

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

**BOARD OF REGENTS**

**Work Session**

**October 7, 2004**

A work session of the Board of Regents was held on Thursday October 7, 2004, at 10:45 a.m. in Ballroom B, Kirby Student Center, on the University of Minnesota Duluth campus.

Regents present: David Metzen, presiding; Clyde Allen, Anthony Baraga, Peter Bell, Frank Berman, Dallas Bohnsack, John Frobenius, William Hogan, Richard McNamara, Lakeesha Ransom, Maureen Reed, and Patricia Simmons,

Staff present: President Robert Bruininks; Senior Vice President and Provost Thomas Sullivan; and Executive Director Ann Cieslak.

Chair Metzen called the work session to order and thanked the administration for its continuing efforts in the area of strategic positioning, the issue identified as the Board's number one priority for this academic year.

President Bruininks commented that careful reflection on the University's mission has always been important, but it is essential in a time of financial stress. He reviewed a diagram depicting the relationships among planning and accountability, financial planning, operational and tactical planning, and decision-making, critical components of the University's strategic positioning initiative as discussed in the September 2004 work session. He indicated that this session would be devoted to a discussion of strategic positioning criteria.

Senior Vice President Sullivan identified the following criteria that will be used to set priorities and evaluate programs and support services:

1. Programs and services are more highly valued if they contribute significantly to the University's core mission.
2. Programs and services should meet objective and judgmental standards of high quality, productivity, and impact.
3. Programs should be evaluated based on exceptional characteristics that make the program a strength for this University compared to other programs in Minnesota or at other peer institutions.
4. Programs should be organized in a way that facilitates intellectual synergies, creating new efficiencies and improvements.
5. Evaluation of programs should consider current and projected demand and the potential and real availability of resources for funding program costs.
6. Programs should be evaluated based on their effectiveness and how efficiently they operate.
7. Both new and existing programs should be evaluated on their potential to develop new resources and leverage existing resources.

The Board was asked to consider the following questions:

- Are the criteria and their relationships with each other clear?
- Will the criteria help us position ourselves to make appropriate decisions regarding strengths, weaknesses, and priorities?
- Will the criteria help us determine how well we are doing in relation to our mission, vision, values, culture, and goals?

Board members commended the administration on progress to date and suggested a number of changes to the criteria, including:

- a focus on core mission as defined by the president and ratified by the Board to provide clarity regarding what activities significantly contribute to the core mission;
- explicit statement of the importance of both technical quality and service quality in program and service delivery; and
- explicit acknowledgment of the University's role in higher education statewide and the institution's value beyond Minnesota's borders.

In response to questions, Bruininks and Sullivan indicated the following:

- The *University Plan, Performance, and Accountability Report*, reviewed annually by the Board, will be the primary tool for assessing progress.
- Because some criteria naturally depend on the presence of other criteria, there is an inherent relative ranking, but rankings may vary.
- Specific values, including diversity, are not reflected in the criteria, but the criteria are objective measures that will be applied through judgments involving trade-offs and interpretations of values, goals, and aspirations.

The work session adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

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