
Bemidji State University

E³ Engage. Embrace. Educate.

The University Plan: Strategies for 2008-2013

Office of the President

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Vision

Shaping potential, shaping worlds.

Mission

E³ Engage. Embrace. Educate.

As northern Minnesota's university, we engage in new worlds of thought, embrace responsible citizenship, and educate for a future that can only be imagined.

Signature Themes

Students, through the sum of their educational experience at Bemidji State, will have multiple opportunities to learn about, experience, and reflect on the university's Signature Themes. The themes represent core values that guide curriculum and services. Not tightly defined, they invite interpretation and discovery.

- International/multicultural understanding
- Civic engagement
- Environmental stewardship

SCOT 2008-2013

INTERNAL STRENGTHS, INTERNAL CHALLENGES EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES, EXTERNAL THREATS

S INTERNAL STRENGTHS

A Student-centered University

Bemidji State is known among students, educators, alumni and the northern Minnesota community as a friendly campus that provides students with new and clear pathways to success in their professional and personal lives, and in their lives as citizens in our vibrant democracy.

Among the offerings and services that have earned Bemidji State that reputation are:

- academic programs that reflect changes and needs in the academy and the work force;
- access to faculty through active learning pedagogies in the classroom, office hours, and faculty-student academic and co-curricular projects;
- student services that support students' personal and developmental well-being, academic success, and recreational desires;
- outreach to high school students through Post-Secondary Education Options, including concurrent enrollment;
- distance learning opportunities that are accredited, flexible and affordable;
- services and accommodations for non-traditional students, including on-campus day care, single-parent housing, and an Honors Program residence;
- an American Indian Resource Center that includes a gathering place for American Indian students and facilities for the study and preservation of indigenous culture;
- a healthy campus environment that responds to trends and needs in housing and other facilities.

In 2006 the university made a renewed commitment to student success with the creation of a division of Student Development and Enrollment. This new division, led by a newly created vice president position for Student Enrollment and Development, provides focus on co-curricular learning and support for students in their academic pursuits.

Academic Programs and Academic Excellence

Numerous factors contribute to academic excellence at Bemidji State, including its excellent faculty and academic programs that honor rigor while responding to needs and changes in both the academy and the greater world.

- Faculty excellence is promoted and assured, in part, via
 - initial preparation, including achievement of terminal degrees;
 - ongoing professional development, reported in Professional Development Plans, including curriculum development, student advising, research and creative endeavors, participation in and presentations at national conferences, and service to the university and the community.
- Excellence in academic programming is indicated, in part, by
 - accreditation of the university by the Higher Learning Commission;

- national accreditation of programs by the Council on Social Work Education, the National Association of Schools of Music, the American Chemical Society, and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, and the National Association of Industrial Technology, and licensure through the Minnesota Board of Teaching;
- an annual spring Student Scholarship and Creative Achievement Conference, a day-long event that features the achievements of students as demonstrated through the scholarship of discovery, creativity, and application; approximately 100 students present each year and the conference is attended by students, faculty, parents, and others interested in the academic progress of our students;
- ongoing review and revision of the Liberal Education Program (general education), including work by a Task Force charged with a major reconsideration of the program;
- an Honors Program that offers focused academic and co-curricular opportunities to qualified students;
- accreditation of distance learning programs, including programs in Hibbing, Minnesota; Minneapolis, Minnesota; and Casper, Wyoming;
- awards received, such as the MnSCU 2006 Excellence in Curriculum Programming Award given to the Bemidji State English Department for its Bachelor of Fine Arts in Creative and Professional Writing, “In recognition of outstanding educational achievement”;
- an ongoing five-year comprehensive review for every academic program;
- placement of approximately eighty-one percent of graduates in career-related jobs, fifteen percent in graduate schools (2005-2006 survey, excluding those not seeking employment or with unknown status);
- the 360° Manufacturing and Applied Engineering Center of Excellence, a Minnesota State Colleges and Universities collaborative enterprise, with Bemidji State as the lead institution in collaboration with eight two-year technical and community college partners located throughout the state; the Center primarily deals with precision manufacturing such as machining, welding, and automation and robotics in addition to engineering technology and applied engineering.
- Support for faculty and programs is provided by
 - Professional Improvement Grants, supporting faculty presentations at conferences and related professional development activities;
 - IFO professional development funds supporting professional development activities and purchases;
 - the Center for Professional Development, a “faculty-led group dedicated to improving teaching and learning” (mission statement);
 - In-service duty days with workshops on curriculum, university planning and related topics;
 - the Honors Program, offering faculty workshops related to interdisciplinary and team teaching;
 - the Center for Extended Learning, supporting faculty development in online and web-enhanced course development.

University Planning

Bemidji State engages in university planning through the development of plans, and through work in committees and at meetings and forums, department and program reviews, and related activities and work. The coordination of these efforts contributes to focused and robust planning at the university.

- Planning documents
 - 2008-2013 University Plan and Strategic Imperatives
 - Annual Work Plan and Annual Work Plan Reports
 - Master Plans
 - Academic (MAP)
 - Technology
 - Facilities
 - Student Development and Enrollment (Spring 2008)
- Planning committees, meetings and forums
 - Scenario Planning Committee: contributed to the development of the 2008-2013 University Plan.
 - Provost forums.
 - Academic forums: regularly scheduled meetings with the Provost, deans, and academic department chairs.
 - Budget forums: held as needed to apprise the university community of the status of the university's budget.
 - In-service duty days: meetings on curriculum, planning and related matters.
- Five-year Academic Program Reviews (Process revised in 2006.)
- Five-year Student and University Services Program Reviews.
- Assessment Coordinators: assist academic departments and programs in the developing, implementing and reporting of their assessment plans.
- Liberal Education Task Force: charged by the BSUFA Senate to review and propose revisions to, as appropriate, the Liberal Education Program.

Information and Support Technology

The university continues to expand and diversify its information, data and security technologies. Examples of innovation within the area of information and support technology include:

- launching of a student portal to the university website;
- development and launching of a new University website;
- piloting, and eventual adoption, of a dual platform program for all faculty laptops;
- creation of a gaming room in the newly renovated Linden Hall;
- creation and filling of a dedicated CIO position;
- moving the campus to a wireless platform;
- double digit growth in online learning credits;
- continued professional development opportunities for faculty and staff through computer services offices.

The University Campus

The Bemidji State campus is widely considered to be the most beautiful campus in the state university system. It is situated on the shores of Lake Bemidji where the waters of the

Mississippi River cross to their exit to the Gulf of Mexico, and where loons call as they have for eons. Eagles and great blue herons soar in the skies overhead. The campus grounds are kept clean and safe, and buildings are continually renovated and developed. Recent enhancements have been made in concert with the Master Academic Plan and the Master Facilities Plan, and with keen attention to the university's role as environmental steward for the campus, the lake, and the university's 240-acre off-campus Hobson forest. They include

- complete renovation of Linden Hall, a student residence building, into contemporary suites;
- completion of the American Indian Resource Center, now a focal point of the university and a favored location for campus meetings and events;
- wildflower butterfly garden between the Hobson Memorial Student Union and Sattgast Hall;
- the opening of Java City in the student union, offering expanded service hours and meeting high-end coffee needs of students, faculty and staff;
- Lakeshore Protection Project with Shoreline Habitat, funded cooperatively with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Beltrami County Soil & Water District;
- participation in Diamond Point Park renovation, including university representation on the design committee and a long-term lease with the City of Bemidji locating the Outdoor Program Center in the park, commencing Spring 2008;
- completion of renovation of Bridgeman Hall, including addition for the Center for Advanced and Emerging Technologies (CAET);
- Completion of an addition and remodeling in Sattgast Hall which included moving nursing faculty into the building;
- Planning for business program building.

Philanthropic and Regional Collaborations

The academic and student-centered climate at Bemidji State University is supported in part through the university's relationships with philanthropic, community, and intergovernmental partners. These dynamic relationships contribute to the university financially, promote the status of the university, and offer opportunities for the university to serve its region. Through its university centers and programs, its collaborations with regional high schools and organizations, and other outreach efforts, Bemidji State is well positioned to contribute to the economic vitality and cultural enrichment in northern Minnesota.

C INTERNAL CHALLENGES

Funding

Funding for public higher education in the nation is undergoing a major change: a new approach that focuses on autonomy and accountability is replacing the model where states serve as the primary source for financial support. In 2004-2005, for the first time in its history, Bemidji State's funding from tuition exceeded its state allocation, moving the university from a state-supported institution to a state-assisted institution. In addition to an overall decline in state funding, university resources have become more directly tied to enrollment patterns. In other words, portions of the institution's base funding will be directly connected to achievement of system targets with regard, for example, to underrepresented students, STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics), retention and graduation rates, and other measures of performance. It is anticipated that in the future an increasing percentage of overall university

resources will be tied to student enrollment. This linking of funding to enrollment patterns decreases the university's ability to sustain its offerings during enrollment declines. Imposed limits on tuition increases, projected to remain at a rate approximating the rate of inflation, further hamper the University's ability to forge a strategic direction.

Student Characteristics

Traditional students coming to campus in the next five years have been described as "Generation NeXt." Understanding this group of students and their educational needs will present challenges for Bemidji State University. Generation NeXt students desire and demand alternative ways of access to university courses and services. They are interested in active and experiential learning that includes and utilizes the best, most recent technology. GenNeXt students are savvy about technology and frustrated with those who are not. The near constant use of technology in their lives (Facebook, cell phones, text messaging, etc.) has changed the ways in which they interact socially and communicate interpersonally. They are less interested in formal, traditional methods of teaching and delivery of student services.

The growing number of adult student learners also present challenges for the future. Adult students, in general, are not working on the developmental, identity-building tasks of their traditionally-aged peers. They are interested in work-friendly scheduling of their classes and convenience in their student services. Adult students frequently balance a number of roles in their lives, and it is important to examine institutional barriers that present challenges for them in particular.

Student Demographics

Demographic trends in Bemidji State University's main service area present significant challenges. There are fewer traditional aged students in the northern part of the state. Those traditionally aged students who are enrolling in postsecondary education are increasingly interested in career preparation.

Bemidji State University is located in close proximity to three American Indian Reservations and plays a unique role in assisting with the educational needs of those populations. While the construction of the American Indian Resource Center has helped the university establish a base of support, more work is needed in this area. The university continues to seek programming to support the recruitment, retention and graduation of American Indian students.

Information and Support Technology

External challenges facing the Information Technology Service's area include

- funding to support campus technology demands;
- assurance of network and data security;
- facilitation of faculty and staff use of current and emerging technologies for teaching, research and student support activities;
- and expectation of 24/7 technical support;
- and need for additional disaster recovery planning that outlines strategies to assist with business continuity efforts after a major disaster has occurred.

Distance Learning

Distance learning, especially online offerings, continues to grow. The university recognizes that it needs to adjust the distance learning funding structure to accommodate that growth. Other challenges include insuring adequate instructional and technical support for faculty, and providing training for faculty in new technologies.

Planning

As noted in Strengths, above, the university has made great strides in planning. Still, some challenges remain, including the need to decentralize and integrate planning and decision-making through university master plans and other means; the provision of means and methods to invite interpretation and discovery; and provision of effective support for creativity and innovation.

O EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES

Service to Student Populations

The opportunities to offer higher education to students from more diverse settings and more distant regions continue to expand. Bemidji State University's programs to expand the base of students it serves include enrolling previously underserved student populations; offering additional programs to meet the needs of specialized student populations; continuing to develop and expand, as appropriate, programs delivered via online learning; increasing American Indian associations, including utilization of the American Indian Resource Center; expanding cooperative agreements with tribal colleges and other post-secondary institutions (i.e. Anoka Ramsey Community College and Alexandria Technical College); and increasing service to international student populations.

In addition, an in-migration trend of retirees, semi-retirees and near-retirees provides the university with the opportunity to serve older adults through creative degree and non-degree programming.

Serving the Region through Stewardship, Partnership, and Representation

Since its beginning in 1919, Bemidji State has both served and been served by its region and the state. Today it continues to seek opportunities to bring the world to its doorstep, through its international student program, and to take Bemidji State to the world, through international study and partnership opportunities. The university continues to develop and model stewardship of the land and the region, to partner with communities to develop and enrich the region, and to grow its relationships with and support for business and industry. This effort is supported, in part, by the Center for Research and Innovation (CRI) and the university's Center of Excellence both designed to increase collaboration between the University, technical colleges, business and industry, community development organizations, primary and secondary education, and other sectors of the region.

Enhanced levels of cooperation and partnership with the City of Bemidji provide new opportunities for resource sharing and acquisition. Recent examples of successful collaborations with the City include the Diamond Point Park renovation, co-location of the university's Outdoor

Program Center, an active fundraising agenda at the legislature with “Day at the Capital”, and state funding for the regional events center which will also house Beaver Hockey. In collaboration with the Headwaters Regional Development Commission, the university is developing a service learning program which matches students with service opportunities in the Bemidji Area.

Other fundraising opportunities exist for the university, as evidenced by recent success in federal earmarks, in foundation fundraising, and with state and federal grants.

T EXTERNAL THREATS

The Changing Landscape of Education

Higher education in the United States faces a number of issues in a constantly shifting landscape. Funding for higher education is gradually shifting from public to private sources. Students and their families are paying more of the costs, and state governments are funding less and less. This shift in costs brings with it new concerns for growing levels of student debt as well as concerns for how the university will replace lost resources to continue to meet its commitment to the region.

In addition, there is a greater call for accountability at all levels. MnSCU is transitioning to performance based measures for student success and learning. Conversations at the federal level have recently centered on student access and affordability, and institutional accountability. Bemidji State University must be able to articulate clearly ways in which students succeed and learn. This means that the university needs to continue to develop in data gathering and interpretation.

The Changing Societal Landscape of Northern Minnesota

As the university moved through an 18-month strategic planning process known as scenario planning, it identified external societal drivers that will impact the university’s environment. The first was the changing demographics of our region and the state. As mentioned earlier, the northern Minnesota region will experience a decline in the traditional college-aged student. Second, traditional students coming to the university have a new set of educational expectations, including new expectations related to technology and course delivery. Third, changes in technology will continue to impact university operations in ways we cannot fully imagine. Combined, these represent societal changes in our external environment which the University must address.

Goals & Institutional Priorities Strategies for 2008-2013

Strategy A: Engage Students for Success in Careers, Communities and Life

- Strategic Imperative: Create opportunities for student success through high quality programs and services.

Bemidji State recognizes the value of higher education as a public good, provides student-centered access to learning, meets the needs of our diverse, rural and nontraditional students, and promotes lifelong learning.

Goals and Measurements

Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU's Strategic Plan. They are numbered consecutively throughout the Plan.

- Goal One Improvement in student learning outcomes as stated in master and strategic plans and consistent with the Dimensions of Student Learning, e.g., critical thinking, global awareness.
- Goal Two Improvement in engagement and satisfaction as reflected in measures such as NSSE, Noel-Levitz.

Initiatives

Initiatives implement the University Plan. They are accounted for in Annual Work Plans and Work Plan Reports.

A.1 Support students' professional and personal development through high quality educational programs and services.

Prepare students for careers, citizenship, community service, life-long learning and leadership:

- *through engaged, academic preparation in the Liberal Education and Honors programs and the majors;*
- *through student-centered programs and services that assure access and success.*

A.2 Promote achievement and understanding through active learning opportunities.

Foster active learning pedagogies, and opportunities that support volunteerism, student research, internships, and related activities.

A.3 Encourage facilities' planning that supports learning and community.

Provide welcoming spaces on campus that promote an ambiance for learning and opportunities for interaction and community.

A.4 Strengthen measurement of student achievement.

Review and revise the University Assessment Plan and the Dimensions of Student Learning, including student learning outcomes, to assure that they support the university's vision and mission.

Strategy B: Promote Vital Communities through Involvement
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- Strategic Imperative: Support and promote community vitality through Bemidji State's commitments within our local, regional, national and world spheres.

Bemidji State values the supportive relationships between the university and its communities.

Goals and Measurements

Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU's Strategic Plan. They are numbered consecutively throughout the Plan.

- Goal Three Increase the number and type of partnerships with external entities.
Goal Four Increase the capacity of the custom college.
Goal Five Develop measurements of community service by students, faculty and staff.
Goal Six Improve graduation-related employment rates.

Initiatives

Initiatives implement the University Plan. They are accounted for in Annual Work Plans and Work Plan Reports.

B.1 Support and promote educational vitality.

Advance educational opportunities in the university's communities through customized training, concurrent enrollment, PSEO, online and on-campus programs and related offerings.

B.2 Support and promote economic vitality and quality of place.

Build capacity for problem-solving and community building through partnerships and engagement with businesses, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, and other entities.

B.3 Support and promote cultural and recreational vitality.

Participate in the enrichment of our communities through development and support of the arts and other cultural and recreational offerings.

B.4 Promote environmental vitality.

Work with partners to assure the environmental stewardship of our shared communities.

Strategy C: Innovate for a Changing World

- Strategic Imperative: Accommodate change through an organizational culture of creativity, innovation and planning.

Bemidji State values flexibility and adaptability as means to change.

Goals and Measurements

Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU's Strategic Plan. They are numbered consecutively throughout the Plan.

Goal Seven Decentralize planning and decision-making through use of university master plans that invite interpretation and discovery, and support creativity and innovation.

Initiatives

Initiatives implement the University Plan. They are accounted for in Annual Work Plans and Work Plan Reports.

C.1 Increase organizational capacity for a successful, compelling and collegial campus culture. *Improve the success of the university through increased communication, and support for collaboration.*

C.2 Continue to develop the university's planning process. *Guide decision-making in support of the vision and mission with an understanding of the nature and impact of uncertain and critical driving forces that affect the future.*

C.3 Continue integration of plans across all levels and units of the university. *Support a climate of institutional change through ongoing development, revision and integration of the Level I University Plan: Strategies for 2008-2013, Level II master plans, and Level III college and/or department strategic plans.*

C.4 Support creativity and innovation at all levels of the organization while setting a common direction for the university. *Consider ways to mobilize people in a common direction while inviting interpretation and discovery, including the use of decision parameters in master plans, and the development of innovative programs.*

C.5 Strengthen and sharpen communication of the university's identity. *Strengthen the university's public presence through consistent expression of our identity as a vibrant university enlivened by engaged learning experiences.*

Strategy D: Optimize Resources to Achieve the University’s Vision and Mission

- Strategic Imperative: Effectively manage and increase enrollment and resources in support of the university’s vision and mission.

Bemidji State recognizes and honors the role of the university in the stewardship of its resources and the importance of accountability.

Goals and Measurements

Goals and Measurements evaluate achievement of the University Plan and of related items in MnSCU’s Strategic Plan. They are numbered consecutively throughout the Plan.

- Goal Eight Improve undergraduate and graduate enrollment, retention, and graduation rates.
Goal Nine Improve revenues from external funding, including alumni giving, capital campaigns, and grants.
Goal Ten Address MnSCU efficiency measures and standards.
Goal Eleven Achieve HLC reaccreditation in 2010.

Initiatives

Initiatives implement the University Plan. They are accounted for in Annual Work Plans and Work Plan Reports.

D.1 Promote clear pathways for student access and success.

Promote student access, retention and success through excellence in recruitment, programming and services.

D.2 Manage revenues in support of educational programs and services.

Support student success through stewardship of revenue streams including tuition and fees, scholarships, state allocation, and external fundraising.

D.3 Create institutional capacity through improvement in efficiencies.

Support student success through efficiencies and improved utilization of internal financial resources.

D.4 Through intentional analysis, utilize data to inform decision-making in support of the university’s vision and mission.

Improve generation and allocation of resources through a process of discovery, identification, collection and interpretation of data.

D.5 Maintain financial strength through priority program growth and development.

Expand capacity for existing programs with high regional or national demand while identifying new programs and markets that have the potential to strengthen enrollment.

D.6 Provide stewardship of the campus physical environment.

Explore means and methods to model responsibility toward the land and other natural resources.