INTERSEGMENTAL ACTIVITY FROM THE UC PERSPECTIVE

Intersegmental Coordinating Council Conference

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There is nothing new about intersegmental activities in this state. There is something new in the rapid pace with which joint programs have been developing in the past few years. The impetus for this more recent round of intersegmental efforts flows from a collective concern over reform of the schools generally--a concern that has a very personal dimension for me because of my work as Chairman of the National Commission on Excellence in Education. This is now spilling over to the higher education community.

One very beneficial result of the K-12 reform movement has been to encourage all of us engaged in the educational enterprise to take a more active and lively interest in the prospects and conditions of every other part of the educational system. We have a stronger sense of the ways in which K-12, the Community Colleges, the California State University, the independent colleges and universities, and the University of California complement, support, and affect each other's work. And we surely have a greater sense of the ways in which cooperation can dramatically increase our effectiveness, which is the reason we are here today.

I know you have already discussed many of the central issues that demand attention and action--that is transfer and articulation issues, curriculum and assessment, the improvement of teaching, and outreach and student preparation. This afternoon you will concentrate on building an agenda for the future in terms of these critical issues. There are, of course, titles that very easily might have accompanied a conference of this kind for very many decades. But they occur within an ever-changing environment in this State. So these are enduring issues, but not static ones. Thus it is critical, it seems to me that we have a continuing dialogue about these matters.

I will offer very brief comments about those points I believe are of the greatest importance without offering solutions.

First--and most urgent--is the need to attract more minority students in our state into higher education and to help them succeed once they arrive there. We are all familiar with the statistics that tell us California's population is diversifying rapidly, we all know that but we need to think about what it means in a more systematic and forthright fashion than we tend to. The educational imperative that flows from this demographic reality by and large is clear. We must do a better job than we have done historically in preparing and motivating these young people to enter into higher education, the professions, and the

mainstream economic life of this country. Whether you are here to work on student outreach, curriculum and assessment, transfer, or the improvement of teaching, I hope you will carry in your discussions the matter of how to improve the entire system the participation rate of minority students in the state.

How we can pool our respective strengths to accomplish these objectives and how all of us involved--faculties, staffs, students, administration, legislators, the Governor's Office, the professions, the business community can collectively make more progress here than we have historically.

Second, I hope you will also concentrate on how we can best consolidate gains we have already made in strengthening student preparation. Working together, the segments have created a number of very successful pilot programs. Whatever failures we have we also have some successes. We should consolidate those and call more attention to them. Experience and statistical evidence both testify to dramatic differences from these programs as to their effect. The challenge now is to find ways to extend the successful programs and shrink those that work less well so that the resources available to us can be used in an optimal fashion.

Third, I hope you will also include in your discussions some consideration of how we can enable faculty and staff to better prepare students for a society that is becoming increasingly diverse and multicultural. This is an issue that is actively being discussed and debated by the faculties of all the segments and that debate will continue. We live in what is for America a shrinking world, more interdependent, complex, and closely linked than ever before. Whatever the outcome we must be seeking ways to better prepare our students to live in what will be an increasingly multicultured and multi-ethnic state and in what will be a shrinking, interdependent world.

It is debated because people do not see this issue the same; it is healthy that it is debated. We need to see to it that the debate is as informed as possible, as carefully considered as we can possibly make it, and as free as possible from influences which complicate rather than inform.

For education at all levels, this new global reality has far-reaching implications. It means we must rework teacher training programs to include curricula and pedagogical techniques more closely attuned to different cultural learning styles. It means incorporating a more global rather than a parochial perspective into the education we give our students, from kindergarten

through graduate school. It means preparing California's students to play new, and often unpredictable, roles in a global and competitive world economy. We cannot accomplish these ends through narrow training or a truncated education; we can only accomplish them through a broad education and through training that takes these forces into account.

Now the Intersegmental Coordinating Council--and the Round Table itself--is being viewed nationally as an almost unprecedented experiment in voluntary cooperation. Coerced cooperation is a contradiction in terms. No one else has tried in this same way to bring together program directors, faculty members, administrators and policy makers, and indeed, students within a single <u>voluntary</u> organization. I like that approach. Like its counterparts, the University of California has made a determined commitment of staff time and energy to this cooperation, and we will continue to do so, believing it is the way for our institutions to work together.

Because we face new challenges in this state--demographic, cultural, economic, and numerical, and a burgeoning demand for higher education, the reasons for which we are all well acquainted, the outcome of this experiment will be of great moment in California and beyond. That is to say, the experiment to find ways and means of cooperating with one another so as to more effectively achieve our respective agendas.

Thus I am very glad to be here to encourage this effort and to reaffirm the commitment of the University of California.