Follow-up Report on the University Center Rochester

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Follow-up Report of
Initial Assessment
Roles, Responsibilities and Planning (1999)

Background

In 1999, Dr. Robert Bruininks, then Provost of the University of Minnesota, retained Dr. Louellen Essex (see Appendix A, Consultant Background) to conduct an assessment and facilitate discussions with the University Center Rochester (UCR) Steering Committee regarding governance and leadership structure. Structured interviews were conducted by Dr. Essex which entailed meetings with Dr. Dale Bower, UCR Provost; Dr. Linda Baer, MnSCU Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic and Student Affairs; Dr. Robert Bruininks, Executive Vice President and Provost, University of Minnesota; Florence Funk, Assistant to the Executive Vice President, University of Minnesota; the UCR Steering Council, and consultant Bruce Vatne who conducted a review of the organization and governance of the UCR. In addition, a review of documents related to the UCR mission, guiding principles, academic planning, and structure, as well as Bruce Vatne’s report, was conducted.

Based on the interviews held and document review, the following issues were identified:

- Leadership at UCR was not clearly defined and decision-making, therefore, was perceived as sluggish with no one really in charge.
- University of Minnesota programs were not as developed as the community wanted; the Rochester Community and Technical College (RCTC) was perceived as dominant.
- Shared funding for UCR was not adequate.
- The mission of the UCR did not appear to be fully understood and/or agreed upon by members of the UCR Steering Council.
- Incentives, including a mechanism for accountability, to partner between institutions did not appear to be in place.

Given the breadth and depth of the problems noted, the report concluded that the structure of the UCR was not designed for effectiveness and until the primary structural problems were addressed, it did not seem likely the UCR could function productively given too much time appeared to be spent in negotiation over simple things, power struggles, and general role confusion. The recommendation was made that it appeared premature to engage the UCR Steering Committee in discussion of roles, responsibilities and planning at that time. The dialogue should
begin, instead, with the senior administrators of MnSCU and the University of Minnesota to take a hard look at the basic structure of the UCR, clarifying the mission, partner roles, decision making process, success measures and accountability.

**Study Goal and Methodology**

With several years having passed since the report described above was presented, Marilyn Stewart, Chair of the Rochester Higher Education Development Committee, requested Dr. Essex return to conduct a “mini-study” to see what is working and what may not be working at the UCR since the 1999 analysis. Specifically, the goals of this study were to answer the following questions:

1. What, if anything, has changed in how governance and leadership is performed at the UCR.
2. What is working well which should stay in place.
3. What is not working, should be changed and how.

Repeating the methodology from the previous study, interviewees were identified and they included:

- David Carl, Provost, UMR
- Christine Barajas, Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, WSU
- Don Supalla, President, RCTC
- Marilyn Hansmann, Chief Finance and Facilities Officer, RCTC
- Faith Zimmerman, Program Director, Health Sciences, UMR
- Gail Sauter, Associate to the Provost, UMR
- Alison Good, Director, Greater Rochester University Center (GRAUC)
- Claudia Knowlton-Chike, Program Director, Integrated Supply Chain, IBM
- Kathleen Meyerle, Attorney, Mayo Clinic
- Jeff Ward, Program Director, School of Health Sciences, Mayo Clinic
- Valerie Pace, State Director, Corporate Community Relations, IBM

Russell Lohmann, Director, WSU, Rochester Center was invited by Christine Barajas to participate in her interview.

They were selected based on their leadership roles with UCR, history with one or more UCR partner institutions, community involvement, and stakeholder representation. Structured interviews were conducted and the themes summarized. In addition, the consultant reviewed documents related to UCR governance and programming and previous studies (See Appendix B for a document list).
Findings

What is Working

1. Roles and responsibilities of the partner institutions appear to be much clearer now than in 1999. In 2002, a revised Statement of Principles (referred to as the Management Agreement) was developed which attempted to clarify leadership and accountability for higher education in Rochester. A branch campus of the University of Minnesota was established with a decentralized budget, core administrative staff and resident faculty in Rochester. RCTC and WSU-Rochester Center remained intact and within MnSCU. The position of shared Provost between MnSCU and the University of Minnesota was eliminated. Roles and responsibilities were delineated, and an agreement was made that the partner institutions would conduct joint planning for coordinated resources and services, shared financial support and development and delivery of academic programs. The U of M was charged with academic leadership for new upper division and graduate programs and WSU as well as the U of M were directed not to create redundant programs. Lower division programs were given to RCTC as well as responsibility for facility management.

2. All partner institutions have created more programs than were available in 1999 and pathways have been established to guide students through coursework from the RCTC to WSU and the University of Minnesota upper division and graduate programs.

3. WSU and RCTC report the most satisfaction with their partnership in providing academic programs.

4. RCTC is viewed as providing excellent programs, serving the community extremely well.

5. Some joint planning among all three institutions has occurred through the UCR Advisory Council, a citizen group; an academic committee with members from each partner; and individual efforts of each institution.

6. Shared classroom scheduling and reception services at UCR are perceived to be particularly effective.

7. A stakeholder survey (2004) indicates that all three institutions are viewed as providing valuable service to the community.
Barriers to UCR Effectiveness

While some progress has been made since 1999, many interviewees report continued dissatisfaction with several aspects of the UCR model. Specific concerns include:

1. Many perceive that the University of Minnesota’s identity is not distinct enough. They believe the UCR campus is viewed by the community as primarily an RCTC campus and students who enroll in the U of M don’t feel as if they are part of the University of Minnesota. Given that the headcount for RCTC as of Fall 2003 was nearly 6000 students while WSU had 1307 in 2004 and the U of M 392 in 2004, it seems apparent that RCTC would appear dominant. Recently attempts have been made to make the identity of all three institutions more distinct with signage and co-location of administrative offices. U of M staff believes they cannot attract the population of students they target under these conditions. Many interviewees believe the U of M must have its own physical facility for its distinct identity to be established. Some believe this could be accomplished with a building on the URC campus while others believe a separate site is desirable.

2. While pathways have been created for transferring from RCTC to the U of M, the process is described as cumbersome for health sciences students. Given prerequisite requirements for some of the RCTC science courses, students end up taking more credit hours than they would in a 4-year degree program granted from one institution and this becomes time consuming and costly. Access to RCTC classes is reportedly problematic at times for U of M students in the health sciences. The counseling process at RCTC is perceived as sometimes inadequate for these students, also resulting in students taking unnecessary coursework. Additionally the course content students have at RCTC is not always the content the U of M nor Mayo, which collaborates on the Health Sciences degrees, ideally desires. Interviewees report recruitment in the health sciences to be difficult because some students don’t want to begin their college experience in a community college, which they perceive to have less stature than a four-year degree granting school or they simply become confused when they learn, as pathways are presented, that they can’t begin their coursework at the U of M. Enrollment in the health sciences program is not at the desired level due to these perceived issues. The success of the U of M’s upper division courses is contingent on the proper advising, course offerings, and course content which do not appear to be consistently in place.
3. The University of Minnesota struggles to fund its upper division and graduate programs in the absence of lower division courses which typically are the foundation of a campus higher education financing model.

4. Technical support and facilities requests are not always perceived as adequately handled by RCTC for the University of Minnesota. RCTC technical staff is perceived as not having the skill set to support the research needs of the U of M faculty (2). Facilities requests are sometimes not met or take a long time to be addressed. For example, the co-location of University of Minnesota administrative offices was reported to take five years. Facilities planning is viewed as dominated by the RCTC as landlord and by the MnSCU capitol planning process. University needs are not fully heard and addressed.

5. While the RCTC is the landlord for the UCR campus, partners can opt in and out of shared facility arrangements. When classroom space is not shared, the U of M and, sometimes WSU, only want to pay for what they use which RCTC perceives as putting an undue burden on its budget. Additionally, the partners reportedly resist contributing to the expense of classroom technology, preferring to base their cost solely on a percentage of faculty salary which does not include such “overhead.” WSU is reportedly easier with which to negotiate than the U of M.

6. Many are frustrated with the slow rate of growth of U of M academic programs and research capability. In 2002 a GRAUC planning group was assembled which unified around its desire to have the U of M become a more dominant educational institution in Rochester. IBM, Mayo, and other industry leaders want the University to increase its research and academic program capacity. Although UMR has grown since 1999, the rate is perceived as too slow to support their bioinformatics and genomic research and development initiatives at the desired level even though some collaboration has occurred. The Rochester high tech economy continues to outpace the delivery of UCR program development. Many report enormous opportunities for world-class research and education to be collaboratively developed in the unique environment Rochester provides, given the presence of both Mayo and IBM. The current UCR Management Agreement constrains the ability of the University of Minnesota to move more aggressively. In addition, various University initiatives (Extension Service, academic programs, research, the Hormel Institute, the Mayo-U of M Genomics partnership) that are in place are disparate and not united and visible as U of M programs. The Rochester community wants the U of M as their primary partner, given its perceived stature and brand. Area employers report difficulty recruiting staff to Rochester given the absence of a 4-year University as well as graduate and doctoral programs in the
technical areas. Future progress in southeast Minnesota is perceived as heavily dependent on the U of M increasing its role in economic development.

7. Strategic planning for the URC has not been accomplished in a fully integrated way with all three institutions working collaboratively. Interviewees report they must wait for their home institution to complete a strategic plan with which they can coordinate. While academic needs assessment is done through UCR advisory and academic groups, and by each institution’s interface with the community, a truly integrated comprehensive planning process does not appear to be formalized. All partners are not always aware of programs being developed by one another. There appears to be some competition between schools to be the first to release new programs, and, therefore, collaborative planning is not fully embraced. The private higher education institutions have been willing to move in and compete for students given the opportunities for them in Rochester, some of which are created by the absence of a strong collaborative planning process at UCR.

8. Many interviewees report that they believe community advocacy, particularly GRAUC, will be needed well into the future in order for the community vision for higher education to be realized.

9. Data regarding the number of degrees granted, student utilization of pathways, and other descriptive statistics is reportedly difficult to gather since it does not appear to be collected through one coordinated database nor are the metrics utilized consistent among UCR partners.

10. The UCR Management Agreement is perceived as focused on what now exists, with little emphasis on growing and expanding the UCR to meet future needs.

Recommendations

While the UCR 3-2-1 (three institutions, two systems, one campus) model has been refined over the years and has served to create some degree of collaboration among its partners, it appears, at this time, to inhibit the University of Minnesota in developing the additional partnerships and programs the community, particularly Mayo Clinic and IBM, desires to fully meet perceived needs. In order to accomplish this, the following recommendations are made:

1. The University of Minnesota Rochester should be granted the autonomy to become a 4-year university and develop a plan to establish a strong, distinct identity in partnership with IBM and Mayo Clinic. WSU should be given the same opportunity to provide 4-year degrees if it so desires.
2. The University of Minnesota should accelerate its efforts to collaborate with Mayo Clinic and IBM around graduate academic programs and research in Health Sciences, Informatics, Genomics and Technology.

3. A comprehensive study of financial models to support University of Minnesota programs should be conducted and used to guide decision-making on how best to develop the physical facilities as well as academic programs and research capability needed for the UMR to grow.

4. Collaboration between RCTC, WSU, and the U of M should continue to be encouraged. The natural affinity of the 2 + 2 programs will undoubtedly prosper. However, in order to fully serve its stakeholders needs and wants, the University of Minnesota should have the autonomy to move forward more aggressively in providing distinctive 4-year degree programs without the constraints of mandated collaboration.
Appendix A

Consultant Background
Louellen N. Essex, Ph.D.

Background
Dr. Louellen Essex is an organization learning and development consultant specializing in leadership, communication, team building and conflict resolution. She is a Fellow of the University of Minnesota, Carlson School of Management's Executive Development Center and an adjunct faculty member at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. Dr. Essex holds a Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota where she studied administration, psychology, and communication. For the past twenty years, she has worked extensively with private industry, government, health care organizations, and educational institutions. She is a recipient of an American Society for Training and Development Professional Excellence Award for her work in management development. She co-authored *Fast Forward Leadership* (Financial Times-Prentice Hall, 1999), a book describing how to exchange outmoded practices for forward looking leadership and her new book, *Breaking the Code of Silence. How Prominent Leaders Recovered from 7 Critical Mistakes* (Rowman and Littlefield Publishing Group, 2005).

Partial Client List

| Medtronic                                      | Medical Group Management Association |
| Cenex/LandOLakes                               | Health Partners                      |
| General Mills                                  | Mayo Clinic                          |
| Cargill                                        | Seagate Technology                   |
| General Mills                                  | U.S. Office of Personnel Services    |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers                   | Rosemount, Inc.                      |
| Minnesota Departments of                       | Inter-American Children’s Institute, Uruguay |
| Natural Resources, Health,                     | Minnesota Pollution Control Agency    |
| Administration, Revenue,                      | Minnesota Housing Finance Agency      |
| Human Services                                 | Saudi Arabian International Schools   |
| 3M                                             | Pella Windows                        |
| Allina Health Care Systems                     | TSI                                  |
| Caterpillar Paving Products                    | Malt-O-Meal                          |
| Fairview Hospitals                             | Cities of Minneapolis, St. Paul, St. Louis Park |
| Ramsey County                                  | Ramsey, Hennepin, Olmsted, Dakota Counties |
| Merck-Medco                                    | St. Jude Medical                     |
| University of Minnesota                        | StarTribune                          |
| St. Paul Companies                             | Heat N’ Glo                          |
| HGA Architects                                 | Fredrikson and Byron                 |
| Norwest Banks                                  | Oppenheimer, Wolff and Donnelly      |
| Allianz Life                                   | Mercy Clinic, Des Moines             |
| Barr Engineering                               | Biomedicus                           |
| Blue Cross, Blue Shield                        | Arby’s                               |
Appendix B

Documents Reviewed

Program Curriculum for Bachelors of Applied Science in Respiratory Care Transfer Guide - Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences/University of Minnesota

University of Minnesota proposed Center for Allied Health programs

Distance Education Options for General Education Requirements – Radiation Therapy and Respiratory Care - Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences/University of Minnesota

Curriculum and Transfer Guides (Rochester) Bachelor of Science in Nursing, University of Minnesota

2002 MnSCU/UM Management Agreement

Power Point Presentations made by RCTC, WSU, U of M, and Mayo Medical School to the Rochester Higher Education Committee – August 19, 2005

WSU Student Profile, Contributions to Rochester Community, Current Program Offerings, Programs Under Development, WSU-RC Investments in Rochester

Key Performance Indicators 2004 – University Center Rochester

GRAUC Learning Plan Summary

Kathy Meyerle, Mayo Clinic attorney, testimony to HESO on Higher Education Biennial Budget Proposals and Issues, September 27, 2004

GRAUC Chair letter to Citizen’s League, August 30, 2004

Minnesota Higher Education Coordinating Commission Report, 1972

Future Scan 2000. 1986 City of Rochester/Olmsted County/Rochester Chamber of Commerce Long Range Planning