Common Goals, Uncommon Means: the Report of the Commission on Pluralism to the Board of Trustees, University of Maine System

University of Maine System Board of Trustees
COMMON GOALS
UNCOMMON MEANS

THE REPORT
OF
THE COMMISSION ON PLURALISM
TO THE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

JANUARY 29, 1990
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Impelled by a renewed concern for the values of pluralism, the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System appointed a 15-member Commission on Pluralism in May of 1989. Dr. Stanley J. Evans, former chair of the Board, was asked to chair the Commission, which was charged with "assessing the present status of and recommending future steps toward insuring full opportunity for all people in the life of the University System and creating an institutional climate that supports and encourages respect and appreciation for people of different backgrounds."

The Commission met monthly from May through December of 1989. It held public hearings on each of the seven campuses during the fall semester of 1989. Written testimony was received in addition to the oral testimony at the hearings. In October, nine members of the Commission attended the Chancellor's Fourth Annual Systemwide Conference on Improving the Quality of Undergraduate Education, this year entitled "The Synergy of Pluralism," where 160 faculty, administrators, staff, and students from every campus of the System addressed the issues of pluralism. In addition, the Commission interviewed the presidents, chief academic officers, and chief student affairs officers of each of the seven institutions. The Commission members also read extensively on the topic of pluralism in higher education.

The Commission submits its report with a certain sense of urgency, for the issues addressed here are issues upon which excellence in higher education turns. In the year 2000, excellence will not be defined exactly as it has been in the past; it will be more complex, more demanding, and more difficult to achieve because an increasingly pluralistic world is a more complex, more
demanding, and more difficult world in which to succeed. If the people who care about education in Maine make a firm commitment now to the kind of education required by the future, we believe that within a reasonable, but foreseeable, amount of time, our seven campuses could comprise the best small, statewide, pluralistically-based system of higher education in the country, a national model for states similar to us in size and structure. We suggest a program of action directed toward that end.
THE PLURALISTIC VISION

The crumbling of the Berlin Wall in the final days of 1989 is both a symptom and a symbol of deep and rapid change now taking place in the world. It is neither desirable nor inevitable that a people be locked away from other people. The maps of Europe and Africa differ greatly from those of forty, twenty, or even five years ago. But political transformation is not the only type of encompassing change in our environment. The imminent European Economic Community promises a great range of far-reaching effects, and while the geographical profile of our nation remains the same, the profile of its people has altered dramatically and will continue to do so. The average citizen of the United States is no longer a white person with European ancestry. By the year 2000, most Americans will be descended from non-Europeans. The vast majority, 82%, of the 20 million new workers to join the work force between now and 2000 will be, in the words of demographer Harold Hodgkinson, "a combination of female, nonwhite and immigrant." There is no longer a single dominant culture in the United States; it is now and will become an increasingly pluralistic society.

What we propose is a deliberate and intensified expansion of pluralistic elements within the University of Maine System of higher education.

What will be the effects of such change on Maine's system of higher education? No one knows the exact answer to that question; however, some things seem clear. A citizen of Maine in the twenty-first century will have more responsibility as a citizen of the world than at present. Our economy, our social and our cultural life are continually tied into networks of interdependence among people of difference from other parts of our country and other parts of the world.

Two elements are required for a well-functioning pluralistic social order: 1) a set of common beliefs and aspirations, and 2) a set...
of social attitudes and practices which honor differences of race, ethnic origin, gender, age and religion. In 1990 well-functioning pluralistic communities are rare and are usually small. Prosperity in the twenty-first century will depend on an increase in the number and scope of such communities. What we propose is a deliberate and intensified expansion of pluralistic elements within the University of Maine System of higher education.

Meeting the challenges of pluralism will require revision of many aspects of our educational system, including institutional practices, academic programs, and physical facilities. But this should come as no surprise. We would not expect a course in science to be taught in 2010 as it was in 1950. The hallmark of education is innovation and the advance of knowledge and experience—in science, in art, and in the social order within which the life of learning takes place.
PLURALISM AT PRESENT
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF MAINE SYSTEM

"The Synergy of Pluralism," the Chancellor's Systemwide Conference, held in October at Sugarloaf Mountain, created sizable expectations among faculty and administrators for pursuing the goal of pluralism. Even those people already aware and committed to promoting pluralism gained a new sensitivity to the issues. The conference seemed to bring the concept of pluralism a little closer home to Maine. Many people have now come to believe that it is both possible and desirable to change, in educationally exciting ways, some fundamental features of the educational process which presently operates on the seven campuses. Not that we would cease any good we are now doing, but that we would shape the good we do to fit a future very different from our past—a future more global, more pluralistic, and more educationally demanding.

No campus of the University of Maine System exemplifies pluralism to a high degree. Nonetheless, many people are concerned about pluralism and many are actively engaged in promoting pluralistic values. As the Commission visited the seven campuses, its members were favorably impressed by the level of commitment of faculty, administration, students, and staff, and by the innovative programs already in place. The Commission was also struck by the distinctiveness of each campus. We value this individuality, and it is not our intention to recommend campus actions that would be inappropriate to any single campus mission.

For the purposes of this report, a very brief background of each campus is provided.
The University of Maine at Augusta

President Connick describes his institution as a hybrid, since it is primarily a community college but also delivers baccalaureate programs. The fastest growing campus in the System, Augusta has both regional and statewide responsibilities. The interactive television system for the Community College of Maine is housed there. All students are commuters and are primarily adult, although there are traditional-age students enrolled. Most students are part-time, and 70% are women. Many of the students are place-bound, and almost half of the students attend one of the three off-campus centers at Thomaston, Bath, or Lewiston.

There are few minority or international students and faculty. Of a full-time faculty of 66, two-thirds are men. The curriculum does not show particular attention to pluralism, although individual professors do emphasize other cultures and intercultural perspectives in their courses.

The interactive television network has the potential to connect Maine with other parts of the world as well as the United States. Planning is underway to link Maine and Canada over the ITV system. The potential exists to have courses team-taught by faculty at institutions in other countries. Possibilities for multicultural experiences are boundless.

The University of Maine at Farmington

President Orenduff reports progress at Farmington in regard to women on the faculty and in the administration. There are, however, few minorities on campus. Less than one percent of the student body are minority students. A new International Students Club is establishing a presence.

President Orenduff has plans to provide a multicultural experience for every student. The project is still in the planning stages, but the goal is to send every student to another country in the summer following the student’s first year at Farmington. Preparation and follow-up would be connected with the trip.
A new affirmative action committee has been established with the specific charge to hire more women and minorities. Also, the Vice President for Academic Affairs is creating a committee on diversity in the curriculum. Its members will review the courses presently offered to encourage multicultural perspectives in them.

The University of Maine at Fort Kent

Located in the St. John River Valley, Fort Kent has a unique mission to serve its Franco-American population. Of the student body, about 80% are Franco-Americans and between 80% and 90% are disadvantaged economically. Traditionally, the Franco-Americans of Maine have felt themselves the victims of prejudice and discrimination, but they have also been discovering a new pride in their rich culture. President Dumont remarks that "in many ways, the University of Maine at Fort Kent provides a living laboratory for language, historical, and social scientific (especially anthropological and sociological) study."

Fort Kent gives careful attention to the Franco-American people, but there are few other members of minority groups. Compared with national standards, women are quite well represented within the faculty and professional staff, but not in the upper administrative ranks. The relatively remote location of the campus is deemed an impediment to the recruitment of Black Americans and Hispanics and makes plans for the more aggressive recruitment of and service to the region's Native Americans more realistic and achievable.

The University of Maine at Machias

The Machias faculty evidence considerable sensitivity to the individual needs of the student body. Of the students, 50% are from Washington County, and many are first-generation college students, often non-traditional. Another 25% are from other parts of Maine, and the remaining 25% are from other states and countries. There are 20 international students.

Machias too is concerned to provide educational opportunities for
the Native Americans who live on the two near-by reservations. Courses are offered on the reservations. However, faculty report little success in retaining Native Americans who come to the campus. President Reynolds reports that for several years Machias has hoped to build a Center for Native American Culture.

Although there is concern to increase the number of women and minorities on the faculty and in the administration, there has not been much success. The faculty is predominantly male, and all but one are white. The curriculum shows little multiculturalism, although there are now some courses in women's issues. Plans are underway to have French taught regularly. At present there is no full-time regular faculty member teaching any foreign language.

The University of Maine

Two years ago President Lick appointed a Task Force on the Status of Women. The implementation of that report is currently under way. There are increasing numbers of women in senior ranks, on the tenured faculty and in the administration.

Attention is also being given to increasing the number of minorities both on the faculty and in the student body. There are now four black faculty members and two coaches. A minority recruiter, himself an Afro-American, has been hired. A black woman was recently hired as the assistant dean for multicultural programs. She is working with the associate dean of student services for Indian Programs and Minority Services, a position that has existed for many years.

In the recent past, blacks have been attracted to the University of Maine mostly by athletic scholarships. This year scholarships have also been established for minority students who excel in the arts and in other academic areas.

Although still lagging other institutions in numbers of international students, this year the University of Maine increased its international student population by nearly 100, bringing the total
to about 400.

The sense of the campus is that much progress has been made, but more must be done. A major report on the undergraduate curriculum calls for multicultural emphases in the curriculum, and opportunities exist for important curricular reform. The Women in the Curriculum Program, now nearly ten years old, provides a successful model for integrating new scholarship into the courses already being taught.

The University of Maine at Presque Isle

President Roach points to Presque Isle's geographical isolation and depressed economy as factors that inhibit developing a pluralistic community on campus. He too mentions the low self-esteem of the Franco-Americans and the poor retention rate for Native Americans. Out of 1512 students, there are nine Native Americans, 27 blacks, 10 Hispanics, and two Orientals. Many of the Presque Isle students are non-traditional.

Women are found mostly in the lower levels of the faculty; they are concentrated in the middle management (director) level of the administration, but are not found at the senior (vice president) level. Again, recruiting faculty to Presque Isle is difficult.

The campus serves as a cultural center for Aroostook County. The University also provides educational opportunities for the service people of nearby Loring Air Force Base. Loring itself has a population of great diversity.

The University of Southern Maine

Considerable progress has been made recently to increase the diversity of the faculty and student body of the University of Southern Maine. However, women are the only minority who are present in significant numbers. The number of international students has increased from 14 to 80 this year. Special attention is given to the needs of non-traditional students, in particular through a large number of courses (both credit and non-credit).
offered evenings, weekends, and summer and through an extensive day-care program.

The Core Curriculum contains several courses that have multicultural perspectives, and more are being developed. A new committee is studying the internationalization of the curriculum.

Faculty and administrators show concern and commitment for pluralistic values. President Plante states, "In a knowledge-intensive, interdependent world, a contemporary university will structure a curriculum whose end is a thorough understanding of the sources of its own Western values and culture and of some of the antecedents of foreign values and cultures. For as George Steiner in remembering the University of Chicago under Robert Hutchins said, 'Nothing can be truly grasped out of its genetic context.'"
RECOMMENDATIONS

Genuinely pluralistic education is a complex and multi-faceted process. To provide the kind of development envisioned here, we must do more than hire minority faculty and revise courses. Pluralism must be woven into the basic fabric of education in many different ways and in many different places. Because each campus is unique and will be able to incorporate pluralistic values in different ways, the Commission’s recommendations are expressed as goals to which each campus should aspire; the campus itself is expected to establish measurable objectives that will enable it to progress toward these goals.

1. The mission of the University of Maine System should be understood to include specifically the values of pluralism. In light of this System mission, each campus should examine its own mission statement, its curriculum, and its leadership in order to determine ways in which pluralistic values can be enhanced.

   • Curriculum revision should be encouraged to ensure that the courses of study reflect minority perspectives.

   • Students, faculty, staff, and administrators should be encouraged to learn about the importance of valuing differences in the global society of today’s world.

2. The numbers of ethnic and racial minorities in the faculty, staff, administration, and student body should be increased at each institution. Also, the numbers of women should be increased in areas where they are under-represented.

   • Special recruiting strategies should be used to attract minorities
to the student body and support services should be provided to retain and graduate them.

• Strategies such as opportunity hires and the hiring of University of Maine System graduates should be used to increase the numbers of minority and women faculty. Support should be given to untenured faculty to prepare them for application for tenure.

• Informal professional networks should be consulted when openings occur at any level of the University System staff.

3. Special attention should be given to Maine's historical minorities—the Franco-Americans and the Native Americans.

• Where appropriate, centers for the studies of culture and language should be established.

• Native American languages should be taught on campus, and recognition should be given to those who are bilingual in English and a Native American language.

• Numbers of Franco-Americans and Native Americans should be increased in the faculty, staff, administration, and student body.

4. Linkages, collaborations, and exchanges should be fostered between and among the seven campuses, as well as with other institutions at home and abroad, to make optimal use of opportunities to increase pluralism on the campuses.

5. Every student should have an educational experience outside his or her own culture, either abroad or in the United States.

6. The curricula of the campuses should be internationalized.

• There should be foreign language instruction on each campus.

• International education should be a central part of the general education requirements of the institutions.

• Opportunities for student exchanges to foreign countries should be expanded.
• The numbers of international students on the campuses should be increased.

7. In conjunction with an intellectually challenging campus environment, there should be an open and hospitable climate on each campus.

• The classroom attitudes of both faculty and students should indicate respect for differences and valuing of common beliefs.

• Campuses should provide academic and social support for diverse populations of students, faculty, and staff.
MOVING TOWARD PLURALISM

The Commission recognizes that the Board of Trustees is responsible for setting policy for the University of Maine System. And, as previously noted, it is aware that each President must decide the best way to implement that policy for the greatest good of the individual campus. However, the members of the Commission have spent considerable time and energy in discussing the means that the University System might use to set about the challenging task of moving the campuses toward pluralism. Therefore, we further recommend that the Board of Trustees consider the following organizational initiatives:

1. In recognition of the fact that pluralistic values must be inherent in all parts of the University System, pluralism should be built into the central planning effort of the System. The planning process currently in place lends itself well to such a purpose. It is a process which includes continual review and readjustment of goals and objectives along with planning for the future. Through utilization of this process, progress toward pluralism could be monitored in a consistent fashion, and pluralistic developments could be coordinated with financial and capital planning.

2. Significant expansion of pluralistic elements in our educational programs will include attention to the following areas, among others: student, faculty and administrative recruitment; student life and academic support programs; curricular development and innovation; cooperative arrangements with other institutions in this country and abroad. The Commission believes that major resources in time and money are necessary to continue a number of excellent programs already in operation in these areas and to initiate others. The Commission therefore recommends that the Board of Trustees dedicate one million dollars to support an initial two-year program of detailed planning and work toward pluralism. It is believed that a considerable portion of that amount can be raised from sources external to the System. Beyond that we recommend that the Board consider this one million dollars as down-payment on a more extensive, longer-range effort to achieve the goal referred to in our Foreword--creation of a national model
for smaller states in pluralistically-based higher education.

3. At the appropriate time to enhance the planning process, the Chancellor should hold a systemwide conference or provide another similar vehicle in order to monitor progress toward pluralism and to reaffirm efforts to promote pluralistic values in the System. If the systemwide conference in 1990 or 1991 were to become "Pluralism II," it would serve these purposes.

4. The Commission suggests that the Board of Trustees establish a committee at the level of the Board of Trustees for the purpose of assessing the progress that the campuses are making toward their goals and objectives for pluralism. The committee should meet periodically and should report to the Board on its findings.

The Commission expects that a concerted systemwide effort to develop pluralistic institutions will require further commitment of resources that will need to come from both internal and external sources. We indicate here only the resources for beginning the project.

We must be proactive, deliberate, persistent, and bold.

The Commission feels strongly that the issue of resources must be addressed directly. At this time in Maine's history of higher education we cannot afford piecemeal, reactive development. We must be proactive, deliberate, persistent, and bold. If additional resources specifically for this project are not forthcoming, the goals we recommend cannot be met; we are convinced of that.

An official at the University of Maine at Fort Kent remarked, "We have been doing a good job of bringing opportunities for higher education to the St. John Valley, but we have not done a good job of bringing the world to the Valley." We must now increase our efforts to bring other parts of this country and the world to all parts of Maine's system of higher education. How can we afford to do anything less?
AFTERWORD

The members of the Commission on Pluralism have worked intensively for eight months. Participation in the Commission has been demanding but exhilarating. We have had rare opportunities to see into the operations of the campuses. We have been excited by the many innovative programs of the institutions. Especially gratifying was the confirmation that the leadership of the System and its institutions are personally committed to the goal of pluralism. We have taken particular delight in the obvious dedication and enthusiasm of faculty and staff and the loyalty of the students. We have seen in the University of Maine System the potential to provide for the citizens of Maine that pluralistic education that will enable them to live and work efficiently and humanely in the twenty-first century.

The Commission is well aware that its eight-month study has only begun to examine pluralism in the University of Maine System. A great deal of information remains to be collected. The System needs to develop ways to analyze its own community. It needs to be able to assess diversity within itself and in the State. For example, in 1988, the Hispanic population of the state was roughly the same size as the Native American population. Such statistics are not generally known.

The Commission has no illusions that the System has a quick and easy task ahead of it. The Commission realizes that its work in comparison has been simple and time-limited. That is not the case for the campuses. As we visited the universities and talked to faculty and students, we were struck time and time again that valuing differences is a task for us all. We must all work together.
As previously stated, the Commission sees new resources as essential to the successful development of pluralistic attitudes and behaviors on the campuses. Nonetheless, the work must be done. Commitment to the additional resources recommended in this report might at first seem untimely, or out of place. But carrying out our charge has required concentration on issues which are not confined to this or any other particular biennium. The problems addressed here will be with us for a long while, through many good times and bad. We believe that the quality of education in the System is inextricably tied to progress toward the goals we have recommended, and that commitment to these goals is more than just another worthy objective; it is an educational imperative of our time. Recognition of this imperative and tangible action in response to it should draw us together in an otherwise difficult season, and provide us with something on which we can one day look back and be proud. The strength and well-being of our country depend on an educated citizenry. Maine and its University System are moving to meet the challenge of pluralism. In that spirit, the members of the Commission stand ready collectively and individually to help with the task, including with the raising of funds to support it.
Background

The University of Maine System, from its origins in the land grant act and in the normal school, has long had a commitment to access and opportunity. Each generation has broadened that ideal of diversity and inclusiveness.

Recently, the University of Maine System affirmed the need to raise aspirations of young people from all over Maine, whatever their circumstances, to pursue higher education. The University of Maine System has also opened its institutions to older students who may not have considered higher education when of traditional college age.

The United States is a nation increasingly made up of diverse cultures and races in a world mainly non-white and non-Western. Our future is increasingly interdependent with those different from ourselves within and outside of Maine.

The tradition of the University as a democratic institution calls today for a commitment to pluralism, reflecting not only diversity of gender, race, ethnicity, economic status, and background, but also a sense of affirmation and appreciation of differences among people. Those who may come from rural poverty, or from an inner city, or from South America, or from Asian heritage; those who may be female, or be Black, or be of French descent, or be Native American; all of these peoples and more diversify our institutions and offer experiences, cultural perspectives, and contributions to the common welfare that enrich everyone. If a university today is not pluralistic then its educational program will be weak and our future as a state limited.

Charge

The University of Maine System is committed to the development of comprehensive programs that meet two goals: 1) to recruit, retain, and graduate a population diverse culturally, ethnically, economically, and racially; and 2) to create a campus environment supportive of pluralism.
The Commission on Pluralism is charged with helping to make the University of Maine System a more pluralistic institution appropriate to Maine and our times. In doing so, the University of Maine System recognizes especially its commitment to disadvantaged students of Maine.

The Commission has a two-fold charge: 1) to assess the University System’s progress toward meeting the challenge of pluralism; and 2) to make recommendations to help it attain the goal of pluralism.

The University of Maine System will provide staff and resources to carry out this charge. The Board of Trustees expects the Commission to meet on a monthly basis in preparation for a final report to the Board in December.

May 10, 1989
COMMISSION ON PLURALISM

Members

STANLEY J. EVANS, M.D. - Chair
Medical Director at Mercy Hospital Alcohol Institute in Portland; Trustee of College of the Atlantic; chair of Board of Directors of the Association of Governing Boards; past Medical Director of the Alcohol Institute at Eastern Maine Medical Center. Served as chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Human Rights in 1968. Past member and chair of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System.

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Graduate of Radcliffe and University of Maine School of Law; chair of Maine Health Care Finance Commission; Trustee of Bowdoin College; Trustee of the Portland School of Art; Trustee of the Portland Museum of Art; past chair of the Portland School Committee; delegate from Maine to the New England Board of Higher Education for 10 years.

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Commissioner of Educational and Cultural Services; member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System; taught science in the Portland public schools; served as Assistant Superintendent and Superintendent of the Freeport Public Schools.

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Associate Dean of the Colleges, Hobart and William Smith Colleges, Geneva, New York; former Associate Dean of Students and Director of Intercultural Affairs at Colby College; previously served in division of student affairs at Notre Dame.

WESTON BONNEY
Chair of the Board and Chief Executive Officer of Peoples Heritage Savings Bank; served in top management of banks in New England area; Trustee of Bates College; Trustee of Portland Symphony Orchestra; Member of Board of Directors of United Way, Board of Maine Development Foundation, and Chamber of Commerce of Greater Portland Area; co-chair of Maine People for the University (1988).
JAMES R. CARON
Member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System; Vice President of Thibodeau Insurance Company, Inc. in Fort Kent; past Commissioner with the Maine Human Rights Commission.

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Student member of the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System; political science major at the University of Maine at Farmington; Blaine House Scholar and Alumni Scholar.

THE MOST REVEREND JOSEPH J. GERRY, O.S.B.
Bishop of the Diocese of Portland, Maine; author of Ever Present Lord; graduate, teacher, administrator, and Chancellor of St. Anselm College; past member of the National Advisory Council on Equality of Educational Opportunity.

JOHN JAY ISELIN
President of Cooper Union; B.A. from Harvard, bachelor's and master's degrees in law from Cambridge, England, Ph.D. from Harvard; previously president of WNET, New York's public broadcasting station, and of the Educational Broadcasting Corporation; member of the Council on Foreign Relations and a trustee of Columbia University's Seminars on Media and Society, the National Geographic Society, the American Friends of Cambridge University and the WICAT Education Institute; on advisory board of the Yale School of Management and the advisory committee for New York City's Department of Cultural Affairs.

ARNOLD MITCHEM
Executive Director of the National Council of Educational Opportunity Associations; previously Director of Educational Opportunity Program at Marquette University, also on history faculty at Marquette; degrees in history and Ph.D. in Foundations of Education; active in TRIO associations.

WAYNE NEWELL
Assistant Principal of the Indian Township Elementary School; creator of bilingual programs in Maine Indian educational system; former director of Indian Health Service Facility of the Indian
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President of the University of Southern Maine; previously Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Towson State University; author of The Art of Decision Making and numerous other articles; Ph.D. from Boston University.

BETH REUTHE
Manufacturer for 20 years; joined Digital Equipment Company in 1984, became Plant Manager in Augusta in 1986, managing 800 people; degrees in pre-med and business administration.

JOSEPH SEWALL
Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Maine Maritime Academy; semi-retired as President of the James W. Sewall Company, position held since 1946; past president of the Maine Senate.

JEFFERSON WHITE
Professor and past chair of philosophy at the University of Maine; faculty representative to the Board of Trustees of the University of Maine System; B.A. in Greek, Latin and English from Baylor, M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy and M.S. in Law from Yale; taught Greek at University of Texas for one year; taught at Clark University for 12 years, dean for three years.

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