

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BOARD OF REGENTS
PUBLIC FORUM ON STRATEGIC POSITIONING
Monday, May 16, 2005**

A meeting of the Board of Regents was held on Monday, May 16, 2005, at 10:00 a.m. in the Boardroom, 600 McNamara Alumni Center.

Regents present: David Metzen, presiding; Peter Bell, Frank Berman, Steven Hunter, David Larson, Richard McNamara, and Lakeesha Ransom. Clyde Allen, Anthony Baraga, Dallas Bohnsack, John Frobenius, and Patricia Simmons participated via telephone.

Staff present: President Robert Bruininks; Senior Vice President & Provost Thomas Sullivan; Senior Vice President Robert Jones; Vice President Kathryn Brown, Charles Muscoplat, Kathleen O'Brien; Executive Director Ann Cieslak; and Executive Associate Vice President Al Sullivan; Associate Vice Presidents Sheila Ards and Gail Klatt.

Regent Metzen welcomed those in attendance at the Public Forum on Strategic Positioning as well as those connected by television on the University of Minnesota campuses at Crookston and Morris.

Metzen indicated that the Board first heard President Bruininks' recommendations on May 13, 2005 and will vote on the proposed recommendations at its regular meeting on June 10, 2005. He reviewed the procedures to be followed, noting that it is not a dialogue, but an opportunity for the University community and the public to comment regarding President Bruininks' recommendations. Since there were more requests to speak than time available, selected speakers represent various constituencies, such as the Minnesota Students Association, the Faculty Consultative Committee, and the Civil Service Committee. He noted that those desiring to comment further over the next few weeks may submit letters or emails to the Board or to the president.

Executive Director Cieslak called forward the following individuals:

Vance Opperman, Co-Chair, Citizens League Task Force on Higher Education

Mr. Opperman referred the Board to the report of the Citizens League Task Force on Higher Education, *Trouble on the Horizon*. He applauded the strategic plan because it focuses on research, the only area in which the task force suggested additional funding. He asserted that it is the University's responsibility to lead Minnesota into the future and that the strategic plan is an excellent first step.

Barbara Bezat, AFSCME Local 3937

Ms. Bezat voiced her concerns about the impact of the strategic plan on access to the University. She cautioned that rising admission requirements and tuition are threatening the University's fulfillment of its land-grant mission, and, on the basis of her daughter's experience, she wondered how many talented but low-income Minnesotans may be denied admission in the future.

Sheila Ards, Associate Vice President for Community Partnerships

Associate Vice President Ards expressed her support for the strategic plan and the University's goal to become one of the world's top three public research universities. She considers it a bold step, but one that is consistent with the core beliefs and needs

of her community because it speaks to striving for the best. Her only concern lies with access to success, but she is confident that President Bruininks values diversity and is committed to move forward in admitting, retaining, and graduating students of color; to working with local public schools; and to providing financial aid to help retain the best in our community to address its most pressing and intractable problems.

Robin Murie, Program Director, General College

Ms. Murie discussed the impact of the proposed closure of the General College on Minnesota's immigrant communities. Small classes and involved faculty create an excellent learning environment for non-native English speakers, and immigrant students also benefit from the multicultural focus, diversity, access, and support General College affords. She stated that there is excellence in the proposed plan, but she requested that General College be given time at the table so that its best aspects can be retained.

Carol Wells, Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology

Professor Wells spoke in support of the University's Medical Technology Program. She expressed her concerns about proposed discontinuation of this program in favor of training through institutions of the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System (MnSCU), noting that MnSCU lacks the necessary funding, faculty, and proximity to clinical laboratories. She stated that it would be counterproductive to dismantle a center of excellence considering the small cost, outstanding career opportunities, and the vital service provided to the people of Minnesota.

Jeffrey Klausner, Dean, College of Veterinary Medicine & Incoming Chair, Twin Cities Deans Council

Dean Klausner read a letter written to President Bruininks from members of the Twin Cities Deans Council. The letter urged support for the president's recommendations.

Jeanne Higbee, Professor, General College

Professor Higbee voiced her concerns about the future of the research that General College faculty conduct. She stated that this research provides guidance in such areas as what works in the classroom, how to serve students with disabilities, and how to create a multicultural environment. She fears that a General College without appropriate teaching disciplines will encourage talented faculty to go elsewhere.

Jean King, Professor, Educational Policy and Administration

Professor King, a faculty member of the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD), spoke of her excitement about the potential addition of Family Social Science and the School of Social Work to her college. She considers the proposed restructuring an exciting opportunity and urged the Board to support this change.

Emily Serafy Cox, President-elect, MSA

Speaking as president-elect of MSA, Ms. Cox submitted position statements endorsing parts of the strategic plan, but expressed MSA's opposition to the restructuring of General College, which students believe is a vital resource for underserved Minnesota high school students. She also lamented the exclusion of students and community members from the task forces and urged the Board to delay its final recommendations until fall to permit further discussion of the changes proposed.

Mark Bellcourt, Associate Counselor, General College

Bellcourt expressed his concerns that a proposed merger of the General College with the College of Education would reduce the number of poor, urban, rural, and minority students admitted to the University. He is particularly concerned about the potential impact on Native Americans, many of whom are admitted through the General College, and urged the Board to remove from the strategic positioning plan proposed changes that affect the General College.

Tom Fisher, Dean, College of Landscape Architecture

Dean Fisher supported the proposed creation of a College of Design because design disciplines are increasingly integrated and because it will provide valuable interactions across disciplines that will benefit students. Integration of design disciplines also will make possible entry into new fields, such as industrial/product design, an area of potential benefit to Minnesota.

Sheryl Kasdan, Alumnus, General College

Ms. Kasdan spoke of her own personal experience as a non-traditional student who graduated from the University after resuming her college career through General College. She attributed her successful completion of a degree to the assistance she received in General College and believes it is her responsibility to voice her concerns about the potential barriers underprepared students may face if General College is eliminated.

David Tilman, Regents Professor, Ecology

Professor Tilman, who served as a faculty representative on the strategic planning committee, stated that the committee carefully reviewed the University's undergraduate experience. In support of the proposed restructuring, he believes that General College faculty would be more effective if they served University-wide, that student learning opportunities are diminished when some students are segregated, and that the University must attract a higher proportion of top students who often leave the state for prestigious institutions elsewhere. He urged the Board to endorse the proposed plan, taking a first step that is essential if the University is to achieve its goal.

Eleanor Wesserle, Coordinator, College of Natural Resources

Ms. Wesserle stated that she is a 2003 graduate of the College of Natural Resources (CNR) and now serves as one of its admissions officers. She believes that the current organization of the University's environmental programs is lacking, but that merging CNR with the College of Agriculture, Environment, and Food Sciences will result in a lack of focus for both colleges. Instead, she urged the creation of an independent environmental college to enhance environmental research.

Andrea Hjelm, President, University of Minnesota Alumni Association

Ms. Hjelm reported that by resolution the National Board of Directors of the University of Minnesota Alumni Association formally endorsed the proposed strategic positioning plan. She read the resolution, which endorses the University's goal to be one of the top three public research universities and states that this transformation will require creative thinking, bold actions, and looking beyond traditional academic and administrative structures.

Kristin Cory, Teaching Specialist, General College

Ms. Cory urged the Board to postpone its decision regarding General College. She believes that the plan, developed without the involvement of General College staff, will deny admission to a majority of the students General College now serves. She also believes that proposals to disperse these students across the University or to rely on preparation by community colleges will be less effective.

Jean Quam, Director, School of Social Work

Professor Quam stated that change is unsettling, but that the School of Social Work has benefited from change throughout its history and endorses excellence for the University. She reported that Social Work faculty have begun to meet across colleges and functions and have already stepped onto the new path. She urged the Board to endorse the strategic plan as soon as possible in order to maintain progress in doing the work that lies ahead.

Susanne Fisher, former staff member and alumnus, College of Human Ecology

As a former student and faculty member, Dr. Fisher voiced her concerns regarding the strategic plan. She believes (1) that the plan places too much emphasis on research to the detriment of the University's land grant responsibilities in teaching and outreach and (2) that the lack of consultation with faculty in the College of Human Ecology marginalizes their long history of contributions to the profession and service to families.

Jeffrey Roberts, Distinguished McKnight University Professor, Chemistry

Professor Roberts expressed his enthusiastic support of the University's goal and plan for becoming one of the world's top 3 public research universities. He believes that the planning process has been appropriately consultative, with controversy centered on only a few recommendations. He urged the Board to focus not on individual recommendations but on the overarching plan; to implement the plan in its entirety; and to maintain momentum by acting promptly.

William Gleason, Associate Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathology

Professor Gleason voiced his concerns regarding the potential impact on diversity at the University if the General College is closed in favor of a department within the College of Education. During his 30 years as a member of the Medical School faculty, he has been concerned about the University's lack of diversity and believes that the changes proposed will result in a setback in this area.

Joanne Eicher, Regents Professor, Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel

Professor Eicher suggested an alternative to the proposed merger of units from four colleges into a new College of Design. She advocated instead for the creation of a School of Design and a School of Education and Human Development organized within a "mega-college" (similar to the Institute of Technology and the College of Liberal Arts). She stated that such a structure would increase faculty synergies, maintain the Education and Human Development name and alumni giving, increase economies of scale, and result in an innovative, flexible, and exciting reorganization.

William Greuling, Student, College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences

Mr. Greuling described himself as the quintessential non-traditional student, having transferred to the University from Rochester Community College through the Minnesota Cooperative Admissions Program. He commended the University for its hard work on the strategic plan, and especially those aspects that will strengthen relationships between the University and MnSCU, but he is disappointed the plan does not address the needs of transfer students. He asked the Board to create a task force to enhance support systems for transfer students, to look for ways to improve registration and connections to campus, and to establish measures by which the institution will hold itself accountable for academic progress, retention, and graduation rates.

Phyllis Walker, AFSCME Local 3800

As president of AFSCME Local 3800, as a 22-year staff member of the University, and as a Minnesotan, Ms. Walker stated her opposition to the proposed strategic plan. She asserted that the strategic plan departs from the University's land grant mission, threatens the existence of General College, and was developed with little consultation or public comment. Of greatest concern is the potential impact of the plan on diversity and access for the children of Minnesota's workers.

Susan Stafford, Dean, College of Natural Resources, & Charles Muscoplat, Dean, College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences

Dean Stafford encouraged the Board to support the proposed strategic plan. She believes that there is the potential for great synergy and that now is the time to strengthen the University's programs in agriculture, food, and environment. She noted

that some fear the College of Natural Resources will lose its identity, but she believes this is the right time for a new college that will better serve Minnesotans.

Dean Muscoplat urged the Board to embrace the proposed changes. On the basis of his participation in a number of other task forces over the last several years, he considers the proposed changes a part of continuous improvement across the University. He also believes the time is right to enhance connections between food production and the environment.

Erica Stern, Associate Professor, Department of Occupational Therapy

Professor Stern voiced her opposition to the proposed discontinuation of the University's Occupational Therapy program given the anticipated needs for occupational therapists in Minnesota. She urged that the strategic positioning plan of the Academic Health Center (AHC) include allied health professionals; that allied health professionals be included in the AHC's core mission; and that strategic planning committees include faculty from the reviewed curricula (in accordance with recommendations of the Faculty Senate), consumers, employers, community partners, and students.

Joel Maturi, Director, Intercollegiate Athletics

Mr. Maturi indicated that his job is to provide the vision and leadership necessary for the University to be a model athletics department. General College has long been a partner in that process and served Intercollegiate Athletics well, but graduation rates in some athletic programs are not at the level expected of a model Division I program. Because Intercollegiate Athletics is a very visible representative of the University, he supports the changes outlined in the proposed strategic plan, which he believes will increase retention rates, and ultimately graduation rates, for the University's athletes.

Khong Xiong, President, General College Student Board

Mr. Xiong stated that many different ethnic communities comprise the General College, and that General College faculty and staff have been incredibly understanding and helpful to him, a non-native English speaker and first-generation college student. He believes the proposed plan is disrespectful to the General College and its students, faculty, and staff. He also presented a petition that he said contained more than 3,000 signatures urging the Board to postpone until Fall 2005 consideration of proposals regarding the General College.

Kate Rubin, President, Minnesota High Tech Association

Ms. Rubin expressed her support for the strategic positioning plan and its goal of transforming the University into one of the world's top three public research universities. She maintained that the University had not achieved its current national prominence by resting on its laurels, and that its ability to adapt in the past has been critical to its success. She stated that there is a well-established relationship between public research universities and successful high technology firms and stressed that swift implementation of the proposed changes would help the University attract the best and brightest faculty and students.

Kathy Hansen, Director, Fairview-University Medical Center Laboratories

As an employer of medical technologists, Ms. Hansen voiced her concerns about the possible impact on the quality of services if the University discontinues its Medical Technology Program. She also noted that the AHC's Allied Health Education Models Task Force on which she served had recommended that the University's program be preserved and serve as the flagship program for expanded education of laboratory professionals in Minnesota.

Naomi Scheman, Professor, Philosophy and Women's Studies/Incoming Chair, Senate Committee on Equity, Access, and Diversity

Professor Scheman stated that the University has tremendous potential through its research mission to respectfully engage society's many diverse constituencies in the

academic enterprise. This connection is important for these constituencies, but it is also important for any university committed to conducting research responsive to people's needs. She urged postponing until November proposed reorganizations so that the faculty and staff of General College and the administration can discuss how best to integrate their work and the students they serve into the larger University community.

Jay Kiedrowski, Senior Fellow, Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs

Mr. Kiedrowski, who served as a member of the 2002 Commission on Excellence of Minnesota, reported that the commission found there is a need to expand Minnesota's research capacity and a need for excellence in the University's undergraduate programs. He stated that President Bruininks' recommendations are consistent with the commission's findings and that these changes, which will require focus, priority setting, greater efficiency, and resource reallocations, are critical to the University's success and to Minnesota's future.

Wayne E. Brandt, Executive Vice President, Minnesota Forest Industries

Mr. Brandt voiced his opposition to a proposed merger of the College of Natural Resources (CNR) with the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Sciences. The members of Minnesota Forest Industries commend the thoroughness of the internal process that generated the strategic plan recommendations, but they believe these recommendations will weaken CNR and environmental programs. Therefore, he urged additional external consultation in light of the substantial impact of the decisions the Board will make in June.

Karen Buhr, President-Elect, GAPSA

President-elect Buhr noted that she is not speaking for GAPSA, which has not taken an official position on the strategic plan, but as a master's student in the College of Natural Resources. She called for careful consideration of the strategic plan and its possible impact on the University's long history of support for a diversity of voices, a diversity of ideas, and a diversity of research that is not economically motivated. She applauded the University's role in making Minnesota what it is today, but she urged that the institution remain committed to its land grant mission and to the citizens of Minnesota.

Scott Lanyon, Professor and Director, Bell Museum of Natural History

Professor Lanyon expressed support for a merger of the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Science with the College of Natural Resources as a first step in capitalizing on the opportunity for the University to be a world leader in environmental science and policy. He believes this organizational change will bring together key disciplines and produce creative solutions to stressful environmental changes, but he recommended that the merger be followed by creation of an Institute of the Environment (as recommended by the Academic Task Force) and encouraged consultation with faculty, students, and staff to identify even bolder steps.

Dorit Hafner, Chair, Civil Service Committee

Ms. Hafner stated that Civil Service employees support the overall goal of strengthening the University and making it one of the world's top three public research universities, but she reported there are concerns that staff were not invited to participate in the task forces President Bruininks created to develop the plan. She asked that the Board recognize the importance of including all employee groups in the process, that all campuses be treated equally and respectfully, that additional details be provided before the Board approves the plan, and that layoffs not be used as a cost-saving measure to achieve stated goals.

Allen Levine, Professor, Department of Food Science and Nutrition

Professor Levine expressed his excitement regarding the strategic plan because its proposal to merge the COAFES with the CNR is consistent with the President's Health Foods, Healthy Lives initiative and because it will allow the Department of Food Science and Nutrition to achieve true excellence. He suggested enriching the new relationship

through links to the AHC (as recommended in the strategic plan) so that the University's potential to address food and health issues in exemplary ways can be realized.

Ann Masten, Professor, Institute of Child Development

Professor Masten expressed her support for the strategic plan because she believes it will revitalize the Department of Developmental Psychology as well as the University. The department is world renowned, but she believes the changes proposed for the College of Education and Human Development represent a compelling alignment that will connect research to programs in such areas as multiculturalism, human capital development, and resilience among high-risk populations.

Zeb Anderson, Student, General College

Mr. Anderson, from Isanti in rural Minnesota, believes that he comes from an average Minnesota family. He was admitted to the University through General College, where he has enjoyed great counseling, small class sizes, and a great learning environment, but he fears the consolidation of General College within another college will eliminate many of the learning activities from which he has benefited. Because the changes were proposed without much consultation with General College faculty, staff, and students, he urged that General College be removed from the list of proposed consolidations.

Marvin Marshak, Chair, Faculty Consultative Committee

Professor Marshak stated that after multiple open forums, faculty committee discussions, and debate by the University Senate, the Senate voted 120-3 on April 28, 2005 to express its overall support for the initiatives proposed in the strategic positioning document, a first step in a multiphase process to achieve success in learning by a diverse student body. He acknowledged that the Board has yet to decide whether to support strategic positioning, but that its endorsement will enable the University to fulfill its mission in research, teaching, and outreach.

Metzen thanked forum participants for their interest in the University and their respectful comments regarding the proposed strategic plan. He reminded the Board that this issue is scheduled for action at the next meeting on June 10, 2005.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

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