Recognition and Attribution of Full Costs and Cost Increases:** Cost increases must be modeled, reported, and acknowledged as campuses grow and change, regardless of where those costs ultimately are paid or the source of funds. Examples of core costs that at times in the past have been partially or fully paid centrally include compensation increases, capital costs, debt costs, facility repair and maintenance, increases in utilities, fringe rate increases, and general inflationary increases. Campuses cannot assume these costs automatically will be covered (in full or in part), and must include these costs as part of their overall budget planning, even if the costs are not currently attributed to their campus budgets.

2. **Rationalization of Levels of State Support:** The level of state support for any campus should be compared against peers or otherwise rationalized and adjusted over time to benchmark levels. If the level of state support is expressed as a ratio (e.g., state support per FYE student or per faculty member), we must reach agreement on the appropriate strategic size of the campus as well.
3. **Revenue Expectations and Enhancements**: Campuses will be allowed and encouraged to fully use their campus assets in the generation of new revenue, consistent with the missions of the University of Minnesota and the Board of Regents/administrative policies. Campuses will be encouraged—and expected—to develop innovative strategies to reduce administrative cost by developing strategic intra-campus partnerships to share administrative, financial and academic platforms where appropriate and to reinvest the cost savings into key academic programs and initiatives.

4. **Academic Enhancements and Accountability**: Each coordinate campus must continue to lead its own change and strategic positioning process, consistent with these principles and consistent with its mission and that of the University. Each campus must be responsible for developing a long-range academic plan (with rationale), including enrollment targets and academic priorities.

5. **Enhanced Regional Focus**: The future vision of each campus must take into account educational, rural and economic development in the region and where possible forge partnerships with them.

**“Case Study”: Applying the Principles and Criteria**

We already have begun this process with the University of Minnesota-Crookston campus. UMC was chosen to pilot this process because it faces the greatest number and perhaps the most significant critical challenges, driven by demographic, fiscal, and other constraints. In analyzing the future of UMC, it was important to do so in the context of its operation within a network of neighboring states, other higher education institutions, and other resources.

The process was initiated by gathering background data and analyzing a series of demographic, programmatic and fiscal issues the campus faces. This information will be shared shortly with the campus leadership, faculty, staff, and students. The data will then be used to frame an academic and fiscal accountability model and operating assumptions and to drive a long-term strategic planning and accountability process for the campus. We will initiate and complete a comparable process for the other coordinate campuses with reports due to the President and Provost by December 10, 2005.
VI. Implementation and Next Steps

A. Phases of the Current Strategic Positioning Process

The University of Minnesota’s Strategic Positioning Process is a multi-year ongoing process that began in August 2004. Earlier Task Forces and reports contributed to, and informed, this process between 2002-04. The initial phase of this process consists of five stages:

1. University community consultation and the creation of the Strategic Positioning Report. The report, The University of Minnesota: Advancing the Public Good--Securing the University's Leadership Position In the 21st Century, was unanimously endorsed by the Board of Regents on March 11, 2005.

2. Two task forces (academic and administrative) worked from December to March and produced recommendations for consideration to President Bruininks on March 30, 2005.

3. A process of broad consultation with the University community will continue, as the President will share the recommendations for consideration with the University community, including the University Senate and the Faculty Consultative Committee, and the general public. The President will forward his recommendations to the Board of Regents for its consideration in May 2005.

4. The Board of Regents will review the recommendations and hold a public hearing in May 2005. At its June 2005 meeting, the Board will act on the President’s recommendations.

5. If approved, several months will be spent in consultation with faculty, staff and students to develop implementation plans and options, with many results of that process expected to be in place by July 1, 2006. Task Forces are expected to develop their implementation plan recommendations by December 10, 2005.

B. Future Changes

The process of evaluating priorities and reviewing programs, services, and academic structures must be ongoing. The recommendations for consideration contained in this report are not meant to be comprehensive and exhaustive, especially given the time frame within which they were produced. In order to meet our mandate to transform the University of Minnesota into one of the top three public research universities in the world within the next decade, we need to continue to think boldly and creatively, we must be dynamic and nimble, and we must engage in a process of continuous improvement.

The recommendations in this report are not meant to be final steps in our strategic positioning process; they are first steps. These recommendations should be springboards for new ideas at all levels of our organizational structure; they should be invitations for
everyone to think creatively and look to the future. To be truly successful, the entire University community must engage actively in ongoing evaluation and change efforts. Leaders at all levels need to take time to step back and reflect broadly on the mission of their units and on the future; they must encourage their faculty, staff, and students to do the same. Improvement implies motion, and motion requires action and change. There are multiple means to aid our efforts including service on task forces, e-mail comments and suggestions, and department meetings and assemblies.

C. Financial Implications

Some recommended changes will result in cost savings; others will require investment of new or additional resources. All cost savings realized as a result of implementation of any of these recommendations will be reinvested in the academic enterprise as permanent reallocations. In this way, return on cost savings will compound for the direct benefit of the University’s core mission.

D. Human Resources Implications

Faculty and staff enjoy rights under University policy. For example, under the Tenure Code, faculty holding tenure at the University will not lose tenure as a result of any of the changes recommended here. As plans are developed and decisions are made and implemented, the University must take care to protect the rights of all employees affected by change. The University will consult faculty and staff throughout the planning and implementation processes. Any new plans to facilitate implementation will be communicated directly to faculty and staff. Consultation and communication will enhance decision-making and implementation and will best serve the interests of faculty, staff, and the institution.
VII. Conclusion

Our success in reaching our goal and our achievements can be limited only by a lack of leadership, courage, and political will. Much is at stake for the future of the University, our students, and our state. The words of Cyrus Northrop, second President of the University of Minnesota, continue to resonate: “No better inheritance can be given to a child than a good education.” We must not squander this inheritance—and this opportunity.

As a University, we have a tripartite mission of research, teaching, and public service. To be an exceptional institution of higher education, we need to define carefully the core mission of the University through each of its colleges and departments. For each decision, we should ask how the decision will move us closer to building excellence. We also must ask what our comparative advantages are in continuing or expanding in certain areas. In continuing to build excellence as one of America’s premier research universities, we can accept no less as we advance the frontiers of knowledge to address our most significant needs and to help solve society’s pressing problems. Indeed, excellence has been identified as part of our state statutory mandate to “provide a level of excellence that is competitive on a national and international level, through high quality teaching, scholarship, and learning.”

Our pursuit of excellence does not imply any lack of attention to equity and access. We pledge to do this by providing access to disadvantaged students who have been underrepresented historically and whose socioeconomic backgrounds make it difficult to attend the University in the absence of financial assistance. When students are admitted to the University, they should know that we are committed to quality and excellence at each task we undertake and, ultimately, to their academic achievement. The value of their education and degree depends on it. Access to excellence leads to access to success for our students. Successful students create the capacity for the University to provide greater opportunities to advance knowledge and educational opportunity. It should be the state's and the university's first priority.

If we fail to act now, we will fall behind and the quality of life of Minnesotans will suffer. We would look back on these times and wonder why we did not do more. Clearly we have many challenges as we reposition and redesign the University of Minnesota. Such changes will require leadership at all levels of the University and changes to our current culture. But with these challenges there also are opportunities. And opportunities should be inspiring. Each of us at the University is challenged to join the effort to move a very good University into the ranks of great distinction. That should be the charge and legacy for all of us. An even greater University of Minnesota awaits us.