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DECLINE, NEW DEMANDS, AND QUALITY: THE CONTEXT FOR RENEWAL

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It has been five years since Ken Mortimer's insightful monograph, *The Three R's of the 1980's* (1979), made "reduction, reallocation and retrenchment" the catchwords of higher education as we entered this decade. Recognizing the realities of resource decline, our attention has been focused on the "three Rs" at program, institutional, and state or system level (Mélchiori, 1982; Mingle, 1981), and we have learned a great deal about coping with decline.

However, as we reach the middle of this decade, resources continue to be scarce or declining while higher education is being thrust into the limelight and asked to respond to a variety of new societal conditions and changes. Concerns about lagging productivity, revolutions in technology, changing demography patterns, and emerging human resource development needs among others are becoming new demands that are reshaping our rationale for higher education and our expectations for it.

The seeming incongruity of coping with resource decline and responding to new demand is heightened by another contextual issue: our renewed concerns for excellence; for improving performance and quality. The issue has been raised clearly at the institutional level as budgets tighten and critical choices are made. At the state level efficiency and accountability, the issues of the 1970's, have refocused

Exerpts of this are included in a monograph on *Academic Renewal*, Conference Papers, University of Michigan, Center for the Study of Higher Education, forthcoming, and in *Change* magazine, forthcoming.

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on questions of appropriateness, effectiveness and quality of programs and institutions (Education Commission . . . , 1980). Although higher education's concerns for quality precede and are somewhat independent of those at the elementary and secondary level, the Report of the National Commission on Excellence has refueled those discussions in higher education. As we face this crucible of conflicting resources, new demands, and the press for quality, we now hear discussions of the need for institutional renewal or revitalization—vague concepts with illusive substance.

Against this backdrop, my concern is twofold: 1) that resource decline can lead to organizational decline or stagnation and 2) that we may have become so absorbed with the *Three Rs* that, in many of our institutions, it has become an institutional life style that has taken on symbolic meaning. From that perspective, calls for institutional renewal that responds to new demands with improved quality may be little more than platitudes. Institutional renewal requires a more focused agenda—a set of organizational development tasks that supports institutional renewal while realistically reflecting: 1) what we have learned about managing declining resources, 2) what we realistically expect from our future higher education environment, and 3) what we know about the long term effects of resource decline on organizations. A brief examination of these questions suggests a renewal agenda for preventing resource decline from drifting into institutional decline or stagnation so we can respond effectively to the new demands.

Lessons from Resource Decline

From our higher educational experience and literature, it is apparent that we have already learned a good deal about reduction, reallocation, and retrenchment. Compared to other industries with extensive layoffs, plant closures, and bankruptcies, one could argue that higher education has managed this process better than private business that is often portrayed as our model or paragon of effective management that we are supposed to emulate.

For example, we have learned to manage a reduction process in a manner that reflects the reality of our current environment, which is legal, and, which attempts to take a long range view while minimizing the immediate negative consequences and reductions. We know it is critical to *create an awareness* in the institution of the needs for reduction or retrenchment. We know it is important to *establish an overall strategy* that identifies the institutional purpose for or objec-

tives of the reduction, the major emphases or priorities (shared poverty or selective, reductions, etc.), a process that reflects the institution's traditions and the nature of the reduction demands, and the major modes of reduction and reallocation (budgetary, program review, etc.) to be used.

In order to *improve acceptance* (and it will never be fully accepted), we know it will be necessary to involve many constituencies in clarifying the purpose and process, to take steps to establish credibility and trust in it, and to communicate continuously and effectively about it. In *implementing such a process* we have learned the importance of consultation with affected parties, of the need to consider realistic (even if severe) ranges of reductions, about the use and misuse of data, of the need to clarify deliberation time and decision responsibility, to focus debate on the real issues, and to communicate decisions and their rationale.

We also know a *great deal about techniques*, which are useful but are also often given undue attention as we avoid critical process and substantive decision issues. Enrollment forecasting and planning, resource forecasts and allocation models, faculty and student flow models, decremental budgeting strategies, program audit and review processes, retention and attrition studies, need and demand studies, and program retrenchment and layoff policies are all examples of techniques. We know about all of these things—whether we do them well is, of course, always open to debate.

One might conclude that knowing how to manage a reduction without substantial disruption until life returns to a more normal state should allow us to cope with the new demands. However, that is not likely for two reasons: first, the environment may not allow us a quick return to stable resources; and second, our higher education literature has not yet examined the long term implications of resource decline (although it has been done in other fields) and the long terms effects of our current responses to decline.

The Environment: A Continued Era of Limits

While environmental forecasting is an uncertain and dangerous preoccupation, most evidence would suggest that for the next five years at least the condition of higher education is not likely to be stable let alone recapturing some of our lost abundance. A brief review of eight dimensions of higher education's environment highlights this.

First, the demographic projections of declining traditional college age enrollments are irrefutable. David Breneman's AGB Report on the

topic featured in *Change* (1983) highlights this. The range is from no growth, "the good news" to 35% declines in some states. Even with favorable changes in traditional attendance rates and increases in older, minority, or part-time students, most institutions and regions could only hope to stay even. Harold Hodgkinson's recent article, "Guess Who's Coming to College" (1983), offered good insights into the changing characteristics of our future enrollments—especially minorities. But attracting many of these groups requires changes in programs and delivery systems.

Second, despite more favorable news on the economy, predictions are for slow recovery. Unstable world conditions, high employment rates, sagging productivity, and international competition in several industries suggests overflowing government coffers or expanded personal incomes to meet our increasing costs in higher education are unlikely. There are other constraints on governmental support: continued public resistance to tax increases and many other high priority state and federal government demands (unemployment, mass transportation, urban decay, social security, social programs, military priorities, elementary and secondary education, etc.). Expanded financial resources are unlikely for most of us. While sagging economic productivity along with unemployment has provided a popular rationale for higher education's role in human capital development, especially in career and work related programs, these change rapidly and are often transitory.

Third, labor market shifts and unemployment are both a result of economic problems and of people's desire for self-improvement. This is true in many professions—especially in higher education where more faculty (new and veterans) are pitted against each other for fewer positions. Professional career opportunities are clearly limited and likely to improve only slowly.

Fourth, our recent emphasis on a more limited federal role in higher education and shift of educational programs to the states, while open for debate in 1984, leaves higher education with great uncertainty about the nature and source of governmental support and control. At the state level, with but few exceptions, budgets are squeezed. The response most often is for greater accountability and tighter controls on budgets and more intensive review of new and existing programs. There is also considerable agitation to review state level governance and coordinating structures for higher education. The direction of state government control is not clear and is in a state of ferment.

Fifth, our renewed interest in business-higher education relations, while visible and appealing, offers as many demands as prospects.

Partnerships in education and training do offer potential students but often require new career-oriented programs and new delivery systems. Partnerships in research and development, which could provide research support, involve complex contracts or third party corporation agreements, sizable capital investments, and new working relationships. Competition for “biological belts” and “robotics ridges” to rival “silicone valley” is intense. They may be important ventures, but the payoffs are in the distant future. Partnerships of business, government, and higher education for state or regional economic development planning may be valuable but demand participation by higher education staff in a complex political development activity whose payoffs are long term. The message is limited short-term relief and significant new program development and administrative commitments.

Sixth, concerns about technological changes in information processing and telecommunications, the “time of the parenthesis” as John Naisbitt (1982) calls our rapid transition from an industrial to an information era, further demands changes in academic computer literacy and educational programs and delivery systems.

Seventh, in the legal sector institutions may be gaining some degree of freedom in governments current interest in deregulation. However, court rulings on cases of individuals—especially during reduction—continue to demand many forms of procedural formalization in personnel matters.

Finally, the competition among higher educational institutions may be increasing. Student aid problems, the ability of students to pay for costs of education, underutilized institutions, and potential competition from business and industry all reinforce competition both within higher education and with other institutions as enrollments decline.

This brief scenario, even if incomplete and not completely accurate, suggests that, for the near future, higher education faces an increasingly complex environment in which its principal resources, students and money, are likely to continue to be declining or constrained; in which demands for new programs and delivery systems are changing and extensive (indeed expectations for us are again high); professional career opportunities will be limited for faculty; and the strain between competition, coordination, and control is likely to continue among institutions and between institutions and government. Internally, continued limited resources and stress on procedural formalization will continue to push governance toward formal/rational or political (rather than consensual/collegial) patterns and increased coordination/centralization may occur. The academic change process will require the reallocation of resources that continue to be constrained or declining.

An Organizational Renewal Agenda

Given these environmental conditions and the likely continuation of scarce or declining resources, it is critical that we begin to focus on the longer term effects of resource decline and identify an organizational development strategy or agenda for promoting renewal and preventing institutional stagnation—a more critical and responsible mode of decline. Fortunately, the literature on other types of organizations suggests several patterns of the long term effects of resource decline that are helpful in building a renewal agenda (Cameron & Zammuto, 1983; Whetten, 1980, 1981; Zammuto, 1982).

Two findings—that resource decline can induce greater efficiency and that it creates strain among and between organizational units and levels—are obvious and have already been dealt with by higher education. Increasing efficiency, doing “more with less”, has been the focus of higher education for over a decade, and our recent attention to “rationalizing reduction processes” reflects our concern with the second. Other insights from our experience consistent with findings from the literature suggest four broad renewal areas.

- Redefinition of Mission
- Rethinking Administration, Leadership, and Organizational Models
- Reintegrating Organizational Processes
- Revitalizing Members

There are also three areas I would add from personal observations:

- Reparations
- Recuperation and Repatriation
- Recommitment

In each area I think we have learned much that helps in anticipating the longer term effects of resource decline. The seven “Rs” of renewal may suggest how much more difficult it is than the three to govern decline!

Redefinition of Mission

The literature suggests that resource reduction can stimulate organizational redirection although this is more extensive in the private than in the public sector. Clearly, institutions of higher education do respond with different strategies. Some intensify their efforts around their primary mission, a few change radically, but most, either inadvertently or deliberately, redefine their missions. While most lack the flexibility of business firms to change their location, functions, product lines or clientele extensively, many do modify it by what they choose to eliminate, by reallocation of priorities, by conscious choice to

pursue new ventures, or by state level mandates. The patterns of modification are now becoming discernable and their long term success needs to be evaluated. However, what higher education institutions are learning about the importance of "strategic choice" and of "institutional vision" in this redefinition of mission and how to use them under resource decline may be most useful.

Strategic Choice. "Strategic choice," not planning, is used deliberately. Although not intended, planning—whether viewed as a set of techniques, an office or structure, a plan or document, or an institutional process—has suffered from being rational, static, and conservative.

Strategic choice refers to those decisions that a) link the organization to the environment, b) affect or have consequences for a large segment of the organization, c) require a substantial commitment of institutional energy or resources to accomplish, and d) are not easily reversed once implemented. Decisions about clientele, service region, functions, program mixes and priorities, locations, delivery systems or major staffing patterns are well known examples. Strategic choices do assume some examination and consideration of environmental conditions, an institutional assessment, and the values of interests of various constituencies. But the perspective is important. Environmental conditions are viewed not as trends—they are constraints and opportunities; institutional assessments are not general strengths and weaknesses—they are potential capacities; the values of constituents are not just patterns of support or resistance—they are sources of ideas, potential for compromise and groups to convince. The decision process may be rational, political or consensual. But, more important, strategic choices are never purely rational. They have extensive value dimensions, are concerned with future implications, involve risk taking, and reflect significant commitments.

In the past such decisions in higher education involved growth or expansions and were either much easier, were avoided or were made in increments. But under conditions of resource decline "strategic choices" are brought into focus, become more visible, and often require immediate action. In our current milieu institutional leaders seem more willing to make such choices, faculty and staff are more willing to participate in or support them, and many are more willing to think strategically about the overall and long term impact of decisions than just their immediate personal interests.

Some examples may suffice. As enrollments sag, many institutions are examining their potential student clientele and asking who they want to attract. In reducing or eliminating programs, most institutions give consideration to the uniqueness of the program and its impact on

the rest of the institution if closed. To assure student ability to pay, some state systems and even individual institutions are selling bonds to underwrite loan programs. To take advantage of the micro-computer revolution and the current competitive market in that industry some institutions like Carnegie-Mellon are investing to increase student access while others like the University of Colorado are developing plans to underwrite faculty purchases of their own equipment.

Strategic choices—broad scale commitments that link institutional and environmental concerns in opportunistic ways that redefine missions—are extensive and an important feature of our response to decline. The strategic choice process deserves considerable attention as institutions with limited resources seek to redefine missions to be more viable.

Institutional Vision. “Strategic choices” involve a more subtle, but no less important feature of the mission redefinition process: the restatement of an “institutional vision”. Again, the words plan, culture or ideology were not used deliberately. Plans have been debunked. Studying organizational culture or ideology is now in vogue although we have understood it in higher education for years. Vision encompasses both. Many faculty and staff work in colleges and universities either because the higher education profession and its implicit values are important to them or because they value the purposes or ideologies embedded within their own institution’s mission. As the institution suffers resource decline, individuals become concerned about the institutional direction and its implications for both their professional and institutional identity. This is exaggerated when many strategic choices are being made—to give up one activity, to reallocate or consolidate another, to start a new one. The mosaic of choices may confuse many about where the institution is going. The call for “institutional vision” is for a restatement of the redefined mission in a way that gives the participants a renewed sense of the importance of the field of higher education, of the role of their institution, and of the redefined mission. Institutional vision combines a scenario, a plan and an institutional leadership style that stresses “more than survival”. It provides faculty and staff with a positive reason to make the personal and professional commitment to the institution despite the resource constraints.

Rethinking Administrative, Leadership and Organizational Models

The literature notes that resource decline may require new patterns of leadership, can reinforce more conservative behavior, and can lead

to an emphasis on efficiency rather than effectiveness and suggests a need to rethink some of our administrative and organizational models.

New Leadership and Administrative Patterns. The discussion of strategic choice and vision provides an obvious insight about leadership patterns: that we may be entering an era in which both “strategic management” and “visionary” leadership skills are desired. Historically, we had images of “institution builders” in the 1950s, “participatory leaders” in the early 1960s, “political negotiators” in the late 60s, “rational or technocratic managers” in the 1970s, and “tough-minded managers” in our more recent budget reduction era. Such labels are simplistic but reflect the needs of our institutions at different times.

If the “strategic manager/visionary leader” is our current ideal, it is a difficult one. The first assumes leadership with a) an analytic understanding of the whole institution and of its environment that is skilled in strategic management: i.e., identifying strategic issues, coordinating the strategic decision process, and organizing and implementing plans. George Keller’s new book on *Academic Strategy* (1983) describes this role well. The second assumes an educational statesman who personifies the values or commitment of the institution, can state and defend its redefined mission, and has the capacity to institutionalize that commitment despite resource shortages. The role is, no doubt, overstated but reflects the problem of balancing the strategic management of the changing organization-environment relationship while reassuring the commitment of diverse groups during resource decline.

In a more practical but positive vein experience suggests that, while resource decline can lead to conservative or safe responses, it may also make management more acceptable. We used to disparage that term, yet it now seems to have positive connotations. For example, program closures used to be avoided in order not to upset faculty or to show the outside world our ineptness. Now when weak or unneeded programs are closed, faculty are more willing to accept it and it’s often an external signal we are well managed. This is not to suggest that dictatorial procedures or styles are in vogue—rather that the academic administrator, who identifies difficult problems, sees that important issues are addressed, hears differing views, presses for action and then sees that changes are implemented, can do so with some degree of confidence not reluctance.

The explanation of this change may be obvious. There is often resistance, confusion, and anger when resources initially decline. Once that period is past, most faculty and staff come to realize that the resource declines are real, that critical decisions need to be made, that unrealistic or prolonged conflicts are counter-productive. A good

manager keeps those periods of uncertainty and conflict to a tolerable level and may absorb much of the controversy that difficult decisions entail. In a sense, it is better to be in a well managed unit with some constraints than to live with constant turmoil.

New Models. The literature findings that resource reduction often leads to our overemphasis on efficiency suggests a need to rethink our organizational as well as administrative models. I have noted that administrators and review teams have often been concerned about effectiveness and issues of quality, educational rationale, and mission relatedness in resource reductions but, in the press for decisions, become frustrated with their inability to link those to resources. Efficiency issues of need and demand, duplication, and cost per unit (degree, credit hour) or political factors come to dominate. A large part of the problem, I would suggest, is our organizational theories and models are eclectic and inconsistent.

They are eclectic (the nicer word is interdisciplinary) since we have successively borrowed organizational bureaucracy, collegial, professional, political, and public bureaucracy models to describe and analyze higher education. We have also overlaid open-systems theory and inserted temporary-adaptive and theories X, Y, and Z as well. We argued the appropriateness of each over two decades as we passed through eras with successive problems of growth, participation, pressure groups, uncontrolled proliferation, and cost with which each model had been designed to deal in some other organizational sector. As a model, only organized anarchy emerged primarily from higher education. In our saner moments we agree each has some validity.

We are inconsistent in continuously arguing for models developed in other organizational sectors while maintaining that higher education is really different from business, government, hospitals, the military, etc. Yet in addressing the problems of decline, none of the models are designed to deal with educational issues, activities, and results. This suggests it may be time to seriously rethink our organizational models. Our decline experience suggests four possible characteristics of such a model.

First, it might begin with the assumption that we are a "learning organization". Our business is enhancing student learning, faculty learning about their field and the promotion of learning, and administrative learning about how to promote learning environments. If we were more inclined to think of ourselves in these terms, we might take more seriously the need to translate resource reduction issues into concerns for its impact on learning.

Second, the model would give greater attention to learning outcomes or improvement. Sandy Astin has long complained that we give too

little attention to this dimension and resource reduction brings that into focus. Qualitative dimensions almost always focus on faculty and student characteristics with little attention to performance, outcomes or improvement.

Third, the model should probably emphasize dimensions that represent the ways in which colleges and universities are unique. Clearly, in such a model elements that differentiate the culture—the patterns, values, and attitudes members hold about their work and work environment—would probably be a major focus.

Fourth, the relationship of the institution to its environment and the linkage of resources to learning would then play a more critical role than in our borrowed models. Such a model may possess dimensions of some or all of our current models, but given the critical nature of strategic decisions when resources are limited, we need an organizational model that reflects what higher education is really like—not just a partial adaptation.

Reintegrating Organizational Processes

Two other observations about the effects of resource decline are its tendency to remove organizational slack (loss of flexible resources and of coordinating mechanisms) and to centralize decisions. The first reflects a form of horizontal and the second of vertical disintegration that can reduce an institution's capacity to innovate and to sustain membership commitment. This suggests a concern for reintegration.

Coordination. The coordination issue has both an administrative and an academic component. In budget reductions the tendency to eliminate "assistant to" positions, staff support offices (e.g., planning, program development, faculty development), and funds for coordinating meetings and retreats and to consolidate offices is often justified as eliminating duplication or improving efficiency. But important activities, which may appear inefficient, but that support innovation and change, often go undone or assigned to an already overloaded office.

On the academic side there is evidence that interdisciplinary or joint programs, joint faculty appointments, and funds for exploring and developing new areas that do not fit existing departmental or college structures are hard to maintain as each unit focuses on what is essential. Yet there is past evidence that these mechanisms have been useful in supporting innovation and change. This suggests that academic and administrative coordinating mechanisms need to be assessed, not just, in terms of the current need for the activity, but also, in terms of its contribution to the institution's ability to respond to new administrative demands and new academic program needs.

Centralization/Decentralization. The tendency of higher educational institutions to centralize decisions during resource decline is readily apparent. New special budget priority or review committees supercede existing structures. Discontinuance or reduction decisions, because they are controversial, are reviewed at higher levels than new programs decisions. Expenditure decisions (travel, salary changes, etc.) that were made at one level are often routinized or mandated by policies from higher levels. In many instances the decisions are justified as formerly independent units become increasingly interdependent—e.g., when the business school's increasing enrollment begins to decrease the liberal arts enrollment and/or strengthens their claim to a larger share of the allocation of a fixed general fund, we begin to centrally manage enrollments of previously resource independent units.

Such patterns of centralization, introduced in a budget crisis, may not make sense in more normal times and can lead to conflicts in jurisdiction and future problems. Also, centralization without opportunity for affected units to participate may work in crisis but in more stable times may undermine commitment. It is important to reexamine the shifting patterns of decision making after the early rounds of budget decline and to revise it if necessary.

Thus, reintegration of coordinating and decision-making patterns may be a necessary step to retaining institutional vigor.

Revitalizing Faculty

The last observation from the literature about the effects of resource decline is that it increases stress and may cause some of the most innovative to leave. This suggests the need to give strong attention to the areas of faculty, administrative, and staff revitalization. Increases of stress are difficult to measure and assess and clearly some can be productive. However, the effects of long term resource decline and stress that are beyond faculty members' control are likely to be counter-productive.

Faculty are subjected to several stress inducing forces. As individuals, most faculty are committed to their professions and have high performance expectations for themselves. In my experience, their activity and performance level expectations do not diminish as resources and support services decline. Objectively, workload may increase—often in the form of more teaching, less secretarial support, and more demands to develop new programs—while salary and other compensation is stagnating. As professionals, their opportunity structures are usually diminished since there are fewer opportunities for

promotion, professional rewards and to change institutions. Organizationally, the persistence of budget cutting discussions and rumors often creates an aura of institutional uncertainty for the individual or for the faculty collectively. The tendency of academic units to focus on what is central diminishes interdisciplinary opportunities and more innovative activities. Individualized innovative efforts are more difficult due to curricula reviews and the intensive, often arduous, program development processes that are introduced to deal with reallocation needs. The tendency to centralize decisions delimits faculty sense of influence and control.

This scenario for faculty is obviously overstated. But the demand for new and responsive academic programs requires faculty who are flexible, innovative, willing to take risk and committed to the institution. Yet many forces push in the direction of overload, bureaucratization, isolation, playing it safe and loss of control and influence. The potential for increased frustration and loss of morale and commitment are great.

Answers are not always clear but ideas from the preceding discussion include:

1. Faculty need to understand the positive direction and commitments of their institution's redefined mission.
2. Faculty involvement or reinvolved in governance and in the strategic choice process may need to be redesigned.
3. Faculty and units that are not likely to be negatively affected need to be identified and reassured.
4. Mechanisms that reward and support faculty participation in innovative ventures need to be maintained despite pressures.
5. Faculty support systems (secretarial, library, equipment, etc.) need to be minimally acceptable.
6. Whenever possible, provision for adding new faculty should be maintained.

The bottom line is perhaps two heresies. First, to accomplish some of these objectives additional faculty reductions may be needed to gain flexibility for redirection. This should be considered in developing reduction strategies. Second, we may be concentrating too much attention on faculty who are to be eliminated. While this is necessary and humane, the institution needs to show at least as much concern for those who will stay. They are the majority and, in most institutions, will be around for some time. The maintenance and revitalization of a productive, committed faculty may be the most important single task to prevent institution stagnation. Concern for the quality of faculty work life that undergrids morale and commitment deserves serious attention.

The next two renewal agenda items are personal observations of several institutions where resource reductions have been unusually severe, sudden or acrimonious and may explain the analogy, with post-war terminology.

Reparations

While many colleges and universities have done a good job handling resource reductions, higher education was attuned to governing growth and protecting the prerogatives of professional involvement and was not well prepared. Institutions had to re-educate themselves and to invent new reduction strategies and approaches and many did so without major disruptions. However, in the process many made many mistakes that only became apparent later. Several examples come to mind: the academic program that is severely reduced but later discovered to play a key role in servicing other areas or whose demand or need was underestimated; the programs that were to be maintained but lost key faculty in part because of the reduction pressures; the programs that were not cut sufficiently because short-term demand clouded longer-term judgements. Long-term deprivation of maintenance, equipment, library, secretarial support and other administrative budgets are non-academic examples that can suddenly undermine academic quality or responsiveness.

Such mistakes occur for many reasons: the lack of well organized reduction process, the political pressures or irrationality of forced choice situations, the overemphasis on traditional priorities, or the normal incomplete nature of information on the multiple criteria used for reduction decisions. The intent should be neither to decry the mistakes nor to use Naval Intelligence to place blame. Rather we need to view such errors as a normal outgrowth of difficult reduction periods. The institution that is serious about renewal will identify such needs in its priorities for reallocation and make reparations when needed.

Recuperation and Repatriation

A problem, which may reflect the literature's observation about increased administrative stress, is somewhat more unique in higher education and justifies a concern for R & R. This concern is not primarily directed at the career administrator who should understand the realities of reduction nor that unique administrator who revels in reduction as a means of institutional redirection. The concern is the effects on people in academic administrative roles (particularly deans, department chairs, directors of special programs or research units),

who did not intend to embark on full-time administrative careers and planned to contribute their time to improving their units, but who found themselves serving during intensive or prolonged budget reduction.

At a minimum the increased workload of reviews, budget hearings, staff meetings, and negotiations involved in implementing reductions often severely limits their academic and scholarly development—particularly for individuals in mid-career. More often prolonged crisis reductions lead to strains between faculty and administrators. Academic administrators in these pivotal, middle levels are caught—unable to fulfill faculty expectations of little or no reduction and forced to limit expenditures and reduce staff while still trying to give leadership to a disappointed faculty.

Some handle these burdens well, but many do not. After serving for a period of time, they may become frustrated and ineffective, academically out-of-touch with their field and/or professionally isolated from their colleagues. Again, this syndrome may be overstated; but if it occurs frequently enough, it can be a serious roadblock to academic vitality for a significant part of the faculty and the potential loss of a valuable colleague who may have a significant portion of his or her career ahead.

Again, prescriptions are not easy. Better administrative development, specified administrative terms, and other procedural ideas come to mind. However, recognition of the phenomenon by both central administrative and the faculty and the willingness to “respect” a colleague who served in a particularly difficult transitional time may be the best antidote.

Recommitment: Personal Dimension

Finally, institutional renewal may also require a more individual phenomenon. The previous issues—redefinition of mission, rethinking our organizational and administrative models, reintegration of key organizational processes, revitalizing faculty, making reparations, and providing recuperation, repatriation and respect for those who served—are all signs of organizational recommitment to maintaining the vitality of each institution. But there is also a personal dimension for administrators and faculty alike: “recommitment”, the simple act of reminding ourselves that we are doing something worthwhile and that higher education is an important enterprise in which to make our vocation.

When most of us entered the higher education profession, we did not

anticipate resource limitations much less the effects of prolonged reductions or sudden intense cuts. It is important to recognize that we are still in one of the most highly respected professions in this country; that there are significant expectations for the role higher education can and should play; that we are one of the industries that still rates well in the international scene; and that, despite our current disappointments, the challenges ahead are significant opportunities.

Kahlil Gibran in *The Prophet* (1967) captured well the nature of our business and of our commitment:

“And the priestess spoke again and said:
 Speak to us of Reason and Passion.
 And he answered saying:
 Your reason and your passion are the
 rudder and the sails of your seafaring soul.
 If either your sails or your rudder be
 broken, you can but toss and drift, or else
 be held at standstill in mid-seas.
 For reason, ruling alone, is a force con-
 fining; and passion, unattended, is a flame
 that burns to its own destruction.
 Therefore let your soul exalt your reason
 to the height of passion, that it may sing;
 And let it direct your passion with
 reason, that your passion may live through
 its own daily resurrection, and like the
 phoenix rise above its own ashes.”

For the past two decades, higher education has struggled with this balance: the overemphasis on reason in the 1950s, the passion of student revolts and issues of the 1960s, the rational managerial response of the 1970s, and the renewed passions as our resources and our desires clash today. On each campus we passionately debate priorities because we believe strongly in the contribution of all areas of knowledge and struggle for reason in our process of redirection and reduction. The issues ahead are laden with passionate values affecting higher education. What is our role in world wide issues of hunger, resource distribution and politics? What is our role at home in our commitment to minorities, to urban decay, to energy debates, and to economic needs? How will we deal with campus issues of affirmative action, of the balance of science and technology versus humanities and social sciences, of professional versus general education, of relationships to defense research and to business and industry, and of our response to the information and tele-computer revolution? These issues demand a

recommitment and provide an opportunity to use both our “Reason” and our “Passion.”

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