



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

JOHN W. MOORE

APRIL 1994

Dear Colleagues:

Last fall as we looked ahead to the coming year and considered our circumstances and how we could best respond to the challenges that would confront us, I proposed that we find opportunities that would unite us in our common effort to enhance the quality of academic life at the University.

As we proceeded through the fall and into the winter in search of opportunities for institutional improvement and solutions to problems, I think we discovered that the way to achieve success was to work cooperatively and interactively.

Working in this fashion has allowed us to pool our resources and talents. It also has enabled us to make more efficient and productive use of those talents by bringing a number of differing perspectives to bear on a problem and by permitting individuals to focus on those aspects of a project they do best.

Another positive outcome of this process has been getting to know each other a little better — both as people and as ISU faculty, students, and staff. This development has, in turn, led to an increased knowledge of the workings of the University and increased effectiveness.

Consequently, as we approach spring, the groundwork has been laid for a number of projects and initiatives, and we are looking forward to that point in time when they will begin to bear fruit.

Though these projects cover a wide range of subjects, they share a concern with enhancing educational quality, student recruitment, and retention at ISU. They also have in common the fact that they are the results of intracampus — and in some instances intercampus — collaborations.

I would like to highlight several of these projects and encourage your involvement and support.

Enrollment Planning

The academic marketplace is becoming increasingly competitive. In recent years, Indiana State has strengthened its competitive position in several ways and, as a result, has been successful in attracting an increased number of applicants with superior academic qualifications.

In order to maintain — and strengthen — the momentum we have achieved, the provost and I have appointed a 22-member enrollment planning team with representation from across the campus. This group is meeting on a regular basis throughout the spring semester and will continue to meet during the summer sessions.

This team has been given the responsibility for developing and implementing a formal methodology to analyze the influence of external and internal factors that affect University recruitment and retention; developing specific and comprehensive institutional strategies, goals, objectives, and tactics to reach optimum enrollments; and establishing benchmarks for success based on continuous self-evaluation.

We also have reallocated \$50,000 to support and enhance our recruiting efforts. These additional funds will enable the Admissions Office, the Graduate School, and other selected departments to target the recruiting of academically talented students, transfer students, graduate students, underrepresented students of color, and nontraditional students.

We are also looking to impact student recruiting through a review of the undergraduate scholarship program, the graduate student stipend, and the fee remission program.

Additionally, we have increased the value of the University's Academic Scholarships to \$1,500 beginning in the fall of this year. This change will affect only those freshmen who are awarded the scholarship for the 1994 fall semester. We have likewise enhanced the graduate student stipend budget.

Similarly, we are aggressively pursuing a long-range plan that would permit us to award a significant number of "full ride" (tuition, room and board, and books) academic scholarships. We will offer a

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small number of these President's Merit Scholarships to the very best of the students we are recruiting for next year's freshman class. It will be the first time in ISU's history that awards of this type will be made.

First-Year Student Experience

Because a college student's first year is such a critical time in determining whether that student succeeds in reaching his or her educational goals, the provost convened the First-Year Experience Task Force last fall to review and seek ways to strengthen the first-year experience at ISU.

Specifically, the committee has been charged with:

- Improving first-year advisement and registration procedures.
- Recommending strategies for identifying and responding to at-risk student groups.
- Recommending strategies to strengthen the connection between first-year students and the University.
- Identifying the knowledge, values, and skills that are essential for the success of first-year students and recommend a systematic and comprehensive way for the University to nurture their development.

In order to provide a solid information base on which to make future decisions, we are conducting a comprehensive evaluation of our advisement systems. This review includes focus group interviews with students and the use of other student survey instruments. In addition, the registrar has been asked by the provost to chair a small task force to develop a system whereby faculty advisers can directly enroll their advisees in classes by means of computers in their offices. We are also implementing a priority scheduling program for all first-year students to ensure that they have the best schedule possible.

Our goal in all of this is to ensure that our first-year students have the best experience possible in the classroom, with our advising and academic support services, and throughout their out-of-class experiences. This will go a long way in ensuring their success at Indiana State.

Student Retention

The creation of the Academic Services Center, under the leadership of Dr. Catherine A. Baker, will increase the prospects of our students' academic success by bringing all of the University's student academic support services together under one roof, so to speak. The center is located on the second floor of Gillum Hall.

Efforts in the center are focused on increasing the retention and success of our students, in general, and non-traditional and high-risk students, in particular, through peer tutoring, academic advisement and counseling, study skills classes, supplemental instruction programs. In addition, the center provides special academic support programs for student-athletes, open

preference majors, conditionally admitted students, differently abled and learning disabled students, non-traditional students, associate degree students, and others with special needs. The center also assists high school students in their academic preparation through the Upward Bound Program.

To further extend the services that the center is able to provide ISU's students, the provost has approved a plan to increase the center's personnel to provide support for all "at-risk" students not currently obtaining services. The center will play a crucial role in the implementation of our first-year student program.

Teaching and Learning Center

Effective teaching and high levels of learning are central to Indiana State's fulfillment of its academic mission.

Research has shown, however, that teaching and learning in higher education are complex, multidimensional, and interdependent functions. Consequently, the teaching and learning process, in order to be truly effective, must be designed and executed with a number of complex variables in mind, including the nature and preparation of the students, the intended purposes and outcomes, pedagogical philosophies and approaches, the interests and activities of faculty, and assessment and evaluation.

Because of the centrality of teaching and learning at Indiana State, we are committed to supporting these academic processes at the highest-possible level and seek to do all we can to facilitate teaching and learning and to enhance the effectiveness of students and faculty alike.

With this in mind, \$100,000 has been reallocated for the purpose of beginning a Teaching and Learning Center at ISU as a way of supporting these important functions.

Later this spring, the provost will receive a recommended implementation plan from a faculty steering committee for ISU's Teaching and Learning Center. This center, funding for which was provided through a budget reallocation, will, among other things, provide faculty development, diagnostic and referral programs, and services for the improvement of teaching, advisement, and learning.

Student Computing Complex

As computers become ever more pervasive in American life, our students' ability to succeed in their studies and their careers will come to depend more and more on their ability to operate and understand computers and to develop new applications for this technology.

In order to enhance its students' ability to succeed in the world of education and the world of work, ISU opened its new Student Computing Complex last year.

This facility quickly became one of the campus's most popular student hangouts, and, because of the 24-hour,

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seven-day-a-week availability of one of its labs, the 12,500-square-foot building always seems to have people working on a variety of class or individual projects. The facility is averaging over 10,000 uses per month.

In addition to the 24-hour lab, the facility contains two teaching labs. Around the perimeter of the building is a classroom which is available for lecturing, an area for demonstrating new equipment, and consulting offices. All of the computers in the center are connected to the campus network, giving users access to many resources. The use of the computers and some of the printers is free to ISU students.

The Legislature gave bonding authority of \$1.4 million for construction of the building, and the University invested additional money for equipment.

If you haven't been through the facility yet, I encourage you to do so.

Computing Assessment and Planning

Recently, responsibilities for computing and telecommunications were reorganized under the direction of Dr. Ronald Leach, who serves as associate vice president for Information Services and dean of the library. Provost Wells and Dr. Leach have restructured an advisory mechanism that will enable faculty, students, and staff to play appropriate roles in advising on the planning and implementation of state-of-the-art computing systems.

A strategic plan for information services also is under development. This plan, which is to be completed by the end of the semester, will be based on the strategic plans of the Schools and College and the vice presidential areas and information and recommendations generated by the advisory committee.

Two consultants — one from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and one from Princeton University — have visited campus and met with faculty, staff, and students in order to provide advice on scholarly computing, planning and assessment processes, organizational structure of computing services, and strategic directions. Their report will be submitted early next month.

We recently allocated \$1 million to the deans to be used primarily for meeting the computing needs of individual faculty and will soon allocate another \$1 million for the academic computing infrastructure needs of faculty and students.

The implementation of ISU's new integrated institutional software system — "Banner" — is proceeding on schedule. This product will provide for the information needs of areas such as student financial aid, finance, alumni-development, and human resources and will be available for use by faculty, students, and staff. We are working with Systems and Computing Technology Corporation, the company that markets Banner, to further develop the product for use in a client server mode. This will make it much easier for the user to extract the information he or she needs.

A number of training sessions for Banner have been held and will continue. The University's alumni and development operations will be the first to go on line with the system this summer.

Extramural Funding

During this time of constrained resources, it is essential that we strive to diversify our funding base from a variety of extramural sources, particularly faculty-sponsored grants and contracts.

Success in this area depends to a large degree on the maintenance of an environment that is conducive to extramurally supported academic activity. Faculty must be provided with appropriate conditions, resources, and recognition if their potential is to be realized.

As a result, the provost asked the dean of the Graduate School to appoint an ad hoc Task Force on Extramural Academic Support. The task force, which is made up of faculty and staff who are experienced in this area, will provide recommendations as to how the University might better foster extramurally funded projects.

The task force has made a number of "jump-start" recommendations that are designed to enhance extramural fund-raising activities at ISU. These recommendations are divided into four segments — short term, intermediate, long term, and service improvements.

Among the recommendations are:

- Providing funding for the development of new proposals to those faculty and staff who have been the most successful in terms of securing grants in the past.
- Providing funding that will stimulate collaboration and create a mentoring situation between the most successful grant seekers and other faculty and staff.
- Providing funding in support of the development of proposals that are interdisciplinary or international in nature.
- Providing support for faculty who will work on a part-time basis in the Office of Research in order to provide them with experience in typical research administration functions, the opportunity to work with funding agencies, and to create stronger working relationships between the Office of Research and the faculty.
- Providing additional computing and database resources for the Office of Research.

In the coming weeks, the task force also will submit a comprehensive plan on the subject of extramural funding.

Interinstitutional Cooperation

The Wabash Valley is blessed with several diverse and distinctive institutions of post-secondary education. Together, they represent an enormous intellectual resource. Consequently, these six institutions — ISU, Rose-Hulman, Ivy Tech, Purdue's Extension Service in Vigo County, Vincennes, and St. Mary-of-the-Woods — have been investigating ways in which collective action can enhance their stature and improve their quality.

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This desire has resulted in the formation of a formal consortium — the Wabash Valley Educational Alliance.

This consortium will enhance the educational opportunities available to the area's residents through cooperative efforts in matters such as curricular projects, (shared lectures, problem-solving teams, and greater use of each member's specialty areas by the other institutions) and faculty and staff development (seminars, assessment, new faculty orientation, and teaching the adult learner). Inter-institutional cooperation also will be promoted in the areas of research and public service.

In addition, the consortium will seek to form additional partnerships with other organizations and constituencies. This will serve to multiply the consortium's impact even further. This partnership also will give higher education a unified voice in the Wabash Valley and beyond.

In short, this consortium will strive to do collectively what the member institutions cannot do — or do as well — individually.

The proposal for the consortium was developed by Connie Bauer of St. Mary-of-the-Woods, Byron Bond of Vincennes University, Buck Brown of Rose-Hulman, Scott Knapp of Ivy Tech, Max Miller of Purdue Extension, and Mary Ann Carroll of ISU.

In addition, to the matters mentioned above, the University community has been involved in a number of other projects that will have a significant and beneficial impact on ISU's institutional quality.

- The provost is providing significant financial support for the Democracy and Diversity project on campus. This project, which seeks to promote and support multicultural international values, will provide a group of 15 faculty members with an opportunity to infuse cultural diversity throughout the curriculum at ISU as well as into their pedagogical philosophy and techniques. Applications have been accepted from the faculty for participation in this program. The names of those selected will be announced in the near future. Given American demographics and the fact that we now must compete in a global economy, the importance of this project cannot be overstated.

- We recently concluded a 10-day conference on "Building a New Academic Community: Strength Through Diversity." This conference, which was sponsored by the President's Commission on Ethnic Diversity, included lectures, workshops, and group discussions that dealt with various aspects of the subject of ethnic diversity. I would like to thank the members of the commission for all of their work in putting this conference together and all of those who attended the various sessions for their interest in and concern for this important subject.

- Funding is also being provided by the provost to enable more than a dozen minority scholars to visit campus and give presentations and visit individually

with faculty, staff, and students.

- The Summer School Program is under review and a committee has developed and is implementing a more aggressive marketing plan for this program.

- Recently, the University has been able to respond to pressing needs to enhance our academic facilities — particularly for the Library and the Science Building — through the generation of substantial extramural support.

Public Service Indiana has provided grants in support of a \$970,000 major upgrade of the lighting and heating and cooling system in Cunningham Memorial Library to make it more energy efficient. In all, PSI has provided ISU with nearly \$1.5 million for various energy-related projects on campus.

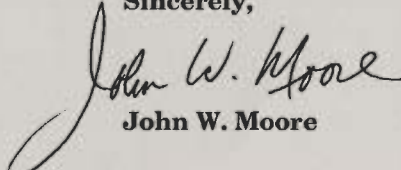
Grants totaling almost \$5 million have been awarded by various federal agencies for the renovation of the Science Building. Some of this money is already being used to provide improvements to the current structure. Plans are being formulated for Phase I of the renovation project, which may include a small addition to the building.

- Significant progress has been made on expanding our transfer articulation agreement with Ivy Tech. Faculty from both institutions have worked cooperatively to develop a program that is in the best interests of both institutions and their students. Agreements presently under discussion include automated manufacturing technology, medical technology, business administration, interior design, and nursing. These programs include ones with IVTC-Terre Haute as well as those in Bloomington, Lafayette, and Evansville. In addition, talks are continuing on the subject of appropriate transfer courses.

I am proud of the response that the University community has made to our challenges and opportunities and am pleased with the various projects and initiatives we have undertaken to enhance the overall educational quality of Indiana State. A great deal has been accomplished, and you are to be commended for the time and effort you have expended on these matters. A great deal remains to be done, however, and just as the responsibility for laying the groundwork for these — and other initiatives — was a shared one, so, too, will the responsibility for further implementing and sustaining these endeavors.

Judging by the creativity, initiative, and commitment that have been displayed to date, I have no doubt that together we will enjoy success in the future. Congratulations and let's keep it going.

Sincerely,



John W. Moore