Ninth David D. Henry Lecture: The University Presidency: Comparative Reflections on Leadership by Martin A. Trow

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by
Martin A. Trow

Ninth David D. Henry Lecture
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois

The David D. Henry Lectureships in Educational Administration are endowed by gifts to the University of Illinois Foundation in recognition of Dr. Henry's contributions to the administration of higher education, including his career as president of the University of Illinois from 1955 until 1971. The lectures are intended to focus upon the study of the organization, structure, or administration of higher education, as well as its practice. Selection of persons to present the lectures is the responsibility of the chancellors of the two campuses of the University. Presentation of the lectures is alternated between Chicago and Urbana-Champaign.

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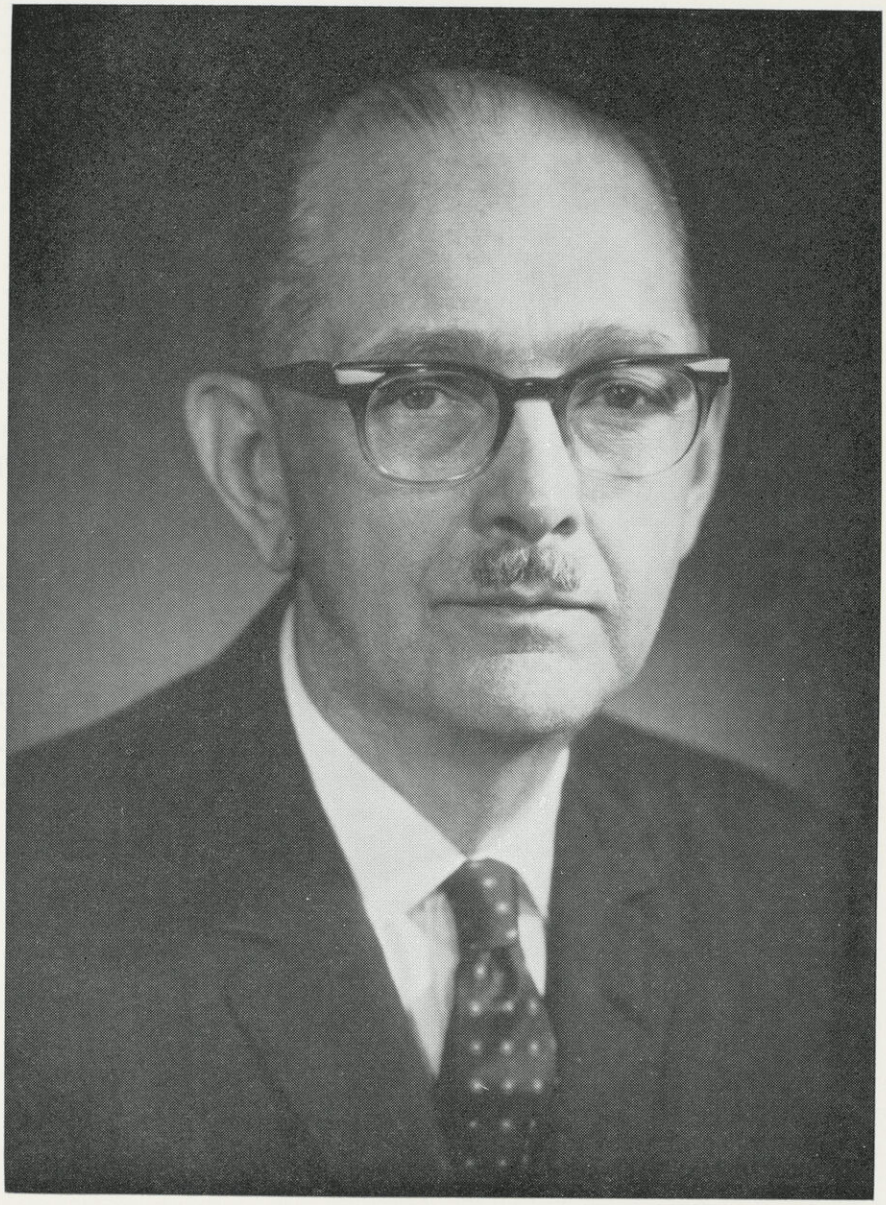

David Dodds Henry

President, University of Illinois
1955-71

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Preface

The Ninth David D. Henry Lecture, titled "The University Presidency: Comparative Reflections on Leadership," by Martin A. Trow, a leading scholar in public policy and higher education, extends the issue of power, influence, and effectiveness of the university presidency raised at the seventh Henry Lecture by James G. March. In that lecture, "How We Talk and How We Act: Administrative Theory and Administrative Life," March argued that the individual administrator in colleges and universities is not a major factor in the effectiveness of an institution, because any of the "qualified" applicants would be about equally effective.

Trow claims that presidents at leading American universities exercise strong symbolic, political, managerial, and academic leadership, especially when compared with their "counterparts" in European institutions of higher education. Particularly unique is his argument that strong faculty influence in university governance is "as much a source of presidential power as a limitation on it." Trow specifies several resources for leadership available to university presidents, but his examples are either symbolic, political, or budgetary with little emphasis on academic leadership except through coordination of faculty governance.

The three formal respondents, a university president, a university dean, and a university professor, for the most part seem to concur with Trow's challenge to March's interpretation of the "real world" of administrative leadership in higher education as represented by the university presidency. This lecture joins the debate, but does not end it. We have not heard the rebuttal — that may have to wait for another David D. Henry Lecture.

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Introduction

Today this campus is privileged to host the ninth in the series of special lectures presented by distinguished leaders in higher education in honor of David Dodds Henry. I am delighted to report that the lecture committee had the vision and foresight to invite a colleague from my Berkeley days as today's speaker. Professor Martin Trow began his career as an engineer. By the time he reached Berkeley in 1957, he was a professor in the social sciences after completing his Ph.D. in sociology at Columbia University. Over the twenty years when we were both at Berkeley, we were active in academic senate affairs; Professor Trow has recently completed a two-year tour of duty as the chair of Berkeley's academic senate.

Furthermore, Professor Trow has indeed had an impressive, distinguished, and productive career as a scholar and researcher. His publication record is most impressive. He has served as director of the Center for Studies in Higher Education at Berkeley since 1977. He has directed national surveys of higher education for the Carnegie Commission and for the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education. He has been a Fellow at the Center for Advanced Studies in Behavioral Sciences at Palo Alto and a member of the Institute for Advanced Studies at Princeton. He is a member of the National Academy of Education and a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Our speaker is currently studying the role of academic leadership in higher education, and we are all about to benefit from that study. I am pleased to present Professor Martin Trow, who will address us on the topic "The University Presidency: Comparative Reflections on Leadership."

Thomas E. Everhart
Chancellor
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

The University Presidency: Comparative Reflections on Leadership

by Martin A. Trow
Director of the Center for Studies in Higher Education and
Professor of Sociology in the Graduate School of Public Policy
University of California, Berkeley

It is indeed an honor to be invited to give the Ninth David D. Henry Lecture here at the University of Illinois.* I have had the privilege of knowing David Henry, not only by reputation and through his writings, but also through a professional association. David Henry, in addition to his many other roles, was a member of the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education throughout its very active life. During those same years, I was a member of a small advisory committee that Clark Kerr brought together in Berkeley to review and comment on drafts of the many reports and recommendations that the commission issued during its lifetime.

Those reports and commission volumes are well known to all of us — in their blue and white covers stretching for several yards across our bookshelves. One of the commission's activities, indeed one of its most important, started as a recommendation in its report on the federal role in higher education, issued in 1968.[1] In that report, the commission, alone among major organizations in the world of higher education, came out strongly in favor of federal support in the form of aid to students rather than block grants to colleges and universities. During the next three years, there was intense activity on Capitol Hill, with the forces of the higher educational establishment, led by the American Council on Education, exerting all their efforts to have federal support come, if at all, directly to the institutions in the form of block grants linked to enrollments.

* Presented at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, October 1984.

In those years, these organizations and their leaders felt very strongly that higher education should present a united front on this issue and not break ranks. And David Henry, as a leader of organized higher education — past chairman of the ACE, past president of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges, past president of the Association of Urban Universities, among others — was subjected to quite intense pressure, the precise nature of which only he knows, to break with the commission's position and join that of the higher education establishment. He did not — a decision that was both wise and courageous.

For as we know, the Higher Education Act of 1972 embodied David Henry's (and the Carnegie commission's) position, and not that of the higher education establishment. It is very doubtful that the Congress at that time would have made any commitment to higher education beyond its support for research that took the form of institutional grants. If it had done so, it is quite certain that support, in that form, would not have survived the first year of the Reagan presidency. But in the form of student aid, federal support for higher education had, and has, a constituency and political support in Congress and throughout the country that saved the program, a program that in 1984 amounted to about $6.5 billion in grants and loans. Federal support for higher education through student aid is of enormous importance in extending access to American colleges and universities, public and private, large and small, to many who would not otherwise attend them. It was also the surest way of defending the autonomy of our institutions against the leverage that block grants would have given to the federal government when, in time, it surely would have wanted to exert its influence.

Many of David Henry's achievements are well known; this one is perhaps less well known, which is why I tell it here. It also illustrates the principle that leadership in higher education takes many forms, some of them occurring in private, in anonymity, and without due recognition.

University presidency

It is altogether fitting that in this lecture in honor of David Henry I speak of the university president and presidency. The subject has been touched on in several of the lectures in this series and was the chief subject of the seventh lecture in this series offered by Professor James March of Stanford University.[2] But perhaps the matter has not been quite exhausted. In this lecture I want to do the following:

First, I want to explore in somewhat general terms what we mean by "leadership" in universities, what its major dimensions may be.

Second, I will contrast the American university presidency with its counterpart in selected European countries.

Third, I will sketch the historical sources of the unique role of the university president that has developed in America.

Finally, I will try to identify some of the structures and institutional mechanisms through which the American university president does in fact take his initiatives, deploy his resources, exercise leadership.* One caveat: many of my remarks about the presidency of American universities also apply to four-year colleges, and particularly to the best of them. But this paper will focus on the role of the presidency as it can be seen in the great American research universities, perhaps thirty or so in all, of which the University of Illinois is a leading example. Moreover, when I refer to university *presidents,* I will be speaking mainly about chief campus officers — though both in the University of Illinois and in my own university, the chief campus officer is called *chancellor.* (The special problems of the heads of multicampus systems deserve a lecture, or a library, of their own.)[3]

Leadership in higher education, in large part, is the taking of effective action to shape the character and direction of a college or university, presumably for the better. That leadership shows itself chiefly along four dimensions: symbolic, political, managerial, and academic. Symbolic leadership is the ability to express, to project, indeed to seem to embody, the character of the institution — its central goals and values — in a powerful way. Internally, leadership of that kind serves to explain and justify the institution and its decisions to participants by linking its organization and processes to the larger purposes of teaching and learning in ways that strengthen their motivation and morale. Externally, a leader's ability to articulate the nature and purposes of the institution effectively helps to shape its image, affecting its capacity to gain support from its environment and to recruit able staff and students.[4] Political leadership refers to a leader's ability to resolve the conflicting demands and pressures of his many constituencies, internal and external, and in gaining their support for the institution's goals and purposes, as he defines them. Managerial leadership is the familiar capacity to direct and coordinate the various support activities of the institution. Ths includes good judgment in the selection of staff; the ability to develop and manage a budget, plan for the future, and build and maintain a plant. Academic leadership shows itself, among other ways, as the ability to recognize excellence in teaching, learning, and research; in knowing where and how to intervene to strengthen academic structures; in the choice of able academic ad-

* Here, as elsewhere, the male pronoun is used conventionally to refer to both male and female genders.

ministrators and in support for them in their efforts to recruit and advance talented teachers and scholars.

Any particular university president need not excel personally in all these dimensions of the presidency; leaders vary in how their talents and energies are distributed among these facets of academic life. Some are largely "external presidents," presenting the image of the institution to its external constituencies and seeking their support, while giving to a provost or dean the main responsibility for academic affairs and to a vice-president for administration the chief responsibility for internal management. Other presidents spend more of their time and attention on internal matters.

But however a leader fills the several dimensions of the role — in the definition of its character and purpose, in its quest for resources, in the management of its organization, or in the pursuit of ever higher levels of academic excellence — effective action in all areas requires that the president have the legal authority and resources to act, to choose among alternatives, even to create alternatives — in short, to exercise discretion. Without that discretion and the authority and resources behind it, a president or chancellor cannot exercise leadership, whatever his personal qualities.

So a discussion of leadership in American higher education must involve:

First, a comparison of the potential for leadership — the power and opportunities for discretionary decisions and action — of American college and university presidents as compared with their counterparts abroad.

Second, some suggestions as to why those differences exist — an historical reference which allows us to see more clearly how and why our institutions and their presidents are as they are.

And third, a somewhat closer examination of how American college and university presidents exercise power, and a look at some of the institutional characteristics and mechanisms that allow them to take initiatives.

Presidential influence

The American university presidency in recent years has had a bad press. Some of the most influential theorists about the organization and governance of higher education argue that colleges and universities are really ungovernable and that leadership in them is impossible. James March in his various writings, alone and with collaborators, has stressed the sheer chaos and unmanageability of organizations of higher education institutions characterized by "garbage-can decision processes," in

which problems are more often evaded than solved. Colleges and universities, in his view, are prototypical "organized anarchies," characterized by ambiguous goals, unclear technology, and fluid participation.[5] Since their goals are ambiguous, nobody is sure where the organization is going or how it will get there. "Decisions are often by-products of activity that is unintended and unplanned. . . ." They are not so much "made" as they "happen" — they are events in which problems, choices, and decision-makers happen to coalesce to form temporary solutions. From this point of view, "an organization is a collection of choices looking for problems, issues and feelings looking for decision situations in which they might be aired, solutions looking for issues to which they might be the answer, and decision-makers looking for work."[6] Such inept, leaderless organizations must be unable to initiate anything or innovate. As Cohen and March put it somewhat epigrammatically, "Anything that requires the coordinated effort of the organization to start is unlikely to be started. Anything that requires a coordinated effort of the organization in order to be stopped is unlikely to be stopped."[7] And if the university cannot be led or moved, then it follows in March and Cohen's view:

> "The presidency is an illusion. Important aspects of the role seem to disappear on close examination. In particular, decision making in the university seems to result extensively from a process that decouples problems and choices and makes the president's role more commonly sporadic and symbolic than significant."[8]

Similarly, George Keller cites Cohen, et al., approvingly in these words:

> "Universities love to explore processes and methodology but hate to make decisions. . . . Decisions in a university often get made randomly — by deans, legislators, a financial officer, the president."[9]

But oddly enough, all of Keller's illustrative cases show just the contrary, whether he is talking about planning for cuts at the University of California; or the survival of a private college in Maryland; or responses to cuts at the University of Minnesota, Carnegie-Mellon, or Teachers College, Columbia. These institutions are not exceptions. While each, of course, is unique — with its own configuration of problems and leaders — the capacity of American colleges and universities to adapt to new circumstances — whether demographic crisis, or budget cuts, or cultural and religious change, or technological explosions — is on the whole astonishing, and most of the gloomiest prophecies in recent decades have not been fulfilled. To take only one example: for at least a decade we have been told that, starting in 1979, enrollments in American colleges and universities would begin to decline — impelled inexorably by a decline in the size of the college age cohorts, a decline nationally of some 23 percent between 1979 and 1992 when these co-

horts would be at their lowest levels. And according to these forecasts, the population of college age youth would not start to grow again until perhaps 1995. It is true that the number of high school graduates peaked in 1979 as predicted; by 1984, the size of the graduating class had already fallen some 13 percent below the 1979 peak. But to almost everyone's surprise, enrollments in colleges and universities nationally did not fall; on the contrary, they actually grew by 8 percent between 1974 and 1984 overall during this time of shrinking college age cohorts.[10]

Of course there are variations by region and by type of institution. But nevertheless, American colleges and universities have shown a remarkable capacity to respond both to recession and to declining age cohorts and have continued to attract growing numbers. I would suggest that much of this capacity to respond creatively and successfully to difficult — and in some cases, to life-threatening — circumstances must be attributed to the ability of institutional leaders to innovate, to motivate — above all, to lead. Our task is to learn more about the nature of the effective and creative leadership and how it works, rather than to assert, in the face of much contrary evidence, that it is impossible.

The thoughtful report of the Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership, *Presidents Make a Difference* (1984), is also rather gloomy about the state of the college and university presidency.[11] In the course of giving sound advice to institutions, presidents, and governing boards, the report identifies and discusses some recent and current developments which the commission believes have made the college and university presidency less attractive now to able people than it was formerly. Its authors are especially concerned with the growing constraints on the presidency — "more barbed wire around smaller corrals," as one of their informants put it. Oddly enough, though they reach the somber conclusion that "the American college and university presidency is in trouble," they note that "about one-fourth of all presidents [whom they interviewed] are quite satisfied with their situations (some are even euphoric); about one-half are clearly more satisfied than dissatisfied most of the time; and about one-fourth are dissatisfied — some even in despair."[12] But as one reads this report, one is struck by the fact that many of the problems that university presidents face, including some of those that have grown in difficulty recently, arise out of the very strength and centrality of the role — a role that has no real counterpart outside the United States.

Strong U.S. presidency compared with Europe

However constrained American college and university presidents may seem to American observers, however weak or ineffective they may appear to students of university organization, they look very strong by contrast with the power and influence of their "counterparts" abroad. The question may be raised of whether they *have* any true counterparts abroad. Certainly in any genuine sense they do not. The weakness of the "chief campus officer" — the rectors, vice-chancellors, or presidents — of European institutions of higher education arises out of the history and development of those universities. They arose, as we know, initially as guilds of masters — in some places, with important initiatives from students. European universities retained their character as corporate bodies of academics which in modern times came to be regulated, funded, and in varying degrees governed by agencies of the state. The basic power relationship in European higher education has been between the guild of academics and its chairman — the rector, on one side, and the relevant church authorities or governmental ministries on the other. Their discussions have centered on the issues of autonomy and support. The leading university academic officer — whether he is called rector, vice-chancellor, or president — was, and still is, largely a chairman of the corporate body, and on the continent and in the British ancient universities was elected, until recently, by the guild from among its own members. On the continent, he is still elected — though now from a wider and more politicized electorate.

There has been much talk in European academic circles since World War II about the desirability of strengthening the hand of the chief officer — making him more like his American counterparts, and indeed sometimes an effort to do that has been made merely by changing his name from "rector" to "president." But I do not think that European countries or institutions have actually gone very far in that direction, beyond the change of name. The broad reforms of higher education, introduced since 1968 in almost all European countries, have had the effect less of strengthening the president or rector than of weakening the professoriate — "democratizing" governance internally by giving more power and influence to the nonprofessorial staff and to students, and externally by increasing the influence of politicians, civil servants, and organized economic interest groups on institutional and regional governing boards. The literature on these reforms and reorganizations is not about more powerful institutional leadership, but about more and more complex internal group politics with central government trying to retain and extend its influence on the nature and direction of the institutions in the face of their claims to traditional autonomies and their newly expanded participatory democracy.

On the whole, informed Europeans admire the American university and recognize the role of its strong presidency in defending its integrity while responding to the many needs of the society which supports it. But their history and academic traditions make it impossible for them to duplicate our arrangements; indeed, in some countries, they seem to be moving in the opposite direction. For example, the current reform of French higher education has enormously complicated university government there; it has increased the number of central government councils which exercise direct control over aspects of university life, and it has increased the number of intermediate institutions standing between the university and central government. It has also further complicated and politicized the internal governance of each university.[13] The new Higher Education Guideline Law provides three elected committees to run the affairs of each university: a Board of Management, an Academic Council, and a Council in Charge of Studies and University Affairs. These councils vary in size from twenty to sixty people; members are elected every three years by a single electoral college composed of academic staff, technical personnel, students, and laymen through a system of proportional representation. The latter insures that external political parties and factions are firmly represented on these councils; indeed, it is a matter of principle that each group having an interest in the affairs of the university be represented in its councils, and those representatives are expected to function directly in the interests of the group which they represent. Moreover, these councils appear to have overlapping functions.

In addition, the law provides for five national councils to develop national policies and guidelines on every aspect of university life, as well as permitting new regional and department (county) organizations to coordinate policies at their levels. This is, I may say, a structure worthy of Rube Goldberg; it is difficult to imagine this machinery being able to reach any decisions about anything. I gather that thus far French universities survive largely by not implementing many of the new rules; but that is a precarious way to survive.

Matters are not quite so bad with respect to institutional leadership in the United Kingdom, often cited as the system nearest to the United States in its forms of university organization among European countries. But even there, the University Grants Committee (UGC), long a conduit of advice from the universities and of funds from central government, has more recently become a conduit of advice to the universities from central government along with reduced funds — advice which in recent years has hardened into directives regarding the organization and priorities of individual universities. Moreover, British vice-chancellors — the nearest equivalent to our own university president — have not on the whole been able to respond effectively to the political

and economic challenges and stresses posed by the budget cuts of the 1980s.[14] Those cuts were distributed unevenly by the UGC among the several universities on criteria that have never been made clear nor justified. They were then distributed within each institution, usually in the academically least defensible way, in part across the board and in part by forced early retirement of senior staff — extremely expensive — and involving the loss of men and women who were often at the peak of their teaching and scholarly powers.

Historical perspective

So the comparative perspective on American higher education and its leadership is one of American exceptionalism, of a sharp contrast between the role of institutional leadership here as compared with that in almost every other modern society, as well as one of quite astonishing success. We can understand better the almost unique character of the American college and university presidency if we look at it in historical perspective. The strength of the university presidency in this country, as compared with its overseas counterparts, arose out of the weakness of the academic profession in America throughout most of our history in conjunction with the tradition of noninvolvement by federal government in education generally, and in higher education particularly.

These two factors — the weak academic guild and weak central government — are also related to the strength of lay boards as the chief governing bodies of colleges and universities. The lay board originated at Harvard, the first American university. The founders of Harvard, community leaders of whom most had studied at the University of Cambridge, had intended to carry on the English tradition of resident faculty control. The senior academic members of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges, the "dons," comprised then, as now, a corporate body which governed each of the constituent colleges that make up those ancient universities. But in the colonial United States, there simply were no scholars already in residence. Harvard had to be founded and not just developed. Without a body of scholars to be brought together who could govern themselves, the laymen who created the institution had to find someone to take responsibility for the operation of the infant university, and that person was the president. He was, in fact, the only professor to begin with, and he both governed and carried a major part of instruction himself, with some younger men to help. And this pattern lasted for quite a long time in each new institution — long enough to set governing patterns throughout our history. Harvard was established for more than eighty-five years, Yale for some fifty, before either had another professor to stand alongside its president. For a very long time,

both before and after the American Revolution, many colleges and universities relied wholly on the college president and a few tutors who would serve for a few years and then go on to another career.[15]

To this set of historical facts we may attribute the singular role of the college and university president in American higher education. He combined in himself the academic role with the administration of the institution. The members of the lay governing boards from the very beginning have had other things to do and have delegated very large powers to the president whom they appointed — a president who did not until this century have to deal with a large or powerful body of academic peers. The American college and university president still holds his office wholly at the pleasure of the external board which appoints him. Most of the rest of the academic staff have tenure in their jobs. But the president of a college or university never has tenure, at least not as president (though he may return to a professorship if he has such an appointment in the institution). That lack of tenure in office partly accounts for the broad power the board delegates to him; they can always take it back, and often do.

So for a long time in American history there were very few who made academic life a career; as long as that was true, there was no real challenge to the authority of the president so long as he had the support of the lay board which governed the institution. This, of course, is quite unlike arrangements in most other countries. European universities, as we know, arose out of guilds — the corporations of doctors and masters and other learned men in Paris, Bologna, and elsewhere. And where they arose differently, as in the modern universities, the academics in their faculties claimed the same powers as their counterparts in the ancient universities. In America, by contrast, colleges and universities were created by a lay board and a president. This has had an enormous impact on the development of our institutions.

The near absolute authority of the American college president has been lost in most of our universities over time, especially with the rise of the research university and the emergence of a genuine academic profession in the last decades of the nineteenth century. In this century, and especially in the stronger universities, a great deal of autonomy over academic affairs has been delegated to the faculty and its senates. But the American college or university president remains far more powerful than his counterparts in European institutions, whose formal authority and power is shared with the professoriate, junior staff, government ministries, advisory boards, student organizations, and trade unions, and where the rector or vice-chancellor really is a political man — a power broker, a negotiator, a seeker for compromise without much power or authority of his own.

Faculty influence

The role of the faculty in the governance of the leading colleges and universitites in the United States is substantial and important, but it is as much a source of presidential power as a limitation on it. The two generations of presidential giants — White at Cornell, Eliot at Harvard, Angell at Michigan, Gilman at Hopkins, Harper at Chicago, Van Hise at Wisconsin, Jordan at Stanford, Wheeler at California, among others — the men who governed the great American universities between the Civil War and World War I, essentially created the American academic profession, a development which coincided with the emergence and growth of the great research universities. Those creative presidents flourished, however, before their universities had large numbers of specialized scholars and scientists with high prestige in American society as well as national and international reputations in their disciplines. Those presidents recruited distinguished scholars and scientists, paid them decent salaries, rewarded their scholarship and research, and thus created the faculty of the modern research university — a body of men and women who could meet them, collectively at least, as equals. The American academic profession and its instruments — the senates on campus and the AAUP and the various disciplinary associations nationally — were the institutionalized expression or reflection of those scholars and scientists brought together in the new research universities by this generation of great university presidents. It was the growth of that body of academics, increasingly aware of their collective importance to the university and to its supporters and constituents outside the university, that gave rise to the modern university faculty, determined to be treated as members and not merely as employees of the university. They thus came to be included in the governance of the universities, in a role which stressed their right to be consulted on matters of importance to them.

In the leading universities, both public and private — though matters are quite different in the second- and third-tier universities — what has evolved is a system of shared governance, marked by a degree of cooperation and mutual trust that has survived the political stresses of the 1960s; the demands for greater accountability from state governments of the 1970s; the growth of federal law and regulation; the consequent elaboration and formalization of procedures, recordkeeping, and reporting; and the explosion of litigation against the university over the past two decades. Despite all of these forces and the internal stresses they have engendered, academic senates and committees in the leading universities still gain the willing and largely unrewarded participation of active and leading scholars and scientists in the process of governance by consultation. The nature of this shared governance by

consultation is extremely complicated and subtle, never adequately captured in the description of the formal arrangements which differ on every campus. Moreover, the power of the faculty varies sharply, depending on the status of the university and of its faculty.

It is sometimes suggested that a strong academic senate reduces the power of the president or chancellor. I believe, on the contrary, that a strong senate enhances the power of the president. An academic senate is, above all, an instrument for the defense of academic and scholarly standards in the face of all the other pressures and demands on the university and on its president. Senates function on the whole through committees; committees are, or can be, excellent bodies for articulating and applying academic values to a variety of conditions and issues that arise. They are splendid at saying "no"; they are poor instruments for taking initiatives or implementing them. By being consulted routinely on a wide variety of initiatives emanating from the office of the president, the senate may in fact give wise and useful advice. But above all, it makes itself, and faculty sentiments, felt by giving or withholding its approval and legitimacy to presidential initiatives. Without that consultation and support, the relation of president and faculty would be largely adversarial — which is what we often see where the senate has been replaced by a faculty union, or where the faculty and president are deeply at odds. And there the power of the president is certainly diminished.

Of course, there are frictions between senate and president; the relationship at its best is marked, in Jacques Barzun's words, by "the good steady friction that shows the wheels are gripping." In such a happy relationship, faculty members recognize that just as the effectiveness of the president depends in large part on a strong senate, so also does the strength of the senate depend on a strong president. It is *not* a zero sum game. For much of the senate's power is exercised through its advice to and influence on the president: where *he* has little power, *they* have little power. Effective power then lies outside the institution altogether, in the hands of politicians or ministries, as in European nations or some American states.

Resources for leadership

I have suggested on historical and comparative grounds that the president of a leading American college or university can exercise leadership: symbolic, political, intellectual, and administrative. But what are his resources for the exercise of leadership, especially when looked at in comparative perspective? What I will say here is familiar to all and yet it is often dismissed or discounted by commentators except when they are actually describing specific leaders and policies.

First, a president has substantial control over the budget of his institution and its allocation. Of course the president's discretion is constrained by the very large fraction of the budget committed to tenured faculty salaries and to support services that must be funded if the institution is to continue to function. But looked at comparatively, the president of a leading American university has relatively large power over his budget and its allocation. In a public university, he usually works with a block grant; thus, he can view the budget as a whole and make internal adjustments subject to the constraints that I have mentioned. By contrast, most European institutions are funded by central state authorities on what is closer to a line-item budget — sums are earmarked for particular chairs and the support staff around them and to particular services, such as a library. The rector or president ordinarily has little power over these internal allocations of funds. Moreover, in the United States it is now widespread practice, if not quite universal, that faculty vacancies resulting from death or retirement revert to the president's office and are not the property of the departments where the vacancy occurred. This reversion of resources permits the president and his associates over time to modify the internal distribution of faculty places in response to changing student demand or market demand, to developments in the disciplines themselves, or to his own ideas about the right mix of fields and subjects.

Academic autonomy is related, if not perfectly, to the multiplicity of funding sources.[16] Here again, by contrast with their European counterparts, American universities are funded in a variety of ways, which in itself gives a president a certain power to bargain from strength in the face of demands from one or another of his funding sources. Even such public universities as the University of California are not state supported so much as "state-aided." The University of California gets about two-fifths of its current operating budget from state sources; about 15 percent from federal grants and contracts; about 13 percent from fees, tuition, gifts and endowment; and one-third from various enterprises such as teaching hospitals, educational extension, and sales of educational services.[17]

But in addition to the sheer multiplicity of sources, some of them are more discretionary than others. The use of unearmarked private contributions, research overhead funds, some of the return on the endowment, is largely at the discretion of the president or chancellor, though over time, of course, those discretionary funds become encumbered by expectations if not by formal programmatic commitments. Programs and people supported by such discretionary funds come to expect that they will continue to be supported. But presidents and their staffs can vary the levels of those commitments, especially if

they do so incrementally, and thus maintain a genuine degree of discretionary power over their allocations.

Even where discretion is not total, it may be large within a category. For example, a large sum comes to Berkeley and to our sister campuses through what are called "student registration fees," which are remarkably like what is called "tuition" elsewhere except that they are supposed to be spent on some kind of direct service to students, and not for the support of instruction or research. But "student services" is a very broad rubric indeed, and gives a chancellor at Berkeley equally broad discretion for shaping the mix of such services as between a learning center, medical services, counseling services, intramural athletics, recruitment and admissions, and various forms of remedial education and outreach to the secondary school system, among others.

The very size of student support services in American universities, as compared with those overseas, increases the power of presidents; where academic staff is largely tenured and their programs and departments difficult to modify except slowly and incrementally, the president has far greater (though never total) freedom to restructure support services whose staff members are not tenured (though increasingly unionized). These large support staffs report to someone directly in the president's office, and they constitute a substantial body of resources and people whom the president can draw on in support of his own priorities — again within certain political, legal, and normative constraints. A large staff provides the resources to put behind the president's own ideas about a stronger development office, or larger affirmative action programs, or whatever it is he may think important.

But the discretionary resources built into student services are only part of the staff resources available to American university presidents. In the United States, the great authority of lay governing boards — much of it delegated to the president, together with the relatively smaller role of central government — ensured that as the public universities grew and needed larger administrative staffs, those staffs would be extensions of the president's office rather than civil servants responsible to a faculty body or to state authorities. As a result, the strong president, supported by his own large administrative staff, has been able to preserve much autonomy and power inside the university. Having his own internal staff allows the college or university president to deal with state authorities with equal skill and expertise, rather than as a scholarly amateur against a body of professional planners and managers. Several points about this large internal staff follow:

Many, and most of the top, staff people owe their appointments to the president they serve and hold those appointments at his discretion. In some institutions there are "untouchables" on the staff, who have independent ties to the board or powerful alumni; these

sometimes constitute a problem for new presidents. But on the whole, few members of the administrative staff have any formal or informal security of employment, and even they owe their advancement, and sometimes their jobs in periods of contraction, to the sitting president. They are for the most part his employees, in a part of the university that much more closely resembles the hierarchical structures of bureaucracies than the collegial structures of departments and research centers. Presidential leadership is often found in programs that rest largely on this administrative staff rather than on the reshaping of the academic programs directly; and that, I think, is because that is where so much of his discretionary resources lie.

These support staffs under the president's direction and leadership can also develop programs which further increase his discretion. For example, strengthening a development office, increasing the effectiveness of market research and student recruitment, writing better proposals for government or foundation grants all increase the discretion of top administrators. These activities and funds can provide the staff support for new academic programs, new links to secondary schools, remedial courses, creative connections with local industry and other colleges and universities. They give the president the needed resources to create priorities, to be an entrepreneur, and to take advantage of opportunities as they arise.

In the United States, the president of a college or university is the link between "the administration" and its support services, on the one hand, and the faculty and its programs of teaching, learning, and research, on the other. And here again the American college and university differs fundamentally from its overseas counterparts. Almost everywhere else, alongside the rector or president stands a registrar, a "curator," an administrative officer who is not appointed by the president and who is not really responsible to him but is appointed by the lay governing council or by a government ministry. In the U.K., a vice-chancellor plays a large role in the appointment of the registrar, but the appointment is rather like a senior civil service post and ordinarily continues beyond the term of any sitting vice-chancellor. And that sharp separation of the academic (and symbolic) leadership from the day-to-day management and administration of the institution enormously reduces the authority and discretion of the chief campus officer of European universities, as compared with his American counterparts.

In addition to the support staff I have spoken of, the American college or university president also appoints the chief academic officers: the vice-president for academic affairs, the provost, the deans and through them, the department chairmen, who are both heads of their departments and administrative officers. The president appoints them, and he can replace them. Of course he cannot do that frivolously or

too often without loss of respect and credibility. Nevertheless, the fact that the president appoints the senior academic administrators, unlike his counterparts overseas (and the British case is intermediate in this regard), gives him a degree of leverage over changes in the academic program: for example, the opportunity to influence the balance of subjects, the subdisciplines represented, and, above all, the quality and character of new appointments.

Another consequence of the fact that the president appoints his senior administrative colleagues — his cabinet, so to speak — is that he largely defines their areas of authority and responsibility; they are not inherent in the job, or office, or in fixed regulations of the institution or ministry. University presidents in the United States (unlike their European counterparts) can and indeed often do change the administrative structures under them in the service of their own purposes and conceptions of the interests of the institution. And that restructuring — ordinarily at the beginning or early in the tenure of a president — may be one of his most creative acts. At Berkeley, for example, the current chancellor brought many student support services under the authority of a Vice-Chancellor for Undergraduate Affairs, an *academic* officer, thus breaking down the previous insulation between student services and the academic program. Moreover, presidents can modify the charge and scope of responsibility of any given academic administrator in response to the interests, talents, and capacities of the individual whom he appoints to a post, as well as to new problems and opportunities that develop around it. In addition, leaders can create decision making structures *ad hoc,* in response to different issues that arise.

If we ask what is the decision-making process at a college or university, we have to answer: "It depends on the issue." Different people and interests are brought together to solve or address different problems. But *who* is brought together to address *what* problems is determined chiefly by the president, and that indeed is an important area for the exercise of his discretion and the demonstration of his capacity for leadership. Should a senior academic officer be brought into a discussion of changes in admission procedures, which often conceal changes in academic standards? Should faculty members or academic senate committees be involved in decisions about the athletic program? Should a university financial officer be involved in discussions about a change in the requirements for graduation? What interests, what expertise, what individuals and perspectives should be brought together to deal with a particular problem; at what point will a greater diversity of perspectives not improve and inform a decision, but paralyze it? Those are among the most consequential judgments and decisions that a college or university president makes.

There is another mechanism of presidential power and initiative — one that lies directly at the heart of the academic enterprise, but which I think has not been adequately studied or discussed by students of American college and university life — and that is the power of a president to take a department or program "into receivership." Various observers have emphasized that colleges and universities are organizationally "bottom-heavy," in that expertise, both with respect to teaching and research, is located among the faculty members and in the departments. This is certainly true, and under ordinary conditions, college and university presidents are wise not to interfere in the private life of departments: in what and how they teach, what they study, whom they appoint, and whom they promote. The autonomy of departments, rooted in their expertise, is an important constraint on the power of administrators, including presidents.

But in American colleges and universities that autonomy can be overridden and set aside when something goes wrong: when, for example, factional fights within a department make it ungovernable, or prevent new appointments from being made, or block all promotions; or other tendencies and events lead to a decline in the unit's standing in the periodic national ranking of departments, or a fall-off in its external research support, or a degree of politicization that affects the quality of instruction, or a loss in the department's ability to attract able students or junior staff. These are among the reasons that lead presidents to take departments into receivership. When they do, they take the government and management of the unit out of the hands of the department members themselves, and of their chairman, and put it in the hands of others, with a clear understanding on how to proceed and what to do. The caretaker may be a person from another related department, or from the same discipline in another university, or even a committee of leading scientists and scholars from within the same institution. In my own university, this has happened to five or six departments over the past decade, including most recently to all of the biological sciences in some twenty-five departments and schools.[18] And like all drastic sanctions, the power to put departments into receivership is a powerful threat as well as an act and affects behavior even when it is not employed.

Control over the budget and especially over the discretionary resources in "student services"; the relatively large staff appointed by and responsible to the president; his power to set the institution's priorities, define problems, and specify who is to solve them; his power to take departments into receivership are some of the organizational resources and mechanisms for intervention and change by which leadership can be exercised in American research universities.

Speculation on the presidency

To sum up, I think it would be useful to get beyond the descriptions of universities as "organized anarchies" engaged in "garbage-can processes of decisionmaking." I doubt that these descriptive categories have any real influence over what college and university presidents actually do, but they stand in the way of a clearer description and understanding of the elements and functions of leadership in higher education.

Let me close with a query: If indeed the presidency of great research universities is as strong and effective as I claim, why has it had such a bad press in recent years? Why is it seen as weak, as ineffective, and as unattractive as it is portrayed? Some speculations, if not explanations, may be helpful here.

First, much of the gloomiest writing about university leadership addresses the situation of weaker second- and third-rank institutions. In the American system — marked by a very high level of competitiveness among institutions for students, for faculty, for resources, for prestige and rank, the power of the leading universities as models, both as organizations and as normative communities, is very great. All universities judge themselves by the standards and criteria of the leading universities and share their high expectations regarding research, graduate work, and institutional autonomy. But those second- and third-ranking institutions do not command the resources of the leading ones: their financial support, both public and private, their libraries and laboratories, their eminent faculties — all the traditions of autonomy that the leading institutions have gained over the years. It may be that the difficulties of university presidents in most institutions commonly arise out of the tension between their high aspirations and inadequate resources, and their resulting sense of relative failure when they compare themselves to Harvard, to Stanford, to Berkeley, or Michigan, or Illinois.

In addition to the costs of this kind of "relative deprivation" are the often frustrating experiences of university presidents, even in the leading institutions. The corral does sometimes seem smaller, the barbed wire higher than it was, or at least as it is remembered.[19] It may be that the presidency of a research university is a more effective, than attractive, position. In one of the most poignant commentaries on the role, the report of the Commission on Presidential Leadership quotes one president as follows:

> On any issue I will enjoy an incredibly high ninety to ninety-five percent of faculty support. Even so, five percent are dissatisfied with my decision, and they remember. On the next issue, I'll again enjoy the same ninety to ninety-five percent support, but the five to ten percent of dissenters will be a different group, and they, too, will

> remember. Eventually one manages to make at least one decision against the convictions of virtually every member of the faculty. By recognizing and providing an outlet for such accumulated discontent, the formal evaluation process merely increases the speed by which courageous decision makers are turned over. This does nothing for attracting the best people into the jobs.[20]

This "accumulation of discontent" threatens to make the aggregate of many small successes into one big failure. And the inexorable erosion of support that this process describes casts its pall over both the role and the office.

Moreover, university presidents are more likely to underplay their power and effectiveness and exaggerate the importance of the process of "shared governance" of which they are a part than they are to claim undue credit for their achievements. In this democratic — indeed populist — age, the towering figures of the heroic age of the university presidency would surely find themselves under attack as authoritarian, power-driven, and without a sensitive concern for the interests of their varied constituencies in the university.

One example only: Clark Kerr, who gave the first David Henry lecture in this distinguished series, was, as we all know, a very strong chancellor of the University of California, Berkeley, from 1952 to 1958 and an equally strong president of the University of California system from 1958 to 1967. In both those roles, he had an enormous impact on the institutions that he led — for example, he shaped the quite distinct characteristics of the new campuses of the university which were established during his tenure as president. And yet, in his seminal book, *The Uses of the University,* perhaps the most illuminating essay on the modern research university, Kerr, after some nostalgic references to the giants of the past, observes that in his own time a university president is likely to be "the Captain of the Bureaucracy who is sometimes a galley slave on his own ship."[21] And he quotes Allan Nevins' observations that the type of president required by the new university — the "multiversity," as Kerr called it — "will be a coordinator rather than a creative leader . . . an expert executive, a tactful moderator. . . ." In Kerr's own words, "he is mostly a mediator."[22]

This, I suggest, is at odds with the realities of university leadership — both as Clark Kerr employed it and as it now exists. Of course, leadership may be more visible and dramatic during periods of growth and expansion, and not all presidents carry to the role the talents that Kerr did. And of course, coordination and mediation were important parts of the job, then as now. But boldness, the undertaking of initiatives, the acting by a president on and through the institution in the service of his own conception of its nature and future — in my view, all of that does not have the weight and emphasis in Kerr's analysis of

university leadership that it did in his own exercise of leadership. Kerr's analysis reflects his concern (reflected again in the report of the Commission on Strengthening Presidential Leadership that he chaired) regarding the decline of institutional leadership as a result of the growth of countervailing forces and complex power centers within and around the university. I believe his analysis also reflects his sense that modern university leaders, if they are to be effective, must keep a low profile, must appear to be finding a "sense of the meeting" rather than imposing themselves on the institution and taking important initiatives within it. If we compare the modern university president to those of the heroic age, we find today more problems, more restraints, even more resources — more of everything, except authority. The exercise of authority is today often attacked as "authoritarian," and successful presidents have learned the trick of exercising authority without appearing to do so — to lead while appearing to follow, or facilitate, or mediate, or coordinate.

Of course the interplay among the characteristics of the person who occupies the office, the role, and the university's institutional environment is tremendously complex, and successful leadership today requires high skills and careful attention to the process of governance. And finally, even when the presidency is successful, troubles multiply and opposition accumulates; it is perhaps, inevitably, a case of "doing better and feeling worse."

This may be why presidents tend to underplay their own effectiveness. But why do observers and analysts do likewise? I have already set forth some of the reasons, but there is one other, and that is the apparent anarchy of intertwined purposeful policies in universities. I suspect that observers have been looking at the university president's role as if it were a cross-section of a thick cable, made up of many differently colored strands or wires, each strand representing another program or activity, and all together in cross-section representing a heterogeneous collection of issues, solutions, and problems, showing little coherence or purpose. But in the research university, this model is misleading. For if this rope is cut along the dimension of time, we see that each strand extends backwards and forwards, moving along in its own coherent, purposeful, even rational way — each marked by its own set of purposes which are largely insulated from other strands, even as they intertwine.[23] So what appears as a random or haphazard collection of events, problems, evasions, and solutions, when viewed in cross-section at a given moment, looks more like a set of purposeful programs — each being pursued in relative isolation within the boundaries of the same institution, when viewed along the dimension of time. And the variety of these programs in their purposes and partici-

pants will be greater the more comprehensive and varied the role of the university in society-at-large.

It is this multiplicity of activities, governed by different norms and purposes and pursued in different ways, that defines the comprehensive university. And it is of some interest to consider how these activities, apparently governed by different and even incompatible values, can be pursued on the same campus, under the general authority of the same president. The key lies in the institutional insulations of activities governed by different values, and the ways in which these activities are brought together in the office of the president. One common situation finds presidents serving what appear to be the mutually incompatible values of academic excellence and social equity — the latter taking the form of increased access to the institution of underrepresented groups. In Berkeley currently, the commitment to excellence is represented by a major reform of the biological sciences very much keyed to strengthening modern currents in biology, both in research and teaching. This involved a major intervention by the chancellor with the advice and support of leading biologists on campus, an intervention that required the creation of new institutional forms and the temporary but substantial reduction of the power and autonomy of the existing biological departments to control their own faculty recruitment, graduate training, and the like. At the same time, other units of the chancellor's office were engaged in major efforts to upgrade the secondary education of minority groups in the cities surrounding Berkeley from which many of its undergraduates are drawn. These activities come together in the office of the chancellor, and only there — although they are carried on quite separately and in many ways are highly insulated from one another. It is doubtful if any of the distinguished biologists involved in the renewal of their discipline at Berkeley knows very much about the outreach programs into the Oakland secondary schools, or the outreach staff know anything about developments in the biological sciences on campus. In the particular circumstances of Berkeley at the moment — and I suspect this is true much more widely, it is necessary for the university to be serving the values both of excellence and of equity and to be seen to be doing so. How that is done depends very much on the sensitivity of a university leader both to his external political environment and to the internal groups and values with whom he must work, most notably the faculty.

There is, of course, an apparent contradiction in the values that govern these two kinds of programs. But these two strands of policy, differently colored and serving different ends and values, are not competitive but supportive — closely intertwined as they move along the dimension of time. It is, I suggest, the task of university leadership to tend both to these strands of university policy and to weave them to-

gether. And if that is done effectively, it may not be visible to observers of the office of the president or chancellor — observers who may be more impressed by the illogic or inconsistency of the values served than by the skills and initiative that enter into their accommodation within the same institution. Of course, incoherence and the loss of institutional integrity always threaten the American research university which says "yes" to almost all claims on its energies, resources, and attention. But it is precisely the nature of leadership in American universities and the broad conceptions of its power and the resources at its disposal that enable the university president or chancellor to give coherence, character, and direction to an institution so large in size and aspiration, so various in its functions and constituencies, so deeply implicated in the life of learning and of action, with links to so many parts of the surrounding society. These great research universities are among the most successful institutions in the world. They could not be if their presidents could not give them direction, as well as the capacity for responding to what is almost always an unanticipated future. It is in the office of the president that the necessary resources and opportunities lie.

Problems of the presidency

Problems with which we have resources to cope may also be seen as opportunities. The great research universities currently face a series of such problems (or opportunities) which are uniquely the responsibility of their presidents, however useful their aides and staff may be. Each of us will have his or her own short list of grave problems that face university presidents, and these lists will change over time. But my own list would include at least these, though not necessarily in this order of importance:

1. There is the problem each president faces of accommodating to or reconciling demands for broadened access by students from historically underrepresented groups with the maintenance of the highest standards in teaching and research. This is the familiar tension in education between equity and excellence, both served in different ways within the same institution, and to differing degrees by different institutions.

2. There is the problem of the evolving relations between research universities and industry. The question presents itself as how to serve industry while using its funds, research facilities, and know-how for the university's own purposes, at the same time maintaining the unique qualities — the very integrity — of the university as a place committed to the pursuit of truth in an atmosphere of open inquiry and free communication.

3. There are the problems created for the university by the very rapid growth of scientific knowledge, and the impact of that growth on the organization of the schools and departments of science and technology, and on the physical facilities in which science is done within the university.

4. Closely linked to the third is the problem of maintaining a flow of new scientists and scholars into departments and research labs, without institutional growth, and with a largely tenured and aging faculty which is not retiring in large numbers until the 1990s or later.

5. On the other side of the campus, there is the problem of sustaining the humanities and the performing arts — that is, of maintaining the crucial balance of subjects within the university — in face of the expansion of scientific and technological knowledge and the growing attractiveness of professional training, especially at the undergraduate level.

6. And finally, the problem on which perhaps all others depend: The defense of freedom of speech and of academic freedom on campus in the face of intense pressure from vocal minorities of students and faculty who, unlike the rest of us, do not have to pursue the truth since they already possess it and who are loathe to permit others with whom they disagree to express and propagate what they view to be error and pernicious doctrines. (The theological language here is intentional.)

What a list! Yet we expect presidents to cope with large problems, as no other national university system does, because in fact our society gives them the authority and the resources to cope. There are never enough resources, in their view, yet by and large, they do cope. It is still in part a mystery how they cope so successfully, when so much of the theory of organizational leadership tells us they cannot and should not.

But I think that the office of the university president has not been properly appreciated; it has been the object more of compassion and criticism than of understanding. The university presidency deserves understanding, though I suspect that incumbents will continue to speak of it deprecatingly and, with good reason, as fraught with difficulties and constraints. And meanwhile, under their leadership in that extraordinary office, our research universities go on from strength to strength.

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Responses, Questions, and Discussion

Thomas E. Everhart, Chancellor at Urbana-Champaign: Thank you very much, Martin. As a new chancellor, I must say I am tremendously encouraged. You know, after a few months, you begin to wonder if you can do anything useful, and you said that if I'm wise, perhaps I can. We will now turn to our panelists, president of the University of Illinois, Stan Ikenberry; Professor Joe Burnett, Dean of our College of Education; and Professor David Whetten from Commerce and Business Administration. They will comment, briefly, on Martin Trow's remarks and give you their own perspectives. We will proceed in the order given in the program; thus, we'll start with President Ikenberry.

Response by Stanley O. Ikenberry

President, University of Illinois

Professor Trow, that was a splendid statement. It's one of the most insightful analyses of the university presidency I have heard. There are two or three areas in which I am in special agreement and would like to emphasize.

First, I think the typologies of leadership you used throughout the paper are helpful. We always hear the need to distinguish between leadership and management. Your typologies are helpful in further underlining that distinction, particularly your use of the concept of symbolic leadership. I'm not sure "symbolic" is the term I would have chosen, but I think you are driving at a concept too frequently ignored in the academic enterprise. That is the responsibility of the president, the chancellor, and many other academic leaders within the institution, both administrative and faculty leaders, to help the university articulate the value system for which it stands. The University is a place of the mind and the spirit — values. Therefore, one of the key aspects of leadership, and one that falls more heavily on the president and the chancellor than on any other leader in the institution, is to help the university to articulate to its broader publics what it believes and what it stands for. The symbolic, managerial, and academic components of leadership, I believe, are helpful in understanding this issue.

I, too, believe that several analyses of the health of the American university presidency are much too pessimistic. The reports of our demise are premature. The "garbage-can theory" suffers from this pessimistic view, as you pointed out so well. It seems to fail to grasp the complexity of the process. Tom Everhart was helpful in making the analogy that many scientific and other phenomena appear irrational or random, but after study we find purpose and order; we don't see irrationality, but functioning in terms of some fairly well understood principles or theory. The "garbage-can theory" fails to comprehend the rationality, fragmentary as it may be, that underlies the process.

The recent Kerr commission report also was a bit more pessimistic than I would have expected. Turn for a moment to the question of power. There are two very valid ways of looking at the power of the presidency. One is to say, the power of the president is rather limited; particularly it is limited from the perspective of the president when confronted with the expectations of the academic community and the power those outside the academic community tend to impute to the presidency. The president, at least this president, many times feels impotent to respond to the expectations that others would bring to the office, and he says to the trustees, or to the faculty, or to the governor, or to the legislature, "Very frankly, that's not within my power"; and many times, it is not.

I am convinced that we tend frequently to go outside of the university to find a president or chancellor precisely because it is easier to impute mythical qualities of power and wisdom to someone we know little about than to someone we know as a mere human being.

On the other hand, there are fundamental powers of the presidency, and these include the ability to set the agenda, to help create options, and to provide flexibility. When we talk about the weakened university presidency, we're referring more particularly to the failure on the part of the presidents to exercise the initiatives they do have, particularly as it relates to shaping the agenda of the university, whether it be in terms of symbolic, managerial, or academic issues. I'm not sure that I would agree that this is more prevalent in the smaller, academically weaker institutions than it is in the major universities, although I suspect on balance larger, stronger universities are more capable of attracting and retaining the strong leadership that may be needed. The results of presidential failure to shape the agenda and other leadership vulnerabilities fall equally on large, complex research universities, as well as the smaller ones.

Your point on the difference between the effectiveness of the university presidency and the degree of job satisfaction of the incumbents is an important point. It's not necessary for a university president to be happy and effective at the same time. Sometimes it isn't a very satisfying, happy, pleasant job, but the president can, at the same time, still be effective. The ability to make the distinction between satisfaction and effectiveness, particularly in analyses of the university presidency, is an important distinction. There is a tendency to confuse a low level of job satisfaction of presidents with presumed ineffectiveness.

Let me conclude by saying that the capacity of presidents and chancellors and other leaders in universities to see problems as opportunities is one of the special gifts of leadership. The values for which a president stands, the values for which an institution such as a university stands, are many times defined most vividly as a result of the bat-

tles and the struggles a president chooses to pursue. There are times where a president chooses to take off his coat, throw it in the road, and say, "This far, no further." It is sometimes through the act of confrontation that a president and a university begin to adapt and change and define values in precise terms. The same can be true when the president tackles managerial problems and exercises academic leadership. The president may have a severe problem in a particular academic college or department and, for its good and the good of the university, may need to say, "This department is bankrupt at the moment; or it is in receivership; or, in short, the conventional rules no longer apply and something must be done."

Opportunities to exercise presidential leadership come through problem-solving. These are the actions of real leaders and effective presidents.

I enjoyed your paper and appreciate this chance to respond.

Response by Joe R. Burnett

Dean, College of Education
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Let me say at the outset of my remarks that, especially as a dean, I have never had any reason to doubt the existence of considerable power for leadership in the university presidency, in the university chancellorship, or in the various university vice-chancellorships! Probably it takes the relative powerlessness of a deanship to see the great power of these offices, something perhaps not possible from the purely professorial role championed by people such as Cohen and March.[1]

As with our speaker, I also wonder about perspectives which say, in effect, that things would go relatively unchanged no matter which actors were placed in the top administrative roles of universities. For this reason I was pleased to hear Professor Trow speculate about how these perspectives might have received such wide coinage. As I understand his account, there are essentially three reasons:

1. There genuinely is not much potential for leadership at some institutions — those second- and third-tier ones suffering "relative deprivation" of resources;
2. There is an "apparent anarchy" in even the first-rate institutions which can mislead those not familiar with the complexity of the mega- or multiversity;
3. There is a tendency of presidents to underplay their power and influence as a means of keeping the low profile useful for being effective.

I would like to suggest an additional reason, one which might be closely associated with the third one just mentioned. It is the existence of an aspect of the professorial mentality which is always on guard against academic administration. Thus, Beneget, et al., interpret Cohen and March as reflecting "a certain archiness" (as an arch-villain) — the effect of which, perhaps, is "to help arm the professoriate against

a president's zealousness. . . ."[2] Such an archiness would be in a grand academic tradition, no grander representative of which can be found than Thornstein Veblen. Veblen's *The Higher Learning in America*[3] — which Veblen once thought of calling "A Study in Total Depravity"[4] — dealt with college/university presidents as, at best, irrelevant to the proper functioning of research and scholarship. More generally he viewed them as harmful to creative research. He spoke of them as "Captains of Erudition," as being as damaging to academe proper as their industrial and business analogues, the "Captains of Solvency," were to the inventive spirit, the Spirit of Workmanship, in the laboratory and workplace.

David Riesman, himself a student of the university presidency, writes that Veblen's belief "that a university bureaucracy is not necessary still hangs on. . . ."[5] One could venture that, to the extent a university president wanted to keep a low profile, this aspect of the professorial mentality might serve him or her well. But as Riesman points out, it also could ". . . create obstacles to the routine tasks needful in any large enterprise, and [help] to build up fierce suspicions at the least signs of parental bent [i.e., paternalism] on the part of university administrators." It could seriously undercut the symbolic and other roles so important for institutional strength.

Professor Trow's comparisons and contrasts of possibilities for effective leadership in American universities, as opposed to the possibilities in certain European universities, are interesting. Other commentators on the differences, such as Hans Daalder and Edward Shils,[6] have called attention to many of the same phenomena as inhibiting, if not neutralizing, effectiveness in the modern European counterparts. But, I suspect that the differences are not merely interesting in their own historical right: they provide a lesson which can be drawn to illuminate another of Professor Trow's points.

To be sure, the differences do have roots in different conditions of origin, as Professor Trow points out, but it also can be argued that the current difficulty in providing effective leadership in European universities stems importantly from the fact that such leadership was not exercised in Europe during the 1960s and the 1970s. The specific failure can be argued to have been that of blocking claims for equity, for democratization, as the sea change from elite to mass education swept through Europe. The first phase of this change saw junior faculty and students successfully challenge the university governance of fairly autonomous, chair-holding professors. The challenge did not stop there but developed into radical student revolt in several countries, bringing state intervention and the imposition of — as Daalder and Shils say — "centralisation, bureaucratisation, and politicisation" of higher education.[7]

In a word, the current lack of effective leadership in European universities is due, in part, to the fact that effective leadership was not exercised earlier, and not just due to the fact that the origins of European universities were so strikingly different from those of American universities.

The lesson to be learned is drawn out by Roger Geiger, in his review of Daalder's and Shils' work:

> . . . any defense of the autonomy of the intellectual functions of the [American] university will have to take into account such realities as the pluralism of American higher education, its responsiveness for good or ill to currents in American society like the civil rights movement, and the irresistible federal presence in supporting university students and university research. . . .
>
> Although bureaucratic aggrandizement may have subsided in the U.S. for the moment, the levers for federal manipulation are now well established.[8]

I think that Geiger's evaluation illuminates the importance of three key points which Professor Trow makes briefly toward the conclusion of his talk; that is, the necessity that the university and its president find a way (1) to serve ". . . the values both of excellence and of equity," (2) to be seen as doing this, and (3) to do this in such a way that causes these values to be supportive of each other rather than in conflict. This, apparently, the European universities did not, perhaps could not, do. And perhaps, it is becoming more and more difficult for it to be done in America. For instance, Professor Trow talks about the need for equity that spurs Berkeley's responsiveness to minority groups — a need that is becoming ever more pressing in urban centers all over America and certainly in the Southwestern states. At the same time, there is emerging a national clamor for excellence, not only in elementary and secondary education, but in baccalaureate education as well — with five major reports faulting baccalaureate education to have appeared by early 1986.[9] It will be a neat trick for the first-rank universities to both raise standards significantly and ease access significantly in a way that can be seen as moves supportive of each other, rather than moves in conflict. Especially this will be the case if large budget reductions occur in higher education, as some have predicted that they will. If both things can't be done, then we, too, probably can expect greater governmental intervention and greater erosion of institutional autonomy, just as occurred in Europe.

Professor Trow concludes his talk with an expression of confidence in the present and future ability of the American university presidency — especially in the first-rank universities — to exercise effective leadership. The evidence of American educational history seems clearly to justify his optimism. We are indebted to him for his analyses and

reflections once again. They should help us better emulate not only the deeds, but the courage, of the great predecessor institutions and their leaders in that history.

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Response by David A. Whetten

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I appreciate the opportunity to respond to Professor Martin Trow's thoughtful paper. My study of universities-as-organizations has been significantly enhanced by Professor Trow's lucid and insightful writings, and this lecture is certainly exemplary.

It has been determined that only sixty-six institutions in the Western world have survived in recognizable form since 1530. These include the parliaments of the Isle of Man and Iceland, the Roman Catholic and Lutheran churches, and sixty-two universities. From this bit of academic trivia, it is appropriate that the focus of this forum is not whether major research universities can survive their contemporary, but in historical terms rather modest, crises of two percent budget cuts below the rate of inflation salary increases, or modest declines in enrollments, but, instead, whether the leaders at the helm of these durable institutions can alter the course dictated by organizational inertia.

This David Dodds Henry Lecture is a rebuttal of sorts to the talk given to this same forum two years ago by Jim March, in which he proposed his "light bulb theory" of university leadership. He argued that just as we need a light bulb to illuminate our activities in dark rooms, universities need leaders to perform certain obligatory, and largely symbolic, functions. Consequently, he argued further, just as there is little difference between the output of different light bulbs, there is little difference between the impact of different university presidents. Collectively, they perform a necessary function, but individually their actions have little lasting consequence. In response, Professor Trow today has provided a cogent argument for the strong leader view: what makes a difference in shaping organizational outcomes is strong management, not institutional momentum.

While there are obviously many aspects of this fine presentation that I could respond to, I will focus my remarks on what I view as the two major contributions to our understanding of the university presidency.

First, Professor Trow has significantly elevated the debate over the relative strength of the office of the presidency. The typical weak-leader arguments have been based on two lines of thought. Proponents have either concluded, on the basis of statistical evidence, that "on the average, across the entire population of presidents, it does not appear they are having major impacts on their institutions." Or, they have argued logically: (a) there are certain conditions necessary for leaders to be powerful, (b) these do not exist in most universities and colleges; therefore, (c) it follows that university presidents can't be powerful.

In contrast, the typical strong-leader argument has tended to reflect a "cult of the personality" orientation in which proponents cite specific examples where dynamic, smart, or clever presidents have had a significant impact on their schools, and then posit that all leaders with similar characteristics can be equally successful.

Professor Trow has provided a much more solid case for his claim that the university president's role is not inherently weak. He has presented an impressive array of comparative and historical evidence indicating that in this country there has been a trend towards an accrual of power in the president's office. What is particularly noteworthy about his approach is that his argument is grounded in an analysis of structural and contextual conditions, rather than the typical wish list of attractive leadership traits.

While I feel that his arguments, overall, have considerable merit, I have two concerns that will hopefully prompt further examination and discussion of this important subject.

First, I am disappointed at Professor Trow's decision to limit his focus to the major research universities in our country. There are roughly 165 universities classified as Major Doctorals, out of a total population of roughly 3,300 colleges and universities, or about five percent. Consequently, while his arguments in favor of the strong-leader viewpoint are highly persuasive, given his limited focus, it is not possible to reject the statistical argument used by the advocates of the weak presidency. Indeed, implied in Professor Trow's line of reasoning is the conclusion that, except for a relatively small number of "major-doc" institutions, university presidents, in general, are not very powerful.

Second, Professor Trow also hedges his argument by focusing on the potential for power inherent in the office of the president. What is missing is an in-depth analysis of the personal and institutional factors that account for the differences in the abilities of individual presidents

to convert the potential for power vested in their office into active personal influence for accomplishing specific objectives.

This limitation actually suggests the second major potential contribution of the paper. Professor Trow does a particularly effective job of highlighting the complexity of the role of university president. Specifically, he argues that there are at least three* components of that position: a symbolic role, a managerial role, and an academic or intellectual role. If we add to this a fourth component, the political role, then I would suggest that further analysis of these facets of the president's position may hold valuable clues to how effective presidents are able to transform their potential power into real influence. Specifically, I would suggest that a key to effective university leadership is an academic administrator's ability to: (1) skillfully execute each of these four roles, (2) recognize the interplay between the roles, and (3) decide when it is important to emphasize each role.

For example, my research on effective administrative responses to retrenchment in universities indicates that administrators who respond primarily from a managerial perspective by treating the problem as a budgetary shortfall requiring internal cost cutting measures, and ignore the symbolic, political, and intellectual consequences of this approach, are seldom successful in balancing their budget. Furthermore, they dissipate the potential for using the power of their office to capitalize on an organizational crisis to initiate long overdue changes in the university, for which they have not been able to generate support during periods of prosperity and tranquility.

In these investigations, I was particularly struck by the fact that influential presidents are skillful implementers of the political role, particularly in their ability to mold and manage coalitions of interests. These leaders view their universities more like European parliaments than monolithic American hierarchies. Hence, they were constantly cognizant of the need to nurture the support of key constituents — taking the support of no group for granted. To accomplish this, they use a catalytic leadership style. Many authors have extolled the virtues of charismatic leaders who use their attractive personality attributes to gain the support of the group for the leader's vision of the future. In contrast, catalytic leaders work with the group, or representatives of groups, to articulate, tease out, mold, and solidify a common vision. My research suggests that both of these approaches are appropriate in different circumstances, and part of the key to being an influential president is knowing when to use each approach.

Before concluding, I would like to make a general comment about the strong-versus-weak–leader debate in the university governance liter-

* Later revised to four components, including the political role, in Professor Trow's published paper.

ature. While this debate has attracted considerable attention to the role of the president, as with most polemics, both sides probably reflect a part of the truth. This conclusion has emerged from my interviews with numerous faculty and administrators from a variety of colleges and universities, during which I was repeatedly struck by the deep-seated and broadly held ambivalence regarding the proper role of administrators in the academic governance process. Furthermore, this ambivalence was especially pronounced when the subject was powerful administrators. One example of this ambivalence is the preference expressed by many for a leader who is a strong external advocate of the department, college, or university, but who is simultaneously a weak internal administrator that does not represent a threat to entrenched, vested interests.

This observation suggests that rather than continuing to search for evidence to support either the strong- or weak-leader theories of the university presidency, a more fruitful line of inquiry for scholars might be to investigate the root causes, manifestations, and consequences of this ambivalence regarding powerful leaders within the academy.

In conclusion, then, this lecture has added considerably to our understanding of the role of the president of contemporary American research universities. The author's extensive and expansive study of this subject is obviously apparent in his presentation. He has been most helpful in providing a historical and comparative background for understanding a very complex, and often oversimplified, debate in this area.

Questions and Discussion

Chancellor Everhart: I have asked Professor Trow to respond briefly to the remarks made by our three panelists, and then I'll open the session for questions from the audience. I hope we can have a fairly general discussion of this important topic.

Professor Trow: I wish to acknowledge with great thanks the care with which members of the panel listened or read, and the courtesy and insight that they brought to bear in their remarks. I could, of course, say quite a lot. Let me just make one remark about each of the panelists' responses.

President Ikenberry was very kind and didn't give me much room to disagree, but he did make a point worth making that I didn't, and that is the extent to which people have excessive expectations of the president. I kept emphasizing the president's genuine powers, but in the minds of some, they are unlimited. There is on one side the assertion that the president has no power at all, it's all fanciful, and so forth; on the other, there is a mythological superman who can leap over tall buildings. The president has both to know the limits of his own power and to be able effectively to educate his constituents to the real limits of that power. If he overstates the case, then he essentially undermines his capacity to do anything. The president has to be the best educator on campus, to teach the various changing constituencies what they can reasonably expect of him. What can be expected is neither everything nor nothing, but has to be continuously explored and restated, as much in action as in words, during his tenure.

Joe Burnett said many things I could respond to, but he also stressed the close link between history and organization. In a very interesting remark, he observed that the failure of leadership in Europe currently is related to the weakness of that leadership and its failure in 1968. That is certainly true, but the weakness of leadership in 1968 can be related to many things, among them the organization of the professoriate in European universities and the tremendous power, at least until recently, of the full professor, the *ordinarius*. In most Eu-

ropean countries, there is a small number of full professors and a large number of "junior" staff, many of whom are not junior in age nor anything else, except in not having the rank of professor. By contrast, in this country, any and every faculty member who gains tenure can ordinarily expect to become a full professor. This is enormously important in helping us avoid what is in the European university a kind of class struggle, the struggle of the professoriat — that top 5, 10, or 15 percent of the teaching staff — and all the others, that has destroyed the capacity of the European academic profession to act with any common conception of or devotion to their institutions.

Dave Whetten also made a number of important points. I fully accept his addition of the political role, along with the other three, and, indeed, it may be that it is the king of the roles and should be included as a central aspect of the university presidency. I do accept that he is sorry that I limited my analysis to research universities; I had some remarks about why I did that, but cut them out as mere scaffolding. The fact is that to do this analysis properly one would need to develop a typology of institutions of higher education, in the various cells of which the possibilities for leadership are really quite different and, moreover, don't change in a linear way from the academically most distinguished to those which do not do much research or academic work. For example, the survivors of the nineteenth century college are the small denominational colleges and the historically Black colleges, and there the president is still the enormously powerful czar that he was in most American colleges before the Civil War. Similarly, in some, but not all, community colleges, the president has a possibility for action and initiative by virtue of local support and connections with many local constituencies that the president of the modest four-year state college down the road, governed from the state capital on a line-item budget, does not have. So we have to differentiate this system in a way that really wasn't possible here, in order to develop this kind of analysis at all well for the whole range of 3,200 institutions.

Questioner (William Prokasy, Dean, Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign): I would like to ask a question about the particular form that the leadership for the presidency takes on the issue of liberal education. Kerr recently pointed out that he felt that the presidency has largely reneged in responsibility in this arena, and I would be curious to know what kinds of power a presidency has, and what you think the role of president can, or ought to be, in liberal education at a research institution — the sixty-six institutions to which you referred.

Professor Trow: Well, I think it was David Saxon who, in his farewell remarks as he left the presidency of the University of California, said

some unkind things about the undergraduate programs of the several campuses, to which, equally unkind, I said to somebody, "How does he know?" But I think that President Saxon, in the course of doing his job very well, had not been required to look very closely at what was going on in the undergraduate programs on the several campuses of the university. That would really be a microstudy, and I think that most of what happens in liberal education on a campus happens invisibly. My own sense is that the most interesting and important things that happen in the private life of the university, in the classrooms and labs where teaching and research go on, are not very visible, nor are they publicized, and often are not known in very great detail to the chief campus officer or to the president.

I think that the chief campus officer has real responsibilities to liberal education, to continue to support it and to make resources available to it, so the people who actually are doing it are not terribly constricted and always at bay. For example, to tax the overhead money that comes in with research grants, largely from science and technology, to tax that money for the support of the humanities is a right and proper function of administrative leadership. To reallocate funds in that way, to try to maintain a balance of subjects and between teaching and research, to resist the enormously volatile movements of student sentiment between one department and another, or between the professional schools and the arts and science departments, those are important functions of the president. I think that I would leave the shaping and content of undergraduate education to the people who are directly involved with it: the academic offices, the chairmen, and the people who actually are doing the teaching and scholarship.

Questioner (Professor Whetten): I was particularly interested in your comments concerning excellence and equity and that marvelous tension which exists between the two, and the president's role in dealing with that tension. My question is this, "Does the president simply work for these two when tension exists, or should the president do something to maintain that tension?" Another way of putting it, perhaps is, "When there is more rhetoric than tension, what does the president do?"

Professor Trow: Well, in the part of the world where I live, there is quite a lot of tension between concepts of equity and excellence. The president doesn't have to encourage it. And I think that is true in many parts of the country. The pressures on presidents to respond to a variety of concerns in the larger society, both moral and political, are very strong — especially in public universities. I gave an example of an area in which these tensions could be resolved by a form of institutional insulation; the actors in two different programs were not particularly aware of what was going on in the other. But in this case, if they had

been aware, they wouldn't have been disturbed by it. That is to say, the work in the university in local secondary schools is not in any serious way incompatible with the work that the biologists are doing in molecular biology, nor is the reorganization of biology at all troublesome to the people working in Oakland high schools. As I said in my prepared remarks, efforts to strengthen local central city high schools are in the service *both* of equity and of excellence. But that is not always the case.

In the area of faculty appointments and the application of affirmative action to faculty appointments, the issues of equity and excellence are very sharp and can't always be neatly resolved by a creative president. There may be a very sharp tension in the appointment of specific people, as between the criterion of competitive excellence and the issue of gender or ethnic group representation on the faculty, trends in that regard, and what the legislature thinks about that. There is no easy resolution for those tensions, not in the happy way that I could describe in the example that I gave, and if I have any apologies to make, it is that I chose an example here that is relatively easily resolved. But if presidents don't solve those, they don't get to solve the others either.

Questioner: How important in the educational preparation of a president is a thorough grounding in educational sociology?

Professor Trow: I really don't know, except that I tend to think that effectiveness and sophistication, in the sense of being articulate about the job, are unrelated. I happen, for obvious reasons, to like to talk to presidents who are reflective and thoughtful about their jobs, but the president of a very well-known, small liberal arts college was one of the most sophisticated organizational theorists I've ever known and a disastrous president. He almost wrecked his institution, but, by God, he was clever. And I've known some very effective presidents who could never really articulate, or maybe they chose not to, what it was they were doing, but flew by the seat of their pants and had kind of an intuitive sense of how to function. Being able to articulate the purposes and mission of an institution is important for a president, but not being able to analyze how it works, the way sociologists do, is no great handicap.

Questioner: You were introduced as a person who has finished a term as chairman of the academic senate on the Berkeley campus. I think you alluded to the role of faculty versus the role of professional employees versus the role of nonacademics and other groups on campus, students. I think I read you correctly as saying that perhaps while they all have a role to play, the faculty has a separate and distinct role to play and that really shouldn't be confused with other roles. I guess what I would really like to know is whether or not I read you correctly, and then perhaps you will elaborate on your

thoughts on faculty governance or the role of faculty governance and how that interacts with the chancellor a bit more.

Professor Trow: That is an enormously big question that you opened up. I don't know if there is a short answer. In most universities, there is something like an academic senate. I think it has an extremely important role, particularly in the defense of academic standards and in strengthening the president's hand in saying "no" to all the pressures that are on him. I think that it's very often extremely helpful for a president to say to somebody outside who wants him to do something or other, "Well, I really would like to do that, but I don't think my faculty would let me." Now, he can't do that very effectively if, in fact, they would let him. They have to not let him sometimes, and the question is how do they not let him, and do they have to have a big and public uprising, do they have to have votes of no confidence? I think quite a lot of the time the senate can set limits on the president's power by a steady statement of what the university is, to remind him what the central functions of the university are, with due recognition on their part that usually he's serving their interests in his ways as well as his in theirs.

I don't believe a senate can be a form of legislature of the university and, therefore, I would not on the whole think it a useful thing for the senate to also include representatives of students and nonacademic staff. I think that those groups have, and ought to have, a voice in the governance of the university directly to the president, and he has to find ways to take their advice and listen to their concerns, as well as the faculty's, and decide what weight to give to what group on what issue. There is, in many places, an effort by students to gain access to the meetings of the academic senate and have their say there because there's a myth that that's where the university really is run. Insofar as that's effective, it simply dilutes the clarity of the faculty's own views. It also destroys the faculty meeting as a place where a faculty can come to discover what its own mind is, so it gets to arguing issues that are on the students' agenda, very often different issues than the faculty want to discuss.

Also, there is a myth that the students who speak at such meetings represent "the students." Well, they often don't represent the students, but a very tiny group of students who are very political and are, in a sense, serving apprenticeship for a future political career. Also, it's important for them, if they are not to become utterly anonymous, to oppose, to find some dramatic position to sustain, and to complain, so quite a lot of the time their positions are driven by personal and political ambitions.

So where students are members of academic senates, the conversation in those meetings get distorted by a lot of considerations that are

not really central to the faculty's own affairs — they have enough to worry about besides those things. But I must say there are many different views on this, and I'm not sure that mine are going to prevail. We're discussing this, yet again, at Berkeley. This never goes away. I want to stress, however, that that simply isn't an adequate analysis of university governance; that's just a beginning of such a thing.

Questioner: You spoke quite distinctly about three* kinds of leadership. You talked about symbolic leadership, and then David Whetten came along and added one called political leadership, and you didn't argue with him. Would you make a clearer distinction whether or not you really think those are two? I think a lot of people in education are a bit uncomfortable with using political leadership as a clear description and are probably more comfortable with saying, "This is symbolic leadership." Do you really make distinctions between those two, or would you think there's quite a bit of overlap in your definition?

Professor Trow: I think the political dimension of leadership of a public university involves knowing the map of the legislature and of its relevant committees; knowing something of the nature of the university's political resources in the alumni and in other groups; knowing of when something important to the university is afoot in the state capital; whom to call among his leading alumni, whom to call on his Board, and whom to call in the legislature; and what kinds of people and resources to bring together when something needs to happen. Now, that isn't the same as the ability to articulate and embody the values of the institution. It is the much more homely business of wheeling and dealing, and yet I think that is a dimension of the role of the president that we would neglect to our peril. But I'm happy here to be corrected by the sitting presidents. I suspect that they have to know and do those things, and I don't find that to be an illegitimate business at all. Is that fair?

Questioner (William Staerkel, President, Parkland College): I was talking to one of our legislators recently — the last session of the legislature, in which, incidentally, higher education came off very well — and he commented to me that the reason higher education came off so well in this last session was because of the president's actions. He said he came to the capitol, he talked to legislators, visited them in their offices; they were flattered. He talked to them about the problems of the university, and they were pleased, and he created an attitude within the legislature that caused them to give higher education more this year than they had gotten before, so I think that clearly points out that it is an invisible fourth element of leadership which is more than just some symbolism.

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* Revised to four, including political, in Professor Trow's published paper.

President Ikenberry: Well, that says it better than I can by a long shot. In order to give Professor Trow a relief, and since it has gotten awfully close to home, maybe I'd better make a comment. I don't have any problem with adding the fourth category, either, so long as it's understood to be a small *p* political. And it is really more, if you listen carefully to what Martin is saying. It is more than the political process itself as embodied in state government. One can underestimate the importance of having rapport with the governor's office and understanding the legislative process and having rapport with legislative leaders. But I think the dimension that is being talked about here, using the word *political,* really goes beyond that to the broad range of constituencies that might be defined as public constituencies — some of whom are on campus, but many of whom are off the campus but have direct and indirect linkages back to the campus. Furthermore, if they aren't understood, you can't understand how universities function and how decisions get made.

Literally there are hundreds and thousands of farmers across this state and there are organizations through which they come together. The relationship between them and our College of Agriculture, the College of Veterinary Medicine, and the relationship to the legislative process on the one hand and our faculties on the other — it is the complexity of that network, and the university understanding where its power base is, and the president nurturing this power base that determines the final result. And the same must be said of the business community, the legal profession, dentists, pharmacy, medicine, and engineering. This is where a public university president must go. Understanding the complexity of these networks, being able to work with them, energize them, lead them, is the key element.

May I just make one other comment in response to a question that was raised earlier in terms of the relationship between quality and access? I think this is a good illustration of the positive power of the presidency if it's creatively used to do two fundamental things. Number one is help define the question. If the question is improperly defined, improper answers and hypotheses will be forthcoming. The genius of American higher education has been the conviction that pursuing quality and broadening access are not antithetical. One of the roles of a president is to teach the public, his own Board of Trustees, and others: "Now, as before, we are going to pursue these objectives of quality and access in tandem." Failure to exercise that leadership role on the part of the chancellor or the president can take an institution down a negative spiral.

Professor Trow: Can I just add one sentence on this? The reason I believe that the present discussion about secondary education may have somewhat more substantial effects on the secondary schools than did

the comparable fuss after Sputnik is that then small groups here and elsewhere got together and wrote better secondary curricula. They put them in bottles, and corked them up, and threw them in the ocean — hoping that somebody would find them. There was a general feeling among educational reformers in universities that it would be a good thing if secondary schooling were better, but I don't think on the whole it happened.

Now, universities like this one, and my own, and others around the country recognize that we cannot resolve this issue of excellence and equity unless secondary education is better, and so for the first time since the 1890s, and maybe earlier, the universities and colleges are beginning to take a bigger role — and not just through their Schools of Education, although in part through their Schools of Education — in secondary education. It is not an act of charity, not a basket at Thanksgiving, but an act of absolutely desperate self-preservation. If we are to remain universities of high quality that also broaden our access to higher education, then we have to do something about primary and secondary education, particularly secondary education.

Questioner (Jo Ann Fley, Associate Professor of Higher Education, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign): In many ways, this lecture and the discussion afterwards should have come three years ago, because in some ways we are reacting to, or taking a different approach to, the ideas that James March shared with us. I think your ideas are somewhat contrary to his, and I want to believe some of the things you are saying. I would rather not believe the models that he proposes, but I'm particularly interested in the part about a leader having some discretion and through that, some power, and in your discussion of the power of receivership. We have a joke around here that if you want to do away with an academic unit, in an evaluation simply say that it is not as strong as it could be, it needs more resources to be strengthened and that's the kiss of death. If you want to keep it, recommend that it should be abolished, but those kinds of recommendations usually come from committees or lower administrators. Then what usually happens, as far as I can see, is the implementation of the political model. You wait for parents to get aroused, you wait for a woman to get aroused, you wait for pressure groups to come into the picture, and the recommended unit for being abolished is saved through the political process. The political process doesn't take effect too much in the other case of just recommending that something be strengthened. It seems to me that the political model, or the model of ambiguity, explains the dynamics of that better than claiming that somebody at the top is exercising rational leadership. Does that make sense? Would you care to talk more about the dynamics of this and defend your point of view?

Professor Trow: Well, the issue of taking a school or department "into receivership" caught my attention, partly because it's both obvious and unnoticed. We all know it is done, but nobody seems to have talked about it very much. The surprising thing is that when it happens, there is remarkably little resistance or opposition within the faculty — probably because it happens rarely enough and in extreme cases, so that there is a general consensus that something really has gone wrong. That is to say, it can be treated as an exceptional case, and the treatment of that case is not going to be an attack on the ordinary processes of academic governance in which the faculty plays a major role. Something has gone wrong, and the president or his senior advisers intervene to help put it right, so that the action is in the service of the fundamental values of the faculty anyway. It ordinarily is not done under the pressure of economic constraint; it's done because something about a department or school has gone sufficiently awry so that its reputation is clearly, visibly declining, people in it are hurting, students are hurting, the faculty is hurting.

In the case of biology in my own university, there were several important departments that almost fell off the bottom of the scale in the last national ratings of graduate departments by the National Academy of Science, and there are some others that didn't do so well. When that happens, the intervention is to try to put things right; a unit or group of units is put into receivership for a temporary period, and it is assumed that it will be put back in the hands of its members as soon as possible. When this happens, with very, very few exceptions, there isn't much of a fuss by the academic community. They know that the people in it cannot do anything to help it, and people immediately around it can't because they will be seen as interfering or taking sides in a terrible conflict. It's precisely the "outsideness" of the president or his provost or senior dean that makes it possible for him to intervene. No, it doesn't happen very often, but it is extremely important that it can, and there are times when departments know "we can't let things go on like this or they will come and take us over." Departments don't like to be taken over, so I think it is more important as a potential than as an actual intervention.

Questioner: I would like to respond to that in the aspect of the specific example or specific problem you cited. One of the failures in the academic enterprise is the failure to recognize that many of the academic decisions that we make have political ramifications. Those who are involved in the decision-making process on the academic side are oblivious to the political ramifications, while on the other hand those who might be sensitive to the political ramifications are oblivious to what's happening in terms of the academic decision. I thought — as you were talking about this marvelous cable that you

described earlier, with these strands going through it — that there are these impulses going through the wires, but the wires are insulated from each other and there is no communication early enough in the process. There are very few things that the academic entity cannot do if it does them creatively and wisely and sensitively. Where we run into problems, by declaring we are going to close something, only to find out that's absolutely the last program in the university that will ever close, is where we are so clumsy. You see, we don't recognize that the legislature, the public-at-large are going to have a say in what it is that we do or don't do, and we are going to have to lay some groundwork to explain to them why such and such an action is going to have to take place, before they read it in the newspaper, in order to make the decision stick. So part of it, I think, is simply building bridges within the university community to understand that decisions need to be made upon the merits, but that does not exclude them from external impact or review.

Chancellor Everhart: I would like to make a brief comment, first, Martin, if I may. I would just like to recount an example of academic leadership on a different campus, but one that Professor Trow will know well. At Berkeley in the 70s, the state government was cutting back very strongly. In fact, programs were cut, and I believe one year the Berkeley campus lost 110 positions, which is a sizeable number of faculty positions to lose in one year. The erosion stopped the year the chancellor looked at all the cuts that were proposed in the diminished budget and said, "We can't take any more out of academic programs," and he proceeded to take all the cuts out of the administrative staff in the chancellor's office. That got the attention of the state legislature; they really knew they were getting down to bone when the chancellor cut his own staff. From then on, I think, there was a healthy respect. This action also gained the support of the Berkeley faculty, as you might imagine, because they had realized all along that the chancellor's office had too much fat — that's always known on every campus — so in one fell swoop, the chancellor took an action that made a difference in the political sense to the legislature and, also, in the symbolic sense to the campus.

Questioner (Bernard Karsh, Professor of Sociology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign): It seems to me that the issue of excellence and equity — I was about to say excellence versus equity, but I'll pose it for the moment as excellence and equity — is likely to be the central issue which will test the competence, the definitions, and the presumptions about the functions of the president of a university in the near term and probably for the long term. The test is largely on the various roles of the president, most importantly the distinction be-

tween the role of the president as academic leader and the role of the president as a political leader. In my view, they are not aspects of the same role; they are distinctively different roles, and they call for distinctively different kinds of behaviors and distinctively different kinds of symbolisms.

President Ikenberry: Well, I welcome the comment. If anything I said lent the impression that I thought the tension was going to go away, I certainly misspoke. The tension between quality and equity, quality and access, is as old as universities themselves, and I see it as a continuing, as an endemic, tension. It is a tension that is within not just the University of Illinois, but it is a tension very much alive in society as a whole. The argument I was trying to make is that it is useful for the president to take the position that in order to pursue quality, you don't have to reject the pursuit of equity and access; in order to advance the cause of access in the equity and equality of opportunity, it need not be done at the sacrifice of quality. It is healthy to maintain the tension and to pursue both ideals. If one could have a measure of quality and equity at the University of Illinois in 1953 when you arrived, in 1955 when David Henry arrived, and today, in 1984, my impression would be that we have gained significantly on both points, that we are as strong academically, overall, today and within specific areas, as we were in 1955, and there is a broad range of opportunity available within this institution, perhaps broader today than in 1955.

Professor Trow: First, to support some of these thoughts: British universities, on the whole, don't worry about access, and so when they get into trouble, they don't have any constituencies outside of government to help them. Also, equity and excellence isn't a problem, it's a dilemma; we learn to live with it rather than solve it. But there is something more substantial to say, and in a way a professor can say it and a president can't. The elected Superintendent of Schools in California, who was defeated the last time — Wilson Riles, a Black man — was, while in office, a member *ex officio* of the Board of Regents of the University of California. When some proposals were made to lower the university's entry requirements, nominally to help the access of minority groups, he voted against it. He said, "Don't wreck the university just now that we are beginning to get into it." I think that the Black population, like other ethnic groups, is not as undifferentiated as it may appear. It is increasingly highly differentiated, and I think we have to learn to talk about ethnic groups with some degree of candor, and not always as they or their spokesmen define the situation or present themselves. Most ethnic group leaders, for obvious reasons and not inglorious ones, assert unity and identity of interest within the group for political strength. But below the surface those groups begin to be

highly differentiated, that is to say, more like the rest of us. And it is precisely there that we have to begin to deal with those groups as we deal with all other groups in the society — in some cases finding that they will be a tremendous support for the maintenance of standards in the university, if it is also accompanied by a continued sensitivity to historical injustices that we have inherited.

I think it also does challenge the integrity of a president to talk to different groups, emphasizing this or that and the other thing to each, but fundamentally standing always for the same thing and not for really different things, because if he stands for different things to different groups, he will over time forget who he is in front of what group, and that is a hopeless position. So, after all the analysis of organization and environment, of staff and politics and symbolism, the last word on university leadership must be the absolute importance of a president's personal integrity. And that is surely a fitting note on which to end a lecture and discussion in honor of David Henry.

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