



MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENT
A S S O C I A T I O N



Since 1967

STRATEGIC PLAN

MSUSA

EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2013 THROUGH JUNE 30, 2016

Introduction

The Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) is an independent, non-profit organization funded and operated by students. MSUSA serves nearly 70,000 students attending Minnesota's seven state universities: Bemidji, Mankato, Metropolitan (St. Paul/Minneapolis), Moorhead, St. Cloud, Southwest (Marshall) and Winona.

The Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) began its work in 1967. Since that time, the organization has changed significantly. MSUSA has created a board of directors, provided opportunities for student advocacy and leadership, developed many relationships with key decision makers, started scholarship programs, established a per-credit student fee to pay for its work and more.

MSUSA's long history of student advocacy has provided students with a voice in the decision-making process for many years. Just as higher education has changed significantly over the years, so has MSUSA. Today, the world is changing even faster. Students are depending more and more on technology for their learning and resources. They are facing significant debt when graduating from college. Today's students are busy, well-informed, and technologically-savvy. In order to recharge today's students and meet new challenges, it is time for MSUSA to take time to review its past success and look for ways to build on that success.

The strategic planning process consisted of multiple sessions beginning May 2009 between the staff and officers of MSUSA, as well as multiple consultation sessions with the board of directors. Through discussions on the past, present and future of the organization, a comprehensive strategy for moving the organization forward was created.

This strategic plan will allow MSUSA to ensure continuity in the organization's work, so that students can grow and learn from the past as they work to make an impact on the present and future. It will enable the organization to better communicate its goals and vision. It will provide the organization with a way to see goals being met, and allow students to see the impact they can make on public higher education.

The strategic plan described in this document will begin on July 1, 2010 and end on June 30, 2013. During that time, MSUSA will work to accomplish the following strategies in order to best serve Minnesota's state university students and continue to play an important role in public higher education.

Statement of Purpose

The mission of the Minnesota State University Student Association (MSUSA) is to elevate the voice of students. MSUSA is a leader in organizing, educating and informing students about higher education issues, serves as an honest broker of student issues and concerns, and encourages students to be active participants not just in the classroom, but in education advocacy as well. The statement of purpose of MSUSA is currently guided by these **values and principles**:

- Developing policy and serving as an advocate for student interests.
- Engaging and educating state university students.
- Developing student leaders.
- Communicating with students and obtaining feedback on issues.
- Serving as a resource for students.
- Remaining connected with its alumni and encouraging them to remain active, engaged advocates for today's students.

Vision

On June 30, 2013, MSUSA will be:

- A resource for the Minnesota Legislature and MnSCU Board of Trustees
- A political power at the state and federal levels
- A national leader among statewide student associations
- An institutional part of every university campus
- A well recognized resource for students who need assistance
- A partner with the Minnesota State College Student Association
- A financially viable organization with a long-term budget process
- A larger organization with more students engaged
- Frequently quoted in local, state and national news sources
- A coordinator for student jobs and internships at the Capitols

On June 30, 2013, MSUSA will have:

- A vision for the future that incorporates the organization's history and experience
- More students who want to attend conferences and become involved in the organization's work
- Students asking for education and development opportunities
- A strong and active alumni association including a mentorship program and an ability to assist Alumni entering into prominent positions
- The ability to identify and contact students by legislative district
- Close ties to P-16 organizations
- More involvement from underserved and underrepresented students
- An annual report widely distributed
- Students who vote in high numbers and are counted in the census
- An impact on the presence of higher education issues during elections and higher student turnout
- Annual donations from individual supporters of our successful scholarship programs
- A positive relationship with the new MnSCU Chancellor
- A competitive hiring process, smooth transitions and a strong staff ensuring the appropriate level of personnel to match the organization's changing workload

Executive Summary

Strategy: Optimize our organizational structure to increase communication to students

- Priority #1: Refine MSUSA roles and responsibilities for officers, staff, board and students
- Priority #2: Develop a comprehensive communications plan
- Priority #3: Develop a working history of the organization

Strategy: Engage students at every opportunity—on campuses, on committees and at the Capitol—and identify and develop the organization’s future leaders

- Priority #1: Establish student campus committee structures and provide training
- Priority #2: Promote civic engagement among students
- Priority #3: Increase visibility of the organization’s scholarship programs
- Priority #4: Seek input and obtain information from students
- Priority #5: Provide student development and leadership training

Strategy: Increase alumni involvement

- Priority #1: Build an alumni networking program
- Priority #2: Create an alumni mentorship program
- Priority #3: Promote public higher education advocacy and lobbying efforts by alumni
- Priority #4: Create an alumni outreach program
- Priority #5: Recognize outstanding alumni and significant contributions
- Priority #6: Provide opportunities for alumni sponsorship of activities and programs

Strategy: Engage with other public higher education stakeholders and be viewed as the official state university student voice.

- Priority #1: Strengthen communications and participation at the system level
- Priority #2: Expand state legislative outreach and advocacy
- Priority #3: Continue to establish relationships with members of the U.S. Congress
- Priority #4: Strengthen relationships and collaboration with other public higher education stakeholders
- Priority #5: Develop relationships with other organizations that will advance student interests
- Priority #6: Developing programming that recognizes the work of other stakeholders in public higher education

Strategies

The following strategies will enable MSUSA to further its purpose, adhere to its values and principles, and meet its vision for the future of the organization.

Strategy: Optimize our organizational structure to increase communication to students

MSUSA believes that good communication is an integral part of playing a role as a leader on campuses and to serve as the students' best advocate. Today's students are busy balancing academics, work, activities, perhaps even families. The ways that MSUSA formerly communicated with its students may no longer be the best fit for the changing demographics on our campuses. The organization will focus on its history to ensure that its value and lessons are not forgotten, but will also work to develop plans to communicate with students in a world of technology and possibilities.

Priority #1: Refine MSUSA roles and responsibilities for officers, staff, board and students. This will include identifying appropriate models of decision-making and communication.

Priority #2: Develop a comprehensive communications plan, including social media, use of blogs, and providing a resource for students to find answer to commonly asked questions.

Priority #3: Develop a working history of the organization by identifying major accomplishments, connecting with alumni, and beginning production of an annual report.

Strategy: Engage students at every opportunity and identify and develop the organization's future leaders

By engaging students in the work of the organization, MSUSA will become a stronger advocate for those students. Obtaining feedback about issues and student needs, encouraging students to vote, providing educational funding through scholarships, and ensuring that opportunities for training exist are all essential pieces in MSUSA's role in developing the next generation of leaders.

Priority #1: Establish student campus committee structures and provide training on issues and skills.

Priority #2: Promote civic engagement among students by encouraging them to vote and promoting advocacy work.

Priority #3: Increase visibility of the organization's scholarship programs, and provide more funding to more students.

Priority #4: Seek input and obtain information from students about services and assistance they need and find resources and methods to provide them.

Priority #5: Provide student development and leadership training, create opportunities for growth, and establish a mentorship program that involves students, officers, staff, alumni and others.

Strategy: Increase alumni involvement

Involving alumni in the work of MSUSA is one more way to ensure that the long history of the organization does not go unnoticed. Students and Alums can benefit greatly through connections made with the alumni association through mentorship programs and networking, and alumni can help move the organization's mission and goals forward through advocacy and other contributions.

Priority #1: Build an alumni networking program that will increase opportunities for MSUSA alumni to connect, including social events and social media.

Priority #2: Create an alumni mentorship program that will enable today's students to learn from alumni experiences, which includes connecting current and previous MSUSA board members.

Priority #3: Promote public higher education advocacy and lobbying efforts by alumni to ensure affordable, accessible, high-quality education for generations to come.

Priority #4: Create an alumni outreach program that is comprised of education opportunities, conferences, training and updates.

Priority #5: Recognize outstanding alumni and significant contributions through an alumni recognition program.

Priority #6: Provide opportunities for alumni sponsorship of organizational activities and MSUSA scholarship programs.

Strategy: Engage with other public higher education stakeholders, including MnSCU, the Minnesota State Legislature and the U.S. Congress, and be viewed as the official state university student voice.

Advocacy has long been a significant priority for MSUSA, especially in the area of legislative work. To build on that success, the organization plans to increase participation at the system level to ensure students' needs are met. MSUSA also plans to expand its advocacy work at the state and federal levels, and to build coalitions and encourage collaboration that will benefit students.

Priority #1: Continue and strengthen communications with key decision-makers at the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, increase participation and involvement at the system level, and work with the system to meet student needs.

Priority #2: Expand state legislative outreach and advocacy, establish long-term legislative policy goals, and reach out to candidates during elections.

Priority #3: Continue to establish relationships with members of the U.S. Congress and develop an effective federal advocacy plan.

Priority #4: Strengthen relationships and collaboration with other public higher education stakeholders, including the Minnesota State College Student Association, Inter Faculty Organization and Minnesota State College Faculty

Priority #5: Develop a list of organizations with which to connect, and meet with broader issue-based organizations on an annual basis and identify collaboration that will advance student interests.

Priority #6: Develop programming that recognizes the work of other stakeholders in public higher education, as well as contributors to the organization and its programs.

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Insight is a St. Paul, Minn.-based management consulting firm that helps organizations achieve operational excellence. Comprised of consultants with executive-level public- and private-sector expertise, Insight develops and implements business-improvement strategies that enhance organizational effectiveness.

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