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**Date:** May 26, 2010  
**To:** Executive Board  
**From:** Ron Bohlander  
**Subject:** Notes on discussion of the updated Georgia Tech Vision and Mission Statement proposed by the Steering Committee for the new Georgia Tech Strategic Plan

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The Executive Board of the Institute was scheduled to meet on May 25, 2010 but was a little short of a quorum. Those assembled heard a presentation of the subject material by Executive Vice President, Dr. Steve Cross, who also served on the Steering Committee for the Strategic Plan. This was followed by remarks from President Peterson and Q&A from Board members assembled. Attached are slides that were presented to compare current and proposed Vision and Mission Statements. The following is a record of what was presented and discussed.

Dr. Cross explained that the proposed Vision and Mission statements were part of the Draft Strategic Plan which has been announced and distributed to the campus. He explained that approximately two hundred people contributed to the drafting of the Strategic Plan, the majority of which were faculty members. Administration officials, students, alumni, and other stakeholders were also involved. There were eight different subcommittees comprising about 15 people each who worked on areas of the Strategic Plan. A subgroup was then formed to look at options for the Institute's Vision and Mission Statements. This group decided to prepare new versions of each to better capture some of the spirit of the deliberations in the various theme areas of the Strategic Plan. One of the common threads was increased emphasis on leadership, including that found in international and entrepreneurial arenas.

Dr. Cross reminded the Board that vision statements were intended to capture the dream of an organization and mission statements reflected who was doing what and how society benefited. They were written as a guide to the campus community but they were also written for Tech's stakeholders, such as sponsors, alumni, supporters in the State of Georgia, etc. Dr. Cross said he was excited by the aspiration in the closing thought of the proposed Vision Statement:

“What does Georgia Tech think?” will be a common question in research, business, the media, and government.

In turning to the proposed Mission Statement, Dr. Cross said he understood that the Board of Regents (BoR) had to approve any update in the Georgia Tech Mission Statement. The BoR wished to hear if the faculty endorsed it, so the Steering Committee and the President's Office were bringing this question to the Executive Board who could represent the faculty.

Dr. Cross noted that the proposed new Mission Statement was longer than the current one, but it tried to identify

- Who was involved in this Mission, namely the whole “Georgia Tech community – students, staff, faculty, and alumni;”
- What we do, namely education, research, and economic development outreach;
- How we do it, through innovation, entrepreneurship, and effectiveness; and
- What the impact of that mission is – “improving the human condition.”

In summary, he said this was the work of many faculty colleagues and it was now time to decide if this should move forward. He asked if there were any questions.

*Q.* It was noted that the proposed Vision Statement was longer but still included the old Vision Statement at the beginning. Was that necessary and desirable? *Ans.* Dr. Cross said it may be possible to emphasize the strong new second sentence with special formatting.

*Q.* Was the statement about the importance of technological change in the mission statement not a given? *Ans.* Dr. Peterson stated that this sentence connected Georgia Tech's mission to its traditional arena in technological leadership.

Dr. Peterson thanked and commended the Strategic Plan Steering Committee, Dr. Cross, Dr. Bill Rouse (Executive Director of the Tennenbaum Institute for Enterprise Transformation), and Mr. Chet Warzynski (Executive Director of the Office of Organizational Development). He said there was an impressive amount of engagement by the community; for example, 700 people were involved on the afternoon of the investiture.

Dr. Peterson explained what was next:

- The Executive Board needs to consider and hopefully approve any updated Mission Statement.
- Then the Board of Regents needs to consider and approve the Statement.

He said the timing was somewhat in doubt as of the May 25 meeting. The Board of Regents would meet next on June 8-9, 2010 and after that, again on August 10-11, 2010. Georgia Tech had requested that the new Mission Statement be considered at the June meeting but had not received confirmation that it could be placed on the agenda due to the press of other urgent business. The President expected that this uncertainty would be resolved in a day or two. The discussion of the Mission Statement with the BoR could not be taken as routine because some questions were being raised at the System level about whether Tech was intending to claim a broader mission than before. The President had provided a response to preliminary questions that Tech already had a broader scope than it might once have had but it still intended to remain true to a focus within a technological framework. In any case, if the matter made it to the BoR agenda for the June meeting, it would be helpful to have a ruling on the Mission Statement from the Georgia Tech Executive Board.

Dr. Bohlander, as Secretary of the Board, said he would poll the Board via an email ballot on this question when the President signaled that the matter was going forward to the BoR. If the matter were postponed by the BoR until August, then the question could be considered at the next meeting of the Executive Board scheduled on June 22, 2010 if it was still appropriate. The President promised to get word to the Secretary about what was needed.

Dr. Bohlander asked if there were other comments or questions:

*Comment.* Fortunately, it was most important what the Tech community actually did, so the Vision and Mission statements would not be the last word in any case. *Response.* The President said it would be the best of all options if the hard work of the Strategic Planning Team could receive appropriate endorsements, but the current statements if left in place would not hold Tech back.

*Q.* How many people were actually involved in drafting the Vision and Mission Statement? *Ans.* Dr. Cross said about twenty-five people contributed preliminary work toward these statements and then 6-7 people were responsible for the first draft. The eight steering subcommittees of about 15 people each reviewed the draft and provided comments. Finally some further iteration occurred with small groups of contributors and editors.

*Comment:* Mr. Corey Boone, new president of the undergraduate student body, said he liked the Vision and Mission statements because they pointed to adventures students were already involved in, such as international opportunities and a spectrum of volunteer activities.

That concluded the consideration of these matters.

Those assembled heard an update from the President on the evolving budget expectations for the next year, and heard a briefing from Mr. Bob Pikowsky, Chair of the Welfare and Security Committee, about the latest developments in parking arrangements for employees. The group adjourned at about 4:30 p.m.

In a subsequent note to the Secretary, Dr. Cross asked that the Executive Board be encouraged to provide comments on the draft Strategic Plan by the June 15, 2010 deadline.

Dr. Peterson informed the Secretary that the proposed Georgia Tech Mission Statement had been placed on the June BoR agenda and therefore the question needed to be put to the Executive Board, as attached.

**The following question was put to the Executive Board via email. A quorum of voting members approved the Mission by a vote of 15-2.**

**From:** Bohlander, Ron  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 27, 2010 1:22 AM  
**To:** Address list suppressed  
**Subject:** An Important Question for the Executive Board  
**Attachments:** EB2010-052510-A-Attach2.pdf; EB2010-052510-Notes.pdf

**Importance:** High

Dear Executive Board Members –

Our meeting on May 25 this week did not have a quorum, but there remains a time sensitive matter that needs our attention and so I am writing to you with the following email ballot for your consideration. Hundreds of colleagues and stakeholders have been hard at work preparing a new draft Strategic Plan for Georgia Tech, which was announced to the campus this month. See <http://www.gatech.edu/vision/>. Within this plan are proposed updated Vision and Mission Statements and the approval of the latter is sought from the Executive Board so the Mission Statement can go forward to the Board of Regents for their approval at their June 8-9, 2010 meeting.

Those who were able to assemble for the May 25 meeting heard Dr. Cross (Executive VP for Research and member of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee) present the proposed new Vision and Mission Statements shown in the first attachment. Only the Mission Statement needs formal action so it can go forward to the Board of Regents. Notes of the discussion are also attached. As indicated in these notes, the President would appreciate your answer to the following question:

Do you approve and endorse the proposed new Mission Statement shown on the first attachment?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Yes      \_\_\_\_\_ No      Reason \_\_\_\_\_

This ballot will be open until close of business on Wed. June 2. Please try to respond as promptly as you can.

We are all also encouraged to provide feedback on the overall draft strategic plan by a deadline of June 15. Use the link given above to get to the strategic plan and the opportunity to provide feedback.

Regards - Ron

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