

The Transformation of a University and It's Faculty of Education: The Case of Minnesota

John J. COGAN

<Outline>

This paper gives a personal account of going through the process of reform at a major comprehensive research university in the United States at the end of the 20th century. It focuses specifically upon the College of Education and Human Development (CEHD) at the University of Minnesota in the United States. Discussed are key decisions and major change turning points in response to 17 years of budget cuts that led the CEHD to restructure and refocus its programs through strategic planning and other efforts. Also addressed is how these efforts fit into and in some areas even shaped educational change and reform across the entire university. Two of the major organizational changes are also discussed: "incentive managed growth", and a "compact planning process".

1. Introduction

This is the story of the fundamental restructuring of a faculty of education in a major U.S. comprehensive research university. It took place over a period of three decades and was at times both planned and unplanned. It was driven by consistent and often sizeable cuts in the base budget of the institution and this college in particular. It was a painful and difficult process but in the end, the

Professor, College of Education and Human Development,
University of Minnesota

College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota has come through it stronger, healthier and more focused in its mission.

This narrative is a personal one as this restructuring process took place over exactly the same thirty year period as the author's tenure in this faculty, 1969-2000. I arrived at Minnesota in the autumn of 1969, a new PhD out of a sister comprehensive research university. I was enthusiastic and ready to begin what I hoped would be a long and productive career. But no sooner had I arrived than the College suffered its first of 22 budget cuts in the next 30 years.

2. Background

The 1960's had been the so-called 'good years' in higher education. Federal monies were plentiful spawned by the launching of the Soviet space probe, Sputnik, which served as a wake-up call to the United States that it was falling behind its primary global rival in science and technology. The blame for this was laid largely at the feet of the educational establishment and billions of dollars were pumped into both elementary and secondary as well as higher education to upgrade the knowledge base of teachers and to develop new, inquiry-based curricula. However, this was short-lived.

At the end of this decade, federal support for education disappeared as quickly as it had appeared, due largely to the nation's military involvement in Viet Nam. Overnight, the hiring of new faculty in higher education ceased and would not appear again in any large numbers for nearly three decades. Base budgets of the institution, and the College of Education in particular, were cut. Older faculty were encouraged to take early retirement; others who were top in their fields left for better positions at other major research institutions. Academic content areas and degree programs were cut to balance the budget. The state support for high-

er education began a slow but steady decline that would, in time, fundamentally alter the manner in which the institution operated. Monies were shifted to elementary and secondary schooling where politicians could more readily point to the impact. Little did we suspect at the time that this process would continue for decades. It was assumed that this was a temporary phenomenon and normalcy would return quickly, normalcy being the 'good days' of the 1960's. We soon realized that this was now normalcy and that the institution in which we worked was undergoing fundamental, lasting change.

To do justice to the history of this process would require a book. What I propose to do in this limited space is to focus in the main on the last decade, the 1990's, of this restructuring in terms of the planning process that took place in the College. This resulted in final structural changes that put us on a much more thoughtful course for the future. I shall briefly overview the history of the first two decades of this process noting key decisions and their long term impact but will then move quickly to the 1990's where the latest and most significant changes took place.

3. Historical Overview

In the 1970's, the university began receiving less support from the legislature of the State of Minnesota, its primary funding body. The legislature began to channel more support into local elementary and secondary school districts where the impact was more visible and the legislators could use this in their next election campaign as an example of them bringing resources back to the local area. Funding going to the university, or to the state colleges, was much more difficult for the local legislator to point to how this had aided the local community. Minnesota is a somewhat unique case as well in that the University of Minnesota is the major research and graduate degree granting institution in the state. The state colleges, later to become state universities, are engaged primarily

in undergraduate and some master's level degree granting work. So while the case can be made that these institutions do contribute significantly to the overall welfare and economy of the State of Minnesota, it is much more difficult for a legislator to pinpoint specifically how local tax monies have been utilized through these institutions to benefit the local community. This is something which university officials have since recognized and now do a much better job of highlighting how contributions of the institution benefit all Minnesotans.

As a result, the state began a slow but steady long term decline in the level of support for higher education in general but for the University of Minnesota in particular. Legislators noted that the university had at its disposal the possibility to attract outside funds both from the federal government as well as from the private sector through foundations. While this was in fact true, the possibilities were not evenly available to all faculties. Medicine and science had the most opportunities while those in the social sciences, the humanities, including education, and the arts, were far fewer.

4. Shift in Legislative Composition

There was also a sociocultural change taking place in the state legislature at this time which I believe is a further explanation for the shift in funding. The Minnesota Legislature had, for its entire history, been made up of people who were born and raised in the state. They had a particular loyalty and allegiance to Minnesota, including its institutions. The University of Minnesota was viewed by everyone as 'their university' and they took great pride in the many accomplishments of its faculty, its students, its sports teams and most certainly its graduates who went on to make significant contributions both in the state and elsewhere. But in the late 1960's and early 1970's, demographic changes began taking place in the state and a growing number of people moved into the state from other parts of the nation seeking jobs, going to school, work-

ing for multinational corporations, and the like. These people became involved in politics at various levels and many were successful. But unlike their predecessors, they had not grown-up in Minnesota. They were raised in other parts of the country, went to universities spread across the land and did not have the allegiance to the University and other institutions in the state which native sons and daughters did. They looked upon the University in terms of how efficient it was and how could it be made more so. So when it came time to pass legislation to support the University they first asked to see evidence of productivity and impact. The university was not used to these kinds of queries from legislators and reacted in a defensive posture initially which was a mistake as it only caused skeptics to dig deeper and to ask more questions.

In the long term, these queries would serve to strengthen the university as it got better at developing databases and means of demonstrating its impact both upon the State as well as the nation and world at large. But this took time and in the interim, the university went through a very difficult period.

There also appeared to be, within the central administration of the university, the view that the education faculty was not esteemed as highly as others. Some administrators, and legislators as well, began openly suggesting that the College of Education was mainly duplicating programs, such as initial and in-service teacher education, which the state university system was already doing. The question was raised as to whether the university really needed an education faculty. Why couldn't these responsibilities be transferred to the state system and thus save duplication of effort and monies as well? As a result, the College Dean and faculty went through a period of more than twenty years in which they had to demonstrate repeatedly that the College of Education at the university was indeed different from its counterparts in the state system. They noted that it was responsible for research and knowledge production, the development of models in the initial and in service education of teachers, and for dissemination of research results and

recommendations to the state, region, nation and the world. Central administrators nodded 'yes' but the cuts in the base budget of the college kept on coming.

5. Move to "All-Graduate" Teacher Preparation

Early in the decade of the 1980's, the then Dean of the College, William Gardner, took a very bold move. In hindsight, his decision may have saved the college, or at least the teacher education part of it. At this time there was a group of Faculty of Education deans meeting to respond to the critique of colleges of education across the nation. These were primarily the academic deans of the major comprehensive research universities. All were experiencing to greater or lesser degrees the queries: "How are you any different from the other institutions of higher education in your state with respect to the conduct of the education of the teaching profession"? It was a fair query and this group of deans met over a period of months to draft a response. They were termed the Holmes Group (Holmes Group, 1986).

What they decided was to change the process of the initial preparation of teachers at these comprehensive research institutions to 'all graduate' programs. They believed, and they were correct, this would set them apart from other teacher preparation institutions in their states and regions and allow them to engage in 'model-building'. These models could then become part of a research and development process with the results disseminated to the others engaged in initial and in-service teacher education throughout the nation. This would demonstrate uniqueness and hopefully persuade central administrators and legislators to increase funding.

Dean Gardner seized this opportunity and took the University of Minnesota, College of Education, into the Holmes Group. Over a period of several years the college went from a primarily undergraduate teacher preparation institution to one which accepted far

fewer numbers for admission but at the postgraduate level. That is, these students had all achieved a BA or BS degree in some academic discipline. They were admitted to a 12-15 month intensive program of pedagogical education to prepare to become classroom teachers. These programs in the various academic subject areas, i.e., mathematics, science, social science, literacy, second languages and cultures, and the arts, were a combination of theory and practice. Students took courses at the university in social and psychological foundations, pedagogy, assessment, at the same time they were engaging in clinical experiences in local schools several days per week. It was a field-based program designed to enable these future teachers to implement and test theoretical models in classroom practice almost immediately. They then came back to the college classroom to discuss, critique and reflect upon their learning. It was designed to make them 'reflective practioners'.

Was it perfect? No, but it did exactly what the Holmes Group and Gardner had intended; it set the College of Education at the University of Minnesota apart from our counterparts in the state university system. It cast us in a research and model building mode, a feature that set us apart. This slowed the questions but did not end them.

In retrospect, I believe this bold move saved the College. Make no mistake, faculty did not go willingly into this new model. The faculty put up all manner of objections to try and dissuade the Dean but he was firm and resolute in his decision and in the end forced us to restructure our teacher education programs. I now believe that was our salvation. Without this change, our critics would have continued to contend that we were in fact no different than our counterparts in the state university system; that we were duplicating effort and in a more costly manner, so why not simply eliminate us. Sometimes democracy is not the best way to proceed when academics are involved. There are times when strong leadership is called for and in this instance I believe we were well served by Dean Gardner's determined and forward looking stance.

Throughout this period and before, College Deans had the unpleasant task of announcing to the faculty almost annually that Central Administration had handed down yet another budget cut to the College. We were constantly in the position of having to trim our programs even further. We watched faculty retire or leave to go elsewhere without being replaced, saw our college and departmental support services cut away, watched supply, resource and professional travel funds reduced to a trickle, and witnessed the morale of the faculty and support staff sink to new lows. Many of us would have left had their been the opportunity to do so. But this was not possible as rapidly our story became everyone's story and there was simply nowhere to go.

Faculty retrenchment was becoming a very serious problem. There were virtually no new faculty hires when people left or retired. The faculty cohort declined from about 200 when I came to the College in 1969 to about 125 in the 1999-2000 academic year, up from 110 at the bottom of the curve in 1995. But the expectations of faculty remained the same in this period. The number of degree programs actually grew, courses got larger and larger, and faculty were still expected to conduct research, publish and provide service to the professional societies and communities of which they were a part. It was a very depressing period.

6. Restructuring in the 1990's at the College and All-University Levels

The 1990's brought a new dean to the College, Robert Bruininks, who was from the Department of Educational Psychology and a leading figure in the area of Special Education. He had been highly successful in attracting federal monies to establish the Center for Community Integration. Special education is an area where sizeable amounts of federal monies are still available. He brought with him a new sense of urgency and set of priorities for the College. He was well aware of the history of budget cuts

and was determined to alter this course. His goal was to restructure the College along more of a private sector model and in the process convince the university central administration that this was the way of the future, not only for the College but for the university as a whole. He saw the path to these goals as being through a long term college-wide 'Strategic Planning' process.

Bruininks began this process immediately upon assuming the deanship. The urgency of this task was brought on, per usual, by the fact that the College was now facing the largest budget cut in its history, nearly \$2 million in state base budget support. This was staggering, especially given that the College already had the lowest level of state funding of any collegiate unit in the university. There was simply no way to trim around the edges and cut a bit here and there any longer. The only way a cut of this magnitude could be managed was through a restructuring of college programs and setting strategic goals for the future.

Simultaneous with Bruininks becoming Dean, the university administration set itself upon a course to focus the priorities of the institution. The University of Minnesota is what we term a 'land grant' institution in the United States. Under the Morrill Act of 1862, every state was given an amount of federal land to sell, based upon their congressional representation, and the proceeds from these sales were to be used in the development of institutions of higher learning geared toward agriculture and mechanics or engineering. These institutions were given a very broad-based mission and were to be involved in research, teaching and service to the local community, state, region and the nation. This mission still holds today although the horizons have long since expanded to the world.

However, this broad mission became problematic in the 1980's in the eyes of the funding body for the university, the Minnesota State Legislature. The state was in a situation where state budgets were either stable or in slight decline with many more demands for support than in the past. So reductions in budget had to be made

in a number of areas. Some legislators and policy makers felt that the university was trying to do too much. They believed that many programs were duplicated by state universities and private sector colleges. They also felt that other major universities in the region had programs that duplicated those at the university. There was a call for 'accountability' and 'efficiency' as well as demonstrating the impact of the state funds given to the university.

In response, the university administration and college deans began a process called U 2000. This was a strategic planning process which was to (1) focus the mission and goals of the institution as a means to (2) becoming more cost efficient while raising the quality of its programs while (3) still maintaining its historic land-grant missions of research, teaching and service. They charged college deans with the task of convening their faculties to,

- conduct a thorough review of programs,
- eliminate those that were weak or redundant,
- strengthen those that fell within the strategic priorities they set for the future,
- reallocate resources and faculty to meet these challenges, and,
- find ways to generate significant amounts of external funding for future programs.

The objective was that by the year 2000 the University of Minnesota would

- be focused,
- be playing to its strengths,
- have a plan for generating substantial external monies,
- raise its standards for admission and reduce its undergraduate intake, and,
- eliminate weak or redundant programs.

At the millennium, the only one of these not accomplished fully is the reduction of the undergraduate student body. In fact, it has grown rather than declined as many of us predicted it would when admission standards were raised. Students everywhere will seek to get into the best universities and if you raise your criteria it sig-

nifies to your potential clients that you are getting better and they want to be part of a better institution. So more rather than less students applied for admission. They were also more highly qualified applicants. The only way to stem this increase is to set admission quotas which is not consistent with the land-grant mission of the institution.

Concurrent with these developments at the all-university level, Dean Bruininks brought together the College leadership for a retreat in 1991 to spell out what was to be faced and to suggest a process for resolving the budgetary and other problems the College faced. Bruininks knew that the College could not survive if it continued to do things in the same way as in the past. A major review and restructuring had to take place and it had to begin immediately. The major trends and issues facing the College were identified and a set of planning assumptions developed to guide the future planning, development and management of the College. Key among them were:

1. fundamental restructuring of the college and redirection of its resources toward strategic priorities,
2. reduction and consolidation of the College curriculum making it more interdisciplinary in the process, i.e. , more cross departmental initiatives were sought,
3. developing the ability to respond quickly to changing market forces as competition for both students and resources became acute,
4. attracting external funding to offset the loss of state base budget support, especially with respect to improving research and program development capabilities,
5. strengthening and enhancing the diversity of both the faculty and the student body,
6. developing focused programs that will enable the College to compete with other institutions of higher education both within and outside the State of Minnesota,
7. developing much stronger programs of outreach to schools and

- other educational communities, and,
8. recruiting more quality full-time graduate students (College of Education, 1994, p. 19-22).

7. The Strategic Planning Process

Shortly after the retreat noted above, every academic unit as well as the College administration began a long-term strategic planning process. Task forces were assembled to work on specific issues. These included teacher education, adult and human resource education, educational policy development, continuing professional education and development, early childhood education, interfacing with the university initiative in K-12 education (elementary and secondary schooling), the role of technology in education, and the role of international education and development as the College sought to strengthen its global linkages. The life of these task forces was to be only long enough to complete the assigned work and then they were disbanded.

8. Strategic Planning Examples

To illustrate the strategic planning process, I will share two examples of what transpired in the two academic units to which I was attached during this period. I am a faculty member with tenure in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction where I am responsible for programming in elementary and middle school social science as well as global and environmental coursework. These are all at the graduate level. I also am a member of the Department of Educational Policy and Administration where I teach courses in comparative and international development education as well as advise graduate students in those areas.

Consolidation of Inservice MEd Programs

At the time the strategic planning process began, there were

12 Master of Education programs focused on inservice teachers in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. The Dean informed the faculty that one of the criticisms of the College was that there were far too many degree programs and that they were also costly in relationship to those of counterpart institutions. The challenge to the faculty was to reduce these multiple MEd programs to one! The faculty was unhappy about this as they had spent years developing these inservice MEd programs around their specific disciplinary content. The faculty set about restructuring the degree requirements to include (1) a general foundations component which all students would be required to take and (2) specific courses related to their particular discipline or subject area. The end result was two inservice MEd programs: one for the elementary and middle school years and one for the middle and secondary level. These reflect the way in which teachers are licensed in Minnesota. This consolidation was viewed by university administration and legislators as a major reduction in degree programs, whether it truly was or not, and they liked the change.

Program Enhancement

In my second home, the Department of Educational Policy and Administration, we were asked to reassess the capabilities of the Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE) graduate degree programs with an eye toward making them among the strongest in the nation. This was as a result of international education being made a central planning priority of the College. The problem faced from the outset was trying to teach and administer both MA and PhD programs in CIDE, an area undergoing rapid growth with a minimal faculty cohort. We used the strategic planning process to do two things that would move toward alleviating this problem.

First, we made sure that a thorough examination of the CIDE program area was part of a forthcoming Graduate School review of all department programs. Further, we suggested an external

review team that was chaired by one of the most highly respected figures in the comparative and international development education field. During the site visit, he interviewed each of the existing faculty in the CIDE unit as well as graduate students at both the MA and PhD levels. He determined what they believed to be the strengths of the program as well as weaknesses and what needed to be done to move the program into the top five in the nation. His report was critical in the development of our strategic plan for CIDE in building a case for two new faculty members.

A second review was undertaken by the College, through a team of three external figures in international education. While their principal task was to assess movement toward goals outlined in the College-wide 'internationalization' plan developed five years earlier, they could not escape examination of the CIDE program in their work. Their review provided some additional insights that were helpful in the development of the strategic plan for the CIDE unit.

The successful outcome of this process is that we hired one of the top professors in the field to a senior faculty position for the 2000-2001 academic year and will search for a second one in the near future. I am confident this would not have occurred without the strategic planning process that forced us (1) to examine our programs, (2) identify our needs and (3) set a plan for achieving them.

These are examples of planning that took place in two individual departmental units. But what about the overall planning process of the College? How did this function? The following describes this macro level work over a period of years.

9. The Collegiate Planning Process

The College administration designed a comprehensive planning process that focused upon the long-term future of the College in an information age. This is a crucial point. The goal was to plan for

the future of the College, for the next 10-15 years and not to get caught up in short term issues. Three complementary, parallel tracks were identified in a comprehensive planning process. They included a focus on

- organizational and management issues;
- potential interdisciplinary and collaborative initiatives; and
- long-range academic restructuring to meet future anticipated needs.

In the first instance, working groups focused on organizational and management issues that required immediate attention to improve the efficiency of the organization and to cut overlap of functions and wastage of resources. A prime example of this was the decision to eliminate a separate budget officer for each departmental unit and combine these functions under a College Administrative Budget Center. This eliminated six positions and centralized the budgeting work into one unit.

The second area of emphasis, interdisciplinary and collaborative initiatives, was designed to reduce duplication of programming efforts across the college and to encourage all-college, or at least cross-departmental programs. For example, everyone of the six departments had a basic introductory research course at the master's level. Why? Tradition! Historically each department had felt the need to organize this course to the particular programmatic needs of their unit. But upon investigation, it was discovered that nearly every one of the six units was teaching basically the same course; even using the same course text in several instances. The task force working in this area recommended that a single course be developed and offered to all entering master's level students in the college. This freed-up five faculty to teach another course offering.

In the case of the third area, long-term academic restructuring, I have already given two examples above from my own departmental homes in Curriculum and Instruction and Educational Policy and Administration and will not repeat them. There were many

other examples across the College as well including the development of entirely new programs.

This planning process resulted in six Strategic Directions for the College that were basically parallel to those of the Central Administration's U2000 goals. Making sure that College goals were directly inline with those of the university had been by intent so as to demonstrate that (1) we were in concert with the mission and goals of the university and (2) our future was intertwined with that of the university as a whole.

The College goals included:

1. Promoting Excellence in Research and Scholarship
 - 1.1 Advance knowledge about critical issues in education and human development, and effectively integrate and apply new knowledge to the problems and challenges facing our changing society.
 - 1.2 Continue to secure funding for new research initiatives in program areas where there is both demand and opportunity.
 - 1.3 Create Interdisciplinary and collaborative research programs or centers addressing significant educational issues and social problems that have an impact on the state, region, nation and world, and that build upon the college's unique strengths, relationships, and opportunities.
 - 1.4 Strengthen the infrastructure to advance the research mission of the college.
2. Strengthening Academic Programs that Prepare Leaders in Education and Human Development
 - 2.1 Strengthen and maintain core Ph.D., Ed.D., M.A. and Specialist degree programs and practitioner-oriented graduate programs that prepare future scientists, practitioners, policy makers, and other leaders in education and human development.

- 2.2 Strengthen and maintain model initial licensure M.Ed. programs in teacher education.
 - 2.3 Develop interdisciplinary, collaborative approaches to teaching and learning for (a) academic programs that address significant issues in education and human development, and for (b) continuing professional education programs that meet the changing needs of practitioners.
 - 2.4 Maintain and strengthen current outstanding programs of undergraduate study, while collaborating with other academic units within the University to develop attractive elective programs of study for undergraduates.
3. Extending Outreach and Service
 - 3.1 Strengthen formal links between the college's teaching, research, and service programs and public and private providers—schools, business and industry, service agencies, and related learning organizations.
 - 3.2 Provide technical assistance to both internal and external constituencies, and disseminate the best application-oriented information to practitioners, policy makers, and other leaders in education and human development.
 - 3.3 Serve as Minnesota's key information clearinghouse on education and human development issues, including policies, practices, ideas, and research.
 - 3.4 Provide model, state-of-the-art, relevant and accessible service and outreach programs in several new areas.
4. Advancing Cultural Diversity
 - 4.1 Foster and strengthen a college environment that values cultural diversity and the is conducive to attracting and retaining a diverse community of students, faculty, and staff.
 - 4.2 Increase college resources for the recruitment and retention of students of color and students with disabilities.

- 4.3 Vigorously recruit talented faculty of color in program areas of long-term academic need.
 5. Creating a User-Friendly College Environment
 - 5.1 Maintain and strengthen its historically strong tradition of providing a wide variety of students with access to its programs, and of designing curricula that take into account the changing needs of students.
 - 5.2 Create a stronger sense of community among faculty, students, staff and alumni.
 - 5.3 Continue to redesign support services and space, with the assistance of central administration, to best serve today's students, faculty and staff.
 6. Improving the Overall Efficiency and Effectiveness of College Planning and Resource Management
 - 6.1 Increase the efficiency and productivity of college curricula, and reinvest productivity gains and/or saved resources (usually in the form of faculty time and effort) to support the college's core academic programs and new initiatives.
 - 6.2 Increase non-state funding for core academic programs and new initiatives in research, teaching , and service.
 - 6.3 Reduce administrative costs significantly without substantially reducing the quality of service offered to department chairs, faculty, staff, students, and others.
 - 6.4 Build the analytical and institutional research capacity that supports the college in planning, managing, and evaluating its programs.
 - 6.5 Enhance its communications capacity, with particular attention to 'making the case' for the College, providing important and timely information to both internal and external constituencies, and strengthening student support services and alumni relations (College of Education, 1994, pp. 36-67).
- Dean Bruininks was very shrewd in making sure that College

and the university-wide U2000 missions and strategic goals were aligned. Rumors were again circulating to the effect that there were those in the university hierarchy and in the state legislature who still questioned whether the University of Minnesota really needed a College of Education. "Why couldn't these functions and programs be carried out by those in the state university system?", they asked. The problem was that we were still viewed by most outside the institution and by several key people within it as a place that trained teachers and nothing more. Bruininks knew that for the College to survive, this image had to be changed; indeed it was inaccurate!

10. Name Change: Cosmetic or Substantive?

The first thing Dean Bruininks did was to petition the university administration and our governing Board of Regents to change the name of the College to more accurately reflect what we actually did in line with our strategic plan. He had done his homework by first consulting with other college deans who might or might think that they would be impacted by the change in title, ie, believing it to be too close to their own name and mission. This consultation proved critical. The proposed change was to the College of Education and Human Development (1995). Our programs and faculty were engaged in all manner of human development activities from our globally ranked Institute for Child Development through our Adult Learning and Human Resource Development programs in the Department of Work, Community, and Family Education. The preparation of teachers for initial licensure and in service programs for teachers was but one part of our total activity and a reduced one at that given our move to an all-graduate teacher licensure program in the 1980's described earlier. To some this name change was simply cosmetic. More fundamentally, however, Bruininks and the College used it as the leverage to connect us with all kinds of other units in the university so that if Central

Administration tried to cutback the College budget and programs further, it impacted those units as well and they would come to our defense. It worked magnificently.

A prime example of this was the creation of the Center for Environmental Learning and Leadership (CELL) which was a joint program of the College of Education and Human Development and the College of Natural Resources. CELL coordinates environmental education and leadership activities across the university as well as offering both MEd and MS degrees and hopefully soon, the PhD in this area. The formation of CELL linked these two colleges closely and makes them much less vulnerable to budget cuts since they are fulfilling both their own college missions as well as that of the university as a whole through the focus on interdisciplinary programs.

Several all-university academic minors were developed as well which heavily involved several colleges and thus to cut one of these programs would impact two or more faculties. It was a superb strategy by Bruininks.

11. A Model for the University?

Dean Bruininks then began taking a series of bold moves to set the College apart from other Schools of Education in the region as well as from other colleges within the university. The first initiative, already noted previously, was to totally restructure the College budgeting process and consolidate it into a centralized unit. This eliminated six departmental jobs and theoretically was to streamline the budgeting process so that the College administration had a better grasp of its financial situation at any given point in time. This was not without its difficulties in the implementation stage but these were soon worked out and the model became one for the university.

Next, the College had the department chairs and their units develop revised strategic plans. This would become part of an

ongoing process, ie, continual reassessment of priorities and the means for obtaining goals. Just as in the corporate world, we were in a constant process of reassessing our strengths and weaknesses and finding ways to promote our strengths and improve weak areas.

The move from three academic terms (Fall, Winter, Spring Quarters) to two semesters (Fall and Spring) provided another leverage for change. The move, an all-university restructuring, required that university curricula be reduced by one-third. Thus, it was natural to use this occasion to eliminate courses no longer serving a specific function. We also combined courses which could be integrated into a 15 week semester as opposed to a 10 week quarter. In the process, we thoroughly re-examined our academic degree programs in terms of their quality, relevance and appropriateness. This was a one-time opportunity to really reflect upon and restructure academic programs; even eliminate them when necessary if they were determined to be redundant. All programmatic units engaged in this critical reassessment and the curriculum and degree programs were offered beginning Fall Semester, September 1999. As a result, the college curricula are much stronger, coherent and integrated than ever before.

Bruininks also launched a long-term examination of the College Constitution toward the end of his term. This process is now completed and a totally new, faculty oriented, governance structure is now in place. The former Constitution relied heavily on the Office of the Dean. There was a College Assembly, made up of all the faculty and academic professionals in the college. Meetings of this group were held several times a year when discussions regarding major initiatives or policies needed to be discussed or as a means to disseminating information. There was also a Faculty Senate that met once each term and otherwise as needed, convened by the Dean. This body was elected by the faculty and was to rule on matters of policy, oversee standing committees, and advise the Dean when appropriate. In addition to this, there was a Senate

Consultative Committee, elected from the members of the Senate that met monthly with the Dean. This group brought concerns of the faculty to him as well as the Dean bringing important initiatives he had in mind to the Committee before sending them to the entire faculty.

Frankly speaking, the system was not working very well. When Senate or Assembly meetings were called, few would show up. Indeed, the impetus for change came when, at an important Senate meeting, there were not even enough present to take a vote on a policy item before them. Faculty and the Dean agreed that there was a need to review the structure and make changes to get more people involved in the process of policy and decision-making. This was initiated when I was Chair of the Senate Consultative Committee and continued over a four year period. The Faculty has now approved a new more de-centralized structure allowing for more faculty input. As a result, College Senate members now take their responsibilities far more seriously.

12. The New President

In the Spring of 1997, the University of Minnesota named a new president. Mark Yudof was a lawyer and currently Provost and Senior Vice-President at the University of Texas, Austin. As President, as well as an outsider to the university, he was concerned that he needed a person close to him who knew the university well and could help him learn the university system quickly. Dean Brunininks was already becoming well known and respected in the university community given the remarkable changes he had made in the College of Education and Human Development. At the time of Yudof's appointment, he was Chair of the Deans Council, a group of all academic deans across the university, a position achieved out of respect for the work he had done in the College. President-elect Yudof invited Bruininks to Texas to visit with him about the possibility of becoming Provost and Senior Vice-President

in his administration and to be the person who would help him to quickly understand the university and how it worked.

Yudof selected Bruininks for a number of reasons but in large part because of the way he had taken a College in serious trouble financially and programmatically and reversed its direction. He believed that such a transformation was needed at the all-university level as well and believed that Bruininks was the person to help him do it.

They began working immediately on a process of decentralizing the university decision-making and budgeting process. Both felt that the decisions and the funding to implement them were best placed at the collegiate level. So they implemented a two-part process designed to ensure this.

IMG : Incentive Managed Growth, was a budgetary system implemented by Yudof's predecessor, Nils Hasselmo. It is a process designed to substantially de-centralized authority, responsibility and accountability. Under IMG, the level of state financial support for colleges was set on 1 July 1997. From that point forward, colleges now received whatever the level of state support was for their unit as of 7/1/97 plus 51% of their indirect cost recovery (ICR) funds (overhead on externally funded grants and contracts) and all tuition revenues. In addition, they have the grants and contracts they secure for special research and development projects. If a college experiences growth in these budgets, especially tuition and ICR, they are obviously in a position to increase their academic programs and faculty cohort. However, if they do not meet their current budget targets set on 1st July 1997, then they will have very serious retrenchment decisions to make. But in all instances the process allows for the College to be responsible for its own future both in terms of programs as well as in the budgets to support them as well. This was essentially the process that Bruininks had already put in place in the College of Education and Human Development so we were perhaps better poised than any other collegiate unit in the university to take advantage of this. Bruininks

had told the College faculty again and again when he was Dean that our future was in our own hands; that we could create the conditions to grow or we could complain and do nothing and see the College disappear. As in the case of Dean Gardner before him, with respect to the institution of postbaccalaureate teacher licensure programs, the faculty did not go enthusiastically into these efforts. But I do believe that most realized that we were at a critical point and we either changed the way in which we worked quite substantially or we would cease to exist. Bruininks saw every challenge as an opportunity. "You can either sit back and complain about the hand you have been dealt (a reference often used in the USA referring to a game of cards) or you can say to yourself, what can I make out of this that is positive and progressive". I think in the long term we were well served by Dean Brunininks' forward looking, visionary posture. He has carried this same view forward at the university level as well.

CPP : The second element of the restructuring is the Compact Planning Process. This process is carried out with each collegiate unit on the campus and is designed to engage them in the same kind of strategic planning process in which we engaged in the College of Education and Human Development from 1991-1994. Basically, each collegiate unit must go through a strategic planning process in which they

- identify their academic priorities,
- develop collegiate and unit databases,
- design an enrollment and revenue management strategy,
- note specific faculty and staff issues and priorities,
- note facilities issues which need attention if the college and its units are to meet their Compact goals, and, develop a specific financial plan to achieve the Compact as well as any special funds they will need to obtain to meet their targets.

Central administration then examines the Compact Plan in view of central mission and priorities and either agrees, modifies or rejects proposals. In the end, the Provost and the College Dean

agree to the revised Compact and this is the plan to which both are held for the agreed upon period, usually two years. It is like a contract between the university and its collegiate units.

13. Summary

Much has been written in the last decade about the reform and restructuring of institutions and programs in higher education globally. Indeed, this is one of the major areas of concern within the academy as we enter the millennium. Most of these reports are of an analytical and policy nature. In this brief essay, I have tried to share a more personal view of the educational reform which Michael Fullan most aptly described as "a process; not an event" (Fullan, 1996). Institutional change is slow and often quite painful to those who are involved. But it is inevitable; nothing remains the same.

Those of us in higher education are perhaps are only now beginning to face what our colleagues in the primary and secondary school sector did two decades or more ago. But face it we must with all the creativity and innovative behaviour our intellect can muster. For without a careful, thoughtful, visionary examination of who we are, what is our purpose and where our future lies, we shall fail and other institutions and/or entrepreneurs will replace us. This is without a doubt our most critical challenge of the last century. Let us hope that we are equal to the task.

References

- College of Education (1994) Strategic Plan: Preparing Leaders in Education and Human Development. Minneapolis, MN: College of Education, University of Minnesota.
- Fullan, M. (1996) Change Force, New York: Falmer.
- Holmes Group (1986) Tomorrow's Teachers: A Report of the Holmes Group, East Lansing, MI: The Holmes Group.