Memorandum to Presidents

Date: May 30, 1975
From: Office of the Chancellor
Subject: Proposed Self-appraisal of State University

The attached materials follow up the issues we discussed at Cooperstown. The Board of Trustees acted at its meeting last Wednesday to provide for a thorough self-appraisal of the University.

You'll soon be receiving from Harry Spindler guidelines for the 1976-77 budget request.

Thanks for all your help.

Ernest L. Boyer

Attachments

This memorandum addressed to:

Presidents, State-operated Campuses
Means, Statutory Colleges

This memorandum for information only to:

Presidents, Community Colleges
Chancellor Kibbee
Dean McGrath
President Rase
Mr. Tobin
FOR RELEASE IN A.M. NEWSPAPERS OF SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 1975

Albany, June 1—State University Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer today released the following statement calling for a University-directed "thorough self appraisal" over the next twelve months. Dr. Boyer stated that the University "will initiate and direct this study; first because it is the rational way to plan, and also, because a University must control its own destiny within the resources made available by the State."

He called for hard choices to be made in planning for a future based on constraint, not endless expansion, and said that "crisis budget cutting will not do the job." Admitting the current economic pinch, Chancellor Boyer said that the University will take immediate steps to further reduce its expenditures, but that the long range outlook demands creative management.

"The goal is to improve the University structure now in place, maintaining an educationally diversified, low-cost, high quality, public institution, fully accessible to the citizens of New York," he said. The Chancellor announced an eight point plan of action -- to begin immediately -- to carry out that self-established mandate.

In addition, he announced the creation of a University Commission on Purposes and Priorities, named by the Board of Trustees, and composed of administrators, faculty and students, which will be formed within thirty days and give an initial report to the Trustees by September 30, 1975 so that the first step in this University-wide examination can be reflected in the fiscal plans for the coming academic year.

The full text of Chancellor Boyer's statement follows.
Statement by Chancellor Ernest L. Boyer

The State University of New York, like other major public institutions in the Nation, has been hit by the current economic crisis. The University's budget, already cut, will be constrained still more. The University, while protecting quality, will rigidly control costs to meet the fiscal targets set for it by the elected officials of the State.

But crisis budget cutting will not do the job. This Nation can no longer view endless expansion as a principal yardstick of success. If our social institutions are to stay alive--and recapture some of the confidence they have lost--hard choices must be made. We face a growth slowdown on many fronts, and institutions now must learn to live constructively with constraint.

During the next 12 months the State University of New York will conduct a thorough self-appraisal. The University itself will initiate and direct this study; first, because it is the rational way to plan, and also, because a University must control its own destiny within the resources made available by the State.

The goal is to improve the University structure now in place, maintaining an educationally diversified, low cost, high quality public institution, fully accessible to the citizens of New York State.
To carry out this self-established mandate, we will take the following steps:

1. Every State University president, with appropriate consultation, will be asked to examine all authorized degree programs, identifying those which should be continued and strengthened as well as those which should be reduced or phased out. Class size, enrollment patterns, faculty and staff recruitment and promotion procedures will be analyzed.

2. Administrative and other campus services ancillary to the instructional program will be critically reviewed.

3. The University's central office will be examined to reduce costs and streamline the structure.

4. Increased decision-making flexibility--both within the University and between the University and outside agencies--will be sought in order to achieve maximum return on available resources.

5. Liberal learning in the University will be studied to understand better the kind of universal education needed by students to prepare them for a future in which critical choices for survival must be made.

6. Graduate study and research will be highlighted, noting especially how strong and effectively balanced programs can be maintained and low priority programs consolidated or removed.
7. Additional intercampus cooperation and University-wide projects will be proposed to avoid unnecessary duplication, increase the resources available to students, and move toward greater structural integration within the State University.

8. Student charges and sources of University income will be examined.

Within 30 days a University Commission on Purposes and Priorities, composed of administrators, faculty, and students will be named by the Trustees to advise on the choices to be made. An initial report will be submitted to the Trustees by September 30, 1975, so that the first step in this University-wide examination can be reflected in the fiscal plans for the coming academic year.

The results of this intensive study will move the State University of New York into a new phase of its short but vital history. For about a decade after its founding in 1948, the University supplemented the work of private institutions, focusing especially on teacher and technical education. During the '60s, a true University structure was put in place. Enrollments grew and new campuses were built in response to public pressure.

In more recent years, the University itself moved to consolidate its gains. The University cut its projected enrollment by over 100,000 students, eliminated $1 billion worth of new buildings, and declared a moratorium on all new M.A. and Ph.D. programs until revised guidelines could be drafted. At the same
time, pioneering programs were initiated, and more students were served at reduced costs. As a result, State University has emerged as a strong and exciting institution—a network of well-coordinated campuses, with programs ranging from two-year technical education to medical education.

In the next twelve months, State University of New York will examine and reshape itself creatively for the future. We confidently accept this challenge, convinced that we must set our own priorities rather than settle for across-the-board reductions which weaken every program. The actions contemplated will not threaten the educational services available to the citizens of the State. Rather they will assure the continued excellence of a University whose future will be shaped not by the latest fiscal crisis but by thoughtful, self-directed planning.
Whereas it is necessary and important that the University undertake a study of priorities in order to respond creatively to fiscal constraints and to serve most effectively all segments of the University and society in the years immediately ahead, now, therefore, be it

Resolved that the Chancellor be, and hereby is, authorized to take all necessary steps to provide for the immediate implementation of a campus-by-campus review to determine those programs which should be continued and strengthened and those which should be consolidated or phased out; and, be it further

Resolved that these studies shall be designed to identify new directions for the future, in time to be incorporated into the 1976 master planning cycle, and the results of Phase I of such self-studies shall be completed in time to be incorporated into the planning for the 1976-77 University-wide Budget Recommendations.

May 28, 1975