

RESPONSE TO EVALUATORS' REPORT

"A Visit to Indiana State University
Terre Haute, Indiana
April 14, 15, 16, 1975"

Presented to the
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education
of the
North Central Association of Schools and Colleges

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INTRODUCTION

The report of the visit of the Evaluation Team of the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges is respectfully acknowledged. I am pleased on behalf of the faculty and staff of Indiana State University to have the opportunity to respond to the Report.

Recognizing that a visit of only three days on the campus of the University necessarily limits the depth of study and appraisal by the Evaluation Team, I believe the evaluators were able to undertake its review with considerable insight and perception.

Straightway, I think it is fair to say that many of the strengths and shortcomings cited by the Evaluation Team are those that have been identified by the faculty, administration, and staff. The report of the Evaluation Team provides an opportunity for the campus community to focus attention on the areas of concern and encouragement to order priorities in terms of renewed emphases on strengths and corrective measures. The Report thus provides an appropriate format within which the University can concentrate efforts toward institutional improvement.

RESPONSE

Although many elements in the Report are disquieting, pointing up as it does institutional problems in need of resolution, it is the general view of the great majority of the faculty, staff, and administration that Indiana State University is a strong, dynamic institution with a long and rich history of distinguished contributions to higher education and a most promising future. The problems of the last decade were not unique to this University, and the manner in which most solutions were applied was in the main satisfactory.

Between 1960 and 1970, our major problems centered on burgeoning enrollments, program expansion, the recruitment of qualified faculty and staff, and the task of providing and maintaining adequate facilities. Legislative financial support was on the whole good, and the University moved ahead at an accelerated pace. It was a period of "catching up" and "keeping up." However, a period of rapid growth and development does not ordinarily permit time for patient reflection and deliberate long range planning. Careful modifications of the University's mission, role, and scope did not keep pace with changes and developments in its physical and programmatic character.

A reversal of the trends of the 1960's, particularly a dramatic decline in enrollment between 1970 and 1974, resulted in different problems for the University. Those changes in the fortune of the University also gave rise to certain tensions between and among the faculty, student body, and the administration. At the present time, however, we have reason to believe that we have entered a period of stabilization which should enable the University to concentrate on the renewal of institutional vitality and on the issues cited by the Evaluation Team.

One of our first steps toward institutional self awareness has been to make the Report available to the entire University community. Copies of the Report have been distributed to the Board of Trustees, the vice presidents, the academic deans, the Executive Committee of the Faculty Senate and to the officers of the Student Government Association. The report will also be available to the faculty through department, center, and program offices.

I have asked the faculty and administrative staff to comment on the Report, and I am confident that the Report and the responses will together provide a basis for campus wide discussion and constructive actions.

A number of important actions have been taken since the visit of the North Central Team, which relate directly to areas of concern cited in the Report.

- Dr. Effie Hunt, formerly acting dean, 1974-75, has been appointed to the deanship of the College of Arts and Sciences, effective July 1, 1975. Her appointment was unanimously recommended by the Search and Screening Committee, was supported by an overwhelming majority of the faculty in the College, and was very favorably received throughout the University.

Given the instability of the central leadership in the College in recent years--five deans in the last five years--Dean Hunt's appointment is calculated to provide reason for confidence in the deanship, a basis for enlightened stewardship, and a renewed sense of purpose within the College.

- Dr. Shirley Martin, formerly dean of the School of Nursing, Florida State University, has been appointed to the deanship of the School of Nursing, effective August 1, 1975. We have reason to believe that with this appointment we can expect solutions to those problems identified by the Evaluators within the School.

Further, within the past few weeks we have conducted an active search for faculty members to fill existing vacancies, and we anticipate the appointment of eminently qualified faculty to those positions.

- Dr. Charles Hardaway, formerly Vice President for General Affairs, Indiana State University, has been appointed Acting Vice President for Academic Affairs for the 1975-76 year. He replaces Dr. Maurice Townsend, who has accepted the presidency of Georgia State University.

Dr. Hardaway earlier served as academic vice president, 1965-1968, and brings to the position a wealth of experience and institutional understanding, and his appointment carries the support of his faculty and administrative colleagues.

- A search and screen committee will be organized soon to initiate the process culminating in the selection of a Vice President for Academic Affairs, with the expectation of an appointment as early as July 1, 1976.

- An ad hoc committee charged with the responsibility of studying the tenure situation at Indiana State University has completed its work. The Committee report should provide a starting place in our deliberations on this critical issue. The report has been distributed to the members of the University Faculty Senate and the academic deans, for discussion and as the basis for subsequent policy.
- The Indiana Legislature has approved our request to convert an unused residence hall to a classroom and office building to accommodate the School of Education. This development will improve the residence hall financing situation and provide much needed consolidation for the School of Education (now situated in six different buildings). The relocation of the School of Education will provide more efficient space utilization by other academic units, when the Education move is completed.
- In recent months concerted efforts have been made to remove Indiana State University from the AAUP censure list. Committee A at the spring meeting of the Association in St. Louis, presented a proposal to this effect, and censure was removed in July, 1975.
- The president of Indiana State University has initiated a careful review of the administrative structure, the individual administrative positions, and the matter of titles and responsibilities. Concurrently, the Administrative Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate has prepared a working document relating to the "streamlining of the administration." We are confident that we can pool our best judgment in constructing an administrative organization which will reflect our principal functions and missions and produce an effective structure.
- The President has authorized the position of Advisement Coordinator in the College of Arts and Sciences, and appropriate announcements for application and nomination of candidates have been distributed. When this position is filled, improved academic advising in the College and, thus, throughout the University will be realized.

A number of references in the Report might convey misleading impressions. I am constrained to call attention to those references, not as criticism so much as an attempt to correct the record and to place the matters in a truer perspective.

The "General Observations" includes the implication that most cultural opportunities for the citizens of Terre Haute are found in Indianapolis. Indiana State University provides excellent cultural and intellectually enriching programs as ongoing institutional activities and in conjunction with many city organizations and agencies: the Community Theater, the Terre Haute Symphony, and the Swope Art Gallery, for example. The University offers extensive programs of musical activities, theater presentations, artist-lecture series, and the like, available to both students and the public.

The Report refers to a Library School at Indiana State University. The Department of Library Science is a component of the College of Arts and Sciences. Further, the suggestion is made that perhaps the Library

Science programs offered at Indiana University and at Ball State University are adequate to meet the needs of the state. Since the three units serve widely separated areas of the State, justification for the existence of all three can be made, even though the number of graduates is relatively small.

--The Master of Library Science degree program strengthens Indiana State University's undergraduate programs, which prepare librarians for positions in school and public libraries in Indiana. A large percentage of the cost of the program is related to the meeting of undergraduate student needs.

--A careful study of the type of students and curriculum of the three Masters of Library Science degree programs in Indiana shows that the curricula and students are different. The program at Indiana State University is based upon the University's historical background of service to school libraries.

--Placement of students completing the Master of Library Science program at Indiana State University has been substantially higher than in other library education programs in the United States. For each of the last four years placement of qualified graduates has been close to 100%. Many of our students have positions waiting for them. Our problem has been a lack of students to meet the request of employers.

--Finally, the University faculty of the Department of Library Science have been working towards developing a program that would be accredited by the American Library Association. Good progress towards this goal has been made.

The section on the College of Arts and Sciences invites special commentary. I am particularly concerned about the following statement: "Indeed it is doubtful whether without these two functions [Teacher training and general education] the college could mount a viable program in its own right." The observations which follow are addressed to that statement.

As the following table indicates, the College of Arts and Sciences has produced 65% of all course enrollments over the last five years, 1970-71 through 1974-75, thus reflecting a strong commitment to service and general education functions.

COURSE ENROLLMENTS AT ISU, 1970-1975

	Professional Schools		College of Arts and Sciences		Totals	Percentage of Total Course Enrollments in College of Arts and Sciences
	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>	<u>Fall</u>	<u>Spring</u>		
1970-71	24,290	25,202	51,019	46,199	146,710	67%
1971-72	24,134	24,405	46,930	41,691	137,160	65%
1972-73	23,610	22,604	42,816	39,167	128,197	64%
1973-74	20,264	19,856	37,782	33,601	111,503	64%
1974-75	<u>18,890</u>	<u>18,661</u>	<u>33,796</u>	<u>30,719</u>	<u>101,768</u>	<u>63%</u>
Total	110,890	110,728	212,343	191,377	625,338	65%

Our most recently available figures reveal that of all baccalaureate degrees awarded by the University over the last three years, 1972-73 through the spring of 1975, the College of Arts and Sciences accounted for 41% (2300), and of the number of degrees awarded by the College, 58% (1329) were non-teaching degrees.

The College of Arts and Sciences has lacked a sense of identity and unity in the past, in the main because of the turnover in the College's administrative leadership. The College was formed in 1962, and was headed by its first dean until 1971. During that period the College attempted with some success to sink roots into the history and traditions of the University. Since 1970, however, the College has had five deans, two of them in "acting" positions; and during those five years the College experienced a decline in total enrollment and necessary fall back in faculty numbers, both of which contributed to a serious erosion of faculty morale and to a lack of confidence in self-identity and purpose.

As noted earlier in this response, the very recent appointment of a new dean, stabilized enrollment, and visible signs of faculty reaffirmation of the appropriate rôle, scope and mission of the College--these recent developments are calculated to contribute solutions to well known and well defined problems and issues for the future. In this respect, the faculty and administrators of the College can count on the fullest support and cooperation of the president and central administration.

The Report comments on "the absence of ethos for scholarly activity" in the College of Arts and Sciences. The 1974-75 annual bibliography of faculty

publications reveals that the College accounted for 70% of the entries, and that list is incomplete. Off-prints, copies of books and monographs, and the over-subscription of faculty carrels in the Library indicate a tangible amount of scholarly ferment. On the whole, and though my own investigations have been made over a six week period, I have been favorably impressed by the range and number of faculty publications since 1970, many of them very distinguished and most of them eminently respectable.

CONCLUSION

The institutional strengths noted by the visiting team will serve as a starting point as we devote our attention to enhancing the academic character of the University. It is heartening to us that our visitors noted and acknowledge our many qualities. We are appreciative of the candor of the visiting team in identifying the problems that will require our continuing study. As noted early in this response, we have had a general awareness of some of our shortcomings, and the counsel and constructive criticism of our evaluators will help us develop a plan of action aimed at meeting those issues.

The recommendation of the Evaluating Team that continued accreditation at the doctoral degree level be extended for a five-year period has met our expectation, and we are gratified by this expression of confidence in our behalf. The major rationale behind the recommendation of the Evaluating Team is plausible and acceptable. We shall look forward to the next evaluation visit in the spring of 1980.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to respond to the Evaluators' Report. We are indebted to the visitors for their frankness and their candid evaluation. We are confident that the visitation and subsequent appraisal will result in the betterment of Indiana State University.