

Resolution on Strategic Planning
Approved April 28, 2005, by the University Senate

1 1. The University Senate strongly endorses the goal of systematically reviewing and
2 improving the University and the necessity for strategic planning. The increasingly rapid change
3 in the structure of knowledge and the pressures on the University arising from decreasing state
4 funding and resulting increases in tuition all mandate an ongoing effort to ensure congruence
5 between the University's structure and its goals.
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7 2. The University Senate calls on the President to increase University community
8 participation as the strategic planning process continues. Whatever recommendations the
9 President and the Regents endorse, the implementation will only be effective with faculty
10 leadership and participation as well as active involvement by staff members and students.
11 Because of the importance of faculty in implementing academic change, a majority of each task
12 force should be faculty members, and the task forces should be chaired or co-chaired by a faculty
13 member. Student membership should be strongly encouraged but not required on each task force.
14 The task force members should be chosen from both inside and outside the specific affected
15 areas based on their relevant knowledge, skill, and commitment to the process. Deans and chairs
16 should not control the selection. Task force members should be expected to bring their special
17 expertise to the planning process, but should represent the interests of the University, not those
18 of any particular college, department, dean or chair.
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20 3. The University Senate asks the President and Provost to continue to meet and consult
21 with concerned individuals and groups on and off campus regarding the Strategic Planning
22 process, goals, and implementation. Achievement of the strategic planning goals requires that
23 the administration understand and respond to the concerns of those most directly affected.
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25 4. The University Senate suggests that future strategic planning should consider even more
26 ambitious plans than those that have been presented so far and that current and future efforts
27 should address resource and budget factors. The Senate is concerned that the steps outlined in the
28 Academic Task Force Report may not be sufficient to achieve the University's goals. Moreover,
29 the University's achievements are currently limited by a lack of money, reflected in problems
30 such as low ranking on faculty compensation, small numbers of faculty in key departments, and
31 uneven distribution of resources to support research and creative activity. These problems must
32 be addressed if the University is to achieve its goal of being among the top three public research
33 universities in the world, as it will be difficult to compete successfully with institutions whose
34 resources are much greater than those available to us.
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36 5. The University Senate recognizes that reconfiguration of academic units may be
37 necessary to achieve the University's strategic goals. In the process of such reconfiguration:
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39 -- The University Senate strongly supports a continued emphasis on the University's
40 commitment to access and diversity and to its land-grant mission. The commitment to
41 access and diversity requires outreach, recruitment, retention, and graduation of a diverse
42 student body. The University Senate believes that geographic diversity and the
43 University's land-grant mission require that urban and rural students in Minnesota have
44 access to the University. The University Senate recognizes that diversity includes race
45 and ethnicity, socio-economic status, geographic area, educational attainment level of
46 family members, primary language, gender, sexual orientation, and ability/disability. The
47 Senate intends, by careful monitoring, to help ensure the commitment to access and
48 diversity is fulfilled, whatever recommendations are adopted.
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50 -- The University Senate re-emphasizes the importance of participation of all
51 faculty, in the units to be reconfigured, in the development of mission, goals, and

52 organization of the reconfigured units. Students should also have a voice in the
53 development and implementation of this process, with contributions not limited to
54 membership on specific task forces and including student government leaders, as students
55 often have unique insight on the effects of proposed changes. Structural change will
56 succeed only if affected faculty and students are active contributors to the implementation
57 process and if the values and objectives of each affected unit are reflected in the final
58 outcomes.

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60 -- All proposed task forces should give special priority to planning that incorporates
61 these commitments.

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63 6. The University Senate supports initiatives to improve and enhance honors education and
64 writing education at the University of Minnesota, and the Senate supports the creation of task
65 forces to consider and evaluate a range of recommendations on how best to achieve these goals,
66 including the proposals to create an honors college and a baccalaureate writing initiative. The
67 Senate emphasizes that in the implementation of those proposals, there must be consultation with
68 those currently involved with honors programs and writing programs across the University, and
69 the implementation must ensure the examination and sharing of existing best practices in
70 University programs and in similar programs at peer universities. The Senate expects that
71 additional resources will be necessary to achieve these goals.

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73 7. The University Senate welcomes establishment of a task force to determine the
74 appropriate configuration of the pure and applied sciences and recommends that the basic
75 science units of the Academic Health Center be considered as part of the study.

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77 8. The University Senate is concerned that:

78 -- Strategic planning for the Academic Health Center does not appear to be as fully
79 developed as planning in other areas, or to be integrated with that planning.

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81 -- Strategic planning for the coordinate campuses does not appear to be as fully
82 developed as the Twin Cities campus planning, or to be integrated with that planning into
83 an overall vision for the University system.

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85 -- Strategic planning does not sufficiently emphasize the research mission of the
86 University or the support and development of the research infrastructure.

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88 -- Strategic planning does not sufficiently emphasize the teaching mission of the
89 University or the support and development of the teaching and learning infrastructure.

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91 -- There is a perception that units have not been treated equally in the
92 recommendations, with some units given more latitude in planning their futures while
93 others are constrained by mandated choices.

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95 -- Strategic planning does not sufficiently address areas of student life outside the
96 classroom, including issues of transportation, housing, and safety.

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98 9. The University Senate recommends:

99 -- That each freshman admitting college, along with each graduate program, ensure
100 the admission of a diverse student body. Diversity includes access for: urban and rural
101 students, low-income students, first-generation students, underrepresented students of
102 color, English not first language students, and gender diversity, especially in fields
103 traditionally male or female oriented. Each admitting college and graduate program
104 should use individualized review to ensure a diverse student body. In order to admit a

105 critical mass of students of color, each admitting college and graduate program should
106 give a “plus factor” for diversity in the individualized review process.
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108 -- A task force to monitor and ensure that a diverse group of undergraduate and
109 graduate students are admitted and succeed at the University. The task force will monitor
110 admissions in order to ensure that all students at the University receive the substantial
111 benefits of a diverse student body.
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113 -- More coordination between the proposed academic and administrative task forces
114 and the development of the new budget model. Good planning requires a better
115 understanding of financial factors than has been achieved so far.
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117 -- The task forces gather additional data regarding various alternatives in support of
118 the academic planning recommendations.
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120 -- The task forces gather comparative data regarding practices at other "top"
121 universities and discuss what can be learned by observing what has been done elsewhere.
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123 -- Resources be allocated to permit faculty on 9-month appointments to participate
124 in the strategic planning implementation task forces, and that steps be taken to ensure
125 students can participate effectively despite the summer schedule for the launch of the task
126 forces.
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128 10. The University Senate believes that many valuable suggestions have been made in the
129 course of the consideration of the recommendations of the academic task force. The Senate
130 urges the President, in his formulation of a recommendation to the Board of Regents, to take
131 seriously the views of members of the University community that have been expressed. It is not
132 sufficient merely to provide concerned individuals the opportunity to comment.
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134 11. The University Senate instructs Senate committees to continue to review detailed plans as
135 they evolve and make recommendations to the Senate for appropriate action.

