

less possible alone to provide instruction adequate by the standards of preparation for graduate study. Through pooling resources and avoiding duplication, groups of institutions should be able to do so.

Challenge Three: To recompose the intellectual content and procedures of liberal education, so that it will include substantial attention to the linguistics of intellect and the use of new technologies for information transfer. This challenge cuts across all fields. Meeting it in the fashion suggested would introduce *language* as a major new cross-disciplinary field at the undergraduate level. The intensive introduction of newer means of information transfer would be closely related to this substantive innovation. Of great importance, meeting this challenge would make more possible the establishment of a new coherence in liberal education around a central concern for achieving understanding through the competent grasp of the processes and structures of inquiry and conceptual innovation.

Challenge Four: To reorient the college in relation to community, so that it and associated institutions will play a vigorous, constructive part in shaping community development. This does not mean an intensified "public relations" or "community relations" effort in customary image-building terms. It means the active civic involvement of the institution as a corporate citizen sharing in policy decisions and actual commitments to affect the nature of the community environment. It appears especially feasible—and needed—in an area marked by incipient urbanization and inter-college cooperation.

These challenges form a major agenda for Hampshire College in present planning. The College intends to meet each as directly, boldly, and sensibly as possible. The next section briefly sketches the broad outlines of the position Hampshire College takes with great regard to these four matters. Subsequent sections detail more specifically the nature of the Hampshire program within these outlines.

2

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE AS AN INSTRUMENT OF CHANGE

Because we are, inevitably, creatures of the past, our tendency is to use each additional year of schooling as a mere quantitative extension of previous years, and to fit our schools into existing and familiar patterns. That habit was not unjustified in the nineteenth century, but the justification for it has disappeared. We are confronted, in planning for the next generation, with a demand for more radical reforms. We are required to reconsider the functioning of our whole educational enterprise, . . . to look at it not so much in historical context as in the context of present and future requirements.

HENRY STEELE COMMAGER
Universal Higher Education

ALBERT SLOMAN has commented that "a university in the making lacks the dispensation of the armchair critic. . . . [It] has to transform its ideas into reality."⁴⁰ In *A University in the Making*, Vice-Chancellor Sloman gives eloquent testimony to the amount of planning and building required to transform the idea of the new University of Essex into a reality, almost overnight. What is true of a new English university turns out to be true as well for a new American college in the making. Planning and building are detailed and difficult acts. But even more difficult, and not really to be left to armchair critics either, is the prior articulation of ideas worth transforming into reality. In America today, if this need is taken seriously, it means articulating ideas

which will produce what Professor Commager calls for, radical reforms arising out of a reconsideration of the whole educational enterprise.

The ideas that Hampshire College will transform into reality are in part implicit in what has been said so far. Institutions, like people, define themselves by their acts. Hampshire will define itself by responding to the challenges discussed in the preceding section, by articulating ideas relevant to these challenges, and by acting upon them.

In doing so, the central character of the College will be clear: Hampshire proposes to be both an undergraduate institution of excellence and an innovative force in higher education generally.

To have any meaning, these two generalities must be spelled out in terms of specific ideas, and these must be transformed into reality. Only through this process will it be possible to see what the College's intentions and character really are.

The dual proposition from which Hampshire moves forward has immediate meaning, however. Proposing to be "an undergraduate institution of excellence" means, above all, that the College regards its students, their intellectual, moral, and aesthetic education, as its over-riding commitment. The College exists first for them. Proposing to be "an innovative force in higher education generally" means that Hampshire College will be bold enough to make no small plans. The College intends to be an "experimenting" one, not tied to a narrow or doctrinaire "experimental" orthodoxy. It intends to innovate and experiment, in every dimension of collegiate education where it appears promising to do so. It plans to sustain an experimental mood as far forward in time as it can. It will regard no cows, academic or of other breed, as sacred. And it intends to have an impact on all of education. Hampshire College may be new and far from abounding in means, but it intends to make a difference.

These two general commitments of Hampshire College are expressed through four interconnected vectors. The College is seen as:

A laboratory for experimenting with economically feasible ways the private liberal arts college can be a more effective intellectual and moral force in a changing culture.

A catalyst and innovator of increased interinstitutional cooperation in order to maximize the variety and quality of education available.

A pioneer in making language a substantive, vigorous component of

liberal education, and in using advances in information transfer for increased effectiveness and economy in the process of education.

A corporate citizen actively involved in community development, joining the life and welfare of the academic community with that of the world around it.

In Hampshire College, these vectors are not separable from each other. They make up a unified field of force. Improving liberal education for its own students *and* for the good of the whole educational enterprise is the unifying agent. Experimentation in academic program and campus life, pressing interinstitutional cooperation forward, pioneering in language and information transfer, and civic involvement are bound together in the central thrust of the College toward excellence and innovative impact.

1. THE NEED FOR HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE: 1958

Nearly a decade ago, four distinguished institutions of higher education in the Connecticut Valley outlined, as a part of their collaboration with each other, plans for a new private liberal arts college. A four-college committee, representing Amherst, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and the University of Massachusetts, worked for a number of months on this project, under sponsorship of the Ford Foundation. The results of their deliberations were published as *The New College Plan: A Proposal for a Major Departure in Higher Education* in 1958.⁴⁷

The study had been requested by the presidents of the four institutions. They had "been aware for some time of the imminent demands upon American colleges to provide space and opportunity for a vastly enlarged body of students." In view of these demands, the presidents wished to consider "the possibility of creating a fifth institution in their general area, to which they might contribute and with which they might develop new departures in educational methods and techniques." Their "hope was to plan a new college which would provide education of the highest quality at a minimum cost per student."⁴⁸

The need for a new institution was underlined by the 1958 faculty committee in approximately the same terms:

It is acknowledged on all sides that American higher education is facing a crisis and that if we are to continue "the pursuit of excellence"

on which our society's growth, health, and safety depend, we shall have to bring to bear both great resources and great imagination. Many things will need to be done to meet the rapidly mounting demand which is the result not only of a drastic increase in the college age population, but also of the steadily rising proportion of our young people who are seeking a college education. Amherst, Mount Holyoke, Smith, and the University of Massachusetts are already engaged in exploring and carrying out measures which each can take individually to meet the coming challenge. This report proposes that the four institutions also make a contribution cooperatively by sponsoring a new departure in liberal education of the highest quality.

The college which we propose would embody marked economies—in staff and in other resources—but it is designed to provide an education comparable to that of the "prestige" colleges. There will be a pressing need for more room at the top in an epoch when there will not be room enough in our exceptional colleges for many of our exceptional students. But still more important will be the need to demonstrate more efficient use of teaching resources, inevitably limited in the coming period. . . .

To sponsor such a pilot plant should be a particularly appropriate role for privately endowed colleges, since as they are presently constituted they cannot, for economic reasons, expand rapidly and still maintain the high standards which are their distinctive contribution. Added significance and range will be given to the project by the happy circumstance that three rather diverse private institutions are associated with a publicly supported university. Unless a drastic increase in efficiency can be achieved, it may be that privately endowed institutions will not be able to sustain their role as leaders in the educational world. A restructuring of liberal education to meet this challenge is what is proposed in the plan for a cooperatively sponsored institution which we are calling "New College."⁴⁰

The need seen in 1958, therefore, was to restructure liberal education, in order (a) to provide for increasing numbers of students, (b) to do so at a level of high academic quality, (c) to do so on an economical basis, and (d) to show that these things could be accomplished in a private institution. The four-college committee proposed to demonstrate that this need could be met by a new kind of undergraduate private college in which curriculum and academic organization would be simplified; students would take greater responsibility for their learning; increased

use would be made of mechanical and electronic learning aids; and the student-faculty ratio would be double that in colleges of comparable quality.

The model proposed by the 1958 committee struck a chord to which many in higher education responded. The New College Plan was intensively discussed in the Valley where it was born. In addition, it aroused wide interest elsewhere in the United States and England.

It came at a time when concern about rising numbers of students, about costs and quality, and about the viability of the liberal arts college was setting in sharply. It came at a time when many professors and administrators were becoming restive about a traditional curriculum which seemed at once regimented and wastefully proliferated. And the 1958 report came in the first flush of enthusiasm about the new auto-instructional machines. In consequence the New College model became a reference point in the planning and development of a number of new institutions, private and public. It was nowhere adopted *in toto*, but in many places its ideas and suggestions were drawn upon.

In a word, in 1958 there was a need for the kind of fresh, optimistic thinking the New College represented.

2. THE NEED FOR HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE RECONSIDERED: 1966

The chartering of Hampshire College in 1965 resulted from a conviction on the part of several men that the need identified in 1958 remained real and that the idea of a new, innovating college remained sound. Mr. Harold F. Johnson, Amherst alumnus, committed a gift of six million dollars to the new college and accepted responsibility as Chairman of its Board of Trustees. Dr. Charles W. Cole, President-Emeritus of Amherst, became Vice-Chairman of Hampshire's Board. The other founding trustees were Mr. Winthrop S. Dakin, Chairman of the Massachusetts State Board of Higher Education; Dr. Richard G. Gettell, President of Mount Holyoke College; Dr. John W. Lederle, President of the University of Massachusetts; Dr. Thomas C. Mendenhall, President of Smith College; and Dr. Calvin H. Plimpton, President of Amherst College.*

*The complement of the Board of Trustees remains to be completed. It is hoped to attract to trusteeship other distinguished scholars and cultural leaders with a

These leaders did not assume that the need of 1965 and after would be absolutely identical with the need perceived in 1958. Nor did they assume that the New College model of 1958 would constitute a precise prescription for the 1970's. They understood that a new diagnosis of need and a new projection of the institutional model were required.

As a step in the latter direction, on October 15, 1965 the trustees invited a new four-college committee of faculty to advise Hampshire College on the design of its educational program. The advice sought was to be within the general lines of ". . . an undergraduate program, experimental in nature, fashioned to encourage and take strength from the present and potential cooperative arrangements, which will make possible high quality education with the least possible expenditure."⁵⁰ This directive echoed 1958 in principle, but left the new Educational Advisory Committee relatively free to make a fresh approach to institutional model building.

The committee used the 1958 report as its "starting point and touchstone," and on April 13, 1966 submitted its own views. A number of its suggestions were new or at variance with the 1958 study, but all of its conclusions were felt to be "clearly within both the tone and the spirit of the New College Plan."⁶¹ Many are incorporated in the present plan of Hampshire College. So, too, are many of the recommendations first made by the 1958 committee.

While much of the 1958 need and proposal therefore still stands reflected in the current design of Hampshire College, there are also changes. The need has changed in some critical ways; now and for the somewhat visible future it has dimensions which were not there to see in 1958. The College, in consequence, has features and functions which were not part of the 1958 planning.

The need for Hampshire College in the present period is heightened by a wide range of developments in the society and in higher education. These were treated from one angle of vision in the first chapter. The major problems—and opportunities—that these developments present to colleges and universities can be catalogued in other ways. No matter

strong interest in the future of liberal education in America. In this direction, the Board recently elected M. I. T. Professor Elting E. Morison, historian, biographer, and social critic.

how it is done, the need seen in 1958 is enlarged, made more complex and more acute. There is an even greater need in 1966 than in 1958 for "a major departure in higher education."

This is evident in John W. Gardner's perceptive agenda of major problems facing colleges and universities. Shortly before joining the Cabinet, Secretary Gardner spoke of the following as the things the times demand of higher education:

Restoring the status of teaching. Teaching, particularly of undergraduates, is being slighted today. "The reinstatement of teaching as an important function of the undergraduate college . . ." may be hastened by student discontent, but the decisions that move the college in that direction must be faculty decisions.

Reforming the undergraduate curriculum. Such a movement is under way; it will reappraise aims and transform instruction in all the major fields. It must stress interdisciplinary approaches and "reintroduce into the undergraduate program the breadth so essential for young people who will reach the peak of their careers in the 21st century."

Improving institutional planning. To be able to provide education of high quality for the radically increased number of college students in the 1970's and after will require "an attentiveness to the economics of education greater than any we have exhibited in the past." Secretary Gardner continued with emphasis that "*we're going to have to learn lessons about planned diversity among institutions and also some hard lessons about cooperation among institutions.*"⁵²

Reforming the college calendar and making the four-year pattern flexible. Virtually all institutions are going to have to go into year-round operation on some form of revised calendar. The four-year pattern will have to be made flexible, both for speeding up or slowing down: "We are now ready to dispense with the tradition of a four-year uninterrupted college education." Some students benefit by acceleration. Others "benefit greatly by a break in the four years—for a year abroad, or a year at work, or a year of traveling, or just a year to figure out what it is they want to be or do."

Bringing the small independent liberal arts college back into the mainstream. Such colleges presently "can no longer compete with the universities in attracting able and highly motivated faculty members or students. . . . *The best chance of salvaging the small liberal arts college lies in devising new means of cooperation among institutions.* . . ."⁵³ [The] need is for the small college to relate itself to *some* larger system

in such a way that it can retain its autonomy but still enjoy access to the richness and diversity of resource that professors and students demand."

Developing leadership in continuing education. Colleges and universities "should provide intellectual leadership with respect to such education"; if they do not, the movement will proceed anyway, but without needed guidance.

Playing a responsible part in the urban community. One of the greatest struggles of our time will be to try to solve the problems of urbanism. "Coping with these problems is going to be very near the top of the national agenda. . . . There are no institutions better equipped to serve as a base for that struggle than the colleges and universities, but they have played a negligible role to date."

Reconstructing the academic institution as a healthy community. On "every college or university campus in the nation the sense of community is diminishing." The neglect of teaching, the anonymity and impersonality of student life, the rise of the disciplines as powerful professional communities, the impact of urbanization, all contribute to the decline of community in the academic institution. It is crucial to offset these factors and provide youth with education in a face-to-face academic community which has internal coherence, shared membership, and morale.

Secretary Gardner's diagnosis of needs that higher education must meet, like the discussion of challenging circumstances in the previous chapter, suggests why a "major departure" in 1966 must go beyond what was specified in 1958.

In the intervening years it has become evident that the major questions include *much* more than increasing student self-instruction through student-led discussion groups, teaching machines, and other techniques. Questions of survival and effectiveness, especially in undergraduate education, have become acutely clear. These involve more than keeping costs within sensible limits. They include qualitative questions of the first order: e.g., whether undergraduate education will help students find any sense of meaning and worth in themselves and society; whether undergraduate education will occur in an intellectual and moral community which may have tensions but also has pride and morale; whether undergraduate education will contribute to the health of the general

culture; and whether colleges will make a real difference in the swift development of urbanism.

John Gardner said further that he did not:

believe that the colleges and universities will go under because they are carrying heavy burdens. If they deteriorate it will be because they lacked the morale, the internal coherence, and the adaptiveness to meet the requirements of the future; it will be because in the moment of their greatest success they could not pull themselves together to face new challenges.⁵⁴

The New College of 1958 had relevance to needs as seen then. The decade since then has accented the earlier needs and added new ones. The justification for Hampshire College is that, like its antecedent model in 1958, it proposes major departures to meet major needs. As such, the College aims at realizing the full excitement of liberal education in new terms, suited to tomorrow's students and their society. As such, the College hopes to have a measure of constructive influence on the evolving character of higher education as a whole.