

TEACHERS COLLEGE COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

4/16/77

To: Members of the Department

From: Robbie McClintock

Subject: Possible strategy for developing the Department

At our meetings last March 29 and April 2, I presented some data suggesting that the Division had been affected more deeply than most parts of the College by the general contraction that has gone on during the past five years or so. In the discussion during the first meeting, it became clear that in order to do anything constructive about this situation, the Department needs to develop a strategy for making an effective case for its interests in the College. Since then I have spent some time reflecting on how we might develop such a strategy. It seems to me that the basic problem facing the College is a deficiency of income and that the only way the Division can really hope to escape enduring indefinitely with a steady-state budget, or worse, in a condition of unending constriction, is by being able to show in hard figures that we can increase the amount of income we draw to the College in the form of tuition and grants. Hence, a search for a strategy seemed to me to resolve itself into a search for a strategy by which the Division can increase the income it draws to the College without compromising its scholarly standards and intellectual integrity. In response to Harold Noah's request for letters in conjunction with his review of the Division Directorship, I outlined my views on the situation at some length, stressing the view that our claim to further resources should be based on a demonstrated capacity to increase the income we draw to the College and indicating three positive courses which the Division might pursue in an effort to generate more resources for itself and the College. In what follows, I want to state as a position paper, somewhat more fully than I did to Harold Noah, the three possibilities that have occurred to me for increasing our income and thus for laying a groundwork for future dynamism in the Division. I do not think these three possibilities are exhaustive, or necessarily the best conceivable possibilities, but I do hope that by putting them before us, they will stimulate action, either on the lines they sketch out or on other lines that emerge from the discussion of them.

To me, whatever we do, we should do because we believe in its intellectual and pedagogical worth. At the present juncture, however, it does not seem possible to mobilize resources for doing something positive without providing a good budgetary justification for them. Such budgetary justification will be couched either as a matter of controlling costs or of increasing income. Controlling costs will almost always be negative; the budgetary foundation for a positive set of purposes will need to be set on a demonstrated or highly probable ability to increase income. Hence it seems to me that in looking for positive initiatives, intellectual and pedagogical, that we can now take, we have to limit ourselves to initiatives that promise an increase of income to the College. Hence the fundamental question: How can the Division increase the income it draws to the College? There are two basic ways we draw income: tuition and grants. Let us look at each in turn.

Tuition: The College keeps fairly good figures of tuition income by Division and Department. These are calculated by 1) Tuition from Department majors, Courses in the Department; 2) Tuition from Department majors, Courses not in the Department; 3) Tuition from Students not majoring in the Department; 4) Total tuition to T.C. from Department majors (Items 1+2); and 5) Total tuition to the Department from all students (Items 1+3).^{*} For Division I, items 1, 2 and 4 are proportionately low, depending on our own majors; items 3 and 5 are proportionately high, reflecting the service function we perform in the College. An argument that through our service courses we actually account for more of the College's income than our budget amounts to in expenses is a good basis for justifying our existence at our present base, but if we try too hard to use increases in our service course enrollments as a basis for budget increases, we are likely to put ourselves in an adversary position vis-a-vis other Divisions. Certainly we should seek to maintain items 3 and 5, and if possible, cause them to increase. But I would argue, however, that for purposes of demonstrating our ability to increase the income we draw to the College, item 4 and its components 1 and 2, are the most significant, and since we have never sought to do much to expand it, we may be able to increase it rather dramatically without compromising what presently we do well.

Tables 15A, 15B, and 15C in the "Budget Book 1976" show enrollments by degrees and by departments from 1967-68 through 1975-76. For our Department they are as follows:

	67-8	68-9	69-70	70-1	71-2	72-3	73-4	74-5	75-6
MA/MS	90	109	83	90	67	56	56	70	42
EdM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
EdD/PhD	---	122	131	125	125	128	139	140	164

From this it is quite clear that our doctoral enrollment has been increasing, our masters enrollment decreasing. It does not seem to me sound to try to increase significantly the tuition we draw to the College by dramatically increasing our doctoral enrollments; some programs could perhaps benefit from a few more students, but not so many that through such expansion we could significantly change the total tuition to TC from Department majors. To do that through the doctoral program would mean the sacrifice of standards and we would risk in a few years glutting employment markets with poorly qualified graduates. It does, however, seem worthwhile to consider whether there are ways in which we can validly increase our masters enrollments. If we could bring our MA/MS enrollment up to 100 and develop an EdM enrollment of 25, assuming each enrollment is 16 points per year at \$129 per point, we would add a bit over \$155,000 to our performance on Item 4, total tuition to TC from Department majors (which would mean an increase of 60% on Item 4 rela-

^{*} Here are the figures given for us in the "Budget Book 1976":

	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
1 Tuit. from Dept. majors (Crs. in Dept.)	85,374	100,992	143,955	135,486
2 Tuit. from Dept. majors (Crs. not in Dept.)	92,535	99,456	140,595	120,744
3 Tuit. from students not majoring in Dept.	625,611	538,368	511,245	612,846
4 Total tuit. to TC from Dept. majors (1+2)	179,909	200,448	284,550	256,230
5 Total tuit. to Dept. from all students (1+3)	710,985	639,360	655,200	748,332

tive to what it was in 1975-76). Before suggesting possible ways this might be done, however, I want to speak briefly to an important reason why we should perhaps not try to do anything to increase our masters level enrollment, for it gives a key to what we might do.

As things stand, we have six, separate, very small masters programs; we recognize that these degrees have next to no market value for their recipients; we find the masters programs in each discipline hard to integrate with our doctoral programs: consequently, in effect, each discipline runs, if I can use such a strong word, an all-departmental masters program, usually giving it minimal attention. So far we have generally concluded from these conditions that it is proper to discourage masters level work in the Department and that drumming up interest in a degree with no market value would be unethical in itself and distract from our real work of doctoral instruction. To me, such reasoning has much merit, but I would like to see whether these conditions that have so far led us to discourage masters level work might not be turned into grounds for developing a different kind of masters program, one that might be quite ethical to encourage and one that might prove to be a useful way of recruiting good students to our doctoral programs. So, let us turn the disadvantages of the present situation into advantages: numerous people seeking continuing education are doing so, not to invest in their careers narrowly defined, but in search of broad, personal development; for them the Department could offer a first-rate, non-vocational, Departmental-wide masters program, which could be run with relatively little interference with our doctoral programs. Since such students are often very intelligent and imbued with a love of learning, such a program would, however, provide a good source from which our doctoral programs might recruit first-rate prospects. Furthermore, some of the courses that might be developed for such a program might be highly attractive as service courses, and it would thus help to maintain and expand our non-Departmental enrollment.

What might such a program be like? It should not, I would argue, simply be run in a laissez faire manner in which students take any thirty-two points they like from the Department and the College. Instead, it would seem to me better were it highly structured, with a definite educational goal, with a carefully controlled admissions process, with a curriculum built partly from existing offerings from across the Department and partly from new offerings specially designed for it, with periodic meetings of its staff and students, and with special publicity for it as a distinct and unique program. The assumptions on which it could be built might be put roughly as follows: education is a basic human experience in which all people are in one way or another involved; many who do not seek qualification as professional educators nevertheless feel drawn to understanding the phenomena of education more clearly; for them, the Department can develop a solid masters program, comprising carefully selected lecture courses, colloquia, and a special seminar, through which the student can appropriate the fundamental insights into education available through the humanities and the social sciences. Such a program could be run well, I think, without putting an undue burden on the time of all the members of the Department if a little care and imagination were used in its organization. Rather than spreading advisement over everyone, this function should probably be centralized and done in conjunc-

junction with required colloquia or seminars--whoever gives those should automatically have the participants as advisees, and since the program would be highly structured, this function would probably evolve into a tutorial relationship.

A further matter that might be considered in relation to the possibility of such a program: it may be possible for the Department to get a fairly sizeable grant in order to develop it. In particular, the National Endowment for the Humanities offers Program Grants, for which we could make a strong application with such a program. These grants are described in the Annual Register of Grant Support: 1976-77, #1162, as follows: "TYPE: Grants designed to revitalize instruction through the development of a new program or series of courses in some area of the humanities that lifts the academic disciplines from the narrow confines of existing departmental structures and places them in a wider context. Whether programs are devised to deal with historical eras, regions or areas, concepts of major values, or some new perception of the human condition, the principle of organization should be comprehensive and related to the continuing insights of the humanities. Not a mere increase in course offerings, but a program which suggests critical re-examination of the content, organization, and method of presentation of the humanities is expected. PURPOSE: To assist institutions of higher learning to enhance the vitality, influence, and attraction of the humanities as a major area of the curriculum.... FINANCIAL DATA: NEH funding for Program Grants may not exceed \$180,000 over a three-year period." Congress has defined the humanities for the Endowment broadly, specifying that it includes, but is not limited to "language, both modern and classical; linguistics; literature; history; jurisprudence; philosophy; archeology; comparative religion; ethics; the history, criticism, theory, and practice of the arts; and the study and application of the humanities to the human environment with particular attention to the relevance of the humanities to the current conditions of national life." The Endowment states that it is authorized "to support social science projects as well, as long as such projects employ the methods and share the concerns of the humanities," which, for our Department, with a program such as here contemplated, would seem to me surely to be the case. Were we to apply successfully for such a grant it would enhance the visibility of the Department and enable us to develop a new source of tuition at no financial risk to the College. If the idea of such a program seems valid to the Department, the best way to proceed would seem to be to assign to one of us responsibility for developing it, with the clear understanding that that person's responsibility would be to organize the effort of those interested in participating in the program; it is not the kind of program that can succeed, however, if only one or two members of the Department are willing to put some work into it.

A second way in which we might increase our enrollment on the masters level is through the judicious development of of EdM programs. The same reasons that have inhibited our developing the MA have also inhibited the EdM. The way around these binds with the EdM seem to me to be somewhat more difficult than with the MA, yet it seems all the same potentially worth pursuing. The basic problem with a the EdM, as with the MA, is that it lacks any significant market value to its prospective recipient. I do not think that the strategy with the MA of reaching out to those interested in per-

sonal, not professional, development would take us far with the EdM. If we are to find a way of developing the EdM in the Department, we will need, I think, to find a way to give it some market value. This I do not think we could do solely from within the Department, but we might be able to do it very well in cooperation with other Departments. It would seem to me that, for instance, an EdD in Educational Administration might have greater market value to its recipient were it combined with an EdM in Politics and Education or Economics and Education than it would have by itself. If this were the case, it might be in the interest of the Department of Educational Administration to develop in cooperation with us such a package, for doing so would enhance their ability to draw good students. So too, the attractiveness of EdD's offered in diverse Departments throughout the College might be much enhanced for prospective students were it possible to combine them with EdMs in one or another of our disciplinary fields. Thus I can imagine, for instance, an EdD in Curriculum Theory packaged with an EdM in Philosophy and Education or History an Education, or an EdD in Home and Family Life or Health Education packaged with an EdM in Anthropology and Education or Sociology and Education. Developing such EdM's would take a good deal of negotiation and I am not sure whether a good EdM degree program could be developed in each area without it somehow interfering with doctoral instruction. Such questions would have to be resolved through extensive discussions. I have informally broached the idea with Dale Mann, and his reaction was positive in principle, although he was alert to possible difficulties in working out the details. From the Department's point of view the basic consideration--whether such a program could be developed within each discipline without interfering with the discipline's doctoral program--is a concrete question that might be worth the various sections of the Department considering. If the results of such considerations are positive, it might be worth our approaching other Departments with concrete proposals. Such, as I see it, developing a non-professional MA program and working out cooperative EdM and EdD packages with other Departments, are two ways we might increase the tuition we draw to the College, and insofar as we can increase the tuition we draw, I think we create a good basis for arguing for increases in our budget. The other basic way we have to increase the income we draw to the College is through grants. Let us turn to these.

Grants: As with program, we tend to look at grant possibilities in a fragmentary way, each discipline going after what it can get on its own grounds. As long as we do this, it seems to me, we will have a great deal of difficulty really coming together as an interdisciplinary center of inquiry and our shared intellectual life, as represented in occasions such as the Departmental Colloquium, will remain without focus and ritualistic. I would argue further that by each discipline going it alone, frequently with each faculty member going it alone, we end up attracting far less grant money than we could if we drew together and had in common one really large project, which would provide us all with one truly visible, prestigious, significant umbrella, beneath which we could all, individually and collectively, pursue grants, perhaps with more success than at present. Hence, I want to propose that the Department seriously consider developing a common research program for which we seek large-scale funding. I do not, of course, mean to suggest that participation in such a project, were it to be developed, should be mandatory for all members of the Department. I do suggest, however, that the

project be looked at as a major Departmental commitment, one that can come into being only if a significant proportion of the Department finds a problem that they can authentically make central to their intellectual concerns, that they are ready to work on actively and cooperatively. In the following paragraphs, I indicate a problem that, it seems to me, might be one with respect to which many (some? all?) of us might be able to address, finding it not a diversion from our on-going intellectual concerns, but rather a valid way to bring those on-going concerns to fuller fruition. What is most important to me at this point, however, is not that the particular problem I suggest actually turns out to be the problem around which many of us can orient our work, but that by discussing it fully and seriously as such a possibility, we begin to learn more about each other's real interests, and as we learn more about those we enhance the eventual possibility of developing one or more cooperative research efforts.

What might be the topic around which such a large-scale, umbrella program of research might be built? I would argue that at the present it should be a topic that brings our abilities to bear on the basic causes of the educational malaise from which Teachers College and all other educational institutions in the US, and to a large degree, throughout the industrialized world, are suffering. Educators seem to be suffering from a failure of nerve; the will to make a case for the allocation of resources to educative effort seems to be weak. This fatalism seems to have taken hold in a rather unexamined response to immediate pressures. In a superficial sense, educational institutions seem to be caught in a demographic bind: the off-spring of the baby-boom have reached maturity, and the size of school-age populations are declining, with, it seems, the inevitable result that enrollments on all levels of education will be declining, or at best, in a steady-state. There is an unstated, tacit premise in such reasoning, however, one that to my knowledge, has not been subjected to the scrutiny it merits. This premise is that in the post-industrial societies, qualitatively, people have reached the point of educational saturation; that each individual receives about as much education as he or she can profitably absorb; and that therefore the demographic profile of the population is the one real arbiter of educational demand. Without this premise it does not in the least necessarily follow that depression should hit educational institutions when the size of school-age populations is stable or declining. On the contrary, without the tacit belief that qualitatively the point of educational saturation has been reached, the diminishing of demographic pressures on educational demand could be viewed as a tremendous opportunity, a great boon throughout the post-industrialized world, a rare opportunity for significantly raising the cultural and educational attainments of the people. When demographic pressures on demand are great, increases in educative effort are needed simply to maintain the qualitative status quo; it is when the demographic pressures decline that the opportunity arises to deploy increased effort for real qualitative improvement. We have a glut of school teachers only if the current teacher-pupil ratio is assumed to be the best of all possible teacher-pupil ratios. We have an excess of supply in higher education only if the optimum proportion of potential students is receiving an optimum higher education. The decline of demographic pressures on the demand for education are cause for alarm and depression, only if people assume that the point of qualitative saturation has been reached; if it has not, the decline of

demographic pressure could be the underlying cause of a major, historic opportunity.

It would seem to me desirable and interesting to try to develop a really large-scale departmental effort to clarify the degree to which people are over-educated, under-educated, or, wonder of wonders, optimally educated; to join together to look at the need for education, bringing our diverse disciplinary perspectives to bear on it. When all is said and done, it does not seem to me that the present pessimism about the future of educational institutions is warranted, for I simply do not believe that Americans are over-educated, that people around the world are over-educated; rather it seems to me that relative to the complexity of the problems besetting contemporary life we are all woefully under-educated. A good case might be made that the lessening of demographic pressures on educational resources may be one of those opportune historical accidents that, if the moment is grasped, might be man's best hope for transcending drift and exerting a modicum of mastery over the great uncertainties of the immediate future. But the case for a positive sense of the pedagogical future simply is not being made and it seems to me very much in keeping with our intellectual mission to set about making it. To me it would seem ideal if this Spring we could start talking about the possibility, if we could query each other how from our various disciplines we might approach such a basic problem. If over the summer, we were willing to do a little preliminary work, next year we would be ready to devote a serious Departmental Colloquium to developing a comprehensive, departmental research proposal, say a five-year Departmental project, from which several books might come, a major conference, numerous articles, and a special thrust for doctoral training. We might be able to develop a very large proposal, altogether on the order of a million dollars, that might have within it many parts. All of it might be stored in my Vdeo, and once that were done a sophisticated, systematic search for funding might be mounted in which we might try to get as much of the whole project as possible funded by one of the major foundations or the Research Applied to National Needs section of the National Science Foundation and in which we might try to get smaller parts funded by smaller foundations. And having such a project at the heart of our collective work might, I suspect, do wonders for the Department: it might bring to life our interdisciplinary work; it might make us far more visible nationally and internationally; it might bring flexibility to our budget and bring to an end our difficulties in recruiting first-rate people; it might bring resources for supporting top doctoral students and might help our ability to place our graduates in good jobs; and in the long-run it might contribute to a fundamental improvement in the pedagogical climate.

Who knows whether such glowing possibilities can come to pass? "The height charms us, the steps to it do not: with the summit in our eye, we love to walk along the plain." How might we start the ascent? It is not enough, I think, simply to discuss whether or not it is a "good idea." Rather, we need to develop a procedure in which we can perhaps begin to transform good ideas into real purposes and plans, ones sufficiently developed for us to search ourselves and test whether we have within us a collective commitment adequate for bringing them to fruition. Towards this end, I would like to suggest a possible procedure, which we might test out with the above des-

cribed problem. The first step in the procedure would be to devote a meeting of the Department to discussing the problem "as if," as if we were going to go all out, all together, over say five years, to clarify the contemporary need for education. What questions should be asked in the course of such a study? How might each of our respective disciplines help to answer those questions? What can we each personally envisage doing in an effort to answer them? How could the pursuit of such questions be integrated into our doctoral program and into our service courses? What skills and talents outside the Department would we need to draw on to complement our own capacities? Each of us should speak to these and similar questions, having given them some forethought, and what we have to say should be recorded in a full set of minutes, which, in effect, would serve as a preliminary, "as if," plan of a major research program. The second step in the procedure would be to let a week or so pass with this "as if" plan before us, to give us each time for reflections and informal discussion. The third step would be to have a second meeting in which each of us shared our considered sense of the degree to which he or she could or could not become truly engaged in the pursuit of such a plan. The basic ground-rule of this discussion, it would seem to me, would have to be thorough collegial respect, the recognition that there should be no tacit group pressure coercing participation, for should such pressure operate it would, I think, undercut whatever potential of success such a project might have, for such a project simply cannot succeed through pro forma participation. Even were the project to die through insufficient genuine interest, however, the time invested would not, I believe, be wasted, for we would come away from the effort with a much better sense of the real priorities guiding each of us and far more able to speak constructively to our concerns, individual and collective.

Let me draw to a close by summarizing the basic positions I am advancing for discussion.

1) For the foreseeable future, positive initiatives within the College will have to be justified on budgetary grounds no matter how strong their intrinsic merits may be. The most effective justification for possible increases in our expenditures will be our ability to demonstrate that we have increased income to the College by an amount greater than the increased expenditures we seek. Hence, we should examine carefully how we might increase the income we draw to the College without embarking on efforts that will detract from our scholarly standards and intellectual integrity. The main means we have for drawing income to the College are tuition and grants.

2) Our service course enrollments are essential to justifying our existence within the College, but they will not prove very useful in justifying a proportionate increase in our budget. To show that we draw more tuition to the College, we need to show that the College is receiving a meaningful increase in tuition from our majors. While modest increases in enrollment in some of our doctoral programs may be pedagogically valid, it is unlikely and undesirable that these increases can be of such proportion that it would significantly affect our tuition account. If we are to increase the tuition income we draw to the College, it will probably have to be by increasing our MA/MS and EdM enrollments, which are very low. In the past, we have been inhibited from seeking masters-level students because our masters programs do

not integrate well with our doctoral programs and because we think it unethical to push degrees devoid of potential market value to prospective recipients. These liabilities might be turned to advantages in two ways:

- a) We might develop a non-professional, Departmental-wide MA program, one with a highly structured program specially designed for persons seeking post-bachelors education conducive to personal, not vocational, cultivation. Development of such a program might qualify for support from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the program itself might become a significant source of tuition to the Department and the College; it might serve as a useful recruiting ground, among others, for our doctoral programs; and it might become a very challenging program in which to teach. Thus it would seem to be a possibility potentially worth trying to develop.

- b) In cooperation with other Departments, we might develop degree packages comprising an EdM in one of our disciplines and an EdD in the professional area of one or another Department. Unlike the proposed Departmental-wide MA program, which can be set somewhat apart from our disciplinary doctoral programs, the EdM possibility would have to be closely related to our doctoral programs and this might pose a problem which should be seriously discussed before we seek to enter into negotiations with other Departments over the development of such degree packages.

- 3) So far within the Department, we have been very individualistic in pursuit of grants. It might, however, be possible for the Department to develop a large-scale umbrella research project, which might bring us substantial resources while contributing positively to our shared intellectual life. One possibility for such a project might be to subject to thorough examination the latent premise behind much of the pedagogical pessimism that presently clouds the future of educational institutions. This latent premise seems to be that post-industrialized societies, particularly American society, have reached to point of educational saturation, and that therefore as demographic pressures on educational demand decline, resources available for educative effort will also decline, or at best persist in a steady-state. It would seem to me that a large, very interesting, very significant research project, one drawing on all our respective abilities, might be developed around this general problem. To find out whether it can be developed around this or some other problem, however, we need a procedure for moving ahead; one that occurs to me consists of three steps. These would be, first a meeting in which we speculate together as if we were going to pursue the possibility all out, from which a hypothetical research plan would emerge; second a period in which we had time to reflect on the hypothetical plan, to discuss it informally, to consider carefully the degree to which real engagement in the pursuit of such a plan was consistent with our real concerns; and third, a follow-up meeting, one conducted with full frankness and collegial respect, in which each of us explains the degree to which he or she could or could not personally engage in such a plan and find intellectual and personal fulfillment in doing so. Such a procedure, it would seem to me, might lead to a real collective commitment on our part, and even if it did not, it would

leave us a good deal closer to each other, better able to give one another real collegial stimulation and support.

I hope that from discussion of these and other positions that may come forth, we can generate a shared sense of direction.