

SPECTRUM

News from the Aug. 2-3 Board of Curators meeting, UM-Kansas City

Curators voted to ask the state for \$370.1 million to operate the University System in 1991-92. The state appropriations increase would cover the costs of continuing the University at current levels (\$19.1 million, including a 6.5 percent increase in compensation), repairing the budget base (\$26.3 million, including another 5 percent compensation increase) and making program improvements (\$24.7 million). The University's appropriation from the state for 1990-91 increased only \$13 million. The board also approved a \$271 million request for capital appropriations to restore, build and equip buildings in 1991-92.

Employees and retirees will have new life insurance options beginning Jan. 1. The board authorized a group permanent life insurance plan through Metropolitan Life Insurance Co. Permanent life insurance enables employees to accumulate a cash value and to continue the policy after leaving the University. The University will continue to offer a group term life insurance plan, and the board authorized the University to contract with Travelers Insurance Co. for this plan. General American now provides this insurance. Details will be provided through benefits mailings and other internal communications.

This fall's review of academic programs should include external consultants, employers that benefit from the programs and graduates of the programs, Curators Sam Cook and Ed Turner said. "There is a natural tendency in any organization to preserve what is," Cook said. President Magrath said, "Internally we do make hard-headed assessments, but we'll make better judgments if we are influenced by what the people out there are telling us they want."

Affirmative action and minority participation are the most important issues facing the long-range planning task force, which will hold its first meeting later this month, President Magrath told curators. He outlined seven steps for making the University "truly a culturally diverse institution" and "changing the attitudes toward race that limit our affirmative action efforts and reduce the attractiveness of our campuses to minority members."

Paul Matteucci, student representative to the board, presented the curators' seminar on non-traditional students -- defined as undergraduates age 25 or older and younger undergraduates who attend part-time or who took time off after high school or for more than one year during college. Current trends predict that such students will be the new majority by the end of the 20th century. Of the 32,000 non-traditional students in Missouri public higher education, 14,000 are UM System students. UMSL, where Matteucci is a student, has 800 more non-traditional students than the other three campuses combined. The University should begin planning now to provide programs and financial support to meet the needs of higher education's new majority of non-traditional students, especially in the metropolitan areas, Matteucci told the board.

Educational fees for most courses will rise 5.8 percent in 1991-92. The increase will add about \$9 million to the University's budget. Fees for freshman and sophomore level courses will increase \$3.50 per credit hour; upper level course fees will increase \$3.80 per credit hour. Fees for some professional programs and engineering and journalism courses will increase more than 5.8 percent.

Next meeting: Sept. 6-7, UM-Columbia