

SUMMARY OF POINTS

Pew Roundtable Discussion Tuesday, November 1, 1994 1:30 - 7:30 Eastcliff

This is the executive summary of the Pew Roundtable Discussion held at the University of Minnesota on November 1, 1994, at Eastcliff. The discussion was wide-ranging and exhaustive and is presented here as a summary of points. Keying off the September discussion, a series of focused follow-up discussions have been held or are planned. Some of these sessions are producing "white paper" action documents (one of which is attached to this record).

The participants in this Pew Roundtable Discussion were: W. Phillips Shively (Liberal Arts; convenor), Carl Adams (Management), John Adams (Liberal Arts), Mario Bognanno (President's Office; Management), Mark Brenner (Graduate School; Agriculture), W. Andrew Collins (Education), Daniel Feeney (Veterinary Medicine), Nils Hasselmo, Fred Morrison (Law), Patrice Morrow (Biological Sciences), Paul Quie (Medical School), and Gerhard Weiss (Liberal Arts).

Professor Shively reviewed a set of questions he had prepared to bring to the discussion; they had to do with getting departments to work well as units and with getting faculty to buy into change at the University. If U2000 or any other University plans are to succeed, it will be at the department level that they will be implemented.

- How can we get departments to buy into general University goals? This is related to how we get faculty to buy into them. This also relates to the goals themselves, the process by which they are developed, incentives to the departments, and whether or not each department should buy into all of the goals.
- Whatever the goals the department is working toward, what is needed for them to attain them? Leadership; how do we handle the generational differences in fulfilling citizenship tasks; how important is collegiality to reaching goals; would collective rather than individual incentives work better? (Now they are almost all individual; what about rewards to the departments?)

This happened once; 20 departments were selected to receive money. Normally, colleges are given the same percentage salary increase, told to make tough decisions, and they then provide the departments nearly the same amounts and tell them to make discriminations.

- It is not rational for young faculty to accept departmental tasks.
- Are there special problems in promoting change? Those who are threatened by change see the change clearly; those who will benefit must imagine it. Those threatened, therefore, fiercely resist it, while those who would benefit are less engaged.
- Are there things the University administration has any leverage over? It has little over collegiality, but could control some rewards and incentives.
- Collegiality is the glue and fabric of departments; however, spectacularly successful departments (scholarly and also contributors to the University) at Harvard had little or no collegiality, so collegiality may be a word for mediocre (but Harvard is also a very different

culture). This does not mean a place cannot be collegial and also excellent; program reviews suggest a common thread among very good departments is their collegiality (at THIS university), and it is a warning sign when it begins to unravel (faculty support and step in for one another and respect each others' subdisciplines); younger faculty are as congenial and collegial as others, but different in how they define their responsibilities, and around the country collegiality and quality seem not strongly correlated.

- Good research departments generally are also good teaching departments and also good at leading the University; something leads people to put in the effort, even though only research is recognized in national networks.
- How faculty view themselves, and the University, is part of esprit de corps; a sense that they are going somewhere can energize them (e.g., no more than one-half of retirements will be taken from any department; to tell a department it will replace no one for ten years will marginalize an entire group, creating a situation of no hope). Faculty leaders must help build up the self-image of department, college, and institution.

Much of what is being done are is not on the mark (Ski U Mah stuff, which is good for other groups but not faculty). In the union issue, excellent departments opposed it and weak ones favored it; weak departments felt bad about themselves.

Ceremony is important; there's not enough of it at the University (e.g., all-University graduation in the Metrodome in addition to college graduations would be more publicly visible).

- There is an issue of department leadership; leaders should lead from the front, not the back; they should never ask a colleague to do what the chair could or would not do. There's a feeling among many faculty that some chairs, deans, and vice presidents could not do it, even if they tried--those people must lead from the back.
- Any statement made here is likely not to be valid across the board.
- Ceremony is part of the faculty role and rewards, which is part of understanding the mission. There is an attitude, brought to deanships, based on experience, that what worked well for us ought to be a model for other units; this is wrong, and each unit has its own culture.

West Point was the focus of a leadership study; the superintendent read the mission at each faculty meeting, and related the issues of the day to that mission. There is not enough attention in colleges and departments to the University's mission. This leads to other problems, such as the definition of faculty roles and rewards that are out of alignment with the mission: one says the organization should go this way, but in the trenches faculty behave as though it should go another.

On leadership, the University does not train people to be effective leaders; it expects people to learn by osmosis. Army officers and those in industry are constantly being trained; the University elects department chairs, without training, tells them to be budget and personnel managers, be a leader, and keep research and teaching going--which is a recipe for failure. A

few here seem to believe in the place, and understand what must be done to make it work, so they hold it together, but there's no conscious effort at each level of the administration to teach the lessons.

"Bringing all of these things together: the definition of the mission and the constant reminding of what it is; the attention to roles and rewards, to make sure that jobs get done; to deal with ceremony, that people can feel proud of the idea that underlies what they are doing. This is necessary. It seems kind of corny; a lot of faculty seem a little embarrassed. But every organization I know that is successful pays a lot of attention to this."

- Reinforcement comes at national conventions, but that's not public, it's informal. It's only work in print, not successful management of a department, that's made a contribution to the field. That's an embarrassment.
- The department is important because it is the intersection between the professional and institutional focus; the professional focus is pulling younger faculty away. The University will have to live with that; what is to be done about it? The only place to pull people back into the University is in the department, and that means making it a celebrated place. "You're from the Minnesota XXX Department, so you must be good." This takes a balancing of encouragements, to do things outside the University in the national organizations and inside it.

The Dean of one college was very effective in ceremonial events, holding major inaugural lectures each year, with professionals in the field and central administration invited; faculty members feel wanted. That may be worth more than some financial rewards.

The intersection of institutional and professional demands raises the issue of mission; the focus of the mission tends to be only on the institutional side, and does not recognize the professional, and many feel that dissonance. U2000 comes across as focusing on undergraduate instruction and graduate education, both inward looking, and outreach (which still comes across as the Extension Service and night classes, not national outreach); research is the subject that has seen the least discussion. User friendliness is inward looking. Faculty fulfillment comes from national and international sources.

- Training has begun; faculty have made clear this is a shortfall. It is too spread out and overlapping, inefficient, and confusing. There is no coordination; training needs to be reviewed and someone appointed to lead it.
- The issue of rewards speaks to many of the questions. Annual salary adjustments are knocked awry when someone receives an outside offer, and the University meets market demands; others doing their job, not visible nationally, are not rewarded for accomplishing other objectives. Nor, usually, are those who may not seek an outside offer. There is merit to thinking about a three-or five-year cycle of reviews for special adjustments, allowing for years when there is little money or for work on longer-term goals.
- The basic point in a new book: the energy that drives organizations comes from individuals and small units having aspirations which the organization can then harness to an overall goal.

It doesn't work to try to sell the organizational goals to individuals; it is the individual and unit aspirations that must be understood. The leader must try to forward those aspirations; without doing so, there is no energy in the organization. So departmental and faculty aspirations, and how they fit into legitimate institutional goals, must be understood. Right now there's no view of what faculty are striving for, or how institutional goals can be subscribed to by faculty because they fit together. Figure out what the University wants to do after considering all these goals.

If the bulk of faculty want to be nationally recognized, somehow that needs to be an element of University goals.

Those faculty goals must be leveraged to reach other institutional goals (e.g., a scholar teaching larger sections, thereby reaching larger groups of people). At the same time, institutional goals may be constrained by those faculty aspirations.

- After nine years of no hiring, a department selected good scientists and good teachers but also people who wanted to be part of the unit. Perhaps only strong units can do this.
- University goals are different from what one hears from deans; different messages are heard, and the one closest to you is the one paid attention to. If money is the goal, faculty will ignore teaching and service.
- External pressures on the University are as great as they have ever been; there is a clash between individual/small group aspirations and what society seems to expect. The problem is to preserve the essence of universities as scholarly communities when society expects a service organization to meet a social agenda. U2000 has suffered from this dissonance.

Faculty are intelligent people who read newspapers; why can't they understand the administration had no choice. U2000 is trying exactly to balance these dissonant inside and outside pressures.

The premise is questionable; people do not pay attention to higher education nor to it in the context of societal concerns.

Most faculty get their perceptions of U2000 from what the President says in the paper. But it is truly a positive message, in terms of what society is asking for.

- The question about generational change in attitude may have been answered by the discussion; earlier, communication with one's national network was not as elaborately developed as any assistant professor now has with email, fax, telephone, and airfare. The access to the national network is immensely different than 40 years ago. Forty years ago commendation would have come from colleagues at home, with attendant social rewards for doing things for the University; faculty were much more local than they will ever be again.

In addition, their societies have national and regional agendas.

Earlier planning discussions suggested that a "great man" had shaped great departments, and the culture had continued to exist. That gave no leverage to anyone to create strong departments. What needs to be invented is a way to take faculty who will be nationally-drawn and energize them to fit University goals with society. There are handicaps, such as competition with great private universities (which have demands easier to align with faculty aspirations). If this is not solved, faculty will leave and the state will suffer because the University will not be a land grant institution able to provide the state with good research. It will provide service, but the faculty who want to do good research will have gone elsewhere. There have to be ways to mix the two--to recognize faculty will be tied into their national profession--and if not, they are no good for the University--but also to fit them to the University's goals in other ways. The worst way is to argue mutual survival--the only way to keep a budget is to satisfy the people of the state by giving them service.

- Most outreach is through the Extension Service and the St. Paul colleges; the objective is to broaden it.
- How does the University get people to buy into the collective good as well look after their own interests? The problem is that certain expectations have been created and certain endeavors rewarded. They are in conflict--such as hours in the day spent on teaching or on research. In addition, how are the "best" departments measured--the ones with the most research dollars? This boils down to time versus collegiality. From a merit and recognition standpoint, time is better spent writing a grant than sitting at a table like this. The mindset is that this is a research institute, and some are seen as very successful because they avoid all department and college work and committees; a star mentality has been created, rewarding the absolute best, and the people who hold the place together are forgotten about. What is meritorious behavior?

There is an aggregate paradox: some of the best departments, evaluated by stars, are also the best teaching departments and also contribute to institutional leadership. How do some departments get so much more out, per capita?

This is people working together, collegiality, where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. Where does the willingness to step in for colleagues come from? Department leadership and esprit de corps. It's circular, and there is no apparent point of leverage for an administrator. It feeds on itself as well; it's easier to recruit into such departments.

Family affects the lives of younger faculty

- Generalization is dangerous; each unit has different pressures.
- Apropos the great leader theme, from the meetings four years ago: another theme was that leading departments on campus were all characterized by having consistently built from within, not recruiting stars. They recruited outstanding young people, nurtured them, and generated loyalty to the institution. The implication for the generational difference is that the institution should take more responsibility for bringing people into institutional leadership roles. The McKnight program has done well; should some be selected from that cohort to become models for their generation? Do what is needed to provide them support they need. Older faculty are

not seen as models.

The University must be careful not to kill those young faculty, however; freeing up time is not enough--they need to be protected to do what they need to do to make their careers. Good citizenship cannot be their primary goal. The idea is to track them, bring them in in a limited way.

- One is struck by the lack of scholarly interaction across the institution. One misses it.
- About goals, in the context of biology, and recalling that generalizations are dangerous: There was cluster planning work in biology, but it came to a dead stop, for several reasons: 1) There was no clear charge to the committee, 2) no well-articulated goal relating to biology that came out of U2000, 3) there was a great fear of a hidden agenda--no matter what was done, there would be an administrative thumb on them, and 4) the fact that the administration resides in "Fortress Morrill Hall"--administrators asking departments to do things have no idea what is going on in the trenches, what is already being done, and when they are told, they are not interested. The feeling was widespread; that is damning and dispiriting for faculty.
- There may need to be a session such as this one devoted to cluster planning, in part to identify what was done wrong. Maybe it's not needed, if biology is an example. It's not happening in the humanities; maybe humanities needs to meet with biology to see what's being done. And maybe the administration needs to meet with biology, for the same reason.
- One goal is to preserve continued participation of scholars in governance, unlike at other institutions.
- How does the University get departments to buy into general University goals? Working up from faculty, on goals, or down from the administration, runs into same weakness in the middle: the lack of a tradition, in a decentralized institution, for launching and supporting initiatives when appropriate; it's like pushing on a rope.
- "One other issue that is a problem is that we continue to look at the 1960s . . . as somehow the norm, when in the history of higher education in the world, I think from '57 to '73 was the anomaly. To look to that as something we might reproduce or see again in our time is silly. It's just not going to happen. These are normal times, and recognizing that they are normal times, rather than yearning for a past that was an ephemeral anomaly, is to open our eyes to the realistic possibilities of the future."
- Contrary to what the President says, the public pressures on the University are not greater now than previously; the tradition of demands has existed since World War II.
- One problem, at least in CLA, is the lack of consistent support for the research initiative at the collegiate level. It thinks of itself as an undergraduate teaching college; what goes on in terms of graduate education and research is the business of individual faculty. Even costing out activities attaches faculty salaries to teaching. There is applause when departments are ranked highly, but the performance is not because of anything the dean's office has done or because of

money it has set aside for the research mission. Leaders define the role.

At this point Professor Shively asked for concrete suggestions.

- The University needs more Regents Professors, because they're terrific scholars, who get a salary increase, and who are expected to be more involved in the life of the University. As more senior people, they are the ones whose presence in a department is very important for collegiality and the future of the discipline; they are not self-centered. Younger faculty see them as a model; there are more in line for Regents Professorships.
- Build more self-esteem and have more ceremony; at great universities, faculty have named (not endowed) chairs. Dorms at Stanford have houses, as do those Minnesota; Stanford's are named, with traditions; Minnesota's are numbered.
- Do more cluster planning.
- The McKnight Fellows should be used more explicitly in the University, the way the Regents Professors are, and be convened as a major source of consultation. Regents Professors do not feel they are overused.

They could also carry the name after they are given tenure.

- It's necessary to stabilize unit leadership over the next 5-6 years, especially where it's unstable. In doing so, figure out better ways to recognize and reward citizenship on the part of those who are building and maintaining the social capital that make things work. Launch more effective means of training/developing leadership within units, at all levels--scholarly, teaching, outreach--for people who are tending the place so it's a good place to work and people feel responsible for looking out for it and making it an agreeable, comfortable place. The problem with making this a user-friendly university is that no one feels it's their job.

One device to tie all this together is to think of ways to unbundle compensation so part of it is attached to tenure and part of it is adjustable on a regular basis, depending on what it is agreed to do that matches more closely the institutional or unit mission. To do THAT effectively requires better leadership in the units to do the negotiating so that they can be matched up. One can imagine a matrix with rank and longevity, but that's too fixed. This, along with putting IT and CLA faculty on 12-month appointments, would mean that one could actually start managing the place--building self-esteem, properly compensating people, giving them a sense that they belong to the place.

The California system has the delta factor, which is very rewarding for those who can produce; faculty are allowed to increase their salary, from wherever they get paid, and it varies by level, but can be as much as double their base salary.

- Students do well in the face of adversity in departments; they have never been as enthusiastic in their expression of appreciation for Medical School faculty as they have recently. Adversity may be key.

One can have good morale, and make progress, in adversity--as long as one can see that it will end at some point.

- Leadership is a hit or miss proposition, and junior faculty are actively discouraged from participating in any kind of leadership.
- One healing event of the last year--how to extrapolate it into the future is not clear--was that members of the Board of Regents came over to the Medical School on several occasions. It started with the President coming to listen to the faculty, and the Regents coming was a concrete example of trying to understand the culture of different units. It need not be the Regents who do this.
- On the issue of the clash of two sets of aspirations--the local public aspirations for the University and faculty being linked into national research aspirations--the University may have been exacerbating it by using as the model of service to the state that of the MN Extension Service. Maybe the University needs to do what it has done in undergraduate education--it wants to provide to a lot, but only to those whom it can best educate; other systems can provide other kinds of education. There are special students who can benefit from a research faculty; perhaps the University can develop the kinds of service that a research faculty can especially offer. This would not be having Physics do something parallel to 4H, but rather something in technology transfer--perhaps some interaction with people in the state about physics, such as with physics teachers. And it does NOT mean asking them to do something totally unrelated to their research. It is necessary to work out the kinds of service the University can do best, some of which the state may not be familiar with.

There's a role for biologists to play in extension; there is a large bio-technology business waiting to be born, and a lot of expertise at the University to act as birth-people. If the University could be more friendly with those who want to interact with it, that would help enormously.

Does this call for "intermediaries"? The faculty researcher providing service is attractive, but the time, personalities, attitude, and experience necessary may not be present. The Extension Service uses intermediaries. Another possibility is UNITE--all the expertise at the University could be made available to every town in Minnesota.

This gets at the heart of the concept of the faculty member; they're seen as clones of each other, doing teaching, research, and outreach. Is it time to recognize more specialization (without giving up certain expectations about competence)--does the University have to reward specialization, those who will make their mark in outreach or teaching? This has to happen at the department level; the collective must look at their personnel. (1) Right now there is no incentive for departments to do that. (2) There is; UNITE will broadcast a class all over the state and give one TAs to help with the workload.

- Returning to the proposition that "the urgent drives out the essential," to get departments to focus on where the University ought to be will mean getting them OFF focusing on how to cope

for the next six months. U2000 didn't take off because of the 2.58% retrenchment--everybody had to cope with how to deal with faculty and TA shortfalls in the next quarter, and didn't focus on where they should be in the next five years.

Departments have done a lot of planning; the central response has been "send us more," not to confirm anything, or to tell departments they could reasonably plan on a certain budget in 2000. There seem to be firm estimates on student numbers, but not faculty; without that, it's hard to identify directions to move in.

How does the University provide a breather from uncertainty? "I have not the foggiest notion."

What is needed are budgetary parameters for five/six years; those would permit thinking about the long run. Some units are more stable (e.g., Law School). But if parameters are left uncertain, units can write whatever they want to in their plans--and they do. They'll never achieve it, but that's OK. Even a 2% cut for the next five years would at least be known, and the unit could organize itself and do things in an orderly way, rather than trying to decide in March how to cut 2% on July 1.

Per Clark Kerr, the best universities are decentralized so groups of people can do creative work; a major function of central administration should be to provide stability for those working groups so they know what to expect and need not worry about big changes in their environment. The administration creates a buffer. For 20 years here, the opposite has been true.

- Somehow--without identifying a mechanism--someone is going to have to look at the uniqueness of each unit and how it can fit into overall goals. A mechanism needs to be devised. (An example was CLE; how does it fit into the Medical School goals and philosophy?)
- There must be a way to provide young faculty a sense they have an ownership role in the process. Medical School faculty disintegrated over this, when the turmoil occurred, because they did NOT feel they had any ownership role. Especially the non-tenured people, especially the clinical faculty. There must be, day to day, faculty involvement in running of the University.
- Remodel U2000; there are strong elements, and some elements of necessity, but it's not as energizing as it could be.
- Restructuring is essential; clear operating lines are needed, and the middle needs to be shored up. Restaffing and retraining are needed; there are weaknesses in the administration and they should be acknowledged.
- The University needs to be refinanced; the financing model drives how people think about the University.
- There needs to be cyclic goal setting and understanding of the mission; people should be recruited who understand that mission. The goals should not just reflect the individuals; there should be institutional goals.

- There has not been enough done about mid-career faculty training and education (faculty vitality). The objectives of the McKnight program have been achieved; a similar program is needed for mid-career faculty.
- There could be a named chair for each county in the state.
- Hiring from within, cultivating assistant professors, is the way to build a department. The McKnight and Bush programs pay off, as do recognition and awards. Also a lecture series, with Nobel laureates, that serves to focus on the culture that held together a program, the value of research. These are elements of a strong program; they don't occur to people naturally. One module in the leadership training program should deal with "best practices" followed by better departments. (The focus in the program now is how to cope, with lawyers and EEO folks talking to them--a focus on how to stay out of jail. This observation met with group dismay.)
- Few faculty know the six strategic directions of U2000 and connect to them. They are so broadly defined that it is easy to determine how a unit or individual fit within them. The problem is inviting the fit; how does Morrill Hall connect to departments? The provostal arrangement should help.
- Two of the strategic directions relate to graduate and professional education and research; meat is being put on them; that "meat" energizes the faculty. U2000 calls for spending millions of dollars on the departments; it is to be hoped they aren't put into activities that fizzle. The departments can best determine how to use them.

If there are only general instructions, with no leadership, the money will be wasted; strong leadership but no flexibility means the leadership is wasted. That's the problem--how to administer it.
- Faculty need to connect with the personification of the institution, something not accomplished by reading U2000 documents. Faculty have to know the Academic Affairs Vice President and President who are leading, and feel comfortable with them in those roles. Eastcliff should be used as a University resource for departments, especially those that the University wants to build. Invite a department to meet with the provost. And the Art Museum should be used, as should the Campus Club.
- The key word is balance; the need is to look at the balance of rewards, incentives, expectations, and goals, for individual faculty, for departments, for the institution. What's been lost is the feeling of advocacy--people must feel they have friends in department chairs' and deans' offices, and in Morrill Hall, and there must be an environment of facilitation: what can be done to make your life better, to be productive? New young faculty feel they have no time for collegiality, for involvement with anything, because they never know what will be expected of them or the criteria they will be judged against. People don't buy into the place until they're tenured, and even then not until they're full professor.
- The process of selecting chairs and heads--leaders--has come up, and their accountability.

Things vary around the University, it was noted.

Should the structure of heads and chairs be changed? Some units have elaborate constitutions that prevent anyone from doing anything. Others have aggressive heads who are very authoritarian. It is likely the differences have an effect on the department cultures. At one place, the university hired heads and gave them mandates to build departments; they did wonderful things, but it was an autocratic tradition that might not be appropriate at Minnesota.

Does it have to be either a process that emasculates the head or an authoritarian system? No. Heads in IT are appointed by the dean but wouldn't last without the support of the faculty. The trick is to give the head authority to make decisions, with the consent of the department, so it isn't deadlocked.

The structure of selection or tenure of chairs or heads is not all that important. Some strong departments have rotating heads; others are strong even though the head may stay for 15 years. The secret is not a uniform administrative structure across the University, but to have one that works with the people who are there, and that instills in those people--through a head or chair--a sense of cultural identity with the unit.

- What is to be done with a department that is deadlocked? Put it in receivership. If a department has an elective system that works, don't disturb it. If it isn't working, someone must take the responsibility to go in and give a department a head.

What are the criteria for determining it "doesn't work?" The judgment of the President. But there's a broad range between minimum performance and taking a faculty on to something called "University" performance; deans are supposed to be paying attention to that.

In general, the faculty indicate a preference to the dean, and the dean appoints the person. If there is to be investment in training of department heads, it has to be more than a three-year period to make the investment meaningful, so tenure in office is something that should be considered. So should compensation for the administrative duties; the University is all over the map on this. There have to be rewards for people to learn the job.

Whatever mechanism a department has come up with, and whatever myth has grown up, it probably makes sense in properly working departments. Where the University has been remiss is that every year there should be three or four departments put in shock therapy. Success is circular; so is failure, and how to cut into failure is a problem.

Why is shock therapy superior to mid-career revitalization? This is dealing with the culture of a collectivity--to break the culture and bring in a head to hire new faculty, but not necessarily stars.

In the health sciences, the heads are brought in from the outside, and hired because they're stars in their own right, and hired as role models to revitalize a department. That comes to stars as well; just hiring excellent junior faculty is not the answer. One field identified has been jump-started by hiring one of the world's leaders, with tremendous impact.

Central administration could set aside money for jump-starting departments; sometimes it would go to one college, sometimes to another. That would be a worthy use of money.

There is better administrative staff support in the health sciences for heads.

Shock therapy worked at a department at UCLA. It also happened in one college here (the criterion in that case was that the fighting was hurting other people; that is one measure to use). In the end, it worked, but it was like lancing a boil. What caused the department to get into that position? An academically weak department head going up against academically strong faculty. Neither side could win.

The criteria for shock therapy should be low enough that even average departments could be improved. Contrarily, since the cost for people is high, the threshold should be high.

- To use one department as an example, there are ideological battles in a department; who will arbitrate when the constitution gives no authority to the department chair? Perhaps that needs to just play itself out in the discipline, but the hirings for 10 years have been along only one line, creating an atmosphere that is very unhealthy. An outside chair would want the constitution changed; the authority, whether consensual or assigned, must be there.

A chair can work well where the environment is working; can a chair--as opposed to a head--work in an environment where a change is needed? One needs a department head. That ignores the distinction about focusing on how to best deal with a unit in trouble, versus how to take a place to something great. Rescuing is not the same as nurturing health.

- Incentives and rewards are related to the department head issue. The carrots and sticks available to the head go along with the opportunity to articulate the mission at the college and department level and work with the resources to bring it about. If there are no rewards that can be managed, or punishment to be meted out, and the chair doesn't believe it's his/her responsibility to regularly remind faculty what the business of the University is, or tries to do it at cross purposes with the dean, then it won't work. One can't talk about roles and rewards without talking about who's going to be responsible for managing the definition of roles and meting out of rewards.
- One of the answers, whether chairs or heads, is that the University must be prepared to remove them, and heads are much harder to remove than chairs. Chairs can be waited out; heads believe they can stay forever. Technically, changes are yearly in the health sciences; in other units there is a five-year appointment with regular review. The terms chair and head overlap in degrees of authority. Regardless, the position is accountable to a dean and the dean should have the authority to remove the person. The dean is a head with respect to departments; cannot the dean exercise responsibility?
- There are questions on incentives and rewards: should they be individual versus collective? what is wanted--good collegiate citizens, good teachers, good researchers? one at the expense of the other? what balance is being sought? If that isn't defined, there's a problem.

- A problem is coming: faculty will be forced into the same position as major league sports, with a salary cap and a few stars. A salary cap will come from the legislature, and the University will be forced into a star system, perhaps on the Harvard model. The University may inevitably be moving in that direction; whether it does so, or resists--and takes the consequences--should be confronted head on.
- Is it the reward system or compensation to be discussed? Rewards are much broader and include awards, support for professional activities (especially for fields where grants do not support it)--things outside of the payroll system. The last ten years of budget cuts have meant starving the University on these rewards in order to maintain the full payroll system.
- In the compensation system, is there a base-plus system? Does it focus on the last 12 months, and rewarding it, or rewarding professional stature in the profession overall? A bonus system?

The cycle of rewards is important--annual plus a three to five year cycle needs to be fleshed out. Also an increment that is removable, if one does not maintain the level of productivity. Inflation has been the tool the University has used.

- It is important to talk about dividing up the pie, but also about the size of the pie and financing the University. If the same pattern continues, the pie will not be big enough. There are different ways to refinance; people need to get out of the box of talking about tuition, gifts, grants, and state subsidy, where the last is significant. The salary cap issue is not small. There better be enough money to divide, or it won't make a difference how it is divided.
- The chair should teach.
- Annual review of faculty in the humanities enhances the little article and deters production of the major book. One doesn't have a great department with innumerable small articles rather than major books.
- Over the last 10 - 15 years, major salary increases for colleagues do not come because of publications, but because of offers received from elsewhere. That affects morale; many equally or more meritorious colleagues who do not get an offer then fall behind. There is a tremendous gap in salaries, which do not really reflect individual worth. This must be kept in mind when compensation is taken up.
- Base salary could be a cell in a matrix involving longevity and rank; one could decide where a faculty member belongs irrespective of whether or not an external offer is received--some places do it. This is administrative. And there is no reason incentive pay cannot be used on top of base salary, including temporary augmentations (e.g., a big research project that will take a lot of administrative time). This would permit treatment of those who hold the place together. If a unit with \$1 million in salary money also had augmentation funds it could count on over ten years, funds that were to not be permanent base improvements but held to allocate as flexible money, there would be a considerable sum, but the faculty in the department would be receiving in the aggregate the same amount of money had it been added to their base--but there

would be an opportunity to manage some of it on behalf of things that need to be done. When all the money is put in base salaries, and each year starts with nothing, all the levers are thrown away.

The base salary issue is the most difficult to open up, because one can raise the base salary but one cannot lower it. Someone must tell those who make the rules that one CAN lower salaries. This could be done administratively.

Agriculture faculty, on 11-month appointments, should have the summer months be a separate contract, not a contractual entitlement but related to their productivity. (There are tenure code problems with this.)

Direct compensation should be seen as providing incentives to behaviors that are wanted. The one aspect of pay that the University has side-stepped is group pay. Group pay has two effects. The institution has a right to expect that some of its interests are pursued by those who live within it. Offering classes on weekends and evenings, for example, if it were determined that that is when students want them; if X% of the faculty were to teach such courses, everyone in the department would receive an augmentation to their salary (not to the base).

- The central administrative practice of allocating the same percentage of salary to each college and department needs to be addressed. If that pattern is broken, there will be interesting discussion; thought must be given to the criteria used to decide to give one college more than another.

Team incentives should be considered, but not just because one feels like treating different people differently; what makes one college more deserving than another?

- Special merit recognition money the legislature awarded one biennium was the one clear of the victory of the University of Minnesota Faculty Association--"anticipatory retention" money. Because of the press of time, it was distributed to 20 departments the administration thought was good. The next year there was University-wide competition. It's a good idea--it builds loyalty--the University did something for someone when it didn't have to. The University should think about doing that again; it was money well spent.

Don't forget about honors. There are no recognitions besides Regents Professors where faculty have an opportunity to assemble together and listen to each other.

This is reminiscent of the way once used to allocate differential amounts to the colleges; a committee looked at proposals and weighed them. The money did good, but it also did harm. What about departments on the rise--the B+ departments? Focus on the excellent, but also have an active program for bringing departments and people along--mid-career individual training for individuals and shock treatments to change a department's culture.

- In distributing salaries to colleges or departments, one problem is the average department salary and its size; a department of 8 versus one of 80 has different choices and abilities to respond to inequities. But that's what deans are for.

On the "average percent" issue, in the Medical School they must stick to the average--even if they have a lot of people who are doing very well. The more a department gets to be excellent, the less the variance, so those who are doing well cannot be rewarded more than people in other departments. Another is that a person doing a good job in a strong department is much worse off than being in a weak department. By having extra money come in, however, it helps the department for the next year.

- The link between unit leadership and compensation must not be lost; that brings together the roles, rewards, and mission problems. The topics must be connected.
- There will be over \$5 million in the Strategic Investment Pool next year; it will be important to do something strategic with it and not just dribble it away. It is important that the call for proposals not come out two weeks ahead of the deadline.

-- Gary Engstrand

University of Minnesota

A PROPOSAL FOR REVITALIZATION OF DEPARTMENTS

Ad Hoc Committee of
11/1/94 Local Pew
Conference:

W. Phillips Shively, chair
Carl R. Adams
John S. Adams
Patrice A. Morrow

I. The Importance of Departments

Basic academic units of about twenty faculty, usually departments but often subdepartments or small colleges, are the basic building blocks of the University.¹ They are the point from which many of the services of the University are delivered, but more importantly, they are the central point of focus for faculty. In order for the University to function well and to adapt well to changing circumstances, the faculty must be engaged, confident, and flexible, and must embrace the University's goals as their own. This will only happen if they are working in vital, functional departments. The health of departments, therefore, is a basic concern of the University.

What makes the department such a central unit? First, of course, the department is physically the place where faculty organize much of their work. Most of the people a faculty member sees in a day at the University are members of her or his department.

More importantly, the department is the point at which the two most important roles of a faculty member intersect: the local role as a member of the faculty of the University of Minnesota, with duties including teaching, committee work, and community service; and the national role as a member of a discipline, with duties including research, service as a referee for journals and funding agencies, and service to professional groups. If the competing demands of these two roles are to blend harmoniously, the department is the place where this will happen.

The coincidence of faculty members' two most important roles in one location gives that place a powerful hold on their emotions. Most faculty identify with their department more than with the University *per se*. It is easier to get faculty to sacrifice for their department than for larger units of the University, as is evident from faculty members' gifts to the University, most of which are designated for their departments. Service to the department is often treated as a generous act on behalf of the

¹For most faculty at the University, the department is the basic organizational unit, but in some parts of the University the basic unit may be the college, a research station, or something else. For economy of style we shall use the term "department" in this proposal instead of a more elaborate description of work units, but it should be understood that we intend our proposal to refer to basic work units generally.

group; service to the University is viewed more ambivalently.

Finally, departments are important in shaping faculty morale. Obviously morale rises and falls generally across the University, in response to external events. But, there also appears to be significant variation in the morale of faculty members from one department to another within the University. From admittedly impressionistic evidence, it appears that those departments whose faculty feel relatively good about their work and about the University tend to be the departments that function effectively. Good research/good teaching/good service departments make for good morale.

If the University is to function well, if it is to get the most from its faculty, departments must function well.

II. Revitalization of Departments

We should define our terms here. A department functions well: when it gets the best efforts out of its individual members both in their own professional work and on behalf of the collective tasks of the department, the college, and the University. Best efforts from the group require:

- effective leadership;
- a supportive culture in which the accomplishments of each are seen as accomplishments of all; and
- recruitment that brings the best faculty into the department, and continuing support (including mentoring) that brings the best out of faculty.

III. Recommendations

A. Effective leadership:

1. Heads and chairs need help in learning how to provide leadership. Present orientation programs for new heads and chairs emphasize especially University procedures, the legal environment of departments, and similar housekeeping topics. We recommend that orientation training emphasize more how to lead departments, how to build community, and how to nurture faculty members. A good addition, for instance, would be sessions on "Best Practices of Best Departments", at which chairs of departments that function well would discuss what they do and why they do it. Another good example would be discussion and tips on how to use a departmental administrator most effectively, how effectively to chair meetings and to budget the chair's time, how to select search committees for new faculty, and other important tasks.

2. "Training" should not stop with orientation. We recommend that venues be created in which moderately sized groups of chairs and heads in related fields can meet at regular intervals to discuss practices in their departments, and common problems they face.

3. Departments have been the unfortunate recipients for a number of years of an

uncoordinated, unmonitored devolution of functions and heightened requirements of accountability from the federal government, the state government, central administration, the graduate school, and college administrations. In each case the new requirements have been well-intended, but the overall effect has been to swamp departments.

3a. One way in which this shows up is in a welter of uncoordinated deadlines from varied agencies and varied parts of the University. We recommend that the University establish ways to exercise greater calendar coordination. An example of good practice in this regard at the University comes from the graduate school. At one time there were various small graduate fellowships available, and students were nominated for each fellowship separately. Today, single sets of nominees are forwarded to the graduate school twice a year, and these serve to nominate students for all of the various awards for which they are eligible.

3b. Similarly, department chairs and heads are swamped by an accelerating flow of paper. Much of this has grown with no central design. We recommend that a task force of civil service department administrators, chairs, and staff from central administration, the graduate school, and colleges be appointed; their charge should be to examine the flow of paper into and out of departments, with a goal of reducing the flow by 50%.

4. Chairs and heads vary widely in their terms of tenure, mode of selection, and degree of accountability to their departments. While we obviously do not recommend trying to revise the many historical paths by which these differences have evolved, we do believe that some chairs are too weak and are in office too short a time to be effective; at the other extreme, some operate for indefinite, but often long, tenures with very little accountability. We recommend that where necessary, chairs be strengthened constitutionally in all departments in which chairs rotate. Depending on the circumstances and wishes of the department, each such department should either: change to a system in which the chair serves an indefinite term, though with regular review; or lengthen the term of the chair to a minimum of five years. We further recommend that the accountability of chairs and heads who hold long-term appointments be improved by thorough and confidential, regular reviews.

5. Finally, We recommend that the necessary funding be provided to allow each department to have a civil service administrator to assist the chair or head. If necessary, small departments should be merged or otherwise clustered in order to provide the necessary scale for this staffing.

B. Culture of Effectiveness:

1. The University should provide added opportunities for faculty to build campus networks both within and across departments. We recommend that the University support community-building through departments. Examples of possible support would include block-grants to departments for socializing in connection with graduate recruiting efforts, departmental meetings and retreats, and so on; another might be subsidized Campus Club memberships.

2. One problem for all departments is getting faculty to contribute to the collective good of the department (by service to the department, innovative teaching, mentoring younger members of the department, etc.; i.e., simply contributing to the community.) Faculty in the most successful

departments are usually generous in this way, but they truly are "generous" -- all of our incentives encourage individual effort and do not reward contributions to the collective tasks of the department or University. Department chairs need ways to unbundle financial rewards so that contributors to collective goals can be rewarded within the departmental reward structure. We therefore recommend that salaries be gradually "unbundled" into (1) a base salary that accompanies tenure; and (2) contract salary, for doing additional work that is negotiated with the department, college, or university, and paid for over and above the base salary. This would provide a means for chairs and deans to provide for collective tasks without skewing the merit basis of the underlying salary structure.

3. A recent study (Science, 19 August 1994, p. 1031) found that faculty morale was best in departments which were focused collectively on a common effort — usually a program to improve teaching. Two sorts of common campaigns suggest themselves to us: 1) programs to improve the graduate program of a department through a review of the recruitment of students, restructuring of advising and instruction, etc; and 2) systematic programs to improve undergraduate curriculum and teaching, such as the Operation Sunrise effort in the College of Agriculture several years ago. There might well be other possibilities. We recommend that the University set aside a modest fund to support several departments or colleges each year in efforts such as these. The University should recognize that the benefits of such efforts go beyond the improvements per se, but also contribute to the building of community.

4. Sometimes departments get caught up in a cycle of internal conflicts that is difficult to break out of. Alternatively, departments sometimes fall into a pattern of mediocrity, such that they do not have leaders to spark improvement. In these and other cases, it may be necessary to bring in an outside chair or head, armed with several new hires, to turn the department around. We recommend that the University budget for one or two such "make-over" efforts annually, perhaps by bringing in an outside chair or head and allowing that person to hire several new faculty over a two- or three-year period. This would not necessarily have to be a permanent cost. It might be managed by bridge loans or programs of enhanced retirement.

5. We recommend that the University and departments expand their repertoire of ceremony and individual honors, in order to increase the recognition members of the department receive from the department collectively. One example of such honors would be to expand our range of named chairs. These would not necessarily require much funding. Two possibilities would be to allow McKnight Land Grant Professors to retain the title indefinitely; and/or to designate all winners of Morse-Alumni Teaching Awards with the honorific of Distinguished Teaching Professor.

C. Recruitment of outstanding faculty, and support of faculty:

Responsibility in these areas lies more fully within departments than was true of A and B, so there is less to recommend for central administration and deans. However, we have one recommendation.

1. The importance of seeking quality in every new faculty member we hire cannot be emphasized or repeated enough. As one member of the Pew Discussion said, our basic rule must always be that we are trying to recruit faculty who are better than we are. We recommend that

assuring quality of recruitment and hiring be made an explicit charge to the three Provosts of the Twin Cities campus, and to the Chancellors of all campuses. Deans should actively oversee searches with an eye to quality, not only to see that they have been conducted legally and fairly; if necessary, they should step in and guide search operations to make sure the searches are conducted competently. Primarily, this is a matter of leadership. Perhaps most important will be repeated and visible public attention to this issue by the highest central officers.

IV. Implementation

Of the above recommendations, responsibility for implementing recommendations A.1, A.3, and B.1 through B.4 appears to us to lie with central administration. A.4 appears to lie with the Deans and Provosts, while A.2, A.5, and B.5 can lie with either central administration or with the Deans and Provosts. Responsibility for C.1 lies with all three.