

Leadership Address

Introduction

What is a "Provost"?

Dictionary: Latin: propositus... "the one in charge..."

1. chief dignitary of a collegiate or cathedral chapter
2. chief magistrate of a Scottish burgh
3. a high-ranking university administrative officer
4. the keeper of a prison

Oh, yes...it comes after "provolone"...the big cheese

At Michigan:

1. Provost is the one who says "No"...
...so the President can say yes!
2. President leads, Provost pushes...
3. President determines direction, Provost determines pace

At Michigan, the Provost, like the President, is chosen from the academic ranks.

Remember, I am first and foremost a faculty member... who has spent 20 years in the trenches teaching, doing research, serving on committees -- including Senate Assembly...and pushing against administrators

So why did I leave my comfy home in Engineering?

I do not have an unusual streak of masochism...

Nor do I have an unusually high threshold for pain

Nore was it HTS's persuasiveness alone, although that was certainly a factor...

Rather, I sensed the University at a stage remarkably similar to my own College of Engineering when I was sentenced to 5 years of hard labor as Dean in 1981.

A time of opportunity, responsibility, and challenge:

Clouds on the horizon:

Poor State funding...

Gram-Rudman, federal tax reform...

the demographic crunch...

Ohio State is getting better with each passing week

Yet the UM seems poised to surge ahead...opportunities

1. Reputation as the flagship of public higher education

2. People

A faculty of great intellectual strength and unusual breadth

Student body of quality unsurpassed by any public institution

Quality x quantity = #1

Largest alumni body in US (1 out of every 1,000 Americans)

3. Resources

Prosperous state, with the potential for greater support

Federal support...learning how to play game better

Private support...Campaign for Michigan

4. Ability to control our own destiny
 - Best of public and private worlds
 - Public support - \$200 M/y -- \$4 B endowment
 - Greater than Harvard and Texas
 - Autonomy of private institution
- Summary of Opportunities:
Believe UM faces opportunities unmatched by another other institution in this nation...
The opportunity is there...
But then so are some important responsibilities!

Responsibilities

To our students

The "raw material" entering this institution today is the most valuable resource of our nation... Truly extraordinary (quality and commitment).

We must be responsible stewards and provide the "value-added" of an outstanding education.

Incidentally, despite the fact I'm an engineer, I am firmly committed to the importance

ce of a broad
and liberal education...including some science,
of course...

To our faculty

Hired over 900 new faculty in past 5 years
Salaries to asst and assoc prof the best
Getting the best!
And we owe them the opportunity to develop their
exceptional talents to the fullest by providing them
with the environment, support, and encouragement to
push to the limits of their abilities.

To our State and nation

We are a public institution, cError!
an important responsibility to our state and nation.

Challenges:

It is a time of unusual opportunity, to be sure. But, if
we are to grasp these opportunities while meeting our
responsibilities, I believe we must face several important
challenges.

These challenges are not so much concerned with resources
state funding or physical facilities or such.

Rather they are concerned with the very nature of what we
believe the University is...and what we wish it to be.

These are challenges of excellence!

1. Picking up the pace a bit...

To build a level of intensity and expectation to
settle for nothing less than the best in the performance
of faculty, students, and programs
The thundering herd...the hoofbeats behind us
Excellence sets us apart...
provides the visibility to attract resources
We must shake off that extraordinary intolerance of extreme
excellence which seems to plague midwestern institutions...
and set our course for achieving the best.

2. Focusing resources to achieve excellence...

Should not try to be all things to all people...
The time of continual increases in public support ended more
than a decade ago.
Quality should dominate breadth and capacity...
Build "spires" of excellence

3. Highest priority: academic excellence

UM's reputation and quality will be based on its
activities in instruction and scholarship...
Academic excellence must be our highest priority...

4. Changing intellectual currents...

Intellectual leadership...

demands pushing to the forefront of discovery
working on the exponential part of the knowledge curve
Shift to a change-oriented, risk-taking culture
Relish change!!!
Stress bold, new initiatives...
Defy the deification of disciplines
New knowledge created at interfaces...
At turbulent mixing, collision of disciplines

5. A sense of community, collegiality

Resist "centrifical" forces on strong disciplines...
Pull people together...

Narrative:

The University of Michigan faces a period of unusual opportunity, responsibility, and challenge in the years ahead.

Today, it can be argued that the University faces opportunities matched by few institutions in this nation. Its reputation as the flagship of public higher education -- indeed, as a "public Ivy" -- has allowed it to attract a student body and faculty of unprecedented quality. While the relative level of state support is not as strong as it once was, the University still benefits from its location in one of the nation's most prosperous regions. The roughly \$200 million it receives each year in direct state funding is equivalent to the income from a \$4 billion endowment! Furthermore, in recent years the University has learned to compete more effectively for federal research support and to attract strong private support from its alumni, friends, foundations, and industry.

Beyond these human and financial resources, the University has benefited over the years from the almost unique independence it has been granted by the State of Michigan, an autonomy established through the original constitutional action which created the institution. This independence allows the University to set its own goals -- to chart its own course. It has been key in achieving and sustaining Michigan's leadership among public universities over the years. Indeed, in a sense, the University enjoys the best of both public and private higher education: the independence of a private institution to set unusually high standards for academic achievement, and the strong support of a public institution to allow the achievement of unusual scale and breadth in its activities.

With opportunity also comes responsibility. Of course, the public nature of the University demands that we accept important responsibilities to serve our state and our nation. However, beyond this traditional role, the fact that today we are presently enrolling the most outstanding student body in our history carries with it the responsibility to provide an education of unmatched quality. So too does our ability to attract the most talented junior faculty entail additional responsibilities for

their professional development. In a very real sense, through its students and faculty, the University has been entrusted with the most valuable resource of our society. We must be effective stewards by taking actions aimed at developing this talent to the fullest.

To seize the opportunities before us, to meet our responsibilities, the University must respond to several challenges. It is customary to think first of the challenges posed by external factors, of responding to declining public support or changing demographics. However we suggest instead that the most important challenges before the University today are those having to do with what this institution is and what we wish it to become in the years ahead. We believe these to be challenges of excellence:

1. First, we suggest that the University must pick up the pace a bit by intensifying its commitment to excellence. Like it or not, the University competes with other institutions not simply for its reputation, but for outstanding students and faculty and for financial resources from both the public and private sector. To sustain our expectations for achievement, we must maintain the margin of excellence that sets us apart from others, that provides the visibility necessary to attract the human and financial resources essential for leadership. Other institutions are accelerating rapidly, and Michigan must do likewise just to remain ahead of the thundering herd behind us.

2. Key to our efforts to achieve excellence will be our willingness to take decisive internal actions designed to focus resources on areas of particularly high quality and critical importance. The time when continually growing state support allowed us to place equal emphasis on quality, breadth, and capacity have long since passed. We can no longer afford to be all things to all people. We must choose carefully those areas in which we can be outstanding, and then make the commitments of resources to achieve excellence. The quality of our activities must dominate their breadth and capacity.

3. In focusing our resources to achieve excellence, we must choose academic excellence -- education, scholarship, and research of the highest quality -- as our highest priority. We are convinced that achievement in these areas must be the foundation upon which the distinction of the University will be built.

A time of opportunity, responsibility, and challenge, to be sure -- but a time of excitement as well. We believe that the University today faces one of those critical crossroads in its history. If we choose our course wisely, with courage conviction, and commitment, we can meet the challenges of excellence and seize the opportunities before us to build new levels of distinction for the institution.

It is in this spirit that we suggest both a direction and a strategy capable of guiding the University of Michigan into the 21st Century. The mission is deceptively simple: to choose as the University's primary goal the building of leadership for tomorrow on a foundation of academic excellence. But the challenge of leadership requires both a theme and a plan if we are to be successful, and it is to these elements that we now turn our attention.

Strategic Planning Process

So how do we respond to this time of opportunity, responsibility, and challenge?

I suggest that we do not "respond"...as we have all too often in the past, but that we seize the initiative by taking action to determine our own destiny.

All too often in the past, we have tended to respond to external pressures, opportunities, needs, rather than taking control of our own destiny. We have been blown in one direction or another by winds from outside. It is now time that we grasp the wheel firmly to steer the University in a direction appropriate for the future.

Narrative:

Why bother?

1. All too often the University has tended to respond to external pressures and opportunities rather than taking strong actions to determine and pursue its own objectives.

2. We must counter the tendency to become preoccupied with process rather than objectives...with how rather than what...

3. To seize the opportunities, to face the responsibilities, and to meet the challenges before us, the University should initiate a process capable of determining both a direction and a strategy capable of guiding it into the 21st Century.

In a sense, I propose that we initiate a process of "strategic leadership" that first addresses the question about "what" we want this University to be -- what our values, goals, priorities, and objectives should be.

We should approach our future "strategically" rather than merely position ourselves to respond.

A Plan to Respond to the Challenge of Leadership

First phase: "what" do we want to be?

"Smaller but better"?...

"Poorer but wiser"?...

What is unique about UM -- our "market niche"?

A large, comprehensive, public, research university

A serious commitment to scholarship
 Unusual breadth, rich diversity of academic disciplines,
 professional schools, social and cultural activities
 Unusual degree of participation of faculty and students in
 University decisions
 AND... probably the highest quality undergraduate student
 body of any public university in the nation...
 Indeed, UM probably enrolls more outstanding students
 than any university in the nation.

Suggestion:

Why don't we take advantage of these factors by choosing a
 mission which links together
 Teaching, research, and service
 Quality, breadth, and size
 Undergraduate, graduate, professional education
 and faculty development
 to provide UM with a unique role in higher education.

Suggestion: A mission of leadership

For the decade ahead, the UM should select as its primary
 goal: "Building the leadership of tomorrow on a foundation
 of academic excellence.

We should place primary emphasis on the development of
 leadership through the education of our students, the
 intellectual development and contribution of our faculty.

Of course, the key to success in this mission will be academic
 excellence: education, scholarship, and research of the
 highest quality.

Such a mission would:

- 1) Take advantage of where we are today...
- 2) Enhance our impact on society in a manner consistent with
 our responsibilities as a public institution
- 3) Lay the foundation for the long term strength and distinction
 of the University through the achievement, contributions,
 and influence of its graduates and faculty.

Some Basic Operating Principles

1. Academic institutions are profoundly people-dependent

Hence, the key to excellence is attracting and
 retaining the outstanding students, faculty, and
 staff, and providing them with the environment
 and encouragement to push to the limits of their
 abilities, and then getting out of their way!

**2. Strive for an entrepreneurial, change-oriented,
 risk-taking culture...**

Which stresses excellence, achievement, and
 excitement...which removes constraints from
 talented people and encourages them to

"go g□r xt"!

3. I am a faculty member

Fought for 20 years, in the trenches...

< - **Bonvinced that faculty! □hould run this place □**

UM strength: HTS, me...

Hope that I can understc

d, shape your values and concerns,

.hlad 4 - ...and respond effectively...

4. Have to «et oqt of blockhouse...

it in on Q□nate#As□eo□ly...

`head 3 - Visit schools and colleges....hea| 3 - E-m!il...

Conclqding remarks

For I believe the Univepsity will faa□ many opport□nxties in the years ahead.

Exceptional quality of its people --

studentsment to excellence...

our determination to-Éeek only the best!

2.!ÄWe must focus our resources to build spires of excellence...

to stress quality owÖr breadth,and capacity!

3. We must place academic excellence as our highest priority.!

5é And we must build the kind of exciting, change-oriented risk-taking enwâronment which will stimulate our students aneÄfaculty to push to the limits of th!ir abilities, to creat that sense of excitement, both in scholarship and in ãe□cation,

which characterizes the most distinguished instit□tions.

Add one more word...

The dea□de ahead will indeed be a time of opportunity, responsibility, and challenge.

But there is one more word that I believe we should-Ädd

to those ckaracterizing Michigan's future: excitement!

I believe Mxchigan is going to be an extraordinarily exciting place in the years ahead...and I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues during this period of opportunity and excitement to maintain and strengthen Michigan's long tradition of excellence.