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SPECTRUM

United front needed to garner more resources

Everyone from professors in the classroom to veteran members of the UM System Board of Curators agrees the University is severely underfunded.

Beginning with that consensus, discussions at last week's meetings of the Board of Curators centered on how to acquire adequate state funding.

Ways to solve the funding problem became the thread woven through board discussions on such topics as reallocation, public credibility and the board's five-year plan for repairing the funding base of the University System.

President opens discussion

President C. Peter Magrath told the board several areas need improvement if the University System is to realize its state funding goals. Among those areas is communication -- at the campus level, among campuses and between the campuses and the system administration.

"More effective communication is needed to inform the University community about procedures used in budgeting and the steps being taken to improve compensation, our libraries, learning facilities and academic computing resources," Magrath said.

As an example, University of Missouri-Columbia Chancellor Haskell Monroe outlined steps being taken on that campus to improve communication. Besides meeting with the faculties of individual colleges each semester, Monroe has initiated administrative forums to share information with faculty and staff. Monroe also plans to form a chancellor's council composed of

representatives of every constituency on campus to discuss campus concerns.

Magrath challenged each chancellor to create procedures to guarantee faculty and staff participation in budget planning. He will review recommendations from each campus with the Intercampus Faculty Council and the general officers before action by the curators.

The president also plans to visit each campus to discuss with faculty

and staff the University System's long-range goals and ways to meet funding needs for the next fiscal year. The curators' state appropriations request for 1989-90 calls for a \$52 million increase in state funding.

"It's going to be a hard sell," Magrath said, "but by making the statement that we will work hard, we raise the issue of the future of the state, higher education in general and this University in particular. I sense a true commitment on

The funding paradox -- a curator's view

Peter Raven, chairman of the board's Academic Affairs Committee, noted the paradox that Missouri is 14th in the United States in per capita income but its citizens cannot seem to convince the state to provide the resources needed for higher education. The time has come, he said, for everyone involved with the University System to get behind the five-year plan to repair the funding base.

"In a state where every single political and civic leader will acknowledge the primacy and importance of the central role of higher education in infusing the future economic life of the state with new dimensions beyond those we have now invigorating the state's economy, we are not able to muster the civic will to make our wishes reality," Raven said.

"We have all worked long and hard in maintaining improvement of salaries as the No. 1 priority, but because of the general underfunding of education in the state, these objectives remain to a large extent elusive."

Raven added that while he appreciated the Coordinating Board for Higher Education's role in recognizing the urgent need for major increases in faculty salaries, he wanted to be on record as recognizing the fact that the University System depends heavily on an excellent and properly paid support staff.

"The staff is badly underpaid," Raven said. "The staff represent a large majority of the workers of this University. We depend on them. We have to find ways to reward them adequately for their efforts, for we must maintain an outstanding staff in order to achieve the objectives the state expects of the University."

Raven commended President C. Peter Magrath for meeting with state civic and corporate leaders and Missourians for Higher Education to weld the University System together in a united effort for increased support.

"We need to go forward as one coordinated body with a common objective," Raven said. "If we all really believe in it, we can afford to pay for it."

everyone's part to move ahead aggressively."

The board has endorsed Magrath's five-year plan to repair the funding base by asking the state to appropriate an additional \$147 million annually to the University System.

The hope is to bring faculty and staff salaries to competitive levels and improve academic computing and library facilities. The curators are expected to formally adopt the plan as board policy next month; curators endorsed the plan informally this past summer.

Reallocation

The issue of improved funding was raised again in a discussion of reallocation.

Terry Ward, a member of the Agenda for Action committee appointed by Magrath to review reallocation efforts, told the board the University System should continue its current plan of shifting about 1 percent annually from lower to higher priority programs. This will not, however, meet compensation goals or help the University System to achieve eminence.

"The University's reallocation record goes well beyond what other major universities in the U.S. have done," Ward said.

The University System has real-

located \$24.2 million in a three-year period, exceeding long-range plan projections by \$2.2 million.

Ward also told curators they may need to look beyond individual campuses and consider intercampus reallocation, a topic the curators will discuss at an upcoming meeting.

Perception of the University

Curator John Lichtenegger voiced a concern about perceptions held by some legislators and citizens that the University System has too many administrators and that cuts in administration would free dollars for faculty and staff salaries. He recommended an independent review to dispel the perception and convince constituent groups the University System is a well-managed organization.

"I think Peter Magrath has put together an excellent team in system administration," Lichtenegger said. "I know dramatic reallocation has occurred. We have a lean and mean organization, if you will. An audit would prove this and enhance our image when seeking financial support."

Committee oversees review

Board President Jeanne Epple appointed Lichtenegger chairman of

a committee to engage the services of a consultant to conduct the review. Other curators on the committee are Sam Cook, Eva Louise Frazer, Fred Kummer and Peter Raven.

According to Epple, the consultant will be charged with the following:

- Review management and operation of the Board of Curators;
- Review management at the system administration level in much the same way an auditor would monitor an organization for efficiency; and
- Review administration of the Columbia campus, the largest, most complex and diverse of the four campuses.

Epple said it would be important that the consultant understand the complications of a higher education management framework. She also urged the committee to include in the review an assessment of the Knight Report's recommendations and resulting organizational changes. The 1986 Knight Report was the product of a committee that included outside consultants charged with studying the organizational structure of the University System.

Magrath said he fully supports the committee's work and welcomes the assistance of a consultant.