

ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL MISSIONS

NUMBER 287

DATE 3/16/90

The Board of Governors has concurred in my recommendation that we make a comprehensive review and reassessment of the currently assigned educational missions of all constituent institutions. This memorandum provides initial guidance for the development of institutional plans and studies as a part of this review.

1. Background

Statements of educational mission describe the basic philosophy and purpose of an institution and identify its central, long-term interests and priorities. With only two exceptions, the current educational missions of the 16 institutions are those defined by the Board of Governors in 1976 in Long-Range Planning, 1976-1981. Thereafter, the Board amended the assigned missions of Fayetteville State University and the University of North Carolina at Wilmington from general baccalaureate to comprehensive university. In conjunction with the statements of educational mission first adopted in 1976, and in 1985 for the two institutions just named, the Board has in successive revisions of Long-Range Planning elaborated on and provided further interpretations of these missions. These elaborations have precluded the proposal of new schools of engineering, law, or nursing, and of any new programs at the doctoral level at any institution not already authorized to offer the doctorate.

The policies embodied in these successive planning documents and in such related studies as the 1983 report on engineering education are now open to reconsideration. This decision does not mean that a determination has already been made that any or all of these policies should be changed, but it is based on a determination that it is time to reassess them.

2. The Need for Reassessment

The reasons for this reassessment will be apparent. There have been many changes in North Carolina since 1976, and further major changes will occur in the 1990s. The population of the State continues to grow and is also changing in many significant ways. The economy has changed dramatically since 1976, and a new set of expectations and understandings has been formed about the relationships of economic development and higher education. Health care and many of the health care professions are experiencing dramatic change.

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Relationships between the University and the public schools are fundamentally different from what they were in the 1970s, and major changes have occurred in higher education itself and in each of our institutions. These are illustrative of the kinds of considerations that make it timely now to reassess the decisions about educational missions.

3. Institutional Plans

Accordingly, each institution is asked to initiate the development of a long-range plan for the coming decade, 1991-2000. This planning process should include a review of your present academic program offerings and changes that the institution believes will be required in this period of time. This review should also look at your research and service functions, examine their current organization, and identify the areas of change needed.

Academic program development plans should focus on proposed new discipline divisions and discipline specialties in which no programs are currently being offered by your institution. You should indicate the specific new degree programs that you would expect to propose over this period of time.

Plans for significant changes in level of academic degree programs from those now offered by your institution should be considered and any that are proposed should be supported by the rationale for such plans. For example, general baccalaureate level institutions proposing to expand current offerings or to initiate new offerings at the master's degree level, or comprehensive level institutions proposing doctoral level study, should prepare detailed explanations about the need for such programs as well as about priorities and schedules for developing such plans.

You should combine this review with a study of your enrollments and a projection of enrollments year by year for the period of this plan. In a short time we will ask for your enrollment projections for 1991-92 and 1992-93 for the preparation of the 1991-93 Budget Request. These biennial projections will be the base for your longer-term projections to the year 2000. The enrollment projections of the historically white campuses should speak directly to your plans to increase minority enrollment, and you should set out goals for these increases. The historically black institutions should similarly make projections and set goals for increasing enrollment of whites.

An analysis and projection of faculty and staff needs for the decade should be developed on the basis of the program and enrollment projections. You will need to examine, in this connection, the age of your faculty and to make estimates about retirement practices after the "uncapping" of mandatory retirement takes effect at the end of 1993. Your analysis here should also indicate what new directions you believe will be necessary in academic personnel policies at your institution. The research universities and programs or units on other campuses with heavy emphasis on research should also give attention to the role of senior faculty in undergraduate education.

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Your planning should also include a review of the current administrative structure of the institution. Will the present structure of schools, colleges, and departments suffice? What realignments or additions are anticipated to accommodate new institutional objectives resulting from modification of the mission, changing program array, and clarification of research and public service roles?

These considerations will lay the basis for your making a comprehensive statement or re-statement of institutional mission, and a statement of key objectives and goals for the planning period. The statement of objectives should be set in the context of the institutional assessment plans you are developing in response to the action of the 1989 legislative session (see the memorandum to your chief academic officer from Vice President Dawson dated January 12, 1990).

4. Assumptions

As pointed out, in this process you are not limited by prior Board of Governors actions on institutional mission and program structure. Your planning should take into account some larger constraints, however, and it should assume the continuation of certain major policies. You are asked to proceed on the assumption that the present system of State budgeting will continue. As in the case of our current study of management incentives and flexibility, we will continue to work for improvements in that process. It should not be assumed, however, that the State should or will change its entire system. Planning based on such an assumption would be unrealistic. In referring to the budgeting system, reference is also made to tuition policies and practice. Our objective should be the continuation of the constitutional policy of low tuition for North Carolina students, and your plans should assume no major changes in the legislation governing non-resident tuition or in the current limits on non-resident freshmen.

5. Schedule

The importance of this process requires involvement of faculty and of trustees. You are requested to establish your institutional procedures and schedules with the goal of submitting your revised plan and statement of institutional mission by early January, 1991. Additional information will be sent to you this spring about the format to be used in certain parts of your presentation. In the meantime, those requests you have already submitted in connection with the biennial revision of the long-range plan that are consistent with your current institutional mission will be acted on. Action on requests that involve a modification of the currently authorized mission will be deferred.


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