

April 10, 2014

TO: All faculty and staff

FROM: Presidents and Chancellor, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities

SUBJECT: Next Steps for *Charting the Future*

This is a defining moment for us. Just when Minnesota needs our colleges and universities more than ever before, we are facing significant challenges that threaten our ability to make good on our core commitments. How we respond to these challenges will determine what the future looks like for our campuses. Now, there's no doubt that faculty, staff, and campus leaders are already working extremely hard every day to best serve our 430,000 students and communities across the state. So it's really not about how hard we're working. It's about how we're not always working together. We're still working in silos. Think about these examples:

- The ability to transfer across colleges and universities is critical to student success, and yet we're still struggling to ensure seamless transfer for our students.
- Campuses spend limited resources on marketing campaigns that, if we're honest with ourselves, too often just serve to steal students from each other.
- 74% of all careers in Minnesota will require some postsecondary education by the year 2020 but currently we're not on-track to meet the demand.

Imagine if we worked together to improve transfer, if campuses partnered on marketing to increase the number of students each campus serves, if we collaborated on expanding programs that prepare students for the careers of tomorrow. We already have some great examples of what happens when campuses collaborate:

- St. Cloud State University and St. Cloud Technical and Community College partnered to create the Community College Connection Program to improve student success, even at some financial cost to the university.
- Leadership from the IT team at Winona State University in collaboration with all of our campuses led to a common network login ID, replacing the unwieldy system we had before, with a different network login ID on every campus.
- President Davenport at MSU, Mankato and President Collins at NHED partnered to lead the implementation of a new purchase card agreement that can be used by all of our colleges and universities to save us close to \$2.5 million a year.

Clearly, we're working together, but it's not enough. Imagine what would be possible if we not only allowed but encouraged and even expected this kind of cooperation. The recommendations drafted with input from over 5,000 students, faculty, and staff in *Charting the Future* give us the roadmap for how we can break down silos and work together in new ways to better serve students and communities across our state, strengthen our colleges and universities, and protect their unique character and autonomy. (To read more, visit: www.mnscu.edu/chartingthefuture/recommendations.html.)

It's time to act on those recommendations and translate them into specific actions. To do that, we are launching eight campus-led implementation teams comprised of students, faculty, and staff across our colleges and universities.

- Four of the teams will be launched in Spring 2014 (team conveners are in parentheses): Student Success (President Connie Gores, Southwest Minnesota State University), Diversity (President Scott Olson, Winona State University), Comprehensive Workplace Solutions (President Sue Collins, Northeast Higher Education District), System Incentives and Rewards (President Phil Davis, Minneapolis Community and Technical College).
- The other four teams will launch in Fall 2014: Academic Planning and Collaboration (President Dick Hanson, Bemidji State University), Competency Certification and Credit for Prior Learning (President Annette Parker, South Central College), Education Technology (President Ron Anderson, Century College), Information Technology Systems Design (Vice Chancellor Ramon Padilla, ITS)

What can you expect from us? We will provide regular updates through email as well as the FAQ on the website (www.mnscu.edu/chartingthefuture). Throughout this process, you can expect us to be open and transparent. You can expect us to listen to you. You can expect regular communication. You can expect us to celebrate individuals and campuses willing to be creative, take chances, and act decisively.

What do we expect from you? We really want to hear from you. The implementation teams need your ideas and suggestions, but also your examples of current collaborations that make you proud. Please email MyIdeas@so.mnscu.edu. We'll share what we learn on the website, which will be regularly updated. We want this to be a dialogue about what we can do together to continue producing the best educated and most talented graduates.

We recognize that these are some big expectations – for all of us. But doing nothing is not an option. We need to do things differently. We need to be bold. We need to be courageous.

We can do this because we're going to do it together.