

October 14, 1999

Dr. Earl Lewis, Dean
Rackham School of Graduate Studies
The University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

Dear Earl:

We are submitting to you the final report of the University-College Partnership Study Committee. The Committee has completed its feasibility study of possible partnerships linking high caliber liberal arts colleges with the University of Michigan. It has concluded that there is great potential benefit both to the University and partner institutions through such relationships.

The University of Michigan could benefit in several ways:

- By using faculty-mentored teaching residencies at such liberal arts colleges to better prepare our graduates for the diverse array of faculty roles characteristic of higher education in America.
- By providing graduate programs at the University with access to the outstanding undergraduate students produced by these colleges.
- And by establishing intellectual relationships between the faculties of the two institutions which could provide our programs with greater impact.

The participating liberal arts colleges would also benefit significantly:

- By having access to research opportunities through the faculty, facilities, libraries, and other intellectual resources of the University.
- By having the opportunity to evaluate some of our strongest Ph.D. students through the teaching residency program;
- And by working with the Michigan faculty in various disciplines to weave our cutting-edge research into their undergraduate programs.

To make this feasibility study more concrete, we have had extensive discussions with the leadership and faculties of two of the most outstanding liberal arts colleges in the nation, Oberlin College and Kalamazoo College. Both are extremely enthusiastic about the potential of such partnerships and willing to commit both faculty and financial resources to the effort. These two particular interactions could provide models for a broader set of relationships with an alliance of such liberal arts colleges such as the Great Lakes College Association.

We have laid out a series of next steps, including the launch of a "Preparing Future Faculty" program with Oberlin and Kalamazoo, the formation of faculty steering committees to oversee programmatic interactions, a joint conference on undergraduate education, and efforts to seek external funding for such partnerships. However it is also clear that for such efforts to move forward, you and your colleagues in the University administration first need to approve, at least in principle, the development of such partnerships in a manner similar to

the commitments made by Oberlin and Kalamazoo. Such a decision would allow the University to move ahead with the necessary fund-raising efforts and program development.

In our discussions throughout the past year we also explored the possibility of relationships with comprehensive universities, with Eastern Michigan University as the case study. Although there was considerable interest in such possibilities both at UM and EMU, the significant differences between faculty environments and roles at these two institutions presented additional complexities that we were unable to resolve during the course of our study. Hence while we have recommended that these relationships continued to be studied, perhaps by joint faculty committees at the level of particular schools or programs, we have no recommendations at this time for specific actions.

Let me note that the Committee you appointed and charged with this task was quite exceptional, comprised of a number of our most creative faculty members and involving strong student participation. Committee members worked very hard and enthusiastically on this project. I should also commend the efforts of Homer Rose, who was invaluable in holding together the many issues considered by the Committee and keeping the effort on track.

In conclusion, it is the belief of the University-College Partnership Study Committee that alliances between the University of Michigan and outstanding liberal arts college would offer very significant opportunities for enhancing the quality of graduate education and opening up new intellectual opportunities for faculty and students both of the University and our partner colleges. Such alliances among colleges and universities of quite different character and mission will become increasingly important in the years ahead. We believe Michigan has an unusual opportunity to explore such possibilities through joint experiments with Oberlin College and Kalamazoo College, and we strongly recommend moving ahead with these efforts.

Although the Committee has completed its effort, both I and several members of the group are willing to continue to provide whatever help might be of assistance in launching the next steps.

Sincerely yours,

James J. Duderstadt