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BULLETIN

To the Faculty, Staff and Students of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville

Vol. 23, No. 10
September 22, 1992

MEMO TO: The University Community
FROM: Earl Lazerson *EL*
SUBJECT: Priorities, Quality, Productivity

The Illinois Board of Higher Education has required of state universities that they review their academic programs, administrative structures, and research and public service activities from the point of view of 1) congruence with institutional priorities, 2) maintenance of quality, and 3) enhancement of academic productivity. The initiative is known as Priorities, Quality, Productivity, or P*Q*P. I shall place this activity in the context of Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, describe the University's response to this point, and present my expectations concerning future developments.

When I became President in July, 1980, I announced to the University community my intention to address a number of productivity-related issues, including unduly high institutional support costs, ineffective coordination and communication among functional areas, insufficient articulation of institutional objectives, organizational impediments to effective student services, and the need for a central planning and resource mechanism. These convictions were tested in the early 1980s, when the University withstood cuts in its base budget averaging over a million dollars per year for five successive years. In addition, during that period the University suffered a decline in funding of \$1.6 million due to other state and Federal actions. From 1980 to 1990, the University's income from state general revenue funds fell 17.8%, from \$61.4 million in 1980 to \$50.5 million in 1990 (expressed in constant 1990 dollars). Full-time equivalent personnel at SIUE declined by 6.2% during this period, including a 15% decline in teaching faculty. In contrast, Fall on-campus enrollment, which was 9,790 in FY 80 (Fall, 1979), had increased 11.6% to 10,930 in FY 90 (Fall, 1989). The student/faculty ratio had increased from 17/1 to 22/1. This conjunction of factors resulted in a reduction in the University's instructional costs, from 125.2% of the statewide average in 1980 to 101.8% of that average in 1990 and 99.97% of it in 1991.

In my State of the University address in January of this year, I laid out a plan for the next four years, 1992-1996, that would provide stable enrollment, a student faculty ratio of 20/1, annual salary increases averaging 2%, and improved quality of instructional programs, services, and facilities, while keeping tuition affordable. With these ideas as a basis, the University Planning and Budget Council has been devising a framework for examination of University programs that will assure continued fulfillment of the University mission in the face of static or declining state support. Another productivity initiative has resulted from the formation in Spring, 1991 of a

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team to audit the management structure of the University. The Management Audit Team has interviewed Vice Presidents and other administrators to assess the extent to which the necessary administrative functions of the University can be performed more efficiently. I have already received a preliminary report from the team. The P*Q*P process is congenial to efforts long under way at this University.

There are two key elements in the University's response to P*Q*P to this point. First, beginning with the annual planning meetings in June, the four Vice Presidents have set up extensive review schedules internal to their functional areas, to assure that during the coming academic year all facets of the University's operation will be scrutinized relative to their relationship to institutional priorities, particularly the Statement of Mission, quality of operation, and contribution to academic productivity. Twenty-five guidelines for this review are contained in a document approved by the IBHE in March, 1992. This document has been widely circulated within the University community and has been helpful in refining our internal review processes.

Second, the *Productivity Report* submitted by SIUE to the IBHE for consideration in its October meeting details productivity improvements undertaken during the 1991-92 academic year and, at IBHE request, estimates the savings from each, both for FY 1993 and annually thereafter. The initiatives are grouped under these major headings: Productivity of Instructional Units, Productivity of Public Service and Research Units, Academic Productivity of the Institution, and Productivity of Administrative Functions. The inventory of changes at SIUE includes such items as administrative reorganizations, redistribution of responsibilities for advising, and improved energy conservation. According to the estimates provided by the functional areas, the amount of money available to the University for other purposes as a result of these enhanced efficiencies is about \$2.3 million during FY 1993 and almost \$2.7 million annually thereafter.

During 1992-93, we can expect the development of a number of proposals for change within the University, resulting from the reviews that are under way in the four functional areas. These proposals will receive, when appropriate, full constituency review prior to submission to me for approval. The IBHE has made clear that it expects Universities to move with dispatch in this review but also expects them to give full respect to their internal processes for review and approval of administrative reorganizations and program and curriculum revision.

The Illinois Board of Higher Education is meeting as a Committee of the Whole to address P*Q*P, in conjunction with its regular meetings. In its September meeting, it approved a report that analyzes need, demand and productivity of academic programs statewide, without mentioning individual universities. We can expect the following actions from IBHE in the near future:

✱ In its meeting of October 6, the IBHE will review Productivity Reports of the 12 state universities and will receive from its staff campus-specific lists of programs that IBHE staff believes should be targeted for reduction, consolidation, or elimination.

‡ In its meeting of November 24, IBHE will approve these lists and will forward the specific recommendations to the university governing boards. The boards will be required to describe in the next Productivity Report, due October 1, 1993, the campus P*Q*P initiatives, including but not limited to the responses to these specific IBHE recommendations. Campuses will have until June, 1996, to complete the implementation of their decisions.

‡ In the November 24, 1992, meeting, the IBHE will also consider a detailed plan for the second cycle of the P*Q*P initiative. This will certainly include a review of obstacles to timely completion of degrees and a comparison of the universities' performances in this dimension, but will probably also include a comparison of university mission statements, examination of off-campus activities, and closer attention to administrative functions and public service units.

It is not pleasant to contemplate several years of flat or declining state support. But this University has a long history of dealing responsibly and creatively with its fiscal resources, and the P*Q*P process can form a natural extension of our efforts. If we proceed rationally and with close attention to the mission of SIUE, I believe that the outcome can be a streamlined and strengthened University, with a keener sense of mission and a renewed resolve to perform the educational services that are so vital to our State and our region.