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Enhancing Quality in a Decade of Opportunity:

The State University System in the 1980's

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Presented to the State University Board
March 12, 1980

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This paper, which suggests a proposed agenda for the State University System as it addresses educational issues in the context of the 1980's, has been developed with the assistance of Vice Chancellors Hannah and Vikmanis; Presidents Dille, Graham, Decker, King, Hanson, Preska, and Wefald; and President-elect Stafford. It is presented to the State University Board, to all components within the State University System, and to other interested parties for reflection, discussion, and reaction preparatory to consideration, in May, by the State University Board of its budget policy guidelines for the 1981-83 biennial budget request.

Garry D. Hays

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INTRODUCTION

The 1980's pose an unusual opportunity for the enhancement of both the quality of education and the scope of service in the State University System--an opportunity to focus on improving programs and facilities, on continuous development of better teaching and learning opportunities and skills, and on more and better services to our various regions.

In starting with this premise, I fully recognize the imminence of the general enrollment decline which will occur during the last two-thirds of the decade, as well as economic and other constraints certain to accompany continued inflation, the national energy crisis, and increasing alternative demands for public resources.

I also recognize that optimism about the future of education is not widely shared by many educators throughout the country. Among many there is a fear that:

- enrollment-related resources will be subjected to increased scrutiny and, in many instances, will be reduced to reflect declining enrollment;
- it will be difficult for some to distinguish between enrollment-related and non-enrollment related resource requirements, with failure to do so--especially during inflationary times--resulting in irreparable damage to public universities in some states;
- concerns about quality, some of which stem from overcrowding of public schools and colleges in the recent past, and from demands for high-cost specialized programs for new or ignored clientele, could lead to excessive legislative discipline and prevent the very quality improvements possible only as enrollments and new demands decline;
- there will be little opportunity to secure major additions to the physical plant of public colleges and universities;
- increasing demands will be heard for "better management" of public institutions.

In this State, however, the heads of public postsecondary systems--and most institutional leaders--have a grasp of the political and social realities involved. They recognize that educational quality is not essentially a function of an institution's size and that sound management and increased accountability will enhance, not erode, public confidence in the educational enterprise.

Moreover, the Minnesota Legislature--while legitimately expecting sound management of and accountability for public funds--has historically supported education and has carefully refrained from the kind of simplistic response or unwarranted intrusion that has existed in some other states.

However, many inside our universities understandably fear that the approaching developments will result in unwarranted austerity--unwarranted in the sense that during the era of rapidly expanding enrollments the personnel and physical resources never did fully catch up with the explosive growth in students to be served. University and system efforts to manage resources better--first to stretch them to meet pressing demands and then to plan for reductions--mean that, sometimes, "management" and "accountability" are perceived as code words for excessive control and rampant centralization of decision making.

These concerns are more than simply the predictable reactions of people confronted with threatened job security, or of those without ability to appreciate the general context of competing priorities and constraints faced by the State. There is some truth in the view that resources did not expand as quickly as might have been desirable during the years of rapid growth, and there is no doubt that measures designed to enhance sound management and accountability have had an impact upon the daily operations of universities.

I note these considerations at the outset because they have significant bearing on our ability to move forward with the task at hand. It is not unusual in colleges and universities throughout the country to hear occasional observations that "the faculty is the university"; that "only students know what is good for them"; or that "administrators could run things better if the students and faculty would simply leave them alone." While these are understandable expressions of human nature, the fact is that the society in which we live and the system of seven state universities within which we work are comprised of many components, all of which are necessary to the successful operation of both. In any vital organization there should always be a diversity of viewpoints, but there must also be a willingness to avoid a "we-they" mentality and a commitment to working together toward a common goal.

It is in this spirit that, as Chancellor, it seems incumbent upon me--at the outset of the decade--to propose those policies which, in my view, are most critical in our efforts to make ours the best possible system of state universities. While I have no illusions that these proposals will result in a consensus about what our objectives are and how we may best achieve them, I hope that it will allow us to discuss these matters in a manner which serves to clarify, rather than obscure, the issues we face.

A FRAME OF REFERENCE: MISSION AND ENROLLMENT

From this context, let me attempt to establish a frame of reference for the issues which, in my judgment, should be the agenda of the next decade for this System.

First, I believe the mission of the State University System is, in fact, that which we have expressed in various public documents in recent years.

As comprehensive institutions with a statewide clientele, the universities offer a broad range of moderate-cost baccalaureate programs in the liberal arts and sciences, education, business and technology, the fine arts, and selected occupational areas, and selected graduate programs to serve unmet needs in specific regions. As regional institutions the universities have the additional mission of responding to specific educational, cultural, and community service needs of the areas in which they are located.

Moreover, I believe that the major elements of that mission statement have particular relevance to a discussion of the future of the System in the decade of the 1980's. We are multipurpose institutions serving a society which has diverse, but inter-related, needs--a need for people with professional and occupational skills to perform the work of society but a need, also, for an enlightened citizenry to preserve and to enhance the values of society and to give it meaning. Thus, our mission recognizes the importance of preparing students to apply creative solutions to societal problems, but also the necessity of assisting them to:

- develop the ability to think critically in order that they may continue to learn;
- transcend their individual limits of time and space in order to acquire perspective;
- acquire an appreciation of their humanistic heritage in order to provide meaning for their lives.

Second, we must address the single most important factor affecting our ability to meet the objectives of the decade: that is, the anticipated major decline in student enrollment.

In a study released in September, 1979, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) projected the following developments for the State Universities.

	Decline in On-Campus FTE Enrollment FY 1980-FY 1990			
	<u>By FY 1985</u>	<u>By FY 1988</u>	<u>By FY 1990</u>	<u>% Decline</u>
Bemidji	246	684	752	19.6%
Mankato	337	1,154	1,374	16.1%
Moorhead	807	1,432	1,456	25.7%
St. Cloud	375	1,097	975	10.8%
Southwest	136	277	302	18.2%
Winona	361	731	778	20.4%
TOTAL	2,262	5,375	5,637	17.3%

It is important to note that these projections are based on two major variables.

--The first is the pool of high school students who will graduate each June in each Minnesota county during the period in question. This data is known, because tomorrow's freshmen are enrolled and being counted in our elementary/secondary schools.

--The second variable is the probable behavior of those students upon graduation in selecting which postsecondary institution--if any-- they will attend. Though the HECB's predicted participation data reflects the most recent year's experience, it is, of course, subject to change each year.

Beyond these variables, the HECB projections assume that other determinants of enrollment--student retention, transfers, non-Minnesota residents, and returning adults--will remain constant. Though changeable, these kinds of variables affect a relatively small percentage of each institution's enrollment, minimizing the possibility of major deviation in the projections. Of greater uncertainty is the potential impact of such possible events as reinstatement of military draft, severe recession, expanded in-service and pre-service education within corporations and professional occupations, or major changes in student financial aid programs. Thus, while we know that not all of these variables will remain constant, the HECB projections do provide a general basis for planning for this decade.

Given the psychology of growth that has pervaded all social organizations for the past two-hundred years, declining enrollment is not a pleasant prospect. Understandably there have tended to be two conventional responses.

--First, institutions expand their "admissions effort"--a neutral euphemism for student recruitment--in an effort to attract a greater share of the diminishing pool of students.

--Second, institutions look to their regional population beyond the traditional college age group and expand their extension offerings--sometimes satisfying long-felt needs, but, also, sometimes with unrealistic visions of non-existent or non-collegiate clientele.

I do not suggest that institutions should not provide the best possible public information--in the most attractive form--about their programs and services. Moreover, efforts to serve previously underserved segments of the population through extension and non-traditional approaches are consistent with the regional service and educational commitments in each university's mission. Development of our several non-traditional programs for working people who cannot attend college on a full-time residential basis represents a legitimate and noteworthy response to such special needs.

While continuing and expanding such efforts, we also must avoid the kind of recruitment efforts or curricular expansion that results in costly, counter-productive, and ethically suspect "body snatching" wars among institutions or systems.

In October, 1976, in presenting to the Board recommendations for the 1977-79 biennial budget, I expressed the view that the challenge of the future will not be how to get larger, but how to improve quality and to expand services when getting smaller. I still believe that we must concentrate on policies which will advance these objectives despite the enrollment developments anticipated, rather than seek to tilt demographic windmills. Minnesota is a national leader in providing educational opportunity for all of its citizenry. The democratic goals, upon which the principle of access is based, can be fully realized, however, only if the quality of the academic enterprise is high. To the extent that our primary efforts to improve the quality of the academic programs and related services of the universities yield enrollment dividends because they enhance the attractiveness of the institutions or have impact upon retention rates, these results will be welcome by-products.

AN AGENDA FOR THE DECADE

Let me now turn to the agenda for the future and share with you at least nine major objectives which, in my judgment, this System must face in the next ten years, and indicate how we might achieve them.

- I. To so manage enrollment decline that we enhance rather than diminish the quality of the universities.
- II. To maintain and continuously improve the quality of the faculty and the curriculum.
- III. To support better the teaching-learning process through continuous improvement of library resources.
- IV. To expand and develop curricula in areas of increasing student demand and societal need.
- V. To insure that our students, faculty, and support personnel have adequate and appropriate equipment to support their respective activities and to prepare students for the technological world in which they will live and work.
- VI. To provide the best facilities possible for teaching and learning.
- VII. To insure basic student support services consistent with the needs of women, minorities, the handicapped, and economically disadvantaged students.
- VIII. To respond to the increasing demand for regional services.
- IX. To expand, where appropriate, cooperative efforts with other Minnesota postsecondary education systems.

In the process of discussing each of these objectives, I will outline measures taken during the last three and one-half years to enhance our ability to be successful in this effort.

- I. To address anticipated enrollment developments in a manner which preserves the essence of a university, especially the quality of the faculty and library, and perpetuates the development of excellent, regional comprehensive universities.

Of the nine objectives, this is clearly the most difficult. The major difficulty, of course, is Minnesota's long history of enrollment-driven budgeting of postsecondary education. We all understand that, throughout the era of rising enrollments, the taxpayers and their elected representatives were asked to support that growth through budgetary devices such as faculty/student ratios and other enrollment-based formulae. Though some might claim that the formulae were deficient, compromises were reached in determining those formulae and they were fully applied to the enrollment growth experienced. The quality of the State Universities in 1980 is testament to this commitment of resources. Given this history, we should not be surprised if many might now expect us to reduce our staffing and other expenses on the same basis as we acquired them.

Yet, if our institutions are to be of high quality and comprehensive in scope, simply to assert such a view will, of course, yield us nothing. To cling rigidly to all existing resources would compromise our ability to achieve appropriate modifications of previous staffing and other budgetary policies. Our task is to demonstrate, through careful analysis and documentation, why the budgetary policies of a growth era cannot be fully applied to an era of decline, and our history and efforts thus far provide groundwork.

We learned a great deal about managing decline in the 1971-75 period, when this System's enrollment decreased by 4,500 students, and more than 400 faculty and other employees were retrenched. As we reduced staffing and other expense categories in accordance with the then-existing budgetary ratios and formulae, we discovered that the enormous enrollment growth of the 1960's had in fact been accompanied by three parallel developments whose dimensions had been obscured by our preoccupation with accommodating the thousands of new students who appeared at our doors each year.

--Those thousands came with new educational goals, and changed the entire university.

--The hundreds of new faculty positions created by application of the budgetary staffing ratios to the enrollment growth enabled the universities not only to modify significantly and to expand existing academic programs, but also to create whole new programs to address the emerging interests of a new generation of students and the needs of their future world.

--A significant portion of those new positions had also been used to expand academic and student support services to reflect not only increased volume, but also a new diversity of academic programming and student needs. Institutions geared to serve only 18-21 year-old prospective school teachers required new

services for returning veterans; new clientele dependent on financial aids; and students seeking internships in such areas as drama, environmental studies, human services, and business.

To meet these demands, a portion of each year's increment of new positions and other resources was used to add new specializations to existing academic programs and support services, as well as to create new ones. Through this process, the Minnesota teachers colleges of earlier decades were rapidly transformed into truly comprehensive universities.

At this point let me note that these developments were possible not because the budget ratios and formulae were "too rich," but because they were adequate to allow the universities to make the hard decisions necessary without starving existing programs. Thus, ratio and formula budgeting worked to meet the needs of the universities during the growth era, but it worked for the wrong reasons.

The real significance of these facts emerged as we concluded the final years of the 1971-75 retrenchment period. It was then that we found that after the true enrollment-incremental staff and resources were removed from programs, further full application of the ratios and formulae would require dismantling of numerous programs rather than just a reduction in the volume of students served. In brief, a multi-purpose university is necessarily more costly to operate than a single-purpose college, and ours had become universities by the 1970's.

Fortunately, the period of enrollment decline ended in 1975 and the universities entered a period of modest growth expected to continue through 1982-83. As this occurred, and it was time to prepare our 1977-79 biennial budget request--my first as Chancellor of this System--we were determined that the State Universities never again would experience the trauma associated with the dramatic enrollment developments and retrenchment of the 1971-75 period. As we examined both national and regional demographic data available in 1976 it was clear that, after a period of modest annual enrollment growth through 1982-83, the State Universities would enter a period of significant enrollment decline through the balance of the decade, and in the case of some universities, through 1995-96.

These data--and other external realities beyond the control of the System--indicated the need to initiate, in 1977, measures which would allow us to accommodate the enrollment decline anticipated for the post-1982-83 period in a manner entirely different from our traumatic experience of the early 1970's. To that end, we reviewed the demographic data and its implications with the State University Board and asked the Board to approve a budget policy designed with the anticipated developments of the 1980's in mind. As a result, the State Universities received full State support and staffing for the enrollment levels of 1977 and are absorbing all enrollment above 1977 levels with the tuition revenues received from such students. This policy, endorsed by two governors and legislatures (and adapted to the other postsecondary systems), has the following implications for the decade of the 1980's.

- In the current year the State Universities are accommodating 1,690 FTE students above 1977 levels through use of some \$1,100,000 in tuition receipts.
- The tuition receipts have been used to add temporary and part-time employees hired with the full understanding that they occupy short-term positions without prospect of acquiring tenure.
- By 1983 we expect that more than 2,500 FTE students will be enrolled above 1977 levels without the addition of a single permanent, tenure-track position.
- Thus, as enrollments decline after 1983, the State University System will have a "cushion" of some 2,500 students whom it may "lose" before retrenchment of permanent staff will need to be considered. It is our estimate that we will reach 1977 enrollment levels in 1985-86.

In adopting this budget policy, it was not our intent simply to postpone the major retrenchment of permanent faculty which will be required if the old staffing ratios are applied in the last half of the 1980's. Rather, our objective was twofold:

- to avoid compounding the magnitude of the eventual problem to be faced through the addition of some 130 permanent faculty during the 1977-83 period;
- to provide as much time as possible for detailed analysis of staffing requirements based on programmatic as well as enrollment considerations.

Additionally, of course, we remain convinced that our demonstrated willingness to adopt a realistic, though somewhat internally unpopular, budgetary policy in the short term will serve to enhance the credibility of our long-term solutions when they are reviewed by the governor and legislature in the mid-1980's.

At this point, let me indicate that I do not wish to suggest that such long-term solutions will altogether eliminate the need to retrench faculty and otherwise reduce enrollment-related expenses; common sense tells us that the magnitude of the enrollment decline anticipated is such that some reductions are inevitable. Our purpose is to insure that such reductions represent only the true incremental costs.

Thus, we recommend the continuation of the present budget policy throughout the remainder of the growth period and the continuation of university planning efforts during the lead-time phase prior to 1986 so that major programmatic and staffing adjustments can be made gradually and with as little disruption as possible.

- II. To maintain and continuously improve the academic quality of existing programs by maintaining an academically current, intellectually alive faculty and by continually adapting the curriculum to new knowledge.

Provision of good academic programs throughout the State is, of course, the primary responsibility of the State University System. The first prerequisite is numerically sufficient, intellectually vigorous, and highly committed faculty and staff. Though it may seem simple, projecting staffing needs and maintaining excellent personnel are two of our toughest tasks: student demands change unpredictably; even good faculty require constant renewal; and planning must be long term.

At Southwest State University, for example, we have developed a core staffing model designed to stabilize staffing within a reasonable enrollment range and to provide efficient support for the programs basic to that university's mission. That model emerged from a careful examination of programmatic responsibilities agreed upon for Southwest when it faced serious enrollment problems in 1976. It included analysis of demographic and enrollment projections and determination of the faculty support required for programs and students anticipated in that institution. It has worked well.

In 1978, a core staffing plan was developed for Metropolitan State University, and a similar project is now underway at Bemidji, where both administrative and academic reorganization have been under modification since September, 1979. Such small institutions require especially careful staff planning, but similar planning has been undertaken at the larger institutions as well. Careful planning includes isolating incremental costs and staffing needs as enrollments rise, then fall, and requires the kind of planned change that assures program quality, while minimizing layoff of personnel.

A major device for assuring program quality is the State University System's required regular review of every academic program. Each university subjects each of its academic programs to a careful evaluation at least once every five years, meaning that in any given year about twenty percent of the university is under internal evaluation. The precise means vary from program to program and university to university, but follow procedures involving faculty and administration in analysis of student needs, demands of the professions, curriculum, resources, personnel, teaching techniques, and academic outcomes for students. Program review frequently involves colleagues from other universities and related disciplines. The resulting report typically proves helpful in both planning and the improvement of teaching and learning. St. Cloud State University recently reported to the Board numerous instances of curricular and faculty improvement inspired by these program reviews.

Perhaps the most challenging aspect of program quality is the continuing professional development of the faculty and staff. In a period of impending enrollment decline, fewer faculty move in and

out of our universities, opportunities to develop new courses and curricula are less obvious, and there is less upward mobility. The customary response of institutions in attempting to provide support activities for faculty and service staff include:

- release time to do related research, to restructure courses, or to assess and address the adequacy of library holdings for the discipline;
- sabbatical leaves, to retrain--for example--mathematicians to serve needs in computer science, to provide industrial experience for business and industrial faculty long removed from the field, to put teacher educators in the public schools, and to encourage research and publication and other professional contributions to the various fields of knowledge;
- improvement grants and research funds--small allowances to support attendance at workshops, costs of research needed in one's teaching, and development of new course materials or learning strategies;
- travel funds for attendance at regional and national conferences where otherwise isolated faculty remain part of their community of scholars, and keep up to date and involved in their disciplines.

With large, and even excess, enrollments, these have been difficult to fund; a sabbatical is granted at half pay and we hire a low-salaried replacement with the other half. Release time is similarly funded. As resources tighten, these become harder to support.

While these are useful means of assisting faculty to remain current in their disciplines, to retrain, and to stay intellectually alive, they are not adequate--even when funded at higher levels. Recognizing this fact, in 1977 we asked then-Governor Perpich and the 1977 legislature to take a "leap of faith" with our faculty and permit us to allocate \$500,000 each year for what we called "Projects for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning." Both were willing to take that bet on our faculty and the faculty responded. In 1979 Governor Quie and the legislature permitted us to allocate \$650,000 the first year of the current biennium and \$1.1 million the second year to similar efforts. The following examples identify the nature of some of those projects.

- At Bemidji, the Environmental Studies Center expanded its instructional support to related disciplines, research opportunities for students, and research services to the region and to various governmental agencies, including projects for the Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Forestry Service, the Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Research has been conducted in the areas of waste water treatment, flood control, chemistry of forest products and agricultural wastes, and the environmental impact of road construction.

- The Prairie Writing Project at Moorhead provides opportunity for faculty from various academic disciplines to improve their abilities to stimulate and teach good writing skills. As a result of the positive response to this project, three other groups in the region are proposing programs modeled after Moorhead's and further workshops are planned in the System. The project has been established as a major regional resource in the teaching of writing and it is providing leadership across five states at the college level and two states at the public school level.
- At St. Cloud, teaching clinics to improve basic verbal and quantitative skills of students have been established. In addition to the teaching clinics, seminars have been held for faculty from various disciplines in the teaching of writing skills.
- At Mankato, additional resources have been allocated to minority services and women's resource centers to serve special problems of minorities, handicapped, and women. The project was developed in response to needs expressed by minority students and women who had need for more extensive mathematics skills to prepare for employment in fields such as computer science, industrial technology, and other applied science areas. Saturday Skills Workshops for Re-entry Women were developed, and funds were also used to increase advising and tutorial assistance services and to sensitize faculty to the problems and needs of handicapped students.
- At Winona, the Great River Writing Project is a spin-off from the Prairie Writing Project begun at Moorhead State University. Its impact has two important dimensions: its effect upon Winona State University faculty in improving teaching of writing skills and its importance in helping to meet the institution's public service commitments. Concentrating upon the improvement of skills in the teaching of writing across disciplines, the Great River Writing Project has enabled many faculty to become involved in the teaching of writing both at Winona State University and in the public schools of southeastern Minnesota. It has sponsored both summer workshops and in-service days for faculty and will provide a summer institute in 1980 to be held at the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse, from which graduate credit will be given at Winona, as well as in the University of Wisconsin System.
- At Bemidji, special efforts are being made to improve the retention rate of Indian students.
- At several of the universities, computer assisted instruction (CAI) programs, which have application to several areas of study, have been developed. The CAI, at St. Cloud for example, is used to improve mathematics skills as a part of a mathematics anxiety program. The program also provides computer experience for faculty and students and makes the computer centers accessible to the handicapped.

I have visited with most of the faculty members who are responsible for these efforts, and I came away from those conversations reinforced in the view that the best faculty development is not something that is "done to" someone who is unwilling or uninterested. Rather, it is providing funds--often in small amounts--for faculty who are already among the best, who are committed to their students, who have the self-confidence to re-examine what they are doing, who have ideas about how to improve, and who spend the long hours and the energy necessary to start new efforts. They represent that which has characterized the best of the profession: creativity, dedication, service, innovation, and human concern for those whom they serve.

Another group of faculty and administrators have developed guidelines for cooperative programming with the Science Museum of Minnesota which will create a national model for sharing resources and personnel. Still others, working with our staff and the academic vice presidents, have assisted in developing ideas and plans for other kinds of professional development efforts. We are currently seeking private funding for both endeavors.

As important as it is to maintain and expand professional development opportunities for present faculty, it is also necessary to have new faculty coming into the System. During the 1960's the universities hired large numbers of young faculty members. Those people are now in their late thirties and early forties, with the average age of faculties in most of our universities being approximately forty-three years old. Thus, at the time when the enrollment decline is most severe, the majority of faculty will be at the midpoint of their careers.

Moreover, those careers are potentially longer because of the change in the retirement law. The implications are clear:

- an increasingly older faculty;
- less turn-over because of reduced mobility and delayed retirements;
- the potential loss--through retrenchment--of younger faculty, many of whom were employed to teach new specialties as our institutions became multipurpose universities rather than teachers colleges.

To help alleviate this problem, passage of the "Teacher Mobility Bill," authored by Representative Lyndon Carlson and Senator Jerome Hughes, ought to be a continuing priority of the System.

Additionally, we recommend the continuation and expansion of efforts to improve the teaching/learning process and to enhance faculty renewal and revitalization.

III. To support better the teaching-learning process through continuous improvement of library resources.

As critical as an excellent faculty is to a high-quality academic enterprise, they and the students must have access to good learning resources. One of our most significant efforts in this regard has been the systemwide library project which grew out of concern for enhancing the quality of our libraries in view of inflation, a prospective shortage of space, and possible implications of the enrollment decline for personnel requirements.

The primary thrust is the better use of technology to address these concerns, and the approach is threefold:

- conversion of our library collection to machine-readable form;
- conversion of card catalogs, which take space and more time and--thus personnel--to keep current, to microfilm;
- development of a systemwide, computerized linkage to enhance the sharing of materials.

The 1979 legislative session provided funding for the first phase. The university library directors and others are working hard to implement this effort. It is my recommendation that continued support be given to the project throughout the coming biennium.

IV. To expand and develop, amid general enrollment decline, programs such as computer science, special education, and international business and economics, which represent areas of increasing student demand and societal need.

As in the last two decades, during the 1980's our universities will be called upon to develop new curricula for an increasingly specialized world while also being expected to retain a quality core curriculum. Development of these new programs need not, in most cases, be a costly process. However, "seed money" is required to fund personnel and to acquire materials until students enroll and until incremental costs shift from old to new programs.

During times of rapid enrollment increases, this happens quickly and with relative ease: universities simply hire new expertise, launch the program, and students fill it up. In periods of enrollment decline and fiscal constraints, however, faculty must be given sufficient notice of forthcoming staff reductions in existing programs and--where appropriate--provided opportunity, time, and support to retrain for a new curriculum before shifts in student educational interests can be accommodated.

In recent biennia we have experimented with providing some such "seed money" for new program development, enough to be convinced that the concept is vital to our continuous growth and renewal.

- V. To insure that our students, faculty, and support personnel have adequate and appropriate equipment to support their respective activities and to prepare students for the technological world in which they will live and work.

The academic programs of the State Universities utilize almost fifteen million dollars worth of instructional equipment. While this is an impressive amount and indicates one facet of the investment the State has in our programs, it is also the cause of some concern when we consider the following factors.

- Much of that equipment was purchased during the late 1960's as a result of the enrollment growth then in progress (equipment dollars have traditionally been provided postsecondary institutions in Minnesota through enrollment-based formulae, although supplemental "catch-up" allocations were also occasionally granted). A great deal of that equipment is now obsolete or nearing the end of its useful mechanical life.
- Additionally, the equipment purchased during the 1980's also has predictable useful life and will need to be replaced in an orderly fashion.
- Because of statewide constraints imposed on the budget requests of all State agencies and systems of postsecondary education during the 1970's, only modest adjustments have been made in equipment appropriations to reflect the impact of inflation. In the best of years such adjustments have been a fraction of actual cost increases; in the worst years no increases have been available at all.
- The net impact on a relatively fixed equipment budget has been deferral of required replacement acquisitions and inability to purchase new equipment for expanding and changing programs.

While we are fully aware of the general fiscal constraints faced by the State, and recognize that all agencies have been required to absorb the impact of inflation with regard to equipment budgets, we are convinced that continued application of such a policy with regard to the State University System will have unacceptable consequences for the quality of instruction. Perhaps the best way to clarify our concern is simply to suggest that there is a real difference between requiring State employees, including our faculty and staff, to make do with beat-up, unattractive desks, and expecting students to be taught with equipment which is inoperable or even long obsolete in the field for which they are training.

We have, therefore, undertaken a comprehensive, systemwide review of current equipment holdings by instructional area, year of purchase, and purchase price. From this data we anticipate developing a reasonably accurate estimate of accrued replacement requirements and projected future needs if we are to institute an on-going program of equipment replacement, including the deferred equipment

needs of academic programs for which necessary equipment simply has not been purchased because of the general shortage of funds.

All of these facets of the problem will be brought together to form a unified, well documented program of equipment procurement for the coming decade. It is my recommendation that the Board make this its highest priority for improvement in the 1981 biennial budget request.

- VI. To insure that our physical plant provides the best possible environment for teaching, learning, and delivery of the other services necessary to a university education.

Anyone who has visited our campuses is aware of the fact that Minnesotans have made an impressive investment in facilities for the State Universities. Moreover, much of that investment was made in direct response to the rapid enrollment growth of the 1960's.

ACADEMIC AND SUPPORT FACILITIES

<u>Completed</u>	<u>Gross Sq. Feet</u>	<u>% of Plant</u>	
Pre-1960	1,419,927	25.9%	} 63.9%
1960-1964	987,970	18.0%	
1965-1969	1,098,712	20.0%	
1970-1974	1,666,133	30.3%	
Post-1974	318,144	5.8%	

Note that almost one-half of the new space constructed since 1974 was to allow consolidation of Mankato State University; a process that substantially reduced the total space available on that campus.

That new construction has slowed since 1973 reflects the fact that--given the enrollment developments of the early 1970's--the State Universities have been provided with adequate amounts of enrollment-related, general-purpose space. Recent space utilization studies completed at three universities with the least favorable space-to-student ratios demonstrate this to be the case. Moreover, while the short-term enrollment growth anticipated through 1982-83 will require extremely efficient utilization of space at several of the universities, the general enrollment decline anticipated for the balance of the decade will rapidly relieve this situation.

While the total size of our physical plant is adequate to meet our anticipated needs for the decade of the 1980's, we are keenly aware of the need to address the following related issues.

- The rapid growth of certain programs has created significant deficiencies in the availability of specialized space required by such programs. For example, multiplying enrollments in computer science necessitate specially equipped large classrooms, supplemented with several kinds of computer laboratories not

envisioned when most mathematics/science buildings were planned in the 1960's. Programs both to accommodate and to prepare teachers of visually and hearing impaired students have special space needs. In art, technology, and technical theater, facilities for work with plastics are new necessities. These needs are not enrollment related; they result from new program developments associated with mid-sized, multipurpose universities. All indicators suggest these problems will not be resolved by the general enrollment decline anticipated; without direct solution, they will, in fact, become more serious.

- Much of the physical plant is more than ten years old and in need of general rehabilitation. This problem is compounded by the fact that a major share of the facilities were constructed and equipped during the same brief period, and all will be in need of major rehabilitation at about the same time. On the other hand, the absence of need for new construction will more than offset this demand.
- Most of the buildings were constructed in the era of cheap energy. Consequently, they lack adequate insulation, double-glazed windows, energy-efficient mechanical and electrical systems, and such elementary conservation features as vestibules for major entryways. While we have launched major efforts to correct these conditions and to compensate for them through improved operating procedures, numerous major structural deficiencies remain.
- Because top priority had to be given to construction of facilities to provide direct instructional services to the rapidly increasing number of students, lower priority physical plant needs were deferred during the 1960's and early 1970's. This is particularly true in the case of classroom refurbishing, campus sitework, parking, and outdoor recreational/athletic space.

The impact of the above considerations unfortunately has been exacerbated by two related issues.

- The number of staff positions authorized the universities to maintain the physical plant has not increased in proportion to the growth in plant size. In fact, the "cost reduction" programs initiated by several governors in the last decade have led to major reductions in plant staffing even as the size of the plant has grown. The impact of this trend is becoming increasingly evident as the large number of buildings constructed during this era start to show signs of their age.
- The availability of repair and betterment funds has not kept pace with the growth of the plant. More importantly, increases in construction costs have far outstripped the modest increases granted in the last decade. Again, the age characteristics of the plant require precisely the opposite trend in funding.

Given these considerations, a major effort is now required to insure that our physical plant provides the best possible environment for teaching, learning, and delivery of other services necessary to a university education. This effort should be predicated on the clear understanding that the era of new construction has ended and that the issue is now one of providing the most functional and efficient facilities possible within the total space now available.

The framework for this effort was adopted by the State University Board in November, 1978, and has subsequently been developed within our internal "performance standards" relating to physical plant planning. The Board directed each university to prepare a ten-year "basic development plan" for its facilities. These plans are to:

- inventory the status of all facilities and their components on the basis of common standards and definitions;
- identify all deficiencies which adversely affect the efficiency of functions housed in a facility;
- establish a priority order for addressing those deficiencies on a systemwide basis.

While top priority must be assigned to correction of structural and mechanical defects resulting in continuing damage to the basic integrity of a building (e.g. a leaking roof), the overall purpose will be to correct deficiencies which affect academic programs. Moreover, as the need for enrollment-related general-purpose space declines through the decade, we will have increasing flexibility in converting such space to the needs of specialized programs.

In addition to the above thrust to the capital improvement program, it is our recommendation that we ask the legislature to give strong consideration to modest expansion of our physical plant staff and an increase in our repair and betterment appropriation. These items reflect our strong conviction that such expenditures represent a sound investment by the State in terms of avoiding future costs.

- VII. To insure the availability of basic student support services in a manner consistent with the needs of women, minorities, the handicapped, and economically disadvantaged students.

With minor exceptions, the personnel resources provided the State Universities during the 1970's for basic support services have not been increased. In fact, the various "cost reduction" programs instituted during that decade by several governors have required some cutbacks in these areas.

During that same decade, however, a variety of new considerations have emerged in support services:

- student financial aid programs have multiplied in number and complexity;

- affirmative action considerations have properly assumed a major role in virtually all aspects of our operations;
- the needs of handicapped students have been recognized and must be addressed;
- equality in all aspects of programming must be provided to women students.

Although in most cases commitment to these concerns caused us to move rapidly to develop and conform to new requirements, we did so at great cost by diverting personnel and other resources from a decreasing pool of total resources.

While we recognize that these developments are not unique to the State University System, they have been particularly difficult to implement in our System given the general context of our budgetary policies, and the extent to which we so directly serve the public. Further progress cannot be supported through such internal reallocation of resources.

We are now conducting a comprehensive review of the current staffing and prospective needs of basic support service units on each campus, and are preparing to recommend that the State University Board request funds to provide such additional resources as are necessary. In doing so, however, we will fully consider the implications of the anticipated enrollment decline.

- VIII. To respond to increasing demand for regional services such as library access, energy education, and continuing education in view of the costs of gasoline, travel, equipment, and personnel.

For many years, ours were primarily single-purpose, largely residential colleges serving undergraduate students in a day-time, general and teacher education curriculum. They provided summer workshops for teachers either completing or supplementing baccalaureate degrees and occasional regional services of other kinds. Students commenced with similar learning skills, and sought general degrees.

Today, we serve students of all ages, seeking general education and multiple types of specific licensure. Many live and are employed throughout the region, often in professions--such as nursing--where continuing education is both necessary and required. Other adults throughout the region seek educational opportunities they believed impossible in earlier years.

Some are served on-campus, in credit-generating courses; others require off-campus courses, and many require work which is not credit-bearing, being primarily an up-date of previous undergraduate work. Most need better access to faculty and library resources than is currently available. Our forthcoming computerized library catalog can be made available in regional libraries, and in some cases, indication of closer resources will be possible; costs of terminals or print-outs must be borne, however.

As travel costs to campus become less bearable and less sensible for students, the universities must bear the costs to send faculty to extension sites. In some cases, extension sites require some minimal instructional equipment to save wear and tear on transporting it.

Currently, non-credit continuing education generates no state support, which has two negative effects on the university:

- it creates immense pressure to grant credit for work which merely enhances or updates prior work and is not legitimately degree-applicable; or
- it drains resources from other students' courses to support this increasing enterprise.

Some appropriate method of funding such educational services needs to be developed.

On occasion, other agencies generate needs assessments for services to special groups such as senior citizens, or for special purposes such as energy education. Those services are usually unfunded, and pose special difficulties. One model for resolving them may reside in the contractual relationship currently existing between the State University System and the Department of Education, whereby the latter contracts directly for inservice education of vocational education instructors in the AVTIs.

These and other such regional service issues may be best addressed by the Higher Education Coordinating Board's new task force on funding alternatives for postsecondary education, but require mention here as serious problems in need of solution.

- IX. To expand, where appropriate, cooperative efforts with other Minnesota postsecondary education system.

While the eight preceding objectives have focused on the State University System, they are presented with the realization that postsecondary education in Minnesota is a shared responsibility. There are many examples of cooperative efforts involving State Universities with both public and private institutions:

- Through the Tri-College University, Moorhead State University, Concordia College, and North Dakota State University offer some majors in common, share faculty, and have made library resources available to students on all three campuses through a common card catalog and a shuttle service.
- Winona State University, St. Mary's College, and the College of St. Teresa share courses, lectures, and concerts and have implemented a common course registration system.

- In Rochester, Winona State University, Mankato State University, the University of Minnesota, Rochester Community College, Rochester AVTI, St. Mary's College and the College of St. Teresa comprise a consortium through which educational opportunities are offered to that community.
- St. Cloud State University, the College of St. Benedict, and St. John's University have, for years, had cooperative programs in various areas.
- The Southwest West Central Consortium includes all nine post-secondary institutions in that part of the State and attempts to extend educational opportunities within the region. Additionally, Southwest State University and Worthington Community College are having conversations about how better to share faculty and to coordinate offerings.
- Metropolitan State University was established as an upper level institution and includes, as a part of its mission, coordination with the metropolitan area community colleges and area vocational-technical institutes.
- Within the State University System, Southwest, Mankato, and St. Cloud have established a graduate consortium to extend graduate education to practicing teachers in southwestern Minnesota without establishing a separate program.

While these efforts, and others, represent an impressive beginning, more will be required if the educational institutions of the State are to continue to provide broad access despite declining enrollments and increasing costs. The absence in Minnesota of destructive competition and petty self-interest among the various systems provides an excellent climate for the development of creative ways for cooperatively enhancing educational opportunity. Commitment to the preservation of this climate and to continued cooperative programming and sharing should be an important agenda item for the State University System.

CONCLUSION

Meeting these objectives, then, is the agenda I propose for the next ten years. Since much of this represents deferred and emerging needs of the State University System, it is only fair to ask how one can characterize the 1980's as a period of unusual opportunity for major enhancement of the quality of education and the scope of service.

In my judgment the 1980's represent just such a period for the following reasons.

- The budget policies adopted by the State University Board in 1977 allow us a grace period of stability for the first half of the decade, a period when we need not be preoccupied with the annual consequences of enrollment developments. If we use that grace period wisely, we will enter the second half of the decade fully

prepared to adjust our staffing and resources in accordance with well developed plans which maintain the quality and scope of our programs and minimize the human consequences of those changes which are necessary.

- The enrollment decreases anticipated will in fact reduce the staffing and other resources required by some programs. If we plan wisely, those decreases will represent true incremental costs which can indeed be removed from programs with declining enrollments without damaging the scope and depth of those programs. Such resources can then--with legislative concurrence--be made available to strengthen and to enrich developing and currently understaffed programs.
- The absence of pressure to construct general purpose facilities to accommodate increasing enrollment will allow us to devote our attention and resources to rehabilitating and remodeling existing buildings to meet the needs of our academic programs. In fact, as the need for current general purpose space declines, we can move to meet long-deferred requirements for specialized instructional and support space through conversion of surplus general purpose facilities.
- The absence of enrollment-generated pressure for general operating requirements will allow us to concentrate on eradicating current equipment deficiencies, securing an on-going basis for orderly and timely replacement of current equipment as its useful life span ends, and acquiring the equipment associated with new or developing programs.
- The decline in enrollment-generated pressure will also allow us to strengthen basic support services in ways not possible when our principle preoccupation necessarily was keeping up with ever-increasing demands for the volume of such services.

Thus it is my judgment that the 1980's will in fact be a "decade of opportunity" to make significant improvements in the quality of education and scope of service in the State University System. To provide a firm basis for seizing this opportunity has been an underlying objective of our management effort during the three and one-half years of this administration.

It is an ambitious agenda. It is an agenda that will:

- require the commitment and cooperation of governors, legislatures, the Board, my office, the presidents and their administrators, the faculty, staff support personnel, and the students;
- demand that the agendas of narrow self-interest be set aside for the common good of the universities and the students and citizens whom they serve;
- test the seriousness, the perseverance, and the physical energy of those who are charged with or who would aspire to leadership roles in our universities.

If all of that sounds like a challenge, it is. In the weeks between now and the May meeting of the State University Board I invite from all components of the State University System thoughtful reflection, criticism, discussion, and reaction concerning the objectives discussed in this paper. In May, the State University Board--through adoption of its policy guidelines for the 1981-83 biennial budget request--will determine the direction of the System for the 1980's.