

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities  
Desirable Characteristics of a Trustee  
Recommendations from the Board Leadership  
May 2012

**Personal Characteristics**

- **Integrity and Accountability**: Ethical standards, integrity and strength of character in his or her personal and professional dealings and a willingness to act on and be accountable for his or her decisions.
- **Informed Judgment**: Demonstrate intelligence, wisdom and thoughtfulness in decision-making. Demonstrate a willingness to thoroughly and openly discuss issues, ask questions, voice reservations, build consensus and tolerate dissent.
- **Mature Confidence**: Assertive, responsible and supportive in dealing with others. Respect for others, openness to others' opinions and the willingness to listen.
- **High Standards**: History of achievements that reflect high standards for themselves and others.
- **Common Good**; Trustees should not represent the interests of any particular constituencies, but rather serve the greater good for the people of Minnesota. Be stewards of MnSCU. Evidence the duties as a Trustee will be discharged in good faith and in a manner that is in the best interests of the system, students, faculty, communities and the taxpayers.

**Core Competencies**

- **Accounting and Finance**: Experience in financial accounting, financial data presentation, charts, ratios, etc.
- **Judgment**: Record of making good business decisions.
- **Management**: Experience in corporate, non-profit, or union-based management settings. Understands and respects the difference between Board policy setting and oversight on the one hand, and delegated operational authority to the Chancellor for system management on the other.
- **Crisis Response**: Ability and time to contribute during periods of both short-term and prolonged crisis.
- **Leadership**: Understand and possess skills of motivating high-performing, talented managers and representing the system with our various communities.

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- Strategy and Vision: Skills and capacity to provide strategic insight and direction by encouraging innovations, conceptualizing key trends, evaluating strategic decisions, and challenging MnSCU to sharpen its vision.
- Bargaining Contract: A basic knowledge of the collective bargaining process, contract requirements and union relations.

**Commitment to MnSCU**

- Time and Effort: Willing to commit the time and energy necessary to satisfy the requirements of Board and Board Committee membership.
  - ✓ Expected to attend and participate in all Board meetings and Board Committee meetings in which they are a member.
  - ✓ A willingness to rigorously prepare prior to each meeting and actively participate in the meeting.
  - ✓ Willingness to make himself or herself available to management upon request to provide advice and counsel.
- Attendance: Available to attend numerous Board, student, campus and community events. Attending student association functions, legislative hearings and college and university graduations and a cheerful willingness to do so.
- Awareness and Ongoing Education: Possess, or be willing to develop, a broad knowledge of critical issues affecting the MnSCU system (including educational trends, technology, legislative and student based concerns). In addition the candidate must understand a Trustee's role and responsibilities including the general legal principles that guide board members.
- Conflict of Interest: No real or perceived conflict of interest as viewed by MnSCU's stakeholder groups or the public.

**Current and Expected Experience Gaps**

- Human Resources: Familiarity with compensation strategies, talent acquisition, talent development, etc.
- Finance: Financial experience with complex issues of budget, tuition, capital budgets, bonding etc.

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- Communications/Public Affairs: Communications and public affairs expertise to assist in advancing the reputation of the MnSCU system and its colleges and universities.
- Diversity: experience to enhance perspective and judgment through diversity in gender, age, ethnic background, geographic origin, and professional experience (public, private, and non-profit sectors).