

STANDARD II **Planning and Evaluation**

Planning and Evaluation Task Force:

Coordinator: **Kent Chamberlain, Associate Professor**
Electrical and Computer Engineering

Doug Beisecker, Graduate Student
Physics

Mary Clark, Professor,
English

Robin Gorsky, Associate Professor
Health Management

Elaine Plante, Business Manager
Operations

Paul Verrette, Associate Professor
Music

Standard Two

PLANNING AND EVALUATION

The University of New Hampshire has engaged in a series of formal planning efforts in the decade since its last accreditation visit. University-wide planning activities have been intricately tied to reappraisals of the institution's mission, progress, and circumstances. These efforts have become progressively more effective over the last ten years as they have become more broadly based, more realistic about the availability of resources, and more clearly focused on the direction the University needs to take to respond to regional and national change.

Consistent with the needs of a complex institution, evaluation at the University of New Hampshire takes place at all levels and in a variety of contexts. University policy requires that each academic program within the University complete an evaluation and planning report at six-year intervals. Departments and schools offering professional programs are involved in professional accreditations that require the regular assessment of the curriculum, effectiveness of instruction, student achievement, and faculty qualifications, as well as follow-up studies of graduates. In addition to these external provisions for evaluation, the University's divisions and offices periodically review and assess their progress, policies, and procedures to guide decision making.

University, college, school, and department committees, as well as Academic Senate committees, and special commissions have also conducted focused assessments of a wide range of the University's activities over the course of the last ten years. These have included, among other areas, assessments of the curriculum, class size, teaching, advising, campus climate, the library, the student conduct system, the status of women, admissions, enrollments, minority recruitment and retention, affirmative action, and instructional and physical facilities. Most recently, special planning commissions on research, international programs, graduate education, and undergraduate advising have engaged in evaluations and presented their reports for campus review at open forums. (The reports and recommendations of these groups cannot be fully described here, but will be available to the NEASC team during their visit.)

The particular areas of focus for planning and evaluation, as well as the ways planning has been coordinated with evaluation within the University, have been determined in large part by economic and demographic changes, by the level of budgeted resources, and by national and regional developments in standards for higher education. Yet planning at the University of New Hampshire has not merely been reactive. While it may be easy to overlook during this most recent period of financial constraint, University planning has also involved projecting and advocating a vision for higher education in the future. The quality of administrative leadership, the commitments and expertise of the faculty, and the changing aspirations of students have all contributed to the development of this vision and have helped shape the formulation of long-range as well as short-range plans and projections.

DESCRIPTION

During the Presidency of Gordon A. Haaland (1984 - 1990), there was an acknowledgment that the University's previous planning activities had concentrated more on maintaining institutional continuity than framing new directions for the future. The planning and evaluation that took place during the Haaland administration was directed at moving the University closer to a modern comprehensive research institution while retaining the quality of undergraduate education. Significant emphasis was placed on enhancing graduate education, encouraging and supporting faculty research, and "tailoring our land-grant mission to extend outward from excellence in instruction and research."

Many of the recommendations of the planning groups of this period were implemented. New programs, centers, and institutes in the humanities, public policy, developmental disabilities, international perspectives, biological sciences, marine science and ocean engineering, and for the study of earth, oceans and space were created. These measures did, in fact, enhance graduate education, increase support for faculty research, and increase opportunities for interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching. Faculty with superior potential in scholarship as well as teaching were recruited and graduate student enrollment began to grow (from 909 in 1982,

to 1095 in 1987, to 1553 in 1992). A new General Education program, undergraduate Honors program, Advising Center, increased opportunities for study abroad, and the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program expanded and strengthened undergraduate education.

The planning process from 1986 through 1988 had several limitations however. While it would have been difficult to predict the decreases in the percentage of its funds the state of New Hampshire appropriated to higher education, or foresee that the University would be subject to a series of recessions in the late 1980s, there was nevertheless an overly confident view of the future of the regional economy and the University's resources. As a result, not enough attention was paid to identifying alternative resources that would be necessary to sustain new initiatives and programs. A further limitation had to do with the narrow focus of the planning process itself. The planning documents that emerged during this time, described in the University's *Fifth Year Report* to the Commission, followed an organized series of campus-wide discussions and forums in response to widely distributed discussion papers. Yet, in looking back now, it is clear that these documents formalized decisions without coordination of a broadly based consensus. Feeling disenfranchised by this process, and beginning to feel the strains of restricted resources, by the late 1980s the faculty began to advocate for a greater role in University level decision making.

Recognizing the limitations just described, the Academic Senate took steps to design a structure that would provide fuller access to decision making and planning. An Academic Senate Budget and Planning Committee, composed of eight faculty, two undergraduate student senators, one graduate student, one professional staff member and one operating staff member, which would report directly to the President, was appointed in the fall of 1988. The charge of the Budget and Planning Committee is described in the *Academic Senate Bylaws*.

This committee shall work with the administration from the very beginning of the budget-making process to develop budgetary priorities and long-range plans for the University and to provide Senate input in developing the University of New Hampshire budget proposal. It shall be the duty of this committee to ensure that the Senate be appropriately involved with significant changes throughout the University, including the distribution of financial resources and long-range physical plant planning.

When President Nitzschke began his administration of the University in August of 1990, a precedent had been set for the involvement of all campus constituencies in University level evaluation and planning. This precedent was observed as the President coordinated efforts in three essential and interrelated areas: academic, budgetary, and physical facilities. Intensive assessment and broadly based deliberations in each area have resulted in the following documents which outline the University's short and long range plans.

The Academic Plan

Acknowledging that the educational mission is central to university planning as a whole, *The Academic Plan* was intended as a first step in the overall coordination of university decision making. Framed as an extension and elaboration of previous planning efforts, it is introduced with the provision that, "to have a lasting effect, [*The Academic Plan*] must be cited in decisions that are made, and reviewed and revised periodically, to reflect changing circumstances."

The process of creating *The Academic Plan* was overseen by Vice President for Academic Affairs Walter Eggers. In 1990, a special ad hoc committee of the Academic Senate consulted with the Vice President in the formulation of an early draft. Taking account of evaluations being conducted by the Reallocation Task Force, General Education Committee, Faculty Commission on Research, Commission on International Perspectives, Commission on Graduate Education, Commission on the Quality of Campus Life, and the *Affirmative Action Advocacy Plan*, successive drafts of *The Academic Plan* were reviewed and revised in consultation with the academic deans, department chairs, and the Senate Budget and Planning Committee. The final document was endorsed by both the Academic Senate and Student Senate in the spring of 1991 before its campus-wide distribution.

The Academic Plan includes a revision of the University's *Mission Statement* (described under the "Standard One" section of this report), an assessment of the University's present conditions, a statement of immediate goals, and recommendations projecting into the year 2010. Pointing out that the mission of the University is threatened by a decreasing availability of resources and that, "the way we can turn hard times to advantage is to

clarify our mission and take some determined steps forward," the following are listed as "five immediate steps to set the direction for a long range, comprehensive academic plan."

First, we will better differentiate the mission of the University within the University System.

Second, we will restore budgets for core undergraduate instruction.

Third, we will better integrate faculty research, scholarship, and artistry with teaching.

Fourth, we will identify the University more closely with the needs of the state.

Fifth, we will instill the ethic of public service in all members of this academic community.

The projections that follow these steps delineate a course of action that is intended to set priorities, consolidate the University's strengths, and establish principles to be followed in response to changing economic conditions. While the specific recommendations contained in *The Academic Plan* will be discussed throughout this report, of foundational importance for subsequent evaluation and planning efforts was the establishment of criteria for growth and change: centrality to the mission of the University, demand, quality, and cost. As outlined in *The Academic Plan*, "New programs will require reallocation, and established programs will be able to claim new support only as they demonstrate compelling importance to the University as a whole."

The Allocation of Resources Task Force and UNH Planning Council

The UNH Planning Council, which issued its report in the spring of 1993, had its beginnings in the Senate and Budget Planning Committee that was described above. In the fall of 1990, a budget shortfall of approximately \$5 million was forecast for the University. Out of concern for how that shortfall would be addressed, the Budget and Planning Committee recommended to the President that an ad hoc committee be formed with the specific objective of analyzing the budget and making recommendations for reallocations that would have the least effect on UNH's educational mission.

The President appointed a Reallocation Task Force chaired by the Vice President for Finance and Administration and composed of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, two academic deans, the Associate Vice President for Facilities Services, four faculty members from the Budget and Planning Committee, one professional and one operating staff representative, and the student body President. In his written charge to the committee, the President stated:

There is no more important item on our agenda than achieving a consensus on budget priorities. Not only do we need to cope with financial constraints, but we must develop a clearer sense of purpose and direction: we must now make the choices that will help define the University in the future. For the remainder of the Fall semester, you will examine the present (FY91) budget both to learn how it works and to discover any flexibility remaining, should we need to make any reallocations this year because of changing circumstances. (Let me once again stress how important it is that you involve all constituent groups in the process from beginning to end!) At the same time, you will begin gathering information about expenditures at the program level across the University, so that for the second semester your focus can shift to the future, to FY92 and beyond.

Consistent with this charge, the Task Force undertook an extensive evaluation of every department and office on campus. In cooperation with the Office of Institutional Research, questionnaires were completed and analyzed to gain detailed budgetary and workload information from all segments of the University. The Task Force then evaluated each department with respect to the four criteria set in *The Academic Plan*: centrality to the mission of the University, demand, quality, and cost. As a result, in the spring of 1991, the Task Force was able to identify \$6.2 million in budgetary cuts which could be implemented by downsizing personnel budgets and reclassifying some departments to self-sufficient, or auxiliary, status during a three year time frame. These recommendations as well as some budget enhancements, including a \$330 thousand per year increase to academic department support budgets for three years, were presented to the President in the spring of 1991.

Of the \$6.2 million in cuts recommended by the Task Force, \$3.36 million have been completed. Eliminating seventy-five positions saved \$980,705. 10.8% came from cutting Principal Administrator positions, 3.4% from Academic Administrator positions, 32.9% from Faculty positions,

28.2% from Professional-Administrative-Technical (PAT) staff positions, and 24.5% from Operating Staff positions. While cuts to administrative and staff positions were targeted specifically, cuts to faculty in selected colleges were made only through attrition.

The Task Force worked throughout the summer of 1991 and the following academic year. The most significant recommendation that it made in its second year was to implement a hiring freeze to help stem a growing budget shortfall. In the late spring of 1992, it sponsored a planning retreat to obtain a consensus on University priorities at which every major constituency was represented. Although a number of priorities were identified, the one that resulted in the greatest action was the renovation of instructional spaces. A large portion of the R&R budget was targeted toward classroom and laboratory renovation and monies were obtained to build "Super Tech" classrooms, which contain state-of-the-art audio-visual-computer equipment.

In mid-summer of 1992, the Reallocation Task Force evolved into the UNH Planning Council. All vice presidents and all academic deans were added to the membership, faculty representation was broadened, and the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs was made the Council Chair. While the Reallocation Task Force had been established to operate for only one year, the Planning Council was formed to provide a more continuous structure for University evaluation and planning. Its charge, as stated by the President, is fourfold:

To ratify or develop the University's official mission statement as a statement of vision for the long-term future.

To serve as the principal advising body at the University of New Hampshire responsible for planning for the future of the University. The responsibility falls to this group to advise the President as to the setting of institutional priorities upon which budgetary decisions will be made.

To continue the process of resource development, allocation, and reallocation and policy review for possible changes in order to accommodate recommendations in a timely fashion.

To examine every opportunity to exercise creative and energetic efforts to generate new sources of revenue.

The first of these charges was fulfilled by the early fall of 1992 when the Planning Council completed a revision of the University Mission Statement in *The Academic Plan*. Throughout the fall of 1992, the Planning Council reviewed and discussed proposals from each of the Vice Presidents regarding possible budget cuts or revenue enhancements in their respective areas. Following the criteria first articulated in *The Academic Plan*, the Council proceeded according to the principle that "vertical or programmatic cuts are less damaging to the University than across-the-board cuts of operating budgets." This principle will continue to guide future restructuring. In December of 1992, a list of recommendations to be implemented over the next three fiscal years was presented to the President for consideration and finalized. The *Report of the UNH Planning Council* was issued in February, 1993. By the end of the academic year several of the recommendations it contained had been implemented and total cuts amounted to \$1,455,271.

The Master Plan

The Master Plan for the University's physical facilities is the culmination of an intensive planning process that began in the mid 1980s with the development of a campus plan to address the need for improvements and increased space for instruction, laboratories, the library, and housing, as well as the problem of deferred maintenance. The details of *The Master Plan*, a summary of which was released in May of 1993, will be discussed in this report under Standard Eight. What is important to note here, however, is that its formulation has involved a thoroughgoing appraisal of the University's mission, needs, and resources and is coordinated with *The Academic Plan* and recommendations contained in the *Report of the UNH Planning Council*.

APPRAISAL

As the only comprehensive research university in New Hampshire, UNH is called upon to offer, and is committed to offering, a broad array of programs at all levels. A decrease in the percentage of state appropriations to the University System, the gradual growth of enrollments, and increased public service initiatives within the region have placed considerable strain on the

institution. However, improved coordinated planning processes have demonstrated a flexibility to address changing circumstances and prevent any substantial negative impact on educational quality. In fact, recent years have seen impressive achievements in faculty research, fund raising, and student recruitment. While the University has faced the same economic and demographic pressures as other New England universities, it continues to enjoy record enrollments while maintaining the integrity of its academic programs.

Over the course of the last three years, planning groups have assessed the University's short and long term needs in the areas of academic programs, budget, and facilities and have identified priorities in relation to the institution's mission and available resources. These evaluation and planning processes have become more broadly based as well as more realistic. Needs for department support budgets, instructional facilities, and equipment are being addressed in a biennial budget planning process that more fully involves the college deans and department chairs (see description in Standard 9, Budgeting Processes). Faculty, staff, and students now participate as formal representatives in University-level evaluation and planning. *The Academic Plan* and the *Report of the UNH Planning Council* have established clear criteria to guide necessary consolidation, restructuring, and downsizing of both academic and nonacademic programs in the future. To avoid jeopardizing the University's educational mission, and to be able to build on recognized strengths by selectively enhancing programs, the principle of vertical, rather than across-the-board cuts has been established.

A continuing concern of campus groups involved in financial assessment and planning is the lack of flexibility in certain budget lines mandated by the University System Board of Trustees. The most frequent complaint is that the special mission and needs of a modern research university, as opposed to the needs of the state colleges, is not fully appreciated or understood. For example, although the University's mission and purposes are distinct from the other institutions within the System, all three institutions are budgeted using the same inflation figures. Because the actual rates of inflation for items such as periodicals, laboratories, and equipment vary greatly between a research university and a state college,

this has made budgetary planning more difficult, particularly when trying to contend with inadequate resources.

Despite difficult times, the University has been able to build on its strengths in undergraduate education, enhance graduate programs and research activities, and begin to address space and facilities improvement. Focused evaluations connected to systematic and comprehensive planning have characterized the administration of the institution during the last three years. Structures are now in place that can provide responsible and thoroughgoing evaluations of institutional effectiveness, needs and priorities.

PROJECTION

Present indications are that the University of New Hampshire will have to contend with further budget-driven cuts in the future. The challenge in the next few years will be to continue to define critical needs, identify programmatic areas that can be consolidated, and reallocate resources without incurring erosion in the quality of educational programs. Consistent with *The Academic Plan*, recommendations of the UNH Planning Council, and *Master Plan*, during the next five years restructuring and downsizing will take place to maintain a strong foundation for future growth and development. At the same time, there will be increased attention to securing alternative sources of funding through such avenues as the UNH Foundation. Within this context, the revised *University Mission Statement* will direct ongoing and broad-based evaluations and continue to inform the planning process within each division and office of the institution.

The focused evaluation and planning efforts of special committees and commissions that have been initiated over the course of the last five years will also continue. Increased efforts will be made to integrate the findings of these groups within the larger context of institutional planning. A Steering Committee on Institutional Effectiveness, chaired by an Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs, has been established and will coordinate regular summaries of assessment practices.

SELECTED SOURCES

- The Academic Plan for the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, 1991.
- "Academic Program Review Policy." Durham, NH: UNH, Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, 1991.
- Affirmative Action Advocacy Plan for the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, Office of Affirmative Action, 1991.
- Annual Report on the Status of Women: 1990-91*. Durham, NH: UNH, President's Commission of the Status of Women, 1992.
- Challenge and Choice: Strategies for Achieving Diversity at the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, University Diversity Committee, 1989.
- Fifth Year Report*. Prepared for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Durham, NH: UNH, 1988.
- Handbook and Bylaws of the Academic Senate/Faculty Caucus, 1992-93*. Durham, NH: UNH, Academic Senate Office, 1992.
- "Recommendations of the UNH Planning Council." Durham, NH: UNH, 1993.
- Report of the Academic Senate Committee on Minority Recruitment and Retention*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1990.
- Report of the Academic Senate Library Committee*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1988.
- Report of the Commission on Graduate Education at the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1993.
- Report of the Commission on International Affairs at the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1991.
- Report of the Committee on Undergraduate Advising at the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1993.
- "Report of the Institutional Effectiveness Steering Committee." Durham, NH: UNH, Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, 1993.
- "Report of the University of New Hampshire Assessment Task Force." Durham, NH: UNH, Office of the Vice President of Academic Affairs, 1993.
- Research at the University of New Hampshire: A Report of the Research Council*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1993.
- Revised University of New Hampshire Mission Statement*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1992.
- A Review of the Student Conduct System at UNH: A Report and Recommendation From the University Judicial Task Force*. Durham, NH: UNH, Office of Student Affairs, 1989.
- Robert P. Owen Associates. *University of New Hampshire, Durham Campus, Library System Space Program, Development Options and Estimated Costs*. Wellesley, MA: 1992.
- Self-Study Report*. Prepared for the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Durham, NH: UNH, 1983.
- "A Special Study Involving Teaching Practices at the University of New Hampshire: Report of the UNH Teaching Excellence Program." Durham, NH: UNH, 1993.
- Strategic Plan for the University of New Hampshire*. Durham, NH: UNH, 1988.
- Summary of the Comprehensive Master Plan*. Durham, NH: UNH, Office of the Vice President for Campus Planning, 1993.
- Summary of the Master Plan*. Office of the Vice President for Campus Planning, UNH, Durham, NH: 1993.