

## **Regents Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach Summary of Recommendations May 21, 2002**

The Ad Hoc Committee on Outreach was appointed by the Board of Regents in fall 2001 to discuss recommendations related to the broad policy question, “What should the University’s outreach mission be in the twenty-first century?” The Committee’s work plan included the following strategic questions:

- What are the public’s expectations for outreach?
- What are the various options regarding changes in outreach?
- From the standpoint of the University’s mission, what are the pro/cons of pursuing these different outreach options?
- What are the most important outreach activities of the University?
- Which outreach activities are perceived as the most valuable by key stakeholders?
- Which outreach activities align most closely with the University’s academic and educational priorities?
- What should the University’s outreach activities be in the next two decade(s)?
- How will the various activities be funded in the future?

At the request of President Yudof, the Committee initially focused on the Extension Service, which had undertaken a major redevelopment process and was preparing a report to the legislature.

The committee met on November 29, 2001; December 12, 2001; February 6, 2002, and May 8, 2002. It invited presentations on:

- The Extension Service plan for change, and legislative report, by Dean Charles Casey;
- The scope of the University’s outreach activities by Associate Vice President Mary Heltsley;
- New directions in technology to support outreach by Associate Vice President Robert Kvavik, Director Billie Wahlstrom, and Assistant Director Mark McCahill;
- The Regional Sustainable Development Partnerships by Associate Dean Steven Daley Laursen and Mr. Dean Harrington, member of the Southeast Regional Partnership Board); and,
- The strategic context for and future directions of outreach by Vice President Charles Muscoplat.

Through these meetings, presentations, and background reading, the Committee learned of a number of related, important activities that the University had undertaken regarding outreach, including the Civic Engagement Task Force and the Administrative Advisory Committee on Public Engagement/Outreach. The committee acknowledged that these activities, and the Extension Service’s *Plan for Change*, were delving into the same strategic questions posed in its work plan. Therefore, the Committee decided that it would be more useful to allow the administrative work to go forward, while it narrowed

its broad charge. Summarized below are the committee's significant ideas, issues, and recommendations.

### **1. Extension Service.**

The Committee approved a resolution for Board action in December 2001. The resolution supported *Extension 2002-2005: A Plan for Change*. (A summary of issues is attached, below.)

**Recommendation:** The Committee recommends periodic progress reports to the Board of Regents on the plan and on Extension's progress in achieving financial stability. The Committee heard an initial progress report on May 8, 2002.

### **2. Outreach, more broadly.**

Reaffirm the importance of and commitment to outreach.

- The Kellogg Foundation has redefined the mission of land-grant universities to encompass learning, discovery, and engagement, rather than the traditional tripartite mission of teaching, research, and outreach.
- Outreach is complex and interwoven into the daily lives of many Minnesotans.
- Outreach is defined in many ways, including engagement with citizens and functions that reach out to the citizenry.

**Recommendation:** The University should define more clearly the outreach mission of the institution.

Emphasize the breadth and depth of outreach activities across all University of Minnesota colleges and campuses.

- The magnitude of outreach or engagement at the University of Minnesota is immense. University faculty, students, and staff engage in a wealth of activities each year.
- The extent of these efforts is not widely understood.
- Outreach is not compartmentalized; it is connected in important ways to teaching and research activities, and is critical to the survival of some colleges.
- Outreach is not just Extension; the Extension Service's work may be most widely recognized; it comprises approximately 10 to 15 percent of the University's outreach expenditures.

**Recommendation:** The University should emphasize that outreach benefits both the institution and citizens. It is a two-way street, as it benefits the state and also provides a venue for students to learn and faculty to teach.

Bring more focus to outreach by recognizing it and communicating about it.

- More should be done to support, communicate about, and promote the value of the University's outreach activities.
- Work of the Administrative (Deans) Advisory Committee on Public Engagement and Outreach is critical to gain wide University support for and make outreach an integral part of what we do.

- Administration may consider central leadership to help make outreach more continually visible.

Consider how to pay for outreach.

- Outreach faces financial issues, especially in a tuition-based model.
- The University should consider whether to try to quantify cost for and revenues to support outreach, recognizing that it may be complicated to do so.

**Recommendation:** The University should focus on efficient delivery of outreach.

Recognize potential in changing delivery methods.

- Great new ideas and technologies will revolutionize outreach, making it boundariless, improving service, and giving the customer more control.
- Implementation of the University's portal strategy goal is that every citizen in state will have his or her own portal link.
- Portal strategy raises questions of how the institution will use it.
- Related issues include: who should the University serve in this environment; intellectual property; privacy; branding/imaging; advertising vs. pay-per-view; need for a business plan; how portal would be used for distance learning.